

BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN HOUSEHOLDS AND
SCHOOL THROUGH PARENT INVOLVEMENT:
A QUALITATIVE APPROACH

By

Melissa N. Peterson

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As members of the Dissertation Committee, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by Melissa Noelle Peterson entitled Building Bridges Between Households and School: A Qualitative Approach and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Education.

Dr. Alberto Arenas Date: April 23, 2008

Dr. Jeffrey Bennett Date: April 23, 2008

Dr. Iliana Reyes Date: April 23, 2008

Dr. John Taylor Date: April 23, 2008

Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copies of the dissertation to the Graduate College.

I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

Dissertation Director: Dr. Alberto Arenas Date: April 23, 2008

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SIGNED: Melissa N. Peterson

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the actual and potential role that cultural resources embedded in Latino households are incorporated into parental participation in schooling practices. By examining various aspects of parental involvement that exist at a particular school site in the Southwest United States – including the various manifestations of the involvement, the enabling and sustaining factors for parental participation – and the challenges and possibilities for improvement of parental participation, this study aimed to provide a framework for how to authentically engage the participation of Latino parents within the school setting.

A qualitative approach was selected as the primary methodological perspective, which included ethnographic interviewing based on Funds of Knowledge research (Moll, 2004) and action research as a participant observer being utilized for data collection. Observations of parent activity at the school were conducted over a three-month period at a school setting called “parent room”, which served as a meeting place for parent volunteers to work, socialize, and attend classes. Twelve parents were interviewed to determine the kinds of skills parent volunteers employ through parental involvement at the school and whether or not these skills can be categorized as Funds of Knowledge. Six staff members were interviewed to establish a history of parental involvement at the school as well as to establish an understanding of the role of the parent room.

The main enabling factors for the sustainability of parental involvement were the prioritization of a space, the funding of a staff member facilitator, and the establishment of trust among participants. Positive outcomes of parent room participation included the acquisition of employment, opportunities to supplement the family income, exposure to new places and ideas,

increased advocacy on behalf of parent participants and their children, a connection to the greater school community, and increased comfort levels within the school setting.

Challenges related to parent room participation were identified and illustrated. These included the need to update the parent room story, varying expectations of parents and staff, the lack of formal training for staff regarding the potential for parental involvement, varying levels of comfort by parents within the school setting, inconsistencies in the parent participation requirements for the preschool and K-5 parent volunteers, parent room size, and varying levels of language proficiency by volunteers in English and Spanish.

The researcher presents results on parent involvement in a school setting that includes a space specific to the needs and work of parent volunteers. The parent room scenario, which has previously not been included in parent involvement research in schools, is determined to be a valuable and viable possibility for schools wishing to increase parental involvement by immigrant and minority parents or those parents who are generally uncomfortable in the traditional classroom setting. The framework and results advance our understanding of the complexities of parent involvement in school and provide a foundation for incorporating families' Funds of Knowledge into the function and organization of schools.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction and Overview

In research, policy and practice, educators are working to increase the involvement of parents in schools (Epstein, 2001). Parent involvement is now widely considered an essential and necessary element in school improvement efforts (Hidalgo, Siu, & Epstein, 2004). School administrators, parents, teachers, students, and community members are increasingly working together to put into effect federal, state, and local policies that encourage parent involvement, based partly on the belief that it increases student achievement.

Parents possess knowledge, skills and resources that are valuable to the process of schooling (Gonzalez, 2005). Because students are advantaged or disadvantaged by the educational and economic resources offered by their families and are advantaged or disadvantaged by the quality of their school experiences (Epstein, 2001), it is essential that educators and school leaders learn how to draw upon the resources and skills that households possess, rather than relying on traditional resources and mainstream educational expectations to support diverse learners' school experiences. It is a goal of this study to provide educators with the tools to perceive and act upon diversity as a resource for teaching and learning. One of the greatest challenges for the future is to transform diversity into a pedagogical advantage (Ferreiro, 1994).

Moll, Gonzalez, and others have addressed this challenge through their Funds of Knowledge research, which builds on anthropological methods to uncover the knowledge base that underlies the production and exchange activities of households (Gonzalez, 2005). The information gathered in their research is then used in the classroom to make learning more

relevant to students' experiences and therefore, more accessible to them. This study proposes that the Funds of Knowledge provide a starting place for educators and school leaders to assess opportunities for families to make authentic contributions to schools.

This qualitative study aimed to answer the following research questions:

- (a). What types of parental participation are taking place in this school?
- (b). Which of these forms of parental participation could be classified as Funds of Knowledge?
- (c). Has this participation been sustained over time and has it increased?
- (d). If yes, what have been the conditions that have enabled this sustainability?
- (e). What challenges have been encountered by parents and by school personnel?
- (f). How can the current parent participation be improved? How can the challenges be removed?

The contributions of this study serve to support educators and educational leaders who wish to effectively integrate the skills and practices of Latino families in to the process of schooling. Current studies on parent participation in schools lack both examples of reform programs under leadership that exemplify the characteristics for effectively facilitating minority parent involvement and a means by which to build upon the practices and resources of Latino households as they solicit parental involvement in schools.

This dissertation is divided into the following chapters: The introductory chapter provides a rationale for the study, including evidence of the growing Latino population in the United States and the significant role of Latino parents in improving education for their children.

The second chapter provides a discussion of the theoretical framework of the Funds of Knowledge that inform this study. Additionally, chapter two provides a thorough review of the

empirical studies on minority and low-income parent involvement, as well as supporting leadership theories. The literature review discusses School-Based Management as a key structure on a continuum of parental involvement possibilities and the inherent obstacles detracting minority participation in this structure. Chapter two provides an overview of recent national and state laws that mandate parental involvement in schools. Finally, the chapter summarizes the limitations of previous studies and how this study addresses these weaknesses.

Chapter three describes in detail the methodology used in this study to address the questions posed. Here I present the site, the sampling strategy, and the interview questions used for data collection. Chapter four details the process of data analyses and the consequential presentation of data. Included in the presentation of data are descriptions of the setting, staff, and parent participants. Chapter five provides a discussion of the findings of the study, including positive outcomes of and challenges of parent participation at the involved site, in addition to Funds of Knowledge and leadership theories identified. Chapter six addresses the implications and recommendations for practice, theory, and research as they apply to the identified issues of Funds of Knowledge, space, gender, leadership, and immigration. Chapter six is concluded with a summary of the value this study.

Rationale

Various studies have attempted to explain the discrepancies in parental involvement between middle class or affluent families and minority, low-income families. Although the contributions of previous studies are of great benefit as educators and school leaders analyze the reasons for minority parents' lack of involvement in schools, issues remain that impede the development of more meaningful research, policy, and practice in this area. These issues are inextricably linked and must be addressed in current and future research agendas, as well as

policy: (1) the lack of an inclusive, non-threatening approach to engaging Latino parents' skills and resources in schools; (2) the lack of a process or tool by which to discover the skills, practices, and resources of Latino households for the purpose of creating opportunities for parental involvement in schools; (3) recent English-only, anti-immigrant policies and perspectives, and (4) the polarization of middle-income English-speaking and low-income Spanish-speaking parents.

Research has shown that Latino families value education and have high expectations for student achievement, yet have a general unfamiliarity with the processes of schooling in the U.S., especially in the case of recent immigrants (Reese, Balzano, Gallimore, & Goldenberg, 1995). These parents struggle to dispel negative perceptions about them while trying to understand and negotiate an unfamiliar school system (Spear-Ellinwood, 2006). Schools can benefit from the supporting families' home practices, educational histories, and language experiences.

Federal requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act for schools to receive Title 1 funding are dependent upon schools' abilities to engage the participation of parents of low-income and English-Language Learner student populations. Large numbers of Latinos fall in to each of these categories, making the Latino population a high priority in terms of parental involvement research, practice, and policy design.

Latinos: A Growing Population

The U.S. is changing from a country that was once largely White and of European origin to a country rich in ethnic diversity (Suarez-Orozco & Paez, 2002). As reported in the 2000 census, the U.S. Hispanic population totaled more than 35 million people (Table 1), about 13 percent of the total U.S. population and growing. By 2005, the total Hispanic population had grown to 44.7 million (Center, 2006). Over the past four decades, Hispanics accounted for 36

percent of the population growth in the U.S., more than any other racial group, with the white population following at 34 percent.

Certainly, the Latino population is not a homogeneous group. This population's origins stem from many countries and varied cultures (Table 1) (Bureau, 2003). It is important to note at the outset of this discussion that the listed categories are useful only as a superficial overview of our nation's diversity. The demographic portrait of Hispanic Americans in the United States is even more unfocused than the norm (Garcia, 2004). National data are difficult to obtain in the specific ethnic format of categorizing Hispanics. The populations thus identified are assumed to be of one ethnic group, with little appreciation for the diversity among them. Also to be factored in to the examination of Hispanic population data is the reality that undocumented Hispanic immigrants may or may not be represented in current population data reports. Due to unstable living conditions in addition to fears stemming from their immigration status, undocumented residents may not be counted and recorded in demographic data.

Of the 11.1 million undocumented immigrants in the United States in 2005, an estimated 6.2 million were Mexican (Passel, 2006) (Center, 2006). Based on this information, Hispanics make up at least 56% of the undocumented immigrant population in the United States. The Pew Hispanic Center reports that 1.8 million undocumented residents living in the U.S. are children ages birth through 18, 56% or more of whom are Hispanic.

Mass immigration from Latin America within the past decade has contributed significantly to the growth of the U.S. Latino population (Pew Hispanic Center, 2005). As the Latino population grows, fundamental changes affect its composition. The birth-rate among Hispanics in the United States, rather than immigration itself is the expected primary source of future population growth (Pew Hispanic Center, 2005). Consequently, Latinos will continue to

interact on increasing scale with many American institutions including schools, health systems, and labor markets.

TABLE 1 HISPANIC POPULATION BY TYPE: 2000

Subject	Number	Percent
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	35,305,818	100
<i>Hispanic or Latino by Type</i>		
Mexican	20,640,711	58.5
Puerto Rican	3,406,178	9.6
Cuban	1,241,685	3.5
Other Hispanic or Latino	10,017,244	28.4
Dominican	764,945	2.2
Costa Rican	68,588	0.2
Guatemalan	372,487	1.1
Honduran	217,569	0.6
Nicaraguan	177,684	0.5
Panamanian	91,723	0.3
Salvadoran	655,165	1.9
Other Central American (Mixed Category)	103,721	0.3
Argentinean	100,864	0.3
Bolivian	42,068	0.1
Chilean	68,849	0.2
Colombian	470,684	1.3
Ecuadorian	260,559	0.7
Paraguayan	8,769	< .05
Peruvian	233,926	0.7
Uruguayan	18,804	0.1
Venezuelan	91,507	0.3
Other South American (Mixed Category)	57,532	0.2
Spaniard	100,135	0.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, May 2001.

Latinos represent a growing presence among the school-age population. Since 1980 the number of Hispanic children has nearly doubled. There were 8.4 million Hispanic children enrolled in grades K-12 in 2001, accounting for 16 percent of all students (Pew Hispanic Center, 2005). Projections indicate that 24 percent of the 5-to-19 year-old population in 2020 will be made up of Hispanics (Pew Hispanic Center, 2005). In sum, the Latino population in the U.S. is rapidly growing and changing. Schools must be prepared to embrace these changes.

Key to preparedness for meeting the needs of the growing Latino population is the building of a foundation for educators and schools to validate Latino home practices and family resources through their integration into the school setting and function. Accordingly, in examining the possibilities for Latino parent participation in schools, researchers should consider the diversity embedded in the lives of Hispanic students and their families.

The role of Latino parents in supporting the education of their children is a growing responsibility. By most measures, Latinos lag behind national educational norms (Garcia, 2004). For example, Latinos students have higher percentages of low scores on standardized tests than Whites and Asian Americans. Latinos have higher dropout rates than Whites and African Americans. Relatively few Latinos are among the nations top high school graduates. These patterns are most severe for immigrants from Mexico. For example, in 1990, only 38% of 25-to-29-year-old Mexican immigrants had completed high school, whereas 78% of native-born Mexican Americans in that same age group has graduated from high school.

As the data unequivocally indicates, the success of our future society is partially dependent upon our ability to meet the educational needs of Latino students, which includes the empowerment of Latino parents to actively support their children. As Latinos emerge as the majority in U.S. schools, their success is our success and their failure is our failure (Garcia, 2004).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this work stems from constructivist theory that is grounded in the research of Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky, Freire, and others, as it supports the Funds of Knowledge framework as applied to parental involvement in schools.

The fluidity of knowledge as defined by Dewey, is analogous to a household's Funds of Knowledge, in that the acquisition of knowledge is continually reforming. The organic connection between education and personal experience is examined in establishing the roles of parents, as well as children within schools (Dewey, 1938). Dewey defined meaning as attained through action and within a context that can vary between the person and the environment or between people. It is with this premise that this study approaches the knowledge brought to schools by both parents and students. Each arrives in the school setting with personal meaning that has been attained through interactions within the home and social networks connected to the home.

The constructivist perspective is rooted in the notion that knowledge is the result of a continuous building and rebuilding, as one strives to make sense of experiences (Piaget, 1926; Piaget, 1923). The Funds of Knowledge approach involves the study of how household members use their skills, resources, and social networks in dealing with changing, and often difficult, social and economic circumstances. As families develop social networks that interconnect them with their social environments (most importantly, with other households), these social relationships facilitate the development and exchange of resources that enhance the households' ability to survive or thrive (Keefe, 1987; Moll & Greenberg, 1990; Velez-Ibanez, 1989). In essence, the examination of households' Funds of Knowledge through the

constructivist lens is the study of the households' building and rebuilding of the knowledge, skills, and labor practices that enable their sustainability. Piaget's constructivist theory underlies the constructivist interpretation of households' Funds of Knowledge, as well as the constructivist process of building an educational connection between the needs of the school and these Funds. Embedded in the constructivist approach to education is the assumption that language and culture, and the values that accompany them are, constructed in both home and community environments (Cummins, 1986; Goldman & Trueba, 1987; Heath, 1981). These are analyzed as Funds of Knowledge that can support the educational experience of children.

Piaget and Vygotsky approached the human being as an active organism, changing to adapt to different environments and cultural shifts. This is embodied in the practices of Latino households, as people practice elasticity between cultures, social networks, and labor markets.

The Vygotskian principle of distinguishing between analysis of an object and analysis of a process is significant in the study of Latino households' practices, which are not stable or fixed, but components of an ever-changing process (Vygotsky, 1978). Through process analysis, the basic task of research becomes the reconstruction of the stages in the development of the process. For the purpose of this study, the unit of analysis has been viewed as a living, integrated part of the whole (Vygotsky, 2000). Within the socially constructed context of schools, Latino families' process of acquiring and passing on knowledge and skills has historically been undermined by the values of mainstream society and the socio-economic factors that influence the organization of schools and instruction (Garcia, 2004).

As households' Funds of Knowledge are examined in this study, it is with the Vygotskian (1978) assumption that human learning and development occur in socially and culturally shaped contexts. The Funds of Knowledge are generated through the social and labor history of families (Moll, 2005). The Funds of Knowledge are communicated to others through the activities that

constitute household life, including the formation of social networks that are central to household function within a particular environment. The opportunities for learning and development change alongside the constantly changing historical conditions (Moen, 2006).

Drawing from the insights of Vygotsky (1978) and his theory of socially mediated knowledge, this work suggests that the social interactions among parents within the school setting serve as a foundation for the construction of individual and collective knowledge that can be mediated to support student learning and school function. People interact with their worlds, which are “humanized” through mediated means and practices. This mediation of actions through artifacts and practices, especially the use of languages, plays a critical role in the formation and development of human intellectual capacities. This study seeks to demonstrate that, through participation in the parent room, the construction of meaning as a result of social relationships exceeds that which the parents would develop individually, resulting in their increased abilities to contribute to the academic growth of their children and improvement of the school.

Vygotsky (1978) proposed the well-known concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZOPD), the contrast between what a child can do on her own (her level of development) and what a child can do with the assistance of others (the proximal development level). As applied to adults’ social interactions in the parent room and the wealth of cultural resources available, this study applies the ZOPD theory to explain growth experienced by parent room participants.

Freire (1970) has argued that educational initiatives cannot expect academic or intellectual success under oppressive social circumstances. Nor can educational success be achieved when the knowledge and resources of stakeholders are devalued as a result of oppressive social circumstances. Through the analysis of Latino families’ practices as fluid,

socially constructed networks of exchange, this study aims to clear the lens through which many educators view Latinos and focus future educational practice on the resources Latino families have to offer.

The plurality of human relationships, also discussed by Freire (1970), is evident in the social funds that are embedded in Latino households and parent room discourse. The common experience of a reality should be perceived in the complexity of its constant state of becoming. Investigation into people's thinking (Freire, 1970), allows for reflection on the situationality of human relationships. Through this reflection, comes the ability to critically act on situationality, thus resulting in empowerment. This study proposes that the fluid, socially constructed knowledge that results from parent room participation empowers participants, their children, and the school to increase student learning and achieve excellence.

Funds of Knowledge

The Funds of Knowledge provide the substantiating theoretical framework for this study. Vélez-Ibañez and Greenberg (1992) discuss the multiple funds that households must, acquire, dispose of, and manage to maintain the household and the individual well-being. These include social funds such as kinship and friendship, caloric funds, or nutrition, and funds of rent or housing. They argue that embedded in these funds are broader sets of practices and patterns of interaction that require the use of specific knowledge and skills. Previous Funds of Knowledge research is inspired by Vygotsky's cultural-historical psychology, emphasizing how cultural practices and resources mediate the development of thinking (Gonzalez, 2005). Funds of Knowledge contribute to the discovery of the most salient array of knowledge and skills that are of strategic importance to households.

Through a systemic approach to inquiry, Vélez-Ibañez and Greenberg (1992) studied how the Funds of Knowledge were created, acquired, taught, and distributed socially among

households on the U.S.-Mexico border. Their findings support that individuals within households continuously gain funds (knowledge and skills) through their participation in labor markets, interactions with other U.S. and Mexican households, daily activities, and educational experiences and language use.

The foundation of the Funds of Knowledge hypothesis is that the possession and attainment of multiple Funds of Knowledge can directly impact children's learning. This study builds the argument that in addition to directly impacting children's learning, Funds of Knowledge also directly impact parents' abilities and willingness to participate in schools, as part of a dynamic, mutually supportive relationship with the school. The concept of Funds of Knowledge is defined by Moll and González (1994) as:

Those historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being. As households interact within circles of kinship and friendship, children are "participant-observers" of the exchange of goods, services, and symbolic capital which are part of each household's functioning.

All members of a household, including children and youth, have access to diverse Funds of Knowledge through participation in household activities and observation of members' interactions with other households. Children's exposure to household proceedings forms a foundation of background knowledge that contributes significantly to their learning process.

A community's Funds of Knowledge occupy that space between agency and structure, between the received historical circumstances of a group, and the infinite variation that social agents are able to negotiate within a structure (Gonzalez, 2005). A major purpose of the Funds of Knowledge approach is to give educators theoretical and methodological equipment to address diversity through a process of engagement with the everyday conditions of

life (Gonzalez, 1995). In this study, the labor market experiences, social networks, and home practices will be examined in order to evaluate the extent to which parents are willing and able to contribute to the function, organization, and efficiency of the school. A basis for examining the Funds of Knowledge approach in this study is to give school leaders the theoretical and methodological equipment to foster diversity and parent involvement through the validation of parents' Funds of Knowledge and their ability to contribute the Funds toward school function and improvement.

Schools often fail to recognize and utilize the cultural and strategic resources that individual households contain (Velez-Ibanez & Greenberg, 1992). These Funds of Knowledge should be seen by educators as both a basis for understanding the cultural systems from which children emerge, as well as important and useful assets to the classroom and school function. Through participation in schools, parents gain valuable insights in to the social and academic needs of their children, as well as an increased understanding of school functions and the resources available to families through the school. It is the premise of this study that the knowledge and skills of the household can be accessed and utilized by the school, forming a theoretical bridge of support between families and the school. In their Funds of Knowledge research, Gonzalez, Moll, and Amanti (2005) found teachers often encountered households that could only survive because of the networks of exchange that surrounded them. Not only can these networks be viewed as important sources of the diversity of Funds of Knowledge that children are exposed to (Gonzalez et al., 2005), but also valuable Funds of Knowledge sources that parents can draw from as they participate in schools.

This study examines the following mediators of children's formation of knowledge and parents' participation in schools: (a) culture, (b) home practices, (c) educational experiences, (d)

language issues, (e) participation in labor markets, (f) networks of exchange, (g) father involvement, and (h) *confianza*.

(a) Culture

A rich contribution of research suggests that the educational failure of “diverse” student populations is related to the culture clash between home and school. The values of diverse cultures are not always embraced by mainstream educators with mainstream value systems. Once researchers begin to peel back the layers, they find a complex history, a variety of definitions, and wide disparity in theories of culture. The concept of culture can be misleading in that it is loaded with expectations of group norms and static ideas of how people view the world and behave in it (Gonzalez, 2005). An assumption can exist that culture provides particular rules for behavior that everyone in a culture abides by, as if culture determines behavior. The term culture presumes coherence within groups which may not exist. The concept of culture was brought to the forefront in education as a result of the need to account for human diversity and to find tools for educators to break down barriers of racial and cultural divisiveness. Educators are urged to be aware of cultural issues and many try to incorporate culturally sensitive pedagogy (Gonzalez, 2005). Researchers have suggested that educational endeavors for culturally distinct learners are likely to fail if they do not attend to the distinctiveness of the contribution of culture (Garcia, 2004).

(b) Home Practices

Gonzalez et al. (2005) chose to focus on practice: what households actually do and how they think about what they do. Considering the parents’ perspectives from this angle opened research up to the interculturality of households, meaning how households draw from multiple cultural systems and use these systems as strategic resources. Culture, thus, is not replaced by another concept and respectful relationships between schools and communities are fostered.

Families are often involved in ongoing household activities that incorporate skills in gardening, car repair, home improvement, child-care, and families businesses or hobbies. Embedded in these practices are literacy and math activities that can link families' out-of-school literacies to formal academic knowledge. By drawing upon household knowledge, student experience is legitimated as valid and classroom practice can build on the familiar knowledge bases that students can manipulate to solidify learning in mathematics, social studies, language arts, and other content areas (Gonzalez, 2005).

Gonzalez, Moll, and Amanti (2005) pointed out that grandparents, aunts, uncles, and other extended family relations provide exposure to resources that go beyond the nuclear family. These additional resources can foster connections to academic knowledge in children and can provide valuable opportunities for families to participate in schools.

(c) Educational Experiences

Parents often rely on their own school experiences as a basis for understanding how to contribute to their children's schooling (Trumbell, Rothstein-Fisch, Greenfield, & Quiroz, 2001). Different orientations prepare people differently for interactions with schools. In some settings, the historical relationship between parents or the community and schools make parent involvement in schools particularly difficult. A history of discrimination, for example, can be a cause for parental mistrust of the school despite the different circumstances that exist for their child. Parents who have not completed a middle or high school program themselves may feel they do not have the required education to participate in schools (Quezada Diaz, & Sanchez, 2003). The key to resolving potential conflicts between different value orientations is awareness. When both educators and parents are aware of their different orientations, they have a greater chance of forging alliances and discovering shared goals for children.

(d) Language and Literacy Issues

A lack of English fluency can limit effective communication and functioning in health facilities, schools, or other settings that provide essential resources to children and their families (Hernandez, 2004). In addition, a lack of English proficiency can isolate immigrants from the broader, mainstream society. Language and literacy abilities can be a barrier for parent participation in schools (Quezada, Diaz, & Sanchez, 2003). Literacy can be defined both as spoken and written language due to the strong connection between learning to talk and learning to speak (Minami & Ovando, 2004). Holman (1997) examined the needs and resources of newcomer immigrant families in interactions with schools. Holman suggested minimizing the language barrier by employing bilingual, biliterate staff, developing a core of bilingual parents who assist in communicating with newly arrived families, providing all communications in the parents' written language, and being aware of varying levels of literacy among parents in the dominant and home languages.

(e). Participation in Labor Markets

Labor history is a rich source of a household's Funds of Knowledge. The jobs that people have had contribute to their wealth of information. Types of jobs and labor histories that are common within a particular location are linked to regional patterns of political economy (Gonzalez, 2005). For example, in the Southwest, Gonzalez, Moll, and Amanti found Funds of Knowledge consolidated in the ecologically pertinent areas of mining and metallurgy, ranching and animal husbandry, ethnobotany, and transborder transactions. For non-white-collar workers, they found that survival was based on strategic shifts in employment trajectories. Children are exposed to the skills funds of knowledge that these shifts produce. Gonzalez, Moll, and Amanti point out that participation in a labor market does not necessarily mean holding a job in the formal labor market. For example, many women sell tamales out of their home, sell cosmetics,

or have a stand at the flea market. These are often not counted as jobs, but do require specific skills for adults to perform and are ripe with potential for children's formation of knowledge.

(f). Networks of Exchange

Nonmarket networks of exchange are important sources for the diversity of Funds of Knowledge to which children are exposed (Gonzalez, 2005). Understanding of the social networks within which a family operates provides insight as to how people tap in to the knowledge that others have accumulated. It is important to understand how parents activate nontraditional resources and leverage relationships with other parents and community members in order to author a place of their own in schools (Calabrese Barton, 2004). Most exchanges within social networks occur in such a routine fashion that people are hardly aware of them (Velez-Ibanez, 1992). Exchanges within networks may include labor assistance, access to information and resources (such as help finding housing or employment), and various forms of material assistance besides money, such as putting up visitors. Networks often invest their labor or pool resources as part of family or cultural rituals, such as celebrating birthdays, quinceaneras, or weddings.

(g). Father Involvement

This study examines father involvement as a separate mediator of children's formation of knowledge and parent participation in schools. The parental investment of time and resources by fathers on child development and the support of schooling is that between traditional and school-based systems of learning and knowledge. Fathers may invest time and resources in developing children's skills and knowledge appropriate to traditional economic pursuits or use their resources to develop children's school curriculum-based skills and knowledge (Bock & Johnson, 2002). Parental investment in the form of time is expected to have the greatest effect on children

through learning. It can be assumed that paternal investment in the form of resources can be used for the achievement of growth-based embodied capital in offspring.

Most current literature focuses on Latino parenting in general with an emphasis on mothers, while that specific to Latino fathers consists of small studies based on clinical populations or ethnographic accounts of certain ethnic groups (Suarez-Orozco & Paez, 2002). One study looked at shared and divided parental tasks in school-related and learning experiences in the homes of Mexican-American families. Researchers involved in this study found that Latino fathers who shared child-care tasks with their wives were also more likely to read to their children and engage in other learning activities with them, than were their more traditional counterparts who divided parental tasks with their wives (Ortiz, 1996).

(h). Confianza

Drawing on the work of Mexican anthropologist Larissa Lomnitz, Velez-Ibanez emphasizes *confianza* (trust) as the single most important mediator in social relationships (Gonzalez, 2005). Parental participation in schools is based on social interactions. It is the assumption of this research that trust must exist among stakeholders in order for parent involvement to thrive in schools. For the purpose of this study, *confianza* will be viewed as a mediator of parent involvement in schools.

Benefits of Parental Participation

The importance of parental participation in schools has been soundly established in prior studies. An increasing number of studies show that family practices and involvement activities are more important for helping students succeed in school than are socioeconomic status, family structure, or characteristics such as race, parental level of education, family size and age of child (Hidalgo, 2004). As a result of parental involvement in schools, students experience academic success and their attendance rate increases (Cazden, 1992).

Parents also benefit from participation in schools. Once empowered as a result of involvement in schools, parents are no longer tourists within the school setting. They take on responsibilities and may be paid for newly-established jobs as paraprofessionals in schools (Lawson, 1997). Parents can serve as partners in problem-solving, helping design, implement, and evaluate teaching-learning experiences and new service and support strategies. Parents become hopeful and confident; their families are strengthened.

Trusting, collaborative relationships can develop between the family and the school staff. Parent-teacher relationships transcend the typical parent-teacher interactions and foster an interchange that creates a new bond of closeness and purpose (Hensley, 2005). The families that participate enjoy being involved. The parents and children are interested because their ideas are utilized. They make a contribution and a difference, resulting in a feeling of pride in themselves and their accomplishments. Once family members become partners, join-designers, and co-evaluators in schools, problems and solutions change (Lawson, 1997).

Because many families compensate for the lack of economic resources by drawing upon their strengths in attitude and energy to support and monitor their children's education at home and at school (Hidalgo, 2004), researchers have proposed alternative models for viewing and constructing parent participation in schools. The ecological parent engagement model (Calabrese Barton, 2004) reconceptualizes parent involvement as engagement within an ecosystem comprised of home, school, and community. This theory examines parent involvement as a social practice, sustained through active participation and dialogue in a social world.

Types of Parental Participation

Parent involvement in schools falls on a continuum. On one end, centralized, top-down systems allow for no parent involvement. The mid point of the continuum is limited to a

traditional PTA approach or to the parents' spending time in the classroom to aid the teacher. Through moderate parental involvement, parents have little power or influence over school decisions and matters concerning student performance in school. On the other end of the continuum, intense parent involvement allows parents to serve as instructional assistants in the classroom and to participate in decision-making councils. This end of the continuum offers parental empowerment through participation in problem-solving and the design, implementation, and evaluation of teaching-learning experiences (Lawson, 1997). At this end of the continuum lies the potential for student and parent empowerment through schools' identification and utilization of households' Funds of Knowledge.

The framework described by Epstein, Sanders, Simon, Clark Salinas, Rodriguez Jansorn, and Van Voorhis (2002) outlines six types of moderate parent involvement in schools. The literature connecting parental involvement with student achievement is extensive and will not be reviewed here. Epstein's framework can assist educators in developing more comprehensive programs for school/family partnerships and in supporting researchers as they work to inform and improve practice. Each type of involvement includes many different practices and evokes unique results for students, parents, instruction, and school climate.

(a). Parenting

Parenting activities reach out to parents by offering activities that build upon their parenting practices (Epstein et al., 2002). Parents who are involved in schools through parenting attend and participate in workshops on topics such as health, nutrition, and child development. They join support groups, receive information about their child from the school, and provide information about their child to the school. Practices are selected to meet the needs of the family (Epstein et al., 2002).

(b). Communicating

Communicating activities include home-to-school and school-to-home communications that increase cooperation and show students that their parents and teachers are working together to foster student success (Epstein et al., 2002). Possible forms of communication include phone calls, homework hotlines, conferences, emails, and websites.

(c). Volunteering

Volunteering activities provide families with the opportunity to share their time and talents to support the school (Epstein et al., 2002). Volunteering may occur at school, at home, in the classroom, or in the community. Various strategies may be used to recruit volunteers and match their talents to the needs of the school. The presence of parent volunteers tells students, faculty, and the community that parents care about school quality and student success.

(d). Learning at Home

Learning at home activities provide information and ideas to families about academics and instruction (Epstein et al., 2002). Such activities increase teacher-parent communication as well as parent-child discussions of student work, skills practice, and homework monitoring. Students are key participants in learning at home activities.

(e). Decision Making

Decision making activities enable families to participate in decisions about school programs that affect their own and other children (Epstein et al., 2002). Through decision making, families may have representation on school councils, committees, or improvement teams. Parents may choose to serve in leadership roles. Decision making activities increase all parents' awareness of and input into the workings of a school, resulting in feelings of ownership.

(f). Collaborating with the Community

Collaborating with the community activities encourage the cooperation of schools, families, and community groups (Epstein et al., 2002). Such partnerships are mutually

beneficial, as community resources can help schools and families while educators and families can help their communities. Families who participate in collaboration with the community can help identify and integrate community resources into the school.

(g). Parent Involvement in School-Based Management

Parent involvement in school decision-making is essential to maximizing opportunities for school accountability and student academic success (Briggs & Wohlstetter, 2003). The concept that student learning is increased when important decisions are placed in the hands of those who best know the needs of the students (the principal, teachers, and parents) is nothing new. School-based management (SBM) has been a popular school reform model adopted by states and school districts since the 1960's. However, school-based management teams, and the law related to these organizations have changed over the past 15 years. Based on recent research showing that successful schools actively engage parents and community resources, (Fullan & Watson, 2000), these laws now include specific requirements for parent involvement in school decision-making, making SBM a standard feature of many current reforms (Excellence, 2004).

Ideally, SBM is not just a structural change, but a cultural change for schools (Fullan, 2000). Participants embrace the concept that schools should be governed in ways that honor the same democratic intellectual and social skills we expect students to master (Meier, 2003). SBM allows the educational community to practice and model democracy through consensus building, thinking about others' needs, and being committed to the larger community. The participatory democracy of SBM provides the opportunity to practice citizenship and results in greater efficiency, effectiveness, and better outcomes (Leithwood, 2001).

Domestic leaders and international agencies have come to believe that expanding school choice and making schools autonomous from public bureaucracy will lead to positive outcomes (Rivarola & Fuller, 1999). There are many potential benefits to the implementation of SBM.

- (a) Decisions are made by those who work with students and have the most informed opinions as to their educational needs (Briggs & Wohlstetter, 2003).
- (b) Participation by the staff and community in planning and implementation brings about significant, sustainable improvements. Through this process, participants share responsibility for failures and success (Barth, 1990).
- (c) Support for the professionalism of educators promotes professional growth (Cotton, 1992). A team-management approach to school governance can result in an improved quality of communication and decision-making practices, increased staff motivation, and enhanced coordination of tasks and plans (Erickson, 1977).
- (d) Focus on student achievement is increased. Research by Robertson, Wohlstetter, and Mohrman (1995) assessed the relationship between SBM and the adoption of new classroom practices, concluding that higher levels of curriculum and instruction reform took place when SBM was fully implemented at a school. A study of schools in Chicago substantiated that teacher participation in decision-making through SBM was positively related to improved instructional practices and an increase in student learning (Smylie, Lazarus, & Brownlee-Conyers, 1996).
- (e) Budgets and instructional priorities are aligned. When a school is freed from central bureaucracy, it can find innovative ways to utilize discretionary funds to enhance technology access, arts education, and to partner with universities and other organizations (Chen, 2004). In recent years, international funding organizations have thrown their weight behind the decentralization of education systems around the world, making decentralization a precondition for financial assistance (Bjork, 2003). Arguments in favor of the devolution of control over schools are based on the idea that decentralization

will lead to the possibility of a redistribution of power, increased efficiency, or greater sensitivity to the local culture.

Researchers have analyzed SBM in terms of how much authority should be devolved to the school, how much autonomy local schools should have in terms of curriculum development, governance, and staffing, and how to structure these organizations for success (Briggs & Wohlstetter, 2003; McInerney, 2003). Researchers have also examined the possibilities for developing a socially democratic model of local school management. What has not been adequately addressed in the research in the United States and abroad is the question of how to make parental contributions to the process more effective.

The empirical evidence for the ability of SBM models to generate improvement has not been overwhelming (Briggs & Wohlstetter, 2003). Reasons for lack of evidence include difficulties in measuring change and outcomes associated with SBM, complexities in implementing management models that necessitate participation by teachers, principals, and others, and the challenge of working in an environment that is shaped by local, state, and national policies.

Until the late 1980's, SBM was most often implemented as a stand-alone reform to remedy a variety of ills in the school system. Current practice suggests that SBM is likely to be embedded within a comprehensive approach to school reform and can lead to a more effective redesign of the entire school organization.

The political push to decentralize school management has spread across continents into many policy circles (Rivarola & Fuller, 1999). When decentralization of decision-making is used for purposes of increasing accountability, it can be successful in increasing the voices of those who are not heard in the context of typical school governance structures (Leithwood, 2001). Many now embrace the idea of holding public institutions more directly accountable to

their clients. In fact, school reform in many developing countries may also more naturally encompass parent and community involvement (Fullan, 2000). In Argentina, federal law and political platforms have included criteria for democratization, decentralization, participation, and equity (Pini & Cigliutti, 1999). The Escuela Nueva (EN) project is a SBM model that has improved the quality of rural basic education in Colombia. In 1994, the Local Content Curriculum project in Indonesia required all elementary and junior high schools to allocate 20 percent of total instructional time to locally designed subject matter. Nicaragua's version of school reform focuses on decentralizing management and budget decisions to local school councils (Rivarola, 1999). In countries such as New Zealand and Australia, school reform has been influenced by the new managerialism philosophy, which calls for more efficient and cost-effective school governance structures, as additional goals for devolution (McInerney, 2003).

Leadership Theories That Facilitate Parent Participation

Research results are accumulating that show school leaders can take steps to develop and implement effective practices enabling more parents to become, and remain, involved in their children's education (Hidalgo, 2004). As key figures in school improvement (Cotton, 1992), principals can orchestrate the school's constellation of unique needs and resources so that everyone gets their needs met (Barth, 1990). This study proposes that both leadership style and background knowledge are important factors in providing parents with the opportunity to effectively participate in schools.

Leaders must acknowledge that there is a discrepancy between what schools offer mainstream students and what they offer immigrant and nondominant culture students (Trumbell, 2001). This is a growing concern, as the number of minority students in the U.S. increases. According to the 2000 U.S. Census figures, about 14 % of Americans are Hispanic, 13% are

African-American, 5% are Asian, and about 1% is Native American. By 2010, children of recent immigrants will comprise 22% of the population (Landsverk, 2004).

The school administrator must have a high level of background knowledge in terms of diversity in order to facilitate participation from parents, regardless of socio-economic status, native language, or race and ethnicity. The school leader must acknowledge that unequal distribution of power, resources, and knowledge often prevent minority parents from meaningfully participating in schooling (Trumbell et al., 2001). There is a need for understanding about diverse children and families, especially social-ecological relationships among children, families, neighborhood communities, and the characteristics of their natural environments (Lawson, 1997) and the Funds of Knowledge they possess. Schools that offer frequent and ongoing opportunities for parents, teachers, and administrators to communicate, to meet face-to-face, and to form relationships will diminish barriers of race, economics, language, and geography (Landsverk, 2004).

A first step in leveling the playing field is to promote a school-wide philosophy that embraces differences and moves toward a school culture that is open to all students, not just those students from the dominant culture (Trumbell et. al, 2001). Enfranchising others to collaboratively make decisions and act as agents for change takes time, training, and hard work (Lawson, 1997). The more a school does to organize programs and practices to involve families, the more parents respond (Hidalgo et al., 2004). Studies indicate that schools can implement targeted activities to involve parents in particular ways that help students reach specific learning and behavior goals (Epstein, 2002; Sheldon, 2001; Simon, 2001; Van Voorhis, 2001; Van Voorhis, 2001).

Traditional leadership styles which utilize a top-down, centralized system of power are not conducive to implementing and sustaining quality parent participation. The actions of

traditional leaders are often based on self interest and their desire to remain in unilateral control, maximize winning and minimize losing, suppress negative feelings, and to be as rational as possible (Argyris, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1993). Decentralization transforms the role of leader into the keeper of the process, not the outcome of the process (Leithwood, 2001).

Most formal models of leadership that guide certification programs identify only the tip of the iceberg in terms of the array of practices used by effective leaders. School leaders find themselves immersed in multiple contexts, each of which makes unique demands on what they need to do (Leithwood, 2001). Certification programs for school administrators generally do not prepare them for integrating school reform, parent empowerment, and community participation (Lawson, 1997). Until appropriate changes are made in preservice education and professional development programs, simultaneously encouraging faculty and student involvement in innovative school communities, higher education institutions will remain part of the fragmentation problem (Lawson, 1997). Higher education programs must strive to provide future educational leaders with a deep understanding of organizational change and the institutional networking involved in creating collaborative school change initiatives (Lawson, 1997). This would cover knowledge about network development, problem solving, and institutional discourse that are specific to the working of schools (Moll, 2005) and integrate parent expertise into the process.

The necessity for substantial information, understanding, and skills development through training, practice, and constructive feedback is essential to an administrator's success in facilitating a SBM philosophy that is inclusive of parent participation (Hord, 1992). Without support, the demise of most educational innovation is no surprise. Effective superintendents understand this and play a significant role with their principals in the adoption and implementation of changes that are planned to achieve the SBM vision (Hord, 1992). However,

school administrators are often caught between “top down” interactions with the central office and school board and the desired collaborative interactions at the school level (Lawson, 1997).

In order to maximize the opportunities for parent participation in schools and in SBM, school leadership must be redefined. The work of Sergiovanni (1992) and others calls for a new generation of school leaders who are prepared to handle the moral authority and commitment to change (Lawson, 1997). New leadership skills and new conceptions of leadership are urgently needed so that principals are able to contribute effectively to schools (Barth, 1990). Modern leaders and theorists have offered alternatives to the traditional definitions of leadership. Ronald Heifetz, director of the Leadership Education Project at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government defines leadership as the ability to mobilize people to tackle tough problems (Heifetz, 1994). Steve Jobs a founder of Apple Computers defines a leader as a keeper of the dream (Johnson, 1994). These current definitions of leadership which allow for collaboration and foster human motivation (Sergiovanni, 1993) have led to the development of new leadership theories.

(a) Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership focuses on higher-order, intrinsic, and moral motives and the needs of followers (Sergiovanni, 1999). Under transformational leadership, parents, teachers, and students function as individuals who strongly identify with certain groups and who are influenced by these groups. They routinely sacrifice their self-interest and pleasure to advance the common good as defined by group commitments. Norms are thought to be more important than individual needs (Sergiovanni, 1999). This means that stakeholders are less influenced by bureaucratic rules or management protocols and more influenced by norms, group mores, patterns of beliefs, values, the socialization process, and the socially-constructed reality (Sergiovanni, 1990). Transformative leaders practice leadership by purpose. Purposing is the

continuous stream of actions by an organization's formal leadership which has the effect of inducing clarity, consensus and commitment to the organization's basic purposes (Vaill, 1984).

Vision is a key concept aligned with purpose (Bennis, 1984). A prerequisite for transformative leadership is the ability to create and articulate a compelling vision that defines the current state of affairs and affirms a commitment to the future (Sergiovanni, 1990). The vision of a school must reflect goals, needs, interests, values and beliefs of the group. A school vision that embodies the sharing of ideals results in a covenant that bonds the leader and followers in a common cause (Sergiovanni, 1990).

Transformative leaders invest distributed power among others with more power as the return (Sergiovanni, 1990). Stakeholders respond to this empowerment with increased motivation and commitment to work, as well as exceptional ability. Transformative leaders do not strive for power over people, but for power over accomplishments and the achievement of the organization's purposes.

(b) Stewardship

In schools practicing SBM, administrators must be what Sergiovanni (1992) referred to as leaders of leaders. These administrators must strive to support the capacities of teachers and others in order to minimize the need for direct leadership (Sergiovanni, 1992). This can be achieved through team-building, leadership development, shared decision-making, and working toward the goal of collegiality (Sergiovanni, 1992). Sergiovanni (1992) stated that the concept of a leader of leaders deserves more attention than it receives from policymakers and more emphasis in school administration literature.

One effective way to be a leader of leaders is the practice of servant leadership (Sergiovanni, 1992). Greenleaf (1997) developed the concept of servant leadership, which is defined as the means by which leaders can get the necessary legitimacy to lead by giving

certainty and purpose to others who may have difficulty achieving it for themselves (Greenleaf, 1977). Purposing entails building within the school a center of shared values (Sergiovanni, 1992). In order to provide purpose to others, the leader must evoke their trust in her competence and values (Sergiovanni, 1992).

Greenleaf's position is consistent with that of Gonzalez et al. (2005) in its emphasis on empowering those who are served to define their own needs in their own way (Sergiovanni, 1992). In terms of eliciting authentic participation by Latino families, this would involve allowing the students, teachers, and parents to define the students' needs and the needs of the school community. Empowerment entails providing autonomy, choice, responsibility, and participation in decision-making (Lightfoot, 1986). It is important for the leader to understand that the most important thing is to serve the values and ideas that help shape the school as a covenantal community (Sergiovanni, 1992).

(c) Moral Authority

Sergiovanni emphasized that the concept of a servant leader is linked to a strength based on moral authority. When leadership practice is placed in service to ideas and to others who also seek to serve these ideas, and act as an advocate on their behalf, issues of leadership role and style are less important. This, in turn, results in outrage and the motivation to evoke outrage in others when empowerment is abused or when the purposes are ignored (Sergiovanni, 1992). An empowered school community, bonded together by shared commitments and values is a prerequisite for evoking outrage in others.

Sergiovanni (1995) examined the moral nature of many of the roles played out by school administrators as he discusses new principles of management and leadership, characteristics of successful schools, forces of leadership, and strategies for bringing about change. He suggested that school leaders are given the responsibility of transforming school members from neutral

participants to committed followers, stating that the embodiment of purpose and the development of followership are inescapably moral (Sergiovanni, 1995).

In defining leadership as a moral craft, Sergiovanni stated that every technical decision has moral implications (Sergiovanni, 1995). The unequal distribution of power in schools is not just an imbalance of power between the ethnicity and socio-economics of families. There is also an unequal distribution of power in schools based on roles, despite commitments to shared decision-making and empowerment (Sergiovanni, 1995). Leaders in schools with school-based management models must be aware of the potential for such an imbalance and the moral implications that ensue. School leaders, as a result of circumstance, often hold more power in schools than do students, teachers, parents, and others (Sergiovanni, 1995). This power is derived from their hierarchical position, which provides them with greater access to information and control over what information is shared, fewer time restrictions, and greater access to outside agencies (Sergiovanni, 1995). The test of moral leadership under such conditions is whether the well-being, competence, and independence of the stakeholders are enhanced as a result of participation and whether the school benefits from collaboration (Sergiovanni, 1995).

The concepts of “leader of leaders” and servant leadership place responsibilities of stewardship on the administrator (Sergiovanni, 1992). Through stewardship, the members of a school community entrust the leader with certain obligations and duties to fulfill on their behalf (Sergiovanni, 1992). In school-based management, parents, teachers and administrators share stewardship responsibilities for the students.

(d) Learning Communities

One popular trend in schools is the concept of learning communities. In a learning community, adults and students learn together and acknowledge that learning by one contributes to the learning of others (Sergiovanni, 1992). The members of a learning community learn to

think critically and analytically and to solve problems that are important to them (Barth, 1990). The construct of a learning community challenges the age-old assumption that schools are the place for learning and adult life is the place for knowing by ensuring that the school environment promotes learning by developing communities that support learning at all ages. Knowledge and learning – the processes by which people create knowledge – are living systems made up of often-invisible networks and interrelationships (Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Lucas, Smith, Dutton, & Kleiner, 2000). A learning community's purposes must be built into the school's structure and embodied in everything it does (Sergiovanni, 1995). The members of such a community acknowledge their own inadequacies, pose their own problems, take risks, exercise a sense of humor, collaborate with other learners, practice compassion, model the expected behaviors, and maintain the presence of a moral purpose (Barth, 1990). Changing school culture to promote this is key to a school's successful function as a learning community (Sergiovanni, 1992).

In the constructs of a learning community, the administrator should be viewed as head learner (Sergiovanni, 1992). Under the practice of a learning community philosophy, the leader experiences, displays, models, and celebrates what is expected that stakeholders will do (Sergiovanni, 1992). The school as a learning community provides an ideal setting for joining the practice of leader of leaders to servant leadership (Sergiovanni, 1992), as students, parents, teachers, administrators, and others share stewardship responsibility for the school. Learning is a lifelong expression of our sense of worth and wonder (Barth, 1990).

Framing Leadership to Support Parent Involvement

Bolman and Deal (2003) provide a framework for understanding and addressing organizational complexity as it applies to the facilitation of parental participation in schools. Modern organizations require the objective perspective of managers as well as the brilliant flashes of vision wise leaders provide (Bolman and Deal, 2003). The four frames as defined by

Bolman and Deal focus on both management and leadership. These include the structural frame, the human resource frame, the political frame, and the symbolic frame.

The structural frame emphasizes goals, specialized roles, and formal relationships (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Structures are designed to fit an organization's environment and technology. The structural frame is a blueprint for formal expectations and exchanges among internal players and external constituencies. In terms of parental involvement in schools, the structural frame would include the formal parent involvement policy, the job descriptions of those working with parent volunteers, the possible roles to be filled by parent volunteers, and the designated parts of a school campus that are open to parent volunteers.

Under the human resource frame, the organization is viewed as a theorized extended family of individuals with needs, feelings, prejudices, skills, and limitations (Bolman & Deal, 2003). The human resource frame centers on the relationship between human needs and organizational reality. This frame is built on the assumption that parental involvement benefits both the parent and the school. Parental involvement under the human resource frame poses the possibility that the needs of the student and/or parent will be met through the parents' contributions to school function.

The political frame sees the organization as an arena shaping the rules of the game (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Politics is defined as the realistic process of making decisions and allocating resources in a context of scarcity and divergent interests. The political frame views authority as only one among many forms of power. When viewed through the lens of the political frame, parental empowerment through involvement in schools is the result of participation, openness, and collaboration within the school setting.

The symbolic frame focuses on how humans make sense of the ambiguous world (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Symbols are viewed as the basic building blocks of meaning systems or

cultures. They are created and inhabited by people. Symbolic concepts are applied to culture, activities, and team dynamics within an organization. Because symbols permeate every fiber of an organization, the symbolic leadership by school administrators regarding parental involvement sets the foundation for the extent to which parents are welcome and empowered within the school setting. School administrators who understand symbols and encourage their use can help shape effective parental involvement in schools, as long as the organizational culture is aligned with the needs of parents and the requirements of the law.

The Law and Parental Involvement

State and Federal law has increasingly advocated for sustainable modes of parental participation in school. Federal mandates and funding for parent involvement surfaced in the 1960's, when Head Start and Follow Through programs called for parent participation in classrooms, advisory councils, and the direct instruction of their children (Epstein, 2001). In 1975, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act mandated parental involvement in the education of Special Education students.

Although parental involvement is the mantra of recent educational reform programs, it is often framed as the parents working in the classroom to facilitate the teacher (Gonzalez, 2005). If schools aim to create partnerships with the community, the relationship cannot be an asymmetrical alliance. The field of inquiry into collaboration between schools and families has been strengthened by recent federal, state, and local policies (Epstein et al., 2002). If left to schools or market forces, the most disadvantaged groups in our society would continue to be marginalized by education policies and practice (McInerney, 2003). Improvements will not be made through accountability frameworks and performance management alone. A commitment to fund equity programs and to sponsor and promote public debate about curriculum, and to

intervene when necessary to ensure that social justice goals are implemented in schools must be in place.

State and local laws have been enacted with this purpose in mind. Such laws are worded to include requirements for effective parent participation in schools. During the 1990's, the Goals 2000: Educate America Act set partnerships as a voluntary national goal for all schools. Recent legislation, such as the federal No Child Left Behind Act, condition funding under Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act upon compliance with parental involvement requirements. The trail-blazing specifications in the state law of Kentucky and the innovative 1988 Illinois reform call for the establishment of school councils with parental participants.

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) put into law what successful educators have known for a long time: students best achieve when parents are informed about, involved in, and supportive of their child's education (Landsverk, 2004). The language of NCLB repeatedly calls for schools to respect the contributions and needs of all parents as their children's first and most influential teachers (Landsverk, 2004). In fact, NCLB supports concepts such as the Funds of Knowledge and school-based management by asking educators not only to understand families and their cultures, but also to improve schools by using parents' knowledge, time and their desire to support their children (Landsverk, 2004).

NCLB mandates that educators pay special attention to the needs of poor parents, homeless parents, those with limited English proficiency, and those whose children attend schools needing improvement (Landsverk, 2004). For example, every district and every school using Title 1 funds must develop with Title I student and parent participants, a written parent involvement policy (Landsverk, 2004).

According to NCLB, the district parent involvement policy must delineate how the district will: involve parents in creating district improvement plans, offer technical assistance and

collaborate with schools to plan parent participation in activities to improve student and school academic performance, build school and parent capacities for strong parent involvement, coordinate and integrate parent involvement strategies with other programs such as Reading First, Early Reading First, Early Start, Head Start, English language acquisition programs, etc., and evaluate with parents the effectiveness of the policy in improving district academics (Landsverk, 2004).

The school's parent involvement policy must describe how the school will create with the parents, a school-parent compact for all children served by Title I funds (Landsverk, 2004). This compact must define: the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction, the parents' responsibilities to support children's learning, and the importance of on-going teacher-parent communication.

Additionally, parents whose children participate in Title I-funded programs must be trained in several areas relevant to their children's educational experience. This training includes being able to understand and monitor state and local assessment of their children's progress, increase their children's achievement through literacy and technology, and general information about school and parent programs (Landsverk, 2004). NCLB calls for the appropriate education of school staff as to effective methods for reaching out to parents as equal partners in the educational process (Landsverk, 2004).

Many states have developed policies to guide schools in the creation of more systemic connections with families and communities (Epstein et al., 2002). Epstein's work calls for state departments of education to create structures to officially support such partnerships. State support of parent involvement should include a department to provide districts with the necessary assistance to sustain the implementation of state policy. Included in effective state policy are leadership criteria for meeting the special conditions of individual areas. State leaders

may establish business collaborations, offer grants, recognize and reward excellent practices, and participate in leadership teams of state and local district officials.

The state law of Kentucky is one example of state-mandated parent participation in schools. The Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 first required parent participation in school decision-making (States, 2002). Kentucky Senate Bill 168, passed in 2002, increased parent participation requirements as members of school-based decision making councils, charged with specific legal authority to set school policy (Excellence, 2004). Like NCLB, the 2002 Kentucky law included more specific details as to parent participation and clearly defined requirements for School council member elections and training, related district policy development, the constitution of school site councils, and minority participation (States, 2002).

The comprehensive school councils in Kentucky are required to have adopted policies on issues related to curriculum, staff time assignment, student assignment, school schedule, school space use, instructional practices, discipline and classroom management, extracurricular activities, state standards, technology utilization, and program appraisal, consultation in filling vacancies, committee participation, advanced placement policy for high schools, and wellness policy for K-5 schools (Department of Education, 2005). These councils are also responsible for making the following decisions: selecting a principal, determining the number of people to be employed in each job class, determining textbooks for the school, instructional materials for the school, and student support services, setting the budget for instructional funds, completing data analysis and school improvement planning, and planning professional development (Department of Education, 2005). The law specifies that the Department of Education provides professional development activities to assist schools in implementing school-based decision-making (Department of Education, 2002). The goal behind Kentucky's law is to help all children

achieve at high levels and close the gaps in achievement between different groups of students (Excellence, 2004) as they all reach proficiency by 2014 (States, 2002).

In 1988, the state of Illinois passed the Chicago School Reform Act in response to a 1987 visit from then U.S. Secretary of Education William Bennett, who declared the Chicago public schools some of the worst in the nation (Chen, Horsch, DeMoss, & Wagner, 2004). The reform act called for each school to establish a local school council made up of six elected parents, two elected community members, two appointed teachers, and the principal to be the primary administrative body for the school. Their responsibilities included hiring and firing principals, disbursement of discretionary state, Chapter 1, and Title 1 funds.

Challenges

Social Class and Parental Involvement

Social class has a powerful influence on parental involvement patterns (Lareau, 2000). The defining features of class position such as education or occupational status and the family life patterns such as parenting or gender roles have unintended consequences for family-school relationships. Family-school relationships vary between the working-class and upper-middle-class communities. Upper-middle-class parents form much tighter linkages with schools than do working class parents.

Minority Parent Involvement

Relationships between parents and schools reflect the structural locations of these individuals in the wider society (Valdes, 1996). Nonmainstream parents may avoid traditional participation in school-based activities because they recall negative schooling experiences, feel unwelcome, or have been called to attend primarily when their children have difficulties. Caste-like involuntary minorities often see school in a negative light, while historical circumstances cast a more positive light on schooling for immigrant students who have chosen to immigrate.

Voluntary immigrants experience a greater sense of agency and are able to voluntarily utilize their resources or conform to mainstream practice as needed, while involuntary immigrants experience less agency and are forced to function within the power relations of mainstream culture.

While all children tend to benefit from parental participation, it appears that those from cultural minority backgrounds tend to benefit the most. In fact, according to Valdes, parent involvement in education has become a prescription for improving the learning of minority students (Valdes, 1996). Trumbell, Rothstein-Fisch, Greenfield, and Quiroz (2001) stated that the movement toward authentic parent involvement in schools is based on research which shows that the best hope for children is for parents to work together with school personnel to establish academic and social goals, learning about each other's values and expectations in the process. Hidalgo and others propose a social-contextual approach that honors parental knowledge, values, and beliefs and at-home practices to reconstruct the concept of family involvement (Spear-Ellinwood & Moll, 2006). For this to happen, the entire school community, including administrators, must be committed to learning and cross-cultural exchange.

Obstacles for Parent Participation in School-Based Management

Some of the obstacles to successful parent participation in school-based decision making include:

- (a) Time limitations restrict progress (McInerney, 2003). It is difficult for school-based management participants to devote the time it takes to create and sustain change.
- (b) The authority of participants can be superficial in nature. Parent participation on school councils has often been restricted to providing input on fundraising, maintenance and small-scale planning (McInerney, 2003). The constraints of federal, state, and local regulations often limit the degree of change that can be made. The careful

implementation of school-based management and the leadership that guides it are essential to its success.

- (c) Participants' expectations can be unrealistic. Parents often enter into the process expecting immediate change. However, research shows that the change process can take five or more years (Cotton, 1992).
- (d) Support for participants is often insufficient. Parents have traditionally been uninformed and underutilized regarding school decisions and operations (Lawson, 1997). SBM participants often lack the knowledge of school operations and group process skills that it takes to be successful. Parents who most need to be involved, those whose children are experiencing academic difficulties, have not been. Conventional approaches such as requesting participants in parent-teacher organizations do not attract these parents or sustain their involvement.
- (e) Participants lack clarity as to their roles. There is frequently a lack of clarity as to the roles of the group and the individual (Cotton, 1992). A study by Lawson and Briar-Lawson (1997), found that people in the same school or community had different expectations, goals, and meanings in mind even when they used the same language. Moll (2005) suggested that there is a gap in the research in terms of information that would help parents understand what resources (Funds of Knowledge) may be advantageous in dealing with schools. Traditional research has focused on how schools can get parents to accommodate the routines of schooling. The need exists for research that focuses on how parents can inspire schools to meet their needs, conditions, and desires.
- (f) The comfort level of parents in the school setting. Ignorance of how culture influences approaches to schooling and child-rearing leads to misunderstandings of why parents and children think and act the ways they do (Trumbell et al., 2001). When major cultural

differences are layered on top of the usual challenges of school decision-making, the risk of conflict in goals and methods increases (Trumbell et al., 2001). As previously discussed, it is often the low-income and minority parents who feel levels of discomfort in interacting with the school community do to their own educational experiences.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN, METHODS, AND SETTING

The methodological framework of this study takes a qualitative approach, using ethnographical interviewing tools in combination with participatory action research.

Qualitative research is defined as a process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. It is multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports details, views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting (Maxwell, 1996). Qualitative methodology is ideal for the purposes of understanding the “meaning” behind participants’ perspectives (Maxwell, 1996). It brings about the unity of theory and practice, called for by Freire (2000). Qualitative methodology allows the researcher to search for meaningful themes within the historical-cultural context of total reality.

The fact that I did not employ quantitative measurements in regards to student academic progress at Bonita is a limitation in terms of this study’s validity. The qualitative framework and ethnographic interviewing included staff and student comments regarding student achievement; however, the research did not compare the comments to actual student achievement data.

This chapter provides a description of ethnographical interviewing, the research relationship, proposed interview questions, setting, population of interest, sampling procedures, and methods of analysis for data collection to address the study’s research questions.

Ethnographic Interview Methods

The encounter with persons, one by one, rather than categories and generalities, is still the best way to cross lines of strangeness. (Bateson, 2000)

Ethnographic interviews are based on the discipline of cognitive anthropology, as a means for eliciting the cognitive structures guiding participants' worldviews (Marshall, 1999). They are used by the researcher to gather cultural information (Spradley, 1979). The value of the ethnographic interview lies in its firsthand view of culture through the participant's perspective. The method is flexible for formulating working hypothesis and avoids oversimplification in description and analysis as a result of its rich narrative descriptions.

The ethnographic interview has been successfully used for the study of the Funds of Knowledge by researchers such as Moll and Gonzalez (2004). Moll describes the dialogue that comes about in the face-to-face interaction of an ethnographic interview as key in linking communities with schools. Asking questions with the intent to learn more about others is a powerful method for establishing the validation of community-based knowledge (Moll, 2005). Gonzalez (2005) advises that only through face-to-face interaction and one-to-one encounters with persons, through a mutually respectful dialogue, can we cross the constructions of difference.

Based on research by Gonzalez, Moll, and Amanti (2005), the research questions for this study were formulated to acquire information on daily, weekly, and monthly routines of participants. Like studies by Gonzalez, Moll, and Amanti, this study inquired about families' hobbies, employment, and educational history with the goal of developing a composite and multidimensional image of the range of possible Funds of Knowledge.

The major weakness of this method is its reliance on the researcher's interpersonal skills. Through the process of ethnographic interviewing, the researcher may impose her values through the phrasing of questions or interpretation of data. It is essential in using this method that the researcher be aware of this potential and take action to avoid it. The possibility of reactivity also

threatens the validity of interviews. The structured interview format will control for the possibility of leading questions and the specificity of the questions will prevent inference.

Action Research

Action research challenges the claims of neutrality and objectivity of traditional social science and seeks full collaborative inquiry by all participants, with the goal of sustained organizational change (Stringer, 1996). It seeks to decentralize traditional research by maintaining a commitment to local contexts rather than to the quest for truth and to liberate research from its excessive reliance on the restrictive conventional rules of the research game. When action research is effectively implemented, the lines between researcher and participants blur, creating a democratic inquiry process.

Participatory action research draws on the emancipation principles articulated by Freire (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). It assumes that sustainable empowerment and development must begin from the concerns of the marginalized. Participatory action research calls for collaboration between the researcher and participants as they pose the questions to be pursued and gather data to respond to them. A cycle of research, reflection, and action constitutes participatory action research.

To control for bias, first and foremost, I acknowledged my role in the research, relied on factual information rather than inference, demonstrated transferability of the information obtained, and triangulated the data.

Research Relationship

My relationship with my former colleagues and the parent community at Bonita was a complex and changing reality, which can be considered both a strength and limitation to this study. As a participant observer, I acknowledge that the relationship I established as a researcher did, indeed, influence other elements of the research design and data collection. As a participant

observer in the parent room, I was aware of the possibility of reactivity and defined any biases that may exist. As a former member of the faculty at Bonita, I had access to detailed information from my colleagues regarding their interactions with the parent community.

In order to develop working relationships with a few select parents from the Bonita community, I spent time in the Bonita parent room, engaging in social conversation, and building an initial level of comfort and trust with the parents who gather there. Through these relationships, I constructed extended relationships with several families, which will allowed me more intimate access to knowledge of their household resources and practices through the interview process.

During the time that I was observing in the parent room, the counselor, PIA, and parents solicited my help in translating. I translated when called upon, but made a conscious effort not to volunteer to do so, as to gain the greatest understanding of how the interactions occur when I was not present.

Setting

For the purpose of anonymity, the names of the school and participants in this study have been changed. My interest in non-traditional approaches to parent involvement at Bonita Elementary School began during my internship with the principal in 2005. Bonita is a large Title 1 elementary school located in an industrial, low-socioeconomic area in southern Arizona. Bonita serves a student population of 800 pre-kindergarten through fifth grade students from predominantly low-income, Latino households. The student population feeds in to the school from several surrounding neighborhoods in the area, but, until the 2006-2007 school year, did not have a neighborhood population of its own. Most of the student population is bussed to the school from nearby trailer parks and other low-income housing communities. The student population has a 52 percent mobility rate and includes a number of homeless students and a high

number of recent legal and undocumented Mexican immigrants. Ninety-five percent of the student population receives free and reduced lunch and over half of the students are English Language Learners. A neighborhood of new, middle income homes is currently being built surrounding the Bonita campus on the South, East, and West sides and will feed in to the school. In the fall of 2006, for the first time, middle class children (who were not related to staff members) enrolled at Bonita, bringing with them a set of background knowledge, social and cultural values, and parental expectations that differed from the Bonita population at large.

The Bonita staff includes more than 40 certified personnel in addition to a large classified staff. The certified personnel include both educators who were raised and live in the Bonita community and those who commute long distances in order to work at Bonita. Approximately half of the certified staff are bilingual in English and Spanish. The majority of the classified personnel are bilingual. Bonita's teacher retention is moderate, with a core of stable staff members who have been at Bonita from 5 and 20+ years, while there are several open positions to fill each year based on both growth and turnover.

As an intern to the principal, I spent the spring semester of 2005 learning about the school, its population, and the role of the principal there. As a leader, Principal Goodleader exhibits many qualities that make her well-suited to serve a diverse community. She is often heard commenting on the amazing resilience of the student population. Principal Goodleader views herself and is viewed by others as head learner in a community of learners. Her lifelong learning philosophy extends beyond her role as principal, as she pursues a doctorate in Language Reading and Culture with a minor in Educational Leadership. Principal Goodleader embraces diversity and acts as an advocate for students, families, and staff. Her leadership actions fall into the categories of modern leadership theory including stewardship, moral authority, and transformational leadership, which are discussed in this study.

Bonita receives school-wide Title 1 funding due to the high number of low-income students. To receive Title 1 funding, Bonita must adhere to the No Child Left Behind Act's requirements for parent participation. As Principal Goodleader described the school's parental involvement component during my internship, I mentally began to formulate a link between the observed parental contributions to the school and my awareness of the Funds of Knowledge research.

Parent involvement at Bonita, like many schools serving low-income minority and immigrant populations, began as a failed attempt at incorporating the parents into traditional roles within the school. Offers were made for parents to participate as classroom volunteers, to volunteer at school events, and to attend meetings, with little success. As these attempts at eliciting traditional parental involvement failed, the staff began to tune in to the needs and comfort levels of parents within the school setting. It became clear to the Bonita staff that many of these Spanish-speaking, recent immigrant parents were uncomfortable in an academic setting that exceeded their personal experiences with schooling. Many parents felt uncomfortable interacting with teachers and school leaders, despite the large number of bilingual staff. The Bonita staff embraced a philosophy of inclusion and set a goal of allowing parents to interact within the school at their individual comfort levels, valuing some degree of involvement over none at all. Conscious efforts were made to provide a non-threatening, authentic space for parents to gather on the school campus. The teachers voted to give up their lounge and turn the teacher's lounge in to a "parent room." The parent involvement assistant (PIA) became the facilitator for parent activity on campus. The creation of the Bonita parent room resulted in increased parent involvement by a core of dedicated Bonita parents. The high mobility rate will remain a challenge for parent involvement at Bonita, as half of the population each year is not stable, making it difficult for students and their parents to plant roots in Bonita programs,

knowing that their participation at Bonita is temporary and often based on the volatile situations that make up their home lives.

In summary, the setting for this ethnographic research study was the parent room at Bonita Elementary, where a few highly dedicated parents regularly volunteer their time at Bonita. Their contributions are greatly valued and a source of pride for those who watched the process evolve from a lack of parent participation to a thriving parent room. Although the parents are active on campus, their contributions rarely have a direct effect on instruction. It was the goal of this research to evaluate whether a modified Funds of Knowledge tool could access greater information as to their possible contributions to school function.

Participant Selection & Sample Size

For the purposes of this study, I implemented purposeful sampling (Maxwell, 1996). I deliberately selected the settings, persons, and events from which to collect data in order to gain the most information possible from those most willing to participate. The participant sample for this study was a sample of convenience, referred to the researcher by methods of referral by staff members. Of the Bonita parent population the referred parents were the most likely to be stable in terms of their participation and to have a record of participation at Bonita. By purposefully selecting parents who participate in the parent room and/or in the preschool program at Bonita to interview regarding their Funds of Knowledge, I gained a controlled comparison of participants in the parent room and the additional resources and skills they might have to offer in terms of parental involvement at Bonita.

I sampled by requesting volunteers who currently participate in the parent room and/or preschool program to participate in the study. I selected parents who participate in the parent room and preschool program based on the volatile nature of the Bonita parent population. In this highly mobile, impoverished population, many parents battle substance addictions, abuse,

deportation, and overall instability. The parents who dedicate their time to the parent room activities and/or preschool program offered more reliable and accurate reporting in the study.

The participants for this study were selected in one of two ways. First, all parents who participate in the parent room and who were willing to participate in the study acted as participants. These parents were referred to the researcher by the Parent Involvement Assistant, as she is the staff member responsible for maintaining parent involvement data and facilitating parent participation in the school.

Secondly, parents who participate in the required preschool parent activities and were willing to participate in the study also acted as participants. Upon requesting Bonita staff referrals of parents who participate at school outside the parent room, I found that the only other source of regular parent involvement is through the preschool program which requires two hours of parent participation per month. The sample size included as many participants as possible. All parents who volunteered to be interviewed participated in the study.

Staff participation in the study included interviews with the Parent Involvement Assistant, the Principal, the school counselor, The program facilitator (who during the study period was hired as principal of a new elementary school nearby), the data specialist, and the prevention specialist. The staff interviews served the purpose of providing a history of the parent room and its functions.

Chronology of the Study

Data was collected January through March of the second semester of the 2006-2007 school year. Prior to January 2007, I had made several formal visits to the Bonita parent room to introduce myself and my work in order to get acquainted with the parent room participants. I spent the month of January 2007 observing in the parent room. This gave me a general understanding of the parent room, its procedures, and its participants. The parent room mothers

accepted me in to their environment immediately. From the first day of observations on, the mothers openly discussed personal issues in my presence. While they occasionally joked with me, inquiring if the video camera was running before talking about a sensitive issue, the parent room volunteers went about their business in my presence in a natural, honest manner. I continued observations in the parent room through the months of February and March. I began the process of individually interviewing the staff and parent participants in February. The interviews continued through mid-March. I concluded the final interview at the end of March 2007. In general, the dynamic of my relationship with the parent room volunteers did not change over the course of the observations and interview sessions. Over the course of time, I was drawn in to conversations with increasing frequency for the purpose of translating, as the mothers became aware of my bilingualism.

Data Collection

I introduced my dissertation research and the purposes behind it to my former colleagues and the Bonita parent community in January 2007 in order to gain support and understanding of my additional role on campus as a researcher. I spent time weekly in the parent room to build community and a sense of comfort and trust with the parents who gather there. I began my observations of interactions in the parent room in January 2007. Through informed consent (see Appendix A), I clarified that participation in this study was voluntary. I asked for volunteers from the parent room setting to allow me to interview them individually. The ten participants provided me with a range of variation among the dozen or so parent room participants. Interviews with participants were video-taped for later transcription and analysis.

The purpose of the interview was to gain detailed understanding of the multiple practices and resources involved in the function of each individual household in order to facilitate linkages

between these practices and the contributions made to Bonita by these households. The interviews were conducted in a small office close to the parent room.

Primary data sources included observations of parents within the parent room and structured interviews (see Appendix B) with members of the parent community based on their Funds of Knowledge. Secondary data sources included interviews with veteran Bonita staff regarding the historical nature of parent involvement on campus. The interviews and observations took place during January, February, and March, 2007.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND DESCRIPTIONS

Chapter 4 provides an overview of the data analysis process, followed by descriptions of study participants and activity within the parent room. In this chapter two of the study's research questions are addressed. This chapter details the types of parental involvement that take place at Bonita and highlights the sustained and increased parental involvement since the parent room's inception.

Data Analysis

The purpose of this study was to investigate the forms of parent participation that occur at Bonita Elementary with the goal of highlighting sustainable practices as well as recommendations for improvement.

To ensure confidentiality of the participants, all names were replaced with pseudonyms. Data analysis began at the completion of the first interview in order to progressively focus the interviews and to gain theoretical sensitivity (Glaser, 1978). The notes from observations and interviews were analyzed. Notes were taken during the analysis to focus on tentative categories or relationships.

Detailed notes were taken during observation periods in the parent room, with portions of parent room sessions being video-taped. Notes were taken during the individual participant interviews, which were video-recorded. Rather than review each participant's individual answers to each interview question, a brief description of each participant is provided and commonalities and anomalies in responses are analyzed. Significant portions of the interviews and parent room sessions were transcribed. The data from interviews and observation sessions was horizontalized by spreading it out for analysis with equal value afforded all comments and events.

The results were coded to develop categories leading to theoretical concepts (Maxwell, 1996). The coding categories were developed from the conceptual structure of the interview questions as well as topics arising from observations, and developed inductively by the researcher during analysis. Displays were utilized to establish visibility of relationships.

I triangulated the data from interviews with staff, interviews with parent participants in the parent room and the preschool program, and notes from observation sessions to discover commonalities as well as discrepancies in the data collected. I examined similarities and differences between participation through the parent room and through the preschool program. Triangulation acted as a validity check. By utilizing a triangulation of a variety of data sources, I reduced the risk of biased conclusions or limited findings. This triangulation included the use of self-reflection and the sharing of the analysis with participants.

Parent Participant Descriptions

(see matrix on p. 66 for comparative purposes)

Lucia P.

At the time of the study, Lucia P. had one third grade son whose enrollment at Bonita began in kindergarten. Lucia P. was born in Durango, Mexico and came to the U. S. when she was 17. She speaks Spanish and limited English. Lucia P. has experience babysitting and cleaning houses. She lists her current employment as making food for the Bonita staff twice a week. Lucia's household includes herself, her son, and a husband who works construction in California, but comes home to visit every two months. Lucia has a 4th grade education, enjoys gardening, and coaches her son's soccer team. Lucia P. appears to be one of the younger mothers in the parent room. She is very outgoing and social. Upon arrival and departure, Lucia P. makes her way around the table, greeting everyone individually with kisses on each cheek.

She is often heard calling the other women “chicas” (girls). Prior to the onset of this research, Lucia P. was one of the few parent room participants who I knew by name.

Aida

Aida sited an eight year old son who attended Bonita for four years. Aida was born in Magdalena, Sonora, Mexico and came to the U.S. at the age of 34. She speaks Spanish and volunteers in the parent room daily. Aida has never worked outside the home. Her household includes herself, two sons, ages 8 and 14, her husband and her brother. Aida has a 2nd grade education. Aida’s husband and brother work as dry-wall installers. Her husband completed middle school and her brother completed his *carerra* (career training). Aida enjoys being around people. She occasionally organizes social events, such as birthday parties and cooks for her family daily.

Leticia

Leticia’s daughter was six and had been at Bonita for 2 years. Leticia was born in Obregon, Sonora, Mexico and came to the U. S. when she was 38. Leticia volunteers in the parent room four to five days per week. She speaks Spanish and “muy poquito” English. Leticia worked in an office in Mexico, but has not worked outside the home since coming to the U. S.. Leticia’s household includes herself, her husband, and three children, ages 6, 12, and 16. Leticia completed two years of *preparatoria* (high schools) and her husband, a diesel mechanic, completed two years of his *carerra* (career training).

Berta

Berta had two daughters who attended Bonita. Her older daughter was in 5th grade and had attended Bonita for three years. Her younger daughter was a 1st grader who had been at Bonita for two years. Berta was born in Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico. She volunteers in the parent room daily. Berta came to the U. S. in 2000. Berta speaks Spanish, but says she

understands a little English, although she does not speak English very well. Berta completed her *secretariado de comercio* (secretarial degree). She worked as a receptionist and as a secretary in Mexico. Her household includes herself, her husband, and daughters ages 6 and 10. Her husband, a construction worker, went to technical school in Mexico. Berta works in the garden as needed, plays sports with her children at home, and enjoys reading and coloring with her children. Her husband's hobbies include cooking on the weekends and carpentry.

Mirna

Mirna had one 2nd grade daughter who had attended Bonita for four years, since pre-kindergarten. Mirna came to the U. S. from Mexico at the age of 26. She volunteers in the parent room daily. Mirna speaks both English and Spanish. Although she states that she speaks "a little" English, Mirna often acts as the translator for parent room conversations. Mirna is one of two parent room participants who attended the University in Mexico. She studied sociology with the goal of working with people with special needs. Mirna has worked in childcare in the U. S.. Her household includes herself, her husband, a 7 year old daughter, and sons ages 14 and 15. Mirna's husband completed *preparatoria* (high school) and owns his own flooring company. Mirna and her husband are part of a church music group. He plays the guitar and they both sing.

Maria Leticia

Maria Leticia had two children who attended Bonita. Her third grade son had been at Bonita for four years and her daughter was in pre-kindergarten. Maria Leticia came to the U. S. at age 20 from Obregon, Sonora, Mexico. She volunteers in the parent room daily. Maria Leticia speaks Spanish. She understands a little English, but feels like she can't communicate. She is trying to learn more. Maria Leticia completed two years of her *secretariado de comercio* (secretarial degree). She worked as a secretary and receptionist in Mexico. Since coming to the United States, she has worked at a food stand, in ceramics sales, and as a volunteer at school.

Maria Leticia's household includes herself, her husband, and three children, ages 13, 8, & 5. Maria Leticia's husband completed *secundaria* (junior high school) and works as a chauffer. Maria Leticia likes to work in the garden and harvest vegetables. She walks every day for exercise. Her husband's hobbies include working on cars and attending the children's sports activities.

Norma

Norma had two children who attended Bonita; a daughter in preschool and a daughter in the second grade. Norma works in the parent room four days per week. Norma was born in Caborca, Sonora, Mexico. She speaks Spanish and has experience working in a factory in Tucson. Her household includes herself, her husband, and two daughters. Her husband is a dry-wall installer. Norma's hobbies include cooking, watching television, and listening to music. She and her husband attend their daughters' sports practices and games.

Isabel

Isabel had a five year old son who attended Bonita. Her older son, Jose, a sixth grader, attended Bonita for two and a half years. Isabel works in the parent room three to five days per week, doing whatever is needed of her. When I started as a researcher in the parent room, Isabel came across as the most skeptical of the mothers. A couple of weeks into the research, I saw her with her older son after school and realized that I had taught his reading group the year before. I told her (sincerely) that Jose had been one of my favorite students and that he is a very intelligent boy. This melted any ice between us and she became much more communicative during the research. Isabel appears to use her sarcastic sense of humor to distance herself from the other women. I came to see this as a self-protection tactic on her part. It was most often with Isabel that I made eye contact during the more heated discussions. I felt as if she was monitoring me

for reactions and understanding. On several occasions, it was Isabel who checked to make sure I had understood a part of a conversation that she found significant.

Isabel feels that her time in the parent room is as much social as it is functional. Isabel was born in Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico. She came to the U. S. at the age of 30. Isabel's household includes herself, her husband, and her two sons. Isabel speaks Spanish. She understands English, but only speaks a little. She worked both as a secretary and as a construction machine operator in Mexico. Since coming to the U. S., she has worked as a dishwasher in a restaurant. She currently makes and sells jewelry. Her husband is a welder. Isabel and her husband both have what is equivalent to a middle school education.

Juanita

Juanita had a six year old daughter who attended Bonita. She has worked as a volunteer at Bonita for the past six years. She spends all day every day in the parent room. Juanita was born in Mexico and came to the U. S. at the age of 26. Juanita speaks Spanish and a little English. She has experience working in hotel housekeeping. Her household includes herself, her husband, a 19 year old daughter, a middle school daughter, and the first grade daughter who attends Bonita. Her husband, as mason, speaks English and Spanish. Her 19 year old daughter is a student and speaks English very well. Juanita, her husband, and her 19 year old daughter all have high school educations. Juanita enjoys making crafts.

Lucia S.

Lucia S. had a child in middle school and a child in high school who attended Bonita from pre-kindergarten through the 5th grade. Lucia volunteers daily in the parent room. She spends time in the parent room at the middle school on Mondays and Tuesdays, but does not volunteer at the high school. She believes that as the school work gets harder, there is less need for parent volunteers. When she finishes her work at the middle school, she comes to Bonita.

She prefers to spend time in the Bonita parent room, as she feels that she is able to be of the most help in that setting. She has come to the Bonita parent room every day for six years. This year she spends three hours a day at Bonita. She feels that the social relationships she has within the parent room are very important.

Lucia S. is one of the older mothers who volunteer in the parent room. She fills an informal leadership role in the parent room, acting as an advisor to other mothers, as well as a role model for some of the younger ones.

Lucia S. was born in Mexico and came to the U. S. at age 30. She speaks Spanish and a little bit of English. She worked as a teacher in Mexico. In the U. S., she says she has practically no work experience other than cleaning houses. She strongly believes that the skills she gained as a teacher have been valuable in her participation at Bonita. Her household consists of herself, her husband, and her two children. Lucia S. completed her bachillerato (specialized high school education). Her husband, a construction worker, has an elementary school education. Lucia S. enjoys gardening, walking three times a week, sewing, and organizing social activities at school. Her husband likes to draw floor plans and design houses.

Gabriela

Gabriela had a fourth grader and a preschooler at Bonita. Her son had attended Bonita for four years. Her daughter was in the pre-kindergarten program. Gabriela does not work in the parent room. She does volunteer in her children's' classrooms. Gabriela spends the required two hours per month in her daughter's preschool classroom. She volunteers in her son's class for three or four hours once a month. In her daughter's classroom, Gabriela spends time interacting with her daughter for up to three hours at a time. When there is a preschool fieldtrip, Gabriela volunteers for the entire day. In her son's classroom, she helps the teacher by preparing materials and cutting things out.

Gabriela does not have time to develop social relationships with the other mothers at school, as she herself goes to school. She comes to school to spend time with her children and feels that if she is socializing with other mothers, it would take time away from her time with her children.

Gabriela was born in Mexico and came to the U. S. at age 20. She speaks Spanish and a little English. She is currently studying English. Gabriela's household includes herself, her husband, and two children. She and her husband are both independently employed. She has experience selling Mary Kay. Gabriela's husband has an elementary education. She has a middle school education. When she learns English, she will take her GED. Gabriela likes to paint and decorate. Her husband has construction skills.

Valeria

Valeria had a daughter who has attended the pre-kindergarten program at Bonita. Valeria spent the required two hours per month in her daughter's classroom. When she had a day off, she also spent it with her daughter at school. Before she had a job, she spent more time at school with her daughter. When the preschool went on a field trip, Valeria helped out. In the classroom with her daughter, she worked individually with her daughter because her daughter gets jealous if she interacts with other children. Valeria also attended the three one and a half hour parent workshops every month at the three schools that house the pre-kindergarten program that her daughter is in. Valeria did not socialize with the other mothers. She knew two of them, one of whom was her cousin. Valeria's interactions with the other mothers were limited by her Spanish language proficiency. Valeria does speak some Spanish, but only when she has to. Because most of the other mothers speak Spanish, she does not feel comfortable communicating with them.

Valeria is the only parent volunteer in the study who was born in the U. S.. She has experience working at the local casinos. She has worked in customer service. She is currently a cashier at a liquor store. She does not feel that there is any relationship between her work experience and her volunteer work at school. Valeria's household includes herself, her mother, her grandpa, and her daughter. Valeria has her GED and has taken some courses at the community college. Her mother and grandpa do not work outside the home. Her mother has an 11th grade education. She is not sure about her grandpa's schooling. Valeria has played flag football and has worked on fundraising for her football team. She sometimes helps a friend who has a business remodeling houses. She would like to ride bikes with her daughter, but does not feel safe riding around the area where they live.

TABLE 2 PARENT PARTICIPATION MATRIX

Name	# Adults in Household	# Children in household	Mother's Education	Father's Education	Mother's Birth Place
Lucia P.	1	1	4 th grade	N/A	Durango, Mexico
Aida	3	2	2 nd grade	Middle School	Magdalena, Sonora
Leticia	2	3	High School	Career Training	Obregon, Sonora
Berta	2	2	Secretarial Degree	Technical School	Hermosillo, Sonora
Mirna	2	3	University	High School	Mexico
Maria Leticia	2	3	Secretarial Degree	Middle School	Obregon, Sonora
Norma	2	2	N/A	N/A	Caborca, Sonora
Isabel	2	2	Middle School	Middle School	Hermosillo, Sonora
Juanita	3	2	High School	High School	Mexico
Lucia S.	2	2	University	Elementary School	Mexico
Gabriela	2	2	Middle School	Elementary School	Mexico
Valeria	3	1	Community College	11 th grade	United States

Staff Participant Descriptions

Rita

Rita had been the Parent Involvement Assistant in the parent room at Bonita since its second year. One staff interview indicated that there was an immediate improvement in the parent room when Rita assumed the role of PIA. Rita, herself, is Latina and knows the parents' culture. Rita's position is funded by district Title 1 funding. Rita appears to be older than all but possibly one of the parent room participants. She is viewed as a role model by the mothers. An interview with staff member Linda indicated that Rita "is not always aware of what a benefit she is to the women she works with". Rita acts as an advocate for the mothers, connecting them to community services, supporting them in their interactions with their children's teachers, and introducing them to new places and ideas. Staff member Linda believes that "Rita worries about the families and their individual struggles, as if they were her own children and grandchildren". Rita is quick to share her personal experiences with the mothers and has elicited a great deal of trust. When Rita started her position as PIA, she ate lunch in the school office with other staff members. She now eats in the parent room with the parents, as she feels that she should be with them in the parent room.

Principal Goodleader

Principal Goodleader had been the principal at Bonita for 10 years. She worked at Bonita as a teacher prior to becoming the school's principal. Principal Goodleader remembers the period prior to the implementation of the parent room when there was very little participation from parents and when parents were not visible on campus. She credits the comfort level of parents within the parent room setting with limiting the school staff's ability to engage parents in active participation in the classrooms.

Prevention Specialist Eva

The school's prevention specialist, Eva, did not participate in participant interviews, however she was present for several of the observed Friday morning counseling sessions. The prevention specialist's job at Bonita is to work with staff, students, and families to prevent drug use, gang participation, violence, absences, tardies, and behavior problems. Eva is bilingual and a part of the Bonita community. She is a Mexican-American graduate of the high school that Bonita feeds in to and has a strong understanding of the living conditions and cultural implications of the Bonita community. Eva participated in the Friday morning counseling sessions both as a staff member and as a woman/wife/mother alongside the other women. She shared personal information during the counseling sessions as a way of teaching the mothers and relating to them. There was a clear level of trust between Eva and the parent room mothers.

Counselor Caroline

Counselor Caroline provides a counseling lesson to the mothers each Friday morning. This ritual gives structure and meaning to parent room life (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Caroline is a native English-speaker with a minimal Spanish vocabulary. She often understands the general idea of a Spanish interaction, although often requires translation for full understanding. She employs many comprehension strategies when interacting with the parent room participants. She uses repetition, gestures, visual cues, cognates, and multiple phrasings of an idea. The parent room mothers amicably translate for Caroline and each other in order to facilitate understanding during the counseling sessions.

Staff Member Linda

Linda has been in the district for many years. She has worked in several positions at Bonita including that of prevention specialist, educator, and her current position as data specialist. Linda is a lifelong friend of the PIA Rita and is the Bonita staff member most familiar with Rita's work. Upon hearing about the research project, Linda volunteered to be interviewed.

She provided the most examples to back up her observations of the about the parent room at Bonita. As a former prevention specialist, and current member of the school leadership team, Linda contributes her practical knowledge of school function and conflict resolution to parent room participants and to Rita as needed. Linda plays an informal consulting role to Rita, as well as to many other Bonita staff members. Linda is more familiar with the parents and their needs than the average Bonita staff member. For example, Linda hosted the 2006 holiday gift exchange for the parent room participants at her house. Linda's knowledge of the Latino culture, the school population, and the work in the parent room contributed valuable data to the study.

Ms. Valdez

When the data collection began, Ms. Valdez has just resigned from an instructional leadership position at Bonita in order to serve as the principal of a new in-district elementary school. Ms. Valdez was housed between two buildings at the time; Bonita and the new school campus. On several occasions she attended parent room meetings and Bonita community meetings regarding the transfer of some of the Bonita student population to the new school for the 2007-2008 school year. Ms. Valdez communicated her respect for the Bonita parent involvement through the parent room and began working to replicate the opportunities available to Bonita parents at the new school. She recruited Mirna, one of the Bonita parent room participants to serve as the Parent Involvement Assistant at the new school.

Description of the Setting

As it exists today, the Bonita parent room is a bustling hub of activity and conversation. A core of 10 to 15 parents comes to school every day to work and socialize in the parent room. The parent room provides a haven within the structure of the school setting for Latina parents to congregate, converse in their native language, and network with the school community at large. Rita, the full-time PIA, serves as a correspondent between the school and the parent community.

Teachers access parents' skills and resources through the parent liaison for needs such as costuming for performances, photocopying, book-making, and other materials preparation. Parents become aware of school procedures, needs, and learn how to provide support to the school and their child's learning through personal observations while on campus as well as through direct communication with the PIA.

The parent room at Bonita is just off the school cafeteria in a room the size of approximately half a regular classroom. It is accessed by entering into the cafeteria from the school hallway. The room holds four large rectangular tables that form a large rectangle, with chairs around the parameter of the tables. Shelves and storage cabinets line two sides of the room. Rita, has a desk toward the front (entrance) of the room. Toward the back of the parent room, shelves block the view to a small kitchen area. The kitchen area contains a sink, coffeepot, dishes, a microwave, and an oven that has not been installed. The room also holds a sofa, television, computer, and large monthly planning calendar board. There is a counter space in the front of the room that serves as the food service area.

Supplies in the parent room include spools of ribbon, wrapping paper rolls, fabric, vases, scissors, glue, rulers, crayons, markers, pens, pencils, and tubs full of additional craft supplies. There is a book binding machine, sewing machine, cash register, and electric griddle.

There is a colorful bulletin board over the sofa, bordered by a collection of small multicultural fabric dolls. Posted on the walls are photographs of parent room activities, a Spanish accent key chart for keyboarding, a monthly schedule, and the names and phone numbers of parent room participants. The parent room is crowded, with not all of the supplies easily accessible. The parents congregate around the tables. They are able to sit and work comfortably, but have little space to move around or spread out other than at the tables.

The parent participants spend between three and seven hours in the parent room up to 5 days per week. Their time spent in the parent room is spent talking, eating breakfast and lunch, drinking coffee, working on craft projects, and performing materials preparation work for teachers and staff.

Conclusion of Data Analysis

Chapter 4 provided an explanation of the data analysis process. This chapter revealed that the parent room program at Bonita has been sustained over time. In fact, parent participation has increased since its inception. This chapter provided detailed descriptions of the staff and parent participants in this study, as well as thorough descriptions of the types of parental involvement that occur at Bonita. Parent participant descriptions included details regarding participants' length of time residing in the U.S., the educational history of participants, and members of participants' households. Staff descriptions included details regarding the staff members' position in the school and their interactions with the parent room participants.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

Four of the aforementioned research questions are addressed in Chapter 5. Chapter 5 depicts the types of parent participation activities that occur at Bonita, as well as enabling factors which support the sustainable, empowering parental involvement program within Bonita Elementary School. This chapter presents positive outcomes resulting from parental participation at Bonita. The challenges faced by the Bonita parent room participants and the program itself are highlighted. Within this chapter, Funds of Knowledge that are employed as part of the parental involvement process are acknowledged. Leadership that supports and sustains the Bonita parent room is identified.

Parent Room Activity

On Friday mornings, the school counselor, Caroline, comes in to do a life-skills lesson with the parents. The topics of the counselor's lessons are sometimes pre-planned with a specific focus, such as stress management or life balance and are sometimes parent-generated based on specific needs or problems they have had that week, such as a problem with a spouse or a child's teacher. The counselor supplements her English lessons with phrases or words in Spanish to assist with comprehension. Most of the mothers in the parent room understand some English, but they rely heavily on translations from Mirna, who is the most bilingual member of the group. The counselor also relies on Mirna to tell her what the mothers are saying when she doesn't understand. Caroline demonstrates validation of the mothers' prior knowledge and introduces them to new ideas through questioning and respectful suggestions.

The Friday morning ritual includes a potluck breakfast and an update from the mothers on the successes and disappointments of their lives over the past week. This process serves to

anchor the parent room participants to a common center, while freeing them to move forward and confront the unpredictability of life (Fulghum, 1995). Historically, cultures have relied on ritual and ceremony to create order, clarity, and predictability. This is true of the Friday mornings in the Bonita parent room. During one Friday morning session, Mirna jokingly addressed me directly: “Tell them in your observations that we eat a lot in this room!”

Several of the parent room participants have taken on informal leadership roles within the parent room setting. As previously stated, Mirna, the mother with the highest level of exhibited English proficiency often acts as the translator for both parents and staff. She translates English to Spanish, as well as Spanish to English. This was especially evident during the sessions with Caroline, the counselor, but occurred regularly. Aida expressed her growing sense of empowerment:

For me, it is important to participate and help, and with time, I’m more involved in things I couldn’t do before. When Rita is sick, I can tell the girls what to do, and I really like that because I know more things. I really like to come and learn more things.

One ongoing project that has provided the parent community with a sense of purpose on campus is the staff lunch service. Members of the parent community cook lunch for purchase by Bonita staff several days each week. The profits earned through the lunch service supplement the family incomes of the parents who provide the service. The lunch service provides the opportunity for staff members to visit the parent room and interact with parents on a social level and provides the parents with a reason to be on campus regularly.

Another on-going parent room project is the “tiendita” (little store) that is run outside the parent room each morning. The store is open during the breakfast period in the school cafeteria before school starts. The parents sell school supplies and novelty items to the students. This project acts as a supplement to the parent room’s \$250 annual budget and funds all parent room

needs, ranging from daily coffee for the participants to field trips that the parents take throughout the year.

For the past two school years, the Bonita community has been in the process of turning a former early childhood playground in to a school garden. The space that as been set aside for the garden consists of a large, walled-in area with several shade trees, a small ramada, and \$15,000 worth of garden boxes that were purchased with grant funding for the purpose of each grade level's having access to a garden plot. Parents have been involved in this project inconsistently, and as needed to accomplish individual steps in the process. This opportunity for participation has the future potential of impacting instruction if the curriculum were to include science, physical education, and other instruction tied to the outdoor environment.

Based on general knowledge regarding the parent population, Principal Goodleader speculated that parents possess a vast array of knowledge in the fields of gardening and construction. Many parents are recent immigrants who work or have worked in construction and agriculture. Families participate in gardening both as a hobby and as a means by which to supplement their food supplies. It was Principal Goodleader's assumption at the onset of the study that the parent community would have much to offer in terms of further development of the garden area.

In interviews with Principal Goodleader, Linda, Rita, and Ms. Valdez, the growth of parent participation was discussed. Linda described the process of starting up the parent room as a series of meetings with eight teachers and 3 parents. Ms. Valdez stated that the first parent room meetings were attended by only two parents. When viewed through this light, the current regular volunteers are a success for the program. Ms. Valdez also commented on how the participation of parents in the parent room has contributed to PTO attendance. The parent room volunteers now attend PTO meetings and often bring their friends and neighbors who are not

regular volunteers, leading to increased PTO attendance in addition to increased participation in the parent room. In general, the Bonita parent room houses extensive, regular parent involvement by a small number of parents whose knowledge of school processes and procedures filter in to a wider social network within the Bonita community.

Enabling Factors

One theme that emerged from the data was that specific factors exist which enable the function of the parent room. These factors include the designation of space, the value placed on parental participation within the school culture, the empowerment of key players, the leadership by key players, trust among participants, clearly defined rules within the parent room, funding, and the Friday morning counseling sessions. Each of these contributes to the sustainability of parental involvement through the parent room.

Bolman and Deal (2003) provide the categories of organizational framework through which these findings are grouped. The findings are grouped into frames, or coherent sets of ideas that provide insight into day to day events and activities. These frames serve as a window on the leadership, function, and sustainability of the parent room.

The Structural Frame

The structural frame emphasizes goals, specialized roles, and formal relationships (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Structures are designed to fit an organization's environment and technology. The structural frame is a blueprint for formal expectations and exchanges among internal players and external constituencies.

Funding

Analysis of the data showed that the funding provided by the "tiendita" is an enabling factor for parent room activities. Most of the merchandise sold through the "tiendita" is donated

to the parent room, which provides the parent room with a small budget to fund their daily coffee supply, as well as their field trips.

Counseling Sessions

Another enabling factor that the data revealed was the Friday morning sessions with Counselor Caroline. In examining the data, the Friday morning counseling sessions were clearly a resource that the participants rely on. Norma referenced this directly in her statement that appeared in the description of trust as an enabling factor: “If we have a problem, we talk about it right there. When we can’t resolve it, the counselor comes and we talk about it...I am very happy here.” Lucia P. credits Caroline when she describes recent positive changes in her personality and outlook, “I have more control over my character”. Data from one particular observation reveals the support Caroline provides the mothers in their communication with school personnel. Mirna had asked Caroline for advice regarding a situation at the high school with her son. Caroline was direct in giving Mirna tips for communicating with the school personnel. Her advice included suggestions such as “talk with your son’s teacher and the principal” and “make sure your son is respectful to adults”. To another mother Carline provided the following advice “Talk to the teacher if you don’t want to sign the paper. Start off by saying something nice and then ask ‘What happened with my daughter’”.

In addition to direct advice, Caroline often encouraged the mothers to think for themselves and draw their own conclusions. In a lesson about role models, she asked the group “Do they tell you what to do or do they listen and encourage you to work it out?” Later in the lesson, Caroline complimented the group “this group is a role model for other parent groups in the district”.

The Human Resource Frame

The human resource frame views an organization as a theorized extended family of individuals with needs, feelings, prejudices, skills, and limitations (Bolman & Deal, 2003). The human resource frame centers on how characteristics of organizations and people shape what they do for one another. This frame is built on the assumption that a good fit benefits both the individual and the organization.

Rita's Leadership

The data revealed that the leadership exhibited by Rita, serves as the most influential force behind sustainability of parent participation. Linda explained that “it is hard to orchestrate the function of that many adults working together. Rita deals with it very well”. A consistent theme throughout the data analysis was the role that Rita plays in the lives of the parent room volunteers. This theme became most evident during one of the Friday morning sessions with the school counselor. The topic of the lesson was “How to be a good role model for your children”. After eliciting a definition of a good role model from the parents, Counselor Caroline asked the mothers about their own personal role models. The first to share was Lucia P. “La Ms. Rita”. This received many nods of agreement from around the table. Lucia P. went on to describe Rita as having many good qualities, being patient, “like a mother, like a grandmother. She’s a good person. She’s perfect”. A recurring theme in the observation sessions and interviews was the supportive role Rita plays in the lives of the mothers. The mothers repeatedly expressed their admiration for Rita, as well as the impact she has had in their lives. Rita is given credit for much of the personal growth that parent room participants experience. These statements occurred at different times during individual interviews:

Juanita Ms. Rita is a nice person. She tries to help us when we have a problem.
 She’s a wonderful person and we also try to help her in whatever we can.

Leticia More than a teacher, Ms. Rita is a really good friend. If we have a problem, we tell it to her and she helps us. She's always in a good mood. Ms. Rita is like our counselor.

Maria Leticia Ms. Rita is a really good person inside and out. She has taught us that we have to be nice to people. She tells us that we have to help others no matter if it is a child or an adult. She is like a mother that shows us the way step by step. She's a wonderful person and she's always smiling. We don't know when she is sad or mad because she doesn't show it.

Norma Ms. Rita helps us a lot. When we have problems, she is always there for us.

Isabel Ms. Rita is who makes us come. She makes us feel really good. She is like a mother to us. She is really trustworthy.

Lucia P. I feel really good coming to the parent room because Ms. Rita is a really nice person. The way she pays attention to us and the way she talks to us. When we need advice – she is always there for us. She listens to us. She is always helping us. She is like a second mother for all of us. She is why we are here from the morning until school gets out. She is a very caring person. She helps us a lot. She listens to us. She always helps us with our problems.

This theme also appeared in the interview with staff member Linda. Linda stated that Rita is a role model for the mothers in terms of appropriate dress and behavior within the school setting. Linda described mothers coming in to the school with low-cut blouses that revealed inappropriate amounts of cleavage, short skirts, and other forms of clothing that did not belong in an elementary school setting. She speculated that Rita's direct communication with the mothers,

as well as her modeling of appropriate school attire is the reason that the women now dress and behave in a manner appropriate for the school setting. Linda stated that Rita educates the mothers as to the differences between schooling in the U. S. and their experiences with schooling in Mexico.

Additionally, the interview with Principal Goodleader revealed the theme of Rita's leadership as an enabling factor. Principal Goodleader stated that Rita provides insight to the parents as to school function. She believes that Rita's role as the PIA enables the sustainability of the parent room function from year to year and speculates that it would be very difficult to maintain a continuous group of parent volunteers without the leadership that Rita provides.

The Political Frame

The political frame sees the organization as an arena shaping the rules of the game (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Politics is defined as the realistic process of making decisions and allocating resources in a context of scarcity and divergent interests.

Empowered Leadership

The data reveals that Principal Goodleader has empowered Rita, the PIA, with the ability to act as a leader in the parent room with very little monitoring, but with support when needed. Linda stated, "Principal Goodleader has empowered Rita. Rita is very comfortable in her position. This comes across to the parents". Rita is provided with the traits of empowerment defined by Lightfoot (1986): autonomy, choice, responsibility, and participation in decision-making. This demonstration of servant leadership (Sergiovanni, 1992) by Principal Goodleader enables the parent community to define their needs as they work with Rita to support school function.

Bilingual Leadership

The fact that the PIA is bilingual is an enabling factor for the communication both within the parent room, as well as for communication between parent room participants and the Bonita staff. Rita's bilingualism is often called upon during parent room conversations. She is frequently used as a translator between English and Spanish, as well as a resource for clarification within one language. Rita is used as a translator between parents and teachers who are not bilingual. Although all of the current parent room participants speak Spanish, there is the possibility of Rita acting as a bridge between those parents who are Spanish-speaking and those who are not.

Definition of Rules

The process of defining rules within the parent room can be categorized under the political frame. Rita described in her interview how the parent room participants set up rules as a group that they all adhere to during parent room participation. Examples of these rules include a schedule for regular responsibilities such as washing the dishes that are used daily and the agreement that young children and toddlers will not be allowed to attend the Friday morning counselor sessions to ensure that everyone is able to hear the discussion. It was clear from the observation session that infants are welcome in the parent room. The trust between participants is perpetuated by the group's adherence to the norms, resulting in a comfortable and safe environment in which to work and socialize.

During interviews, two mothers expressed the group's ability to rise above differences and find solutions to problems:

Lucia S. The parent room is a nice group. We have problems, but we try to work them out. Sometimes we go out and have fun.

Norma We get along really well in the parent room – we are all like a family. If we have a problem, we talk about it right there. When we can't resolve it, the counselor comes and we talk about it...I am very happy here.

Because an ongoing trust exists, the parents are able to communicate their expectations of one another openly and without hesitation. For example, Lucia P. brought in a box of bottled water. Upon entering the parent room, she announced, “Chicas, I'm bringing water. It's mine”. Her announcement was delivered with the same degree of comfort that one might tell her own sister not to drink her water.

The Symbolic Frame

The symbolic frame focuses on how humans make sense of the ambiguous world (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Symbols are viewed as the basic building blocks of meaning systems or cultures. They are created and inhabited by people. Symbolic concepts are applied to culture, activities, and team dynamics within an organization.

Space

The triangulated data revealed that the function of the parent room is enabled by the fact that the school administrator, Principal Goodleader, has designated a space to serve as a parent room within the school building. The viewing of the physical space designated for parent participation in the school through a symbolic frame of reference demonstrates the importance of parental comfort and presence within the school setting as a key component of school culture (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Principal Goodleader has furthered this symbolic embodiment of the shared value of parent involvement on campus by maintaining the parent room, year after year, despite the campus-wide limitations on physical space.

Valuing Parental Involvement

The culture of valuing parental involvement extends beyond that of the school to the district level. The school district's decision to fund a Parent Involvement Assistant is also symbolic of this value and is key in the sustainability of parent room function at Bonita.

Principal Goodleader stated that the parent involvement in the parent room "would be impossible to sustain without a PIA". By providing funding for a full-time PIA, the district enables the daily, full-day participation of the parent room participants.

Trust

Analysis of the data displayed trust as an enabling factor for parent participation in the parent room. Trust was observable early in the data collection process. Trust is an underlying factor in the relationship that Rita has with the mothers. As a leader, Rita has fostered trust within the group as a whole, as well as within her individual relationships with the women. The open communication among Parent room participants and the intimacy of the subject matters covered reveal high levels of trust. The parent room participants freely discuss topics ranging from immigration issues, political perspectives, relationships with their spouses, to religion and spiritual beliefs.

During my first observation of a parent room counseling session, the discussion topic was "life balance". Prior to this observation, I had purchased lunch from the parents on numerous occasions, met the parents, and introduced my research to them. I had not spent a significant amount of time with them. I was surprised by the level of trust that was evident with a researcher newly present in the room. Counselor Caroline facilitated a discussion on balancing the four elements of a healthy life; emotional, physical, spiritual, and mental health. The mothers freely shared activities they do to maintain balance within their lives. The sharing included intimate descriptions of how they release negative emotions. One of the mothers stated that she has thought of attending the community college in order to grow mentally, but that she

does not want to leave the parent room. As an example of mental growth, Lucia P. stated that she learned how to tell time this year, as she had never learned to tell time in school.

During an informal discussion about the new passport law the following week, Maria Leticia asked “What do I do if I don’t have a passport?”. After a detailed explanation on how to get a passport at the post office, the mothers addressed the fact that they are not all documented immigrants. Angelica P. looked at me. “The camera’s off, right Miss?” I assured her that I had turned it off before the conversation started. She continued. “You can’t leave.” Angelica P. then qualified the statement, “unless you want to change the name on someone’s birth certificate.” “Double the felony!”, came a comment from across the room. The women laughed, despite the reality that many of their lives are now limited by a law that will make it more difficult for them to see their family members and access resources on the other side of the border.

This discussion quickly turned to the upcoming presidential election. Maria Leticia announced that she would vote for Hillary. Isabel agreed, but reminded the others that there was (at the time) also a Latino running. She posed the question, “who would you vote for, ‘the Latino’ or ‘la Clinton’?” The women came to the consensus that they don’t know as much about “the Latino” as they do about Clinton.

Another powerful example of the trust among the women in the parent room was revealed during a Friday morning session with the counselor. Caroline started the session by asking each parent to share a good and bad event from their lives in the past week. Present for this session were the parent room participants, Rita, Counselor Caroline, the prevention specialist, and myself. Leticia shared that her Valentine’s Day was disappointing because her husband is not affectionate with her. She went on to explain that she is usually the one to show affection and that he responds, but she would like for him to initiate the affection. Other women shared intimate details of their marriage during this conversation. The prevention specialist

described how she had to teach her husband how to hug when they started dating. She described how they would practice hugging and stated that after four years, her husband now knows how to show her affection. Isabel shared that she hadn't talked to her husband in a week. She explained that he does show her affection, but that he doesn't talk to her when he has problems. The intimate and confidential nature of this conversation was evidence of the existing trust among parent room participants.

The trust was also evident during an observation session when Berta asked for advice on how to handle a concern about her child's teacher. Berta felt that her daughter had been given detention unfairly, so she had not signed the parental notification of detention form sent home by the teacher. Berta felt that, by signing the notification form, she would have been giving her consent to something she did not agree with. The mothers talked freely about the daughter's teacher. Isabel said, "Es muy extrema, ella". The mothers discussed ways for Berta to handle the situation with the teacher, who is not bilingual.

Positive Outcomes of Parent Room Participation

The triangulated data revealed that participation in the parent room results in significant positive outcomes. These outcomes are grouped according to the four frames used by Bolman and Deal to decode organizational complexity.

The Structural Frame

Increased communication is a benefit that results from parental involvement in the parent room. This includes communication between parent room volunteers and the school staff, as well as communication between parent room volunteers and other Bonita parents.

Data from several interviews shows examples of increased communication resulting from parent room participation and the participants' access to teachers on campus:

- Aida* If my son is not doing so well, I ask the teacher. For example, he was not doing well in reading. I asked the teacher and she told me that they were going to change teachers to help my son.
- Leticia* We have much better communication with the teacher. When I'm here I can go in to the classrooms and help the teacher. It helps me a lot to be able to communicate with the teacher and ask the teacher how my daughter is doing. Also, if she has some kind of problem that the teacher wants to talk to me about, the teacher knows I'm here.
- Isabel* We have communication with the teachers when they have work they need us to do. My son's teacher talks to me- we're always talking.
- Lucia P.* Other people in the building understand what is happening in the parent room – the classes we take, the meetings we have. I communicate more with the teachers because I am in the parent room. If a teacher needs to talk to me about my son, she comes to the parent room – as much the teachers who speak Spanish, as the teachers who only speak English.
- Norma* The participation in the parent room really helps us have more communication with the teachers. We are more aware of what our child is doing at school. If the teachers have a problem they come and find us. For example, the teacher told me not to go outside at lunch with my daughter because my daughter used to cry a lot. She needed to get used to school. Now the teacher tells me that she is doing really well. Sometimes she sends me messages or she tells me when my daughter is misbehaving and how I can help.

Observations in the parent room revealed that the parent room participants provide a valuable link to the greater Bonita parent community. In an interview, Lucia S. explained that “Moms from the parent room help other moms”. She gave the example of a poor Bonita family that one of the parent volunteers had heard about. The parent room volunteer registered the family to receive Christmas presents.

The observation process occurred during a time when a percentage of the Bonita student population was notified that they would be attending the new elementary school the upcoming school year. The new elementary school opened with the purpose of alleviating overcrowding in several surrounding schools, including Bonita. As a staff member, I witnessed one informational meeting for Bonita families regarding plans for the new school. The parent room participants who attended the meeting arrived and sat together. The sense of community among them was apparent. During the meeting, I noted that several non-parent room participants referred to parent room parents for clarification and translation of the information. The parent room parents were clearly a resource for the parents sitting around them. The comfort level of the parent room participants was evident, as they voiced concerns and asked questions more freely than parents who are less familiar with the school setting and staff.

During one observation session, Ms. Valdez, the principal of the new school came in to the parent room to talk about the new school. Through Rita, Ms. Valdez had heard that some parents in the community were voicing concerns about the new school. The parent room mothers were unsure how to handle the situation. To start the discussion, Rita stated that the mothers had been hearing complaints from their neighbors that parents in the community are fearful about their children walking to the new school, whereas they have been taking the bus to Bonita. Ms. Valdez explained the strategy for making the walking process as safe as possible for the children. Mirna pointed out the humor in the fact that parents were complaining about their

children walking to school when so many of them have recently come from Mexico, where they did not have cars or buses and children walked to school in all kinds of weather. Ms. Valdez provided her phone numbers so that parents could contact her with their concerns. The parent room mothers told her that she had their support and that they were willing to help her in any way they could. Lucia P. offered to make lunch for the new school's staff once a week for the 2007-2008 school year.

The Human Resource Frame

One positive outcome revealed by the data is the personal growth that participants experience as a result of their involvement in the parent room. Several of the former parent room participants are now employed by the school or district. One such parent is currently part of the Bonita cafeteria staff. It can be assumed that participation on campus raised the awareness and comfort level of such parents, resulting in their pursuit of formal employment within the school. During the research period, Mirna was recruited by Ms. Valdez principal of the new elementary school to fill the Parent Involvement Assistant position at the new school. Participation has clearly benefited parent participants in terms of employment opportunities. The fact that Lucia S. continues to participate in the Bonita parent room despite the fact that her children have moved on to middle school and high school also demonstrates the personal growth and satisfaction the participants experience as a result of participation.

Parent involvement data shows that parental participation has also been good for the organization. Parent involvement resulting in accrued hours of parent involvement is a benefit to Bonita school and the school district. As state and federal requirements call for the documentation of parent involvement in schools, Bonita is at an advantage with its sheer number of parental involvement hours. Rita documents an average of 1500 volunteer hours per month, with last year's hours totaling 8000.

Also revealed by the data is the fact that two of the mothers, Lucia P. and Norma are able to supplement their family incomes through the money they earn selling lunches to the Bonita staff. They each sited the lunch service as work experience on their individual interviews. Rita stated that the lunch service provides additional income for the mothers who provide the service. The lunch service is clearly a benefit to staff members who have the option of purchasing lunch rather than bringing one or going out to get food on their short lunch period.

Examination of the data showed student academic and behavioral success in school as an outcome of better parent understanding of the schooling process and expectations resulting from parent participation in the parent room. Staff member Linda commented that “It has been interesting to see how it has helped the children”. She noted that the parents who participate in the parent room are well-informed and know what is going on with their children at school. During observation sessions, the women frequently made positive comments about their children’s behavior in school, such as, “my child is respectful to adults” or “my daughter participates in class”.

Participants sited the quantity and duration of their volunteering as accomplishments, having kept record of their starting date, and stating the month and sometimes date that they started in the parent room. These statements were made during individual interviews:

Norma I have two girls here at the school. I’m in the parent room from 8 to 4 and on Wednesdays from 8 to 2. On October 24th, it will be 2 years since I started coming to the parent room.

Leticia This is my first year as a volunteer. It’s going to be a year in October.

Isabel I started as a volunteer in August 2006.

Lucia P. I have a son that is ten years old. I started as a volunteer when my son was 5.

One benefit resulting from participation in the parent room is the outcome that most closely links the current parent room dynamics to the Funds of Knowledge research of Moll, Gonzales, and others: social networks. Commentary on the social networks resulting from parent room participation was plentiful in the examination of data. Some mothers expressed the general amicable environment within the parent room, while others specified more intimate relationships and support systems with some of the other volunteers and their families. These statements were made during individual interviews:

Juanita The social relationships in the parent room are really good – we have meetings, celebrate birthdays and special occasions.

Aida We are really good friends. Outside of school, two or three of us visit each other, but not all of us. I have two friends that I met here. Once a month on the weekends, we get together with our families. Our husbands know each other and our children know each other. We are like a family and we help each other. For example, when my car is not working, my friend picks me up and when she needs a ride, I go and pick her up. My friend and I are getting to know another girl that started in the parent room last year better because we live in the same trailer park. If one of us is running late, we pick up each others' children. That is how the three of us work together. What we're doing right now – we are fixing up my house. My friend's husband does part and my husband finishes it. My husband did work for another friend's husband. This is how we exchange work and that is how we will finish my house. Our husbands haven't had work for about two months. We talk about how work is scarce here. Between my friends' husbands, they help each other find work.

Leticia We are all friends, but we put our trust in one or two other mothers. We always have one friend who is special. When there's a new baby, we all go and visit. We call each other and several of us get together. If there is a child's birthday celebration, we call each other and get together or when the children are going to have a game. Sometimes we take the children to the park. Sometimes we go to a special event, like the parade. It is a better relationship between our children. My husband doesn't know my friends' husbands, but he knows my friends. Right now...it is between the friends here that we ask for help if we have something to do or if we need something that they have. I like to sew. When the moms need something like curtains for example, they come over and I make them while they are here – we have coffee. It is a beautiful relationship. I like how everything is going right now in the parent room. I like the work. I like what we do. We are all friends and we are all a family. We don't want to stay home during the day- we like to come to the parent room.

Maria Leticia We help each other. We talk to each other. For example, if I don't have my car, several friends give me a ride. If they need a ride, we are there to help each other.

Norma The relationship from the parent room continues outside of school because most of us are neighbors. There is a woman that we help with sewing. We make food and invite each other to come over. If I need a ride, I go with Aida and she gives me a ride. My husband and Aida's husband help each other fix up our houses.

Isabel With some of the mothers, the relationship continues outside of school. We help each other if one of us needs us to pick up her children.

The Political Frame

The data repeatedly exposed school success stories experienced by the mothers and their children. These include heightened awareness of their children's progress and what is going on in the school, involvement in the school, and their sense of being important and helpful to the school community. Principal Goodleader explained that Rita provides the participants with "insight as to the school function. She gives them understanding of how systems and schools work". Parent volunteers made the following comments during interviews:

Aida Being here as a volunteer, you can be more aware of what your child is doing. My son feels more comfortable. When I'm here, he feels more sure of himself.

Leticia For me it has been a really good experience because my daughter participates more at school. My relationship with my daughter and the teacher is better than before. My daughter feels happy that I am here. I like to feel useful and help with the kids.

Maria Leticia The relationship with my son is better because I notice what is interesting for him at school. I know when he is embarrassed that I'm here and when he's comfortable that I'm here. The children make more progress in school. Sometimes it affects the school when one of us is not here, because the school needs a lot of help. Sometimes when we don't have anything to do in the parent room, they call us to help in the nurse's office, help the art teacher, help in the library. Our work here is very important. Sometimes we take the children to the nurse. When they take fluoride, we

take it to the children in the classrooms. We watch the kindergartners and first grade children in the cafeteria. We help clean up the cafeteria. If we see a child in the hallway and he's going to the nurse's office, we help him get there. We help the art teacher put the paints on the tables and pass out the materials to the children. We help the children make the example that the art teacher gives the children. In art we help with different things. We are always around the school helping.

Norma The teacher tells me what to do to help my daughter. And for my oldest daughter, the teacher always tells me that she is doing really well.

Aida I clean my house at night. In the morning I leave my son at middle school and then I come here with the other one. I don't know why more moms don't come here. It's a really beautiful experience. You help and they help you. It is always some kind of help at this school.

Isabel The parent room helps me see how teachers teach. I learned how to be more outgoing than before. I learned how the school runs. I learned the school rules – a lot of things that I didn't know.

The triangulated data revealed that the mothers' participation in the parent room has increased their levels of advocacy. The women who participate in the parent room have grown to be empowered to speak up for themselves and their children within the school setting.

The Symbolic Frame

Parent participants' exposure to new places and ideas contributes to their construction of meaning as women, mothers, and U.S. residents. The data showed that the women have many new experiences through parent room guest speakers, counseling sessions, and field trips. Some examples that Rita mentioned include field trips to places the parents have never been, such as

the mall, Sunflower Market, and the Gem and Mineral Show. Linda and Rita both talked about a field trip that the parents took to a local used book store. The field trips usually include lunch at a local restaurant, where the topics of nutrition and healthy eating habits are part of the lunch discussion. Data recorded from observations in the parent room revealed that the parents and staff frequently refer back to their experiences on such field trips. The women often incorporate the things they learn on field trips into the parent room dialogue. They clearly use these experiences to build upon their existing knowledge and as resources for their continued learning.

Data from an interview with Rita revealed that a guest speaker from the university makes an annual visit to do a lesson on nutrition. The most recent lesson included visuals and powerful examples, such as how many cubes of sugar are equal to the content of sugar in a can of soda.

Data from an interview with Counselor Caroline described a lesson from a woman who showed the mothers how to reduce stress by tapping on their pressure points. This lesson came up in several observed discussions, with Counselor Caroline asking the mothers if they are using what they learned from the lesson.

Data from one observation session included an explanation by Lucia P. of how much she and the other mothers had changed as a result of participating. Included in her examples were changes in the way they dress, the colors they wear, how they do their hair and makeup, and how they take care of themselves. Examples of personal growth were expressed by several mothers during individual interviews:

Isabel I learned how to be more outgoing than before. Everyday I learn something new.

Aida I am really happy to come to the parent room because if it weren't for the parent room, I would go back to Mexico. Life here is really sad. I came

to the parent room because I had trouble with my oldest son. It's been four years now, and I can't stay at home anymore. I have to come and help.

Maria Leticia The parent room is very important to me because it shows me how other people are. Now I understand that every person is different. Sometimes people are misunderstood, but talking about the problems and everything is ok. I have learned that communication is very important. I really like it because I know myself better.

Lucia P. I like coming to the parent room because my son seems more enthusiastic since I started coming. He is really happy to see me. I learn a lot of things and I like to help the teachers. I really like to participate in the parent room because not only do I learn a lot of things, but the teachers help me practice my English. When I started coming to the parent room, I was never scared, but it has changed my personality because of the counselor. I'm a different person. I have always been a really happy person. I'm very positive and I never bring my problems to the parent room.

Challenges

Although the establishment of the parent room has brought many viable improvements to Bonita, there remain several challenges to its success and growth. The challenges range from challenges encountered by parents, to challenges encountered by staff to challenges encountered by both parents and staff. These challenges are categorized according to the frames used to categorize the enabling factors and positive outcomes.

The Structural Frame

Varying Expectations

The data revealed that there are different expectations among staff members and parent participants regarding parent participation at Bonita. The expectation of the staff members interviewed is that parents will not want to volunteer in the classrooms. Several parent participants expressed their feeling that it is often the teachers who do not want the parents to help in their classrooms. Rita backed up this position by stating that some Bonita teachers escort parents who arrive at the classroom prepared to help in the classroom back to the parent room. In addition to those teachers who do not want parent help in their classrooms, the parent participants feel that there are teachers who do not know how to utilize parent help. This became very clear during the parents' discussion with Ms. Valdez. The recommendation that Ms. Valdez train the teachers at the new school on how to utilize the resource of parent volunteers came up twice during one discussion and received nods of agreement from around the table. The task of merging expectations is a challenge for both parents and staff.

The expectations of Bonita key players (participants and staff) need to be clarified and agreed upon in order for parent participation to continue without resentment or distrust between participants and staff.

Comfort Levels

A theme that appeared in the staff member interviews, but not in the parent room observations or parent interviews was the staff members' belief that parents who are comfortable volunteering in the parent room would be uncomfortable working in their children's classrooms. The staff member interviews revealed the belief that parent participants are so comfortable and happy in the parent room that they do not want to leave the parent room setting in order to help in the classrooms. Parent room observations revealed the contrary: that the parent room volunteers would like to spend time working in the classrooms. During several observation sessions, the parents expressed the opinion that the reason they do not work in the classrooms is

that many teachers do not want parent volunteers in their classrooms. Principal Goodleader shared the history of the parent room during her interview. She explained that there was a time when parents were not comfortable on the Bonita campus. Since the evolution of the parent room to the thriving hub that it is today, it is only the staff who views parent comfort levels to be an obstacle to classroom volunteering. The expectations staff members have of parent volunteers are based on the misconception that the parents do not want to work in the classrooms.

Room Size

A challenge that was observed, but not discussed is the size of the parent room. The fact that the parent room is small and crowded may be a limiting factor for further recruiting of additional parent volunteers. Although a few more people would fit in the room on any given day, there is not enough room in the parent room to significantly increase the number of volunteers. It can be assumed that efforts for actively recruiting more volunteers are limited by this factor. In a school with special limitations due to overcrowding, it can also be assumed that this will remain a challenge; no larger space is or will become available.

Room size is the only obstacle found in this study that may be outside the control of Bonita stakeholders to remedy. When addressed with the parent participants during one observation session, the issue of room size was not considered a challenge. The mothers showed me how, since my last observation, they had moved out one of the large rectangular tables, making the room less crowded. They unanimously expressed their feeling that they are lucky to have a room and are not bothered by the limited space.

The Human Resource Frame

Staff Training

Parent room observations revealed that another challenge for the parent room is the lack of formal training for teachers in terms of how to utilize the services provided by parent room

parents. This topic was raised during the dialogue with the new elementary school principal, Ms. Valdez. One of the recommendations made to Ms. Valdez by the parents was that she should offer teachers at the new school specific training on how to use the parents as a resource. Ms. Valdez offered the insight that “teachers may not be aware of all parents are doing” on campus at Bonita. Through staff training, all staff members could learn how to effectively utilize the resources provided by parent room participants. The mothers felt strongly that the staff should be reminded that these women are volunteers and that staff should respect that. The parent room participants agreed that the staff’s lack of knowledge as to parent room procedures is a challenge. During the discussion session, Rita pointed out that procedures such as making sure a parent signs in and out when volunteering at school is important for her documentation process, yet many teachers do not follow the procedures. The scenario of teachers escorting parent volunteers out of the classroom and back to the parent room was discussed and the mothers expressed the feeling that they are not welcome in some classrooms. They believe that they should feel welcome in all classrooms. Through parent volunteer training, all participants can be empowered to participate to their full potential. The recommended training should be repeated annually to keep key players up to date and to introduce new parents or staff to the possibilities for parent involvement.

Observations of the parent room activities revealed that those teachers who regularly solicit help from the parent room for materials preparation are those teachers who are not new to the building this school year and those who are bilingual in English and Spanish. Observations showed that teachers who are new to the building are not utilizing the parent room’s services and that few, if any monolingual English speaking staff rely on parent room assistance. The challenge in terms of the use of these resources by teachers is that many staff members are missing the opportunity for support and participation by the parent room community.

The Political Frame

Language

Language barriers between teachers who do not speak Spanish and parents who do not speak English limit the interactions between parents and some staff members. Observations revealed that, while bilingual and non-bilingual staff members purchase lunch in the parent room, it is the bilingual staff who strike up a conversation with the parents while they wait for their lunch or who stay to chat.

One interview with a preschool parent revealed another challenge pertaining to language: that of integrating English-speaking volunteers into the current parent room culture. In her interview, Valeria admitted she is uncomfortable interacting with the Spanish-speaking mothers because she prefers to use English to communicate. Although Valeria is Latina and does know how to communicate in Spanish, she is limited in her interactions with other parents due to her preference for English. Observations in the parent room confirm that all parent room volunteers speak Spanish, while only a few speak English at varying levels of limited proficiency. There are no English-dominant parent volunteers. It can be assumed that a parent who does not speak Spanish might feel uncomfortable attempting to function within the parent room environment. The issue of language proficiency will be an on-going challenge in this community.

During the discussion sessions, parent room participants expressed the opinion that English-speaking volunteers prefer to spend time in the classrooms versus the parent room. Rita explained that occasionally non-bilingual English-speaking volunteers will stop by the parent room, but they do not hang out there. I did not observe any non-bilingual English-speaking volunteers on campus during the research process.

If Bonita parents and staff aim to increase the comfort levels of all parents on campus and recruit more volunteers with varying proficiency levels in English and Spanish, specific goals

must be set and monitored. There must be processes in place for annual or semi-annual recruiting of volunteers, with specific efforts being made to be inclusive of English-dominant parents. It is possible that certain times during the week could be designated as English conversation hours in order to be more inclusive of non-Spanish speaking volunteers, as well as to provide Spanish-speaking parents with the opportunity to practice their English.

Preschool/Parent Room Connection

The triangulated data revealed that there are inconsistencies between the parent room program and the mandatory preschool parent volunteer requirements. The preschool at Bonita has the requirement that parents of preschoolers volunteer for a minimum of two hours per month in their child's classroom. The parent volunteer opportunities through the parent room do not require or facilitate classroom participation. The participant interviews revealed that there are preschool parents who participate in both the preschool and parent room activities, as well as parents who only fulfill their minimum preschool requirements. However, the majority of the preschool parent population does not participate in the parent room. All of the parent room participants with preschool children also have an older child at Bonita, showing that there are no preschool parents who have been integrated into the parent room prior to their oldest child starting kindergarten at Bonita.

The challenge of aligning preschool parent involvement and the parent room offerings may be reduced by requiring all preschool parent volunteers to attend the recommended parent room training. This would insure that preschool parents fully understand the parent room opportunities and would provide some cohesion between the two programs. It is also possible, that, once the issues regarding parent participation in the K-5 classrooms has been ironed out, that the school-wide parent volunteer program might include a minimum goal of monthly parent participation in the classroom for all those who are comfortable in that setting.

The Symbolic Frame

The Story

Stories perpetuate values and establish traditions (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Unfortunately, the story that was once true of the general parent population at Bonita and is probably still true of much of the parent population that does not participate in the Bonita parent room, is perpetuating a message that is no longer applicable to the parent room participants. The data revealed that the story highlighting the motivation behind the establishment of the Bonita parent room, the idea that the parent population is not comfortable volunteering in their children's classrooms, is no longer true of the parent room participants, yet the story continues to be told as if it is comprehensive of the entire Bonita parent population. The data from staff interviews indicated that parents were uncomfortable within the school setting prior to the development of the Bonita parent room. Staff member data suggested that, despite recruiting efforts made by staff, parents did not volunteer to help in their children's classrooms. Linda stated that the "parents like the parent room so much- they won't go to the classrooms".

According to parent comments during the observation sessions, the parent room parents would like to be invited into their children's classrooms more often. On several occasions, the topic was raised and the mothers unanimously agreed that they would like to help teachers in the classrooms more often. At the meeting with Ms. Valdez about the new elementary school, the following comments were made; "Some teachers don't want volunteers in the classroom. They bring us back to the parent room if we go to the classroom to volunteer", "We want to be in the classrooms if we're needed there".

Rita was the only staff member who expressed an acknowledgement of the parents' desire to help in the classrooms. The other staff member interviews relayed the same belief; that the parents who participate at school are not comfortable in the classroom setting.

Certainly, it is possible that newly arrived immigrant parents who have never participated in the U.S. school system would feel discomfort at being asked to volunteer in the classrooms. It is reasonable to assume that parents who have had limited educational experiences of their own might not feel prepared to assist a teacher within the instructional setting. However, the parent room participants made it clear on several occasions that they feel that it is the teachers who do not want their help in the classrooms. During the observation session when Ms. Valdez came to talk to the parents about the new elementary school, the parents addressed this topic and offered suggestions to Ms. Valdez for developing a parent involvement program at the new school that would allow for more classroom participation by parents. These suggestions will be addressed in the recommendations section of this study.

The story that Bonita staff tells about the parent room clearly needs updating, as it was once but is no longer true. This leads to the expectations of participants and Bonita staff. In one interview, Principal Goodleader defined one of her goals for parent involvement at Bonita: “to get parents in to the rooms with their kids to see the teaching”. This is also a goal expressed by the parent participants.

The data shows that while staff members are communicating a story that reveals the success of a good program (Bolman & Deal, 2003), they are also preventing the development of deeper levels of parental participation on campus. The challenge here, for both parents and staff, is to honor the existing organizational story while ensuring that its message is made current.

Funds of Knowledge Identified

The original postulate of this work asserted that there would be a connection between households' Funds of Knowledge and the parameters of parents' involvement in schools. True to the theoretical framework supporting Funds of Knowledge research, data from interviews and observations showed that knowledge is socially constructed among parent room participants.

Observations of formal counseling sessions with Counselor Caroline showed participants constructing knowledge socially through dialogue, the clarification and translation of information by other participants, and the referral to past group information and experiences by participants as a foundation for the topic at hand. Knowledge is also socially constructed in informal parent room conversations, such as the described dialogue regarding the technicalities of border crossing and passport documentation. Because the socially constructed knowledge in the parent room is often directly related to the parents' understanding of school practice, communications, and function, it became evident that the participants both feel and are perceived as more effective and informed in their parenting and support of their children's education as a result of their participation in the parent room.

The data revealed evidence of the widening of participants' individual and collective Zones of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978) as a result of parent room participation. Within the social context of the parent room and with exposure to new ideas, concepts, and places, the potential for problem solving under guidance from the PIA, counselor, and various instructors and that done in collaborations with peers increases the growth of parent participants far beyond what they would experience outside the parent room context.

The adult learning that was observed and articulated in this study occurred in accordance with Vygotskian theory of learning in childhood. Parent room learning awakens internal development that operates as the individual interacts with people in her environment and in cooperation with her peers. Once internalized, these processes become a part of the parent's independent achievement and daily practice. Examples from this study include Lucia P.'s statement that her participation in the counseling sessions with Caroline changed her personality for the better, by instilling in her the value in a positive attitude. This internalization of a concept learned in the parent room is articulated by Maria Leticia's interview, in which she talked about

how Ms. Rita had taught the parent room mothers to have respect first for themselves and then for others. Some of the concepts through which Ms. Rita guides the participants to understanding and internalization through daily practice might appear basic or as second nature to some audiences, however these concepts were repeatedly mentioned in observed dialogue and interviews as transformational for the parent room volunteers.

Skills that parent participants and their spouses bring as background knowledge were also revealed in this study. Through questions from the Melissa Peterson Interview Tool, the following collection of participants' and spouses' hobbies and skills was documented; gardening, music, singing, guitar, landscaping, sports activities, working on cars, carpentry, home design/decorating, cooking, drawing/painting, crafts, and sewing. Parent room participants and other adult members of their households noted previous and current work experience (both in the U.S. and in Mexico) as follows : babysitting, house cleaning, secretary, hotel housekeeping, landscaping, welding, harvesting, masonry, construction, drywall, tile, making and selling jewelry, factory work, homemaker, food preparation store clerk, machine operator, and teaching.

An unanticipated finding in this study was the degree to which parents' Funds of Knowledge are not utilized by the school or are utilized in a limited context. In general, the parent room mothers utilize a few basic skills regularly in their parent room service. For some participants, their contributions to the parent room encompass their entire personal skill sets. These include organizational skills and domestic skills. Included in the organizational skills are activities such as sorting, filing, classroom materials preparation, and event set-up. The mothers' domestic skills contribute to activities such as food preparation, sewing and craft projects, and the supervision of children in unstructured settings such as recess and lunch. The data generally did not reveal skills possessed by the mothers that are not being utilized by the school. One

exception to this is Mirna, who is the most highly educated of the parent room volunteers. Mirna's ability to communicate in English and Spanish, as well as her education have enabled her to participate on the school's site council. The other exception to this is Valeria, who volunteers only through the required arrangement with the preschool. Valeria has experience in fundraising and remodeling, two skill sets that could easily translate into parent participation at school.

For some mothers, and certainly for fathers who do not yet participate on campus, there are resources that have yet to be tapped for contributions to school function. The data revealed many possibilities for campus participation by fathers through a variety of skills.

Another interesting and unanticipated finding is the extent to which the parent room exists as the sole social network for many of the participants. I entered into the interviews with the assumption that the women would have networks of friends and neighbors with whom they interact, trade goods and services, and share child care. The data showed, however, that the connections and relationships the women have made through their involvement in the parent room are their primary source of emotional, social, and sometimes financial support. Mirna, once again, was the exception to this. Mirna talked extensively about her involvement with her church and her family's participation in a church music group.

Interestingly, this study did not uncover extensive networks of exchange within family structures. Aside from the few interviewees who sited one adult in addition to the parent/parents as members of the household, the participants did not claim networks of exchange or support among non-nuclear family members. The Funds of Knowledge research (Gonzalez, 2005) discusses exposure to resources by extended family members that were not uncovered in this study. It is possible that parent room participants do not have extended family living nearby or

that these resources were not addressed in this study as a result of the data collection being limited to the school setting.

Leadership Identified

Leadership was exhibited in this study by staff members, including Principal Goodleader, Counselor Caroline, and Rita. The parent participants demonstrated leadership within the school, while several individual parent volunteers exhibited leadership within the parent community.

Servant Leadership

Principal Goodleader is what Sergiovanni (1992) called a leaders of leaders. She clearly supports the capacities of Rita, Caroline, and the parents and minimizes the need for direct supervision over the parent room. As described by Sergiovanni (1992), she empowers those who are served (both her staff and the parent volunteers) to define their own needs. True to Greenleaf's (1977) description of servant leadership, it can be inferred from the data that Principal Goodleader's legitimacy to lead stems from her having given certainty and purpose to her staff and the parent community, who then fulfill leadership roles within the school. Purposing entails building within the school a center of shared values (Sergiovanni, 1992). One such value at Bonita is the belief in the benefits of parental participation on campus and the resulting increased understanding parents have regarding school processes and procedures, which allow them to better support their children in school.

Principal Goodleader, Counselor Caroline and PIA Rita all evoke the trust of the Bonita community in their competence and values as they effectively lead in varying capacities within the school. They each contribute to the empowerment of parent room participants by providing autonomy, choice, responsibility, and participation in decision-making.

Learning Communities

PIA Rita and Counselor Caroline have facilitated the formation of an informal learning community within the parent room through participation in the Friday morning counseling sessions, as well as participation in daily parent room activities. As leaders of the parent room counseling sessions, Rita and Caroline play the roles of head learners. Through their participation and honest sharing in the counseling sessions, Rita and Caroline experience, model, and celebrate what is expected of parent participants. Alongside the parent volunteers, Caroline and Rita guide the parents through thinking critically and analytically to solve problems. Data from observations of the Friday morning counseling sessions exhibits group learning and the construction of knowledge as a group endeavor. Characteristic of a learning community according to Barth (1990), the parent room participants, alongside Rita and Caroline, acknowledge their own inadequacies, pose their own problems, take risks, exercise a sense of humor, collaborate, practice compassion, model the expected behaviors, and maintain the presence of a moral purpose within the parent room.

Data from the observation sessions shows the participants' feeling of shared responsibility for the school, which is defined by Sergiovanni (1992) as a characteristic of participants in learning communities. During observation sessions, the participants described their identification of needs within the school and their voluntary actions to meet those needs. For example, if the parents notice that several staff members are absent on a given day, they check to see if additional coverage is needed to supervise children in the cafeteria or on the playground. The sentiment of shared responsibility permeates both the parent room itself and the mother's attitudes toward the school and school activities.

Transformational Leadership

PIA Rita's leadership within the parent room can best be categorized as transformational leadership. Her promotion of intrinsic and moral motives within the parent room and her

dedication to the needs of her followers are consistent with Sergiovanni's (1999) description of transformational leaders. One pervasive example of Rita sacrificing her self-interest to advance the common good is the fact that, upon realization that the parent room participants did not function as effectively without her presence, Rita changed her practice of eating her lunch in the company of other Bonita staff members to eating her lunch in the parent room with the parent volunteers. Under Rita's transformational leadership, the parent volunteers are more influenced by group norms and the socially-constructed reality within the parent room than they are by Bonita rules or district policy. Rita's very presence within the parent room is an example of purposing. She continually provides clarity, supports the group in working toward consensus and focuses the group on their commitment to the basic purposes of the parent room and the school.

Rita's success in empowering the parent room participants was best articulated by Aida's statement,

For me, it is important to participate and help, and with time, I'm more involved in things I couldn't do before. When Rita is sick, I can tell the girls what to do, and I really like that because I know more things. I really like to come and learn more things.

Characteristic of stakeholders under transformational leadership, parent room volunteers respond to their empowerment with increased motivation and commitment to work. Within the group dynamics, Lucia P. showed leadership in a social context, in terms of reaching out to staff members, greeting anyone who entered the parent room, and moving about the room to interact with all participants. Many of the mothers have a seat or part of the room that they occupy regularly. Lucia P. moved about the room throughout the day, sitting with different people at different times and striking up conversations. Lucia P. showed the most interest in fashion and hairstyles and often brought equipment with her to style someone's hair or to have her own hair done. Lucia S., the oldest parent room participant, a participant who no longer has children who

attend Bonita, provided leadership in terms of insight. She was often singled out both by the counselor and other parents to share her life experiences, ranging from experiences with teachers to her philosophy on her relationship with her husband. Mirna demonstrated leadership as a parent participant, as well as the capacity to fulfill a formal leadership position as the PIA at the new elementary school.

Summary of Findings

The data showed that positive outcomes of parent room participation affect the lives of parent room volunteers and their children. When I met with the parent room participants in May 2007 to discuss my findings and to gain their perspectives, the mothers and Rita were generally in agreement with my findings. The mothers believe that their involvement on campus is one reason why their children do well in school. The mothers feel that they are well-informed of school procedures and events, and are thus able to support their children's participation in school. At this meeting, the participants described the successes of the parents who started out in the parent room, became comfortable in the school setting, and acquired district positions. The participants shared these success stories as evidence of the parent room's success.

Interviews with staff members and parents revealed that parent participation has been sustained and increased over time as a result of the development of the parent room. The guidance provided by Rita in her role as Parent Involvement Assistant has been key in the sustainability and growth of parent participation at Bonita. This indicates the importance of the district's funding of this position. Several parents are also key players in the sustainability over the past few years, as their participation in the parent room has been consistent, with one mother continuing to participate despite the fact that her children are now in middle and high school.

The data clearly demonstrates a network of support behind the function of the parent room, with many factors contributing to sustaining and enabling its success. This includes

support from the leadership in providing a room in which the parent room functions and the funding for the PIA position. The leadership by Rita, is a driving force in the sustainability of the parent room. Her consistent involvement and dedication in the parent room, its activities, and in the lives of its participants are the glue that binds the group of parent volunteers. The mothers whole-heartedly agreed that Rita's work as PIA is the most significant enabling factor in the parent room's success. Finally, the trust that has been nurtured and valued among parent room participants is essential to the continued commitment by each individual parent.

In response to the aforementioned research questions, this chapter revealed significant findings that enable a sustainable, empowering parental involvement program within Bonita Elementary School. The types of parental involvement activities that occur on the Bonita campus were described. Funds of Knowledge that are employed as part of the parental involvement process were identified. Leadership within the context of the Bonita parent room was identified. This chapter presented positive outcomes resulting from parental participation in this school. The challenges faced by the Bonita parent room participants and the program as a whole were highlighted.

In the next chapter, recommendations are made for improving the parental involvement opportunities at Bonita. These recommendations for practice and the issues raised within are transferable to other elementary schools' parental involvement programs. Finally, Chapter 6 will address implications and recommendations for theory and policy.

CHAPTER 6

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Guided by the questions posed at the onset of this paper, I have extended the traditional discussion of parental involvement in schools to include the possibility of increased parental motivation and empowerment by looking at schools' access to the household Funds of Knowledge that constitute the knowledge base of parents. By examining the possibilities for transferring what has traditionally been viewed as household knowledge to the school setting, the range of possibilities for parental contributions to school improvement and function are increased.

Throughout this paper, consideration has been given to the leadership theories and behaviors that effectively support parental involvement efforts in schools. Effective school leaders perceive diversity as a resource for teaching and learning, among both students and parents. A focus on what parents bring to the schooling process provides school leaders with a lens through which to view the possibilities for parental contributions to school improvement and function. Culturally aware school leaders transform the deficit approach to viewing minority families into an opportunity for the co-construction of knowledge among parents who learn alongside their children through their participation on campus.

A responsive school leader recognizes that the needs, comfort levels, and background knowledge of parents can vary greatly depending on the parents' education, socio-economic status, language proficiency, race, ethnicity, and immigration status. Given the growing number of Latinos in the U.S., the specific concerns of Latino students and their families in terms of parental involvement were addressed in this study. A focus on the opportunities for parents to contribute their Funds of Knowledge not only to enhance the instruction of their children within

the classroom, but also to supplement school improvement efforts of the school broadens the horizon of possibilities for empowerment of Latino parents and students.

The findings of this study will serve to guide educators and school leaders as they seek to cultivate increased authentic involvement of parents in schools.

Funds of Knowledge

Implications and Recommendations for Practice

Participant interviews revealed that many parents and their spouses possess knowledge and skills, in other words, Funds of Knowledge that could possibly benefit the school, but are not yet tapped. It is the recommendation of this study that parent volunteer recruiting procedures include an interview or questionnaire to evaluate volunteers' skills and resources in order to maximize their potential contributions. This will allow the school to identify untapped resources and provide parents with the opportunity to contribute using their skills and knowledge. By identifying participants' Funds of Knowledge, schools can make the process of parental involvement more meaningful for parents, staff, and students.

In order for Bonita staff members to more thoroughly utilize the resources families possess, it is the recommendation of this study that school staff take on the role of ethnographic researcher to make home visits for the purpose of learning more about families and their potential for involvement in schools. Through home visits, school staff would increase the possibility of learning about extended family members and the Funds of Knowledge they have to offer, in addition to the possibility of uncovering skills and resources that are not revealed in the school setting out of modesty or perceived irrelevance.

Teacher-researcher Marla Hensley (2005), who participated in the Funds of Knowledge research with Moll, Gonzales, and Amanti described how a home visit with a student's father led to a collaboration that benefited the father as well as his child's class. Hensley entered the

student's home with the goal of acquiring advice regarding a classroom gardening project. When Hensley noticed a guitar in the room, she discovered a wealth of song-writing and musical talent, which led to the father creating a musical that the class later performed. The process of creating the musical was empowering for the parent and the children, as well as other parents, who joined in the project. In a similar manner, it would be of value to Bonita staff to become more aware of the families and what they have to offer through home visits to the homes of parent room volunteers, as well as other Bonita families. Hensley advises that once an educator has spent time in a child's home, she will have a better feel for the home lives of all students. Connecting with just one family creates an awareness of all parents as people. Hensley explained that she is more tuned in to parents as a result of her experience with the Funds of Knowledge project. She discovered the importance of perceiving the parent as someone with expertise, which helps create a trusting relationship between parents and school personnel. Invariably, all parents I interviewed at Bonita expressed a similar feeling of wanting a true two-way street between the school and the home, in which parents assist the school with tasks that need to be accomplished on campus, and the school opens up to the Funds of Knowledge that parents can offer for the benefit of children and the community at large.

This study tapped only the surface in terms of resources available to the school. By entering the homes and learning more about the families they work with, Bonita staff will have access to more information about families' skills and resources. Through in-depth studies of families, teacher-researchers access a wide range of resources they may not have realized were available (Hensley, 2005). Through home visits, educators view parents as people with skills to offer, with successes and struggles, and with goals and dreams. If staff members acting as researchers place value on the knowledge uncovered in the home, families will feel important and empowered, leading to a change in the climate of the home-school relationship. In the case

of the Bonita story, perhaps this deeper understanding of the parents as people would lead to a more united perspective regarding parent volunteers in the classroom setting.

For those schools that currently have a parent involvement component, it can be recommended that the study-group approach taken by Moll and Gonzalez in their Funds of Knowledge research should be carefully implemented. Collaborative thinking among parents, teachers, school leaders, and researchers can be used to strategically improve the function of parent involvement and insure that the skills and resources embedded in Latino households are utilized and validated in the school setting.

As an extension of this work, this study recommends the creation of additional opportunities for school personnel to visit students' homes in order to gain a greater understanding of the population they serve. This recommendation is particularly important for educators and school personnel who are new to the community. The possibilities range from simple drop-in home visits to welcome a family to the school to organized household visits specifically designed to introduce new school personnel to the community in which they work. One recommended option is for the parent room volunteers to take turns hosting a dinner in their home for new staff members. The insights gained from exposure to the home lives of students are invaluable in understanding and better being able to meet the needs of the students and their families.

Implications and Recommendations for Theory

For those concerned about advancing the research agenda for improving parental involvement efforts in schools serving low-income minority and immigrant populations, a focus must ensue, identifying and valuing the Funds of Knowledge that parents bring to the table in terms of their participation in schools.

Like educators who strive to improve their access to information about the families they serve, researchers, too, must enter into the homes of parents who participate in schools in order to identify additional skills and resources available to the school. Through the design and implementation of further research investigating the contributions made by parents in highly effective parent involvement models, the field of possibilities for authentic participation by parents in schools will be broadened to include other non-traditional models that truly meet the needs of parents for empowerment and advocacy while advancing the improvement efforts of schools.

Implications and Recommendations for Policy

Among policy makers, much attention has gone into raising requirements for parental involvement in schools. For example, the No Child Left Behind Act (Landsverk, 2004), requires parents to get more involved in their child's education and in school improvement efforts. An enormous amount of effort has gone into the creation of parental involvement models. Beyond a regular count of the number of parent volunteer hours accumulated at each site, very little attention in the form of policy has been given to the process of evaluating the effectiveness of parent involvement in schools.

It is the recommendation of this study that schools with parent volunteer programs institute annual evaluation procedures to inform their improvement efforts. Because the parent room in this study is a thriving function within the school, the need to evaluate its successes and challenges has not been pervasive. If it is the goal of parents and staff to continuously improve the opportunities for parental involvement on any campus, an evaluation system should be implemented to assess growth and the need for improvements. This system should call for feedback from parents, staff, and students in terms of the effectiveness of parent involvement on campus and any needs for improvement. Community feedback could be elicited annually

through the use of a survey. The data acquired from the survey could then be analyzed to identify goals for improvement. In the case of Bonita, the creation and implementation of such a tool would allow staff and continuing parent room volunteers to minimize obstacles that prevent program growth, as they routinely examine the internal and external perception of the parent room and its effectiveness. It is highly recommended that school districts require a formalized evaluation process when funding parent involvement programs and facilitators to ensure that the programs are not superficial efforts, but are effective and adequate in meeting the needs of the school community and authentically engaging parents in the school life.

Immigration

Implications and Recommendations for Practice

As shown in the study, immigration is clearly a factor affecting parent involvement in schools. Immigration was discussed during this study both by parent room participants and by Bonita staff. Moll and Gonzalez (2004) touch upon the lack of training provided to teachers regarding this issue “few, if any preservice or inservice courses for teachers address immigration issues”. They state that teachers are forced to deal with the “media-driven stereotypes of immigration and its influence on education” on their own. The same can be said of schools and school leaders. We know that, at Bonita, immigration has an effect on the comfort level parents have within the school setting, as well as their familiarity with the school setting.

Immigrant parents bring to the table a different perspective than those who attended school in the U.S.. Immigration does more than simply alter the ethnic character of a school; it also changes the social context of a neighborhood (Moll, 2004). Moll and Gonzalez recommend that school personnel address immigration dynamics because they shape the character of a school’s diversity.

Implications and Recommendations for Theory

A truly important aspect of future research in this area is the climate of fear among immigrant parents and the effect this has on parental involvement in schools. With the passing of anti-immigrant laws in states such as Arizona and Florida, it can be assumed that immigrant parents' fears will increase and their trust of schools will decrease. To investigate the concerns and fears of recent immigrants, both documented and undocumented, in the current context would provide schools and school leaders with insight as to the barriers between recent immigrants and effective school participation, as well as strategies for disarming these barriers. It is possible that, through social networks, the fears of some immigrant parents are being eased. Parents who currently participate at school and can attest to the fact that participation is non-threatening to undocumented immigrants are certainly a great source of advertising and recruiting. In light of recent immigration policy, it is highly recommended that future research address the limitations and possibilities for parental involvement amid the resulting fears.

Future researchers might look deeper at how immigration impacts parent involvement in schools, how waves of immigration in some communities alter the parental involvement needs and processes within schools, and how stereotypes and fears of immigrants and nonimmigrants limit opportunities for parental contributions to schools.

Implications and Recommendations for Policy

Current newcomer education programs are generally limited to the participation of school-age children. In order for school districts to elicit parental participation and support from immigrant parents at the onset of their child's education in the U.S., they should include in their newcomer programs a parent induction component. Taking cues from the successes of the Bonita parent room, newcomer parent induction programs district-wide could simultaneously prepare recent immigrant students and their parents for success in the U.S. school system.

Through newcomer education programs that include a parent induction component, newcomers

and their parents could learn basic social English, become familiar with the policies and procedures of the school and district, and construct knowledge alongside their peers.

Trust among parents and the staff members who worked with them was a central enabling factor of Bonita parent room participation. Likewise, trust would need to be developed between newcomer parents and the school as a foundation for engaging their participation in a newcomer parent program. As a service to families through public education funding, immigrants would be required to provide legal documentation of their status within the U.S. in order to participate in newcomer programs with a parent induction component. A district policy calling for participation by newcomers and their parents would ensure that families new to the U.S. would be provided with temporary support in order to prepare them for academic success in U.S. schools.

Gender

Implications and Recommendations for Practice

The support of the full-time Parent Involvement Assistant was critical in Bonita's parent room success. The need for a parent involvement facilitator is transferable to most school settings. This recommendation was also made as a result of the Schools Reaching out Project (Davies, 1991), which examined parents from low-socioeconomic backgrounds and their relation to schools. Davies concluded that schools should employ a school-community specialist to create linkages with families and community organizations. For schools with the financial resources to do so, employing a full-time staff member to facilitate parent involvement and provide leadership for volunteers is ideal. For schools lacking the capability to employ a full-time staff member to coordinate parent involvement, it is essential that a support network be created using parent and staff volunteers, with a redefinition of staff members' responsibilities that engages creative thinking to ensure that parent volunteer efforts are supported and valued.

As a focus for future practice, it is recommended that the parent involvement facilitator take in to consideration the possibilities for recruiting and retaining fathers in addition to mothers as volunteers. Within the Bonita setting, the Parent Involvement Assistant was very successful in recruiting and retaining mothers to participate in the school. The gender of parents should be considered in evaluating the success of parental involvement programs. Fathers, like mothers, have skills and resources that can be gainfully contributed to participation in schools. It is possible that parental involvement by fathers (often the primary bread-winners, especially in Latino households) might look different from that of mothers. Effective parent involvement facilitators will solicit and implement participation from fathers, as a foundation for involving fathers more directly in the educational experiences of their children, with the results including empowerment for the child and father in addition to fathers' valuable contributions to school improvement efforts.

Implications and Recommendations for Theory

Another area for future research involves the role of gender in Latino parent involvement in schools. Clearly, gender played an active role in determining which parents volunteer in the Bonita parent room. This is established through the data, which shows that the parent room is made up entirely of female volunteers (mothers) and is consistent with the findings of Moll and Gonzalez (2004). Their Funds of Knowledge research shows that it is evident that women play the central role in the formation of social networks. Moll and Gonzalez suggest developing a theoretical analysis of the role of gender or of gender relations in constituting household and classroom settings. I recommend taking this a step further by developing a theoretical analysis of the role of gender in constituting parent involvement and its contributions to school function. This could facilitate the exploration of ways to recruit and sustain involvement by fathers in ways that utilize and validate their skills and knowledge.

Implications and Recommendations for Policy

A starting point for incorporation of gender-specific parental involvement policy would be to follow the lead of Federal, State, and district requirements that call for the tracking of parent volunteer hours in schools. This work may need to be extended to include documentation of the gender of parents accruing volunteer hours in schools. Through the documentation of male compared to female participation in schools, school leaders will be better-informed to set goals for increased participation by fathers in addition to that by mothers. Through a district policy for record keeping requiring the documentation of gender in volunteer data, districts can better assess the need for the recruiting and retention of fathers' participation in schools.

Space

Implications and Recommendations for Practice

This study has demonstrated strongly that the structure of the Bonita parent room provides an effective, transferable framework from which other schools can begin to build quality parental involvement models. For schools with similar issues regarding minority and immigrant parents' comfort levels in the school setting, the creation of a parent room is an excellent starting point for increasing their comfort levels within the school and providing them with non-threatening ways to participate on campus.

The relationships that form between parent room participants are powerful in the sustainability of parent involvement and the construction of collective and individual knowledge. The transferability of this concept would indicate that, like that of the Bonita mothers, consistent parent involvement in an environment that fosters social interaction among parents would lead to the parents' motivation to participate stemming both from their understanding of the needs of the students and school, as well as the personal fulfillment gained from experiences within the parent room context.

Implications and Recommendations for Theory

The “tiendita” (little store) provides the opportunity for research in terms of the further development of the school store concept. The examination of school store models including those that employ a farmer’s market or a regular rummage sale approach could lead to possibilities that would provide a greater benefit to children and families than is enabled by the “tiendita” that currently operates at Bonita. School store concepts that educe more substantial learning and participation by parents, students, and staff could be examined as possibilities for the integration of families’ Funds of Knowledge into the function of the school. The concept of space is central to the school store concept, whether the school store functions as a regular rummage sale, a community garden/farmer’s market, or a hub for the distribution and purchase of school supplies. Regardless of the purpose or function of a school store concept, the school must provide space for the storage and vending of store merchandise. Given the scarcity of space within schools for the purposes of instruction, further research is required to generate viable possibilities for schools to employ parents to generate funding and further school goals. With the possibility of linking the school store concept to instruction through an ongoing project incorporating the organization, maintenance, accounting, and operation of a store, the motivation for providing a store space could be validated as central to the school’ instructional goals and improvement efforts.

Implications and Recommendations for Policy

As federal leaders consider the inadequacies of state funding for school facilities, while calling for heightened parental involvement efforts through federal mandates, it is essential that federal and state policy makers acknowledge space as a legitimate concern for those involved in the parental involvement implementation efforts. In schools with active parent communities, parents require access to school space and often equipment in order to meet, plan, and prepare

materials for their efforts. Parent groups, such as Parent Teacher Organizations, often require access to school computers, copy machines, and supplies as they perform their work and fill their responsibilities. Future policy makers should factor in to the new school faculties equation a designated space for parents to congregate and work on each school campus, allowing for uniqueness and individuality of school parental involvement programs.

Leadership

Implications and Recommendations for Practice

A focus on leadership that honors and supports diversity of household knowledge generates within the school a culture of valuing the contributions and possibilities for contributions by parents regardless of race, gender, education, or socio-economic status. Within a leadership practice that facilitates involvement by parents, parental skills become tools that refine and develop the capacity for school improvement.

From the standpoint of school leadership, it is recommended that parental involvement be considered a key component of school function that can be grown and nurtured to support the goals of the school to the greatest extent possible, dependent upon parent availability, interest, and knowledge. It is essential that school leaders view the possibilities for parental contributions as fluid, understanding that, as parents become more comfortable within and knowledgeable of the school, their ability to contribute to school function will increase. School leaders should enter into the practice with the understanding that the range in parent comfort levels can span from fear and anxiety upon entering the school building to complete ease and the ability to identify and meet the needs of staff, students, and other parents through daily participation.

Implications and Recommendations for Theory

Of importance for further educational leadership research is the exploration of models that facilitate the use of specific staff and parent training components to inform parent

participation on campus, as well as the exploration of models using specific evaluation tools to assess the needs and successes of parent participation on campus. The exploration of school leadership that employs evaluation tools for parental involvement practices that include a means by which to assess the value of diversity, as well as the concerns and fears related to immigration would greatly inform practice.

Given the range of leadership philosophies and behaviors of leaders, the search for general principles of leadership that promote parental involvement in schools must be identified at the individual level. Through the direct observation of school leaders who effectively engage parents in school improvement efforts, researchers will uncover further guidelines for those leaders and future leaders who target increased authentic involvement by parents as a goal for school improvement. This is especially important in areas that serve minority and immigrant populations, as the stakes are higher in terms of welcoming parents onto the school campus initially and retaining their participation.

Implications and Recommendations for Policy

A recommendation for policy calls for school districts serving populations that include students of poverty, recent immigrants, and English Language Learners to provide training for new hires that exceeds that which teacher or administrator certification programs generalize in order to better prepare new hires to work effectively with their student and parent populations. With a realistic understanding of the issues faced by children and families of poverty, immigrant children, and English Language Learners, school leaders and staff can honor and validate the knowledge and experiences the children and parents bring to the school setting.

In addition to district level training, of specific importance is the training that educational leaders receive in administrator certification programs. This study recommends that institutions of higher education require in administrator certification programs comprehensive training

related to leading diverse student populations, identifying, appreciating, and incorporating Funds of Knowledge in schools, as well as training in the recruitment and retention of parent volunteers from diverse communities. Educational leaders should enter in to administrator positions fully equipped to understand and meet the needs of their student and parent populations. In schools with ethnic and economic diversity, it is the responsibility of the school administrator to level the playing field of the inequalities that are seen in broader society (Trumbell, 2001).

It is highly recommended that schools employ a designated staff member to facilitate the training and activity of parent volunteers on campus. It is imperative that, despite budget cuts, district, state, and federal policy include the allocation of funds to support staffing to coordinate parent involvement at each school site.

An underlying theme of the recommendations made here is that the strategies that educators, school leaders, and policy makers employ in their attempts to improve parental involvement in schools, especially by Latino immigrant parents, should be as empirically grounded as possible and target not only the quantity of volunteer hours accumulated in a building, but the effectiveness and authenticity of parental participation in schools.

Conclusion

This study was, without a doubt, worth pursuing, despite the aforementioned recommendation of extending the research into the home setting in the pursuit of more informative observations and interviews. The literature review highlighted the knowledge gaps in current research regarding the comprehensiveness of opportunities for parent volunteers to contribute their home practices, skills, and knowledge to the overall function of their child's school. By providing school leaders with a modified Funds of Knowledge tool for accessing the multiple means by which households can contribute to the process of schooling, this study aims to close the gap between actual and potential parental involvement in schools. It is the goal of

the researcher that this study will offer transferability to other school settings, providing schools with the opportunity to more authentically involve parents in the process and function of schooling.

This study is of value to the Bonita community as it provides avenues by which to increase parent involvement and to provide the school with access to the many resources households have to offer. This study provides the Bonita community with suggestions for improvement, including a formal evaluation process by which to assess the success of the parent involvement program, the opportunity to clarify the discrepancy in the story from staff members and volunteers regarding in-classroom participation, and suggestions for making preschool parent involvement a more cohesive first step in participation as a Bonita parent volunteer.

It is a suggested priority to promote more comprehensive coverage of issues of diversity in institutions of higher education in the training of future educational leaders to effectively serve diverse populations of learners and their families. The recommendation to institutions of higher education is that preparation to lead parent involvement efforts in communities serving families of poverty, recent immigrant status, and English Language Learners be implemented as a component of all administrator certification programs. In order for schools to incorporate the strategic and cultural resources of students' households into parental involvement possibilities, school leaders must possess the knowledge and skills to first provide an environment that is comfortable and motivating for all parents, delving below the surface to identify and validate the multitude of skills available to support learning and school function.

Finally, it is expected that findings from this study will contribute to the design of more effective and authentic involvement policies in schools and districts serving Latino populations. The facilitation of parental involvement efforts by a qualified staff member has been shown to be effective in sustaining and growing parental involvement within a school. This study seeks to

encourage schools and districts to fund such a position in order to maximize the potential for parental contributions to schools, as well as the potential for parents to benefit and grow as a result of participation in schools. As schools and districts design and fund parental involvement efforts, it is recommended that they simultaneously implement a formal system to evaluate the effectiveness of the efforts in terms of productivity, effectiveness, and benefit to the school community.

In summary, once educators include parents and families in the formula for educating children and begin to value their Funds of Knowledge, we will be on our way to a brighter future for children and their families (Hensley, 2005). On the basis of this understanding, schools can become a forum in which – regardless of race, ethnicity, social background, and gender- the wealth of knowledge available in students' homes can be accessed by educators to empower students, families, and schools.

EPILOGUE

THE BONITA PARENT ROOM ONE YEAR LATER

I called Rita late one afternoon in January 2008 to ask her if I could visit the parents in the Bonita parent room. We set up a time for the following week. When the plans were made, Rita warned me, "It's pretty sad this year". I asked her what she meant by the comment. "These women are incredible," she told me. "Things are really hard right now. A lot of the husbands don't have work." She went on to describe how the women continue to come to the parent room day after day, working tirelessly for the benefit of the school, while many of them could probably be out earning money for their families as part of the official or unofficial workforce. With so many husbands struggling to find work in the construction field due the sagging economy and tense immigration climate, Rita hypothesized that, at the very least, the mothers who volunteer so diligently might be able to clean houses during the day in order to supplement their families' incomes. "Instead, they choose to come here. Every day," said Rita, truly in awe of their dedication.

The following week, I was able to see first hand what she meant. The mothers greeted me with the usual kisses to the cheek and offered me coffee and breakfast. Several of them were busy preparing materials for teachers, others were chatting over coffee. Some volunteers were employed throughout the school, preparing the cafeteria for lunch, making copies, and running errands. Despite the recent tightening of immigration law, they did not mention anyone having left Bonita to return to Mexico. They asked me how Mirna was doing as the PIA at the new school. I told them what a wonderful job Mirna is doing. "She learned from the best," I said. From the agreement all around, I could see that their love and admiration for Rita had not diminished.

While chatting individually with several of the mothers, Rita's warning was validated. They spoke of how hard life is now, how their husbands hear about work and tell the others about the opportunity. Sometimes the men show up and there is no work. Often they are sent home after only half a day of work. The women explained how employers dodge the immigration authorities through irregular work schedules, half days, and sudden disappearances. They described the decrease in work due to the economy and the slow-down in the housing market. Several of them talked about the possibility of returning to Mexico and how devastating that would be to their children, whose lives are here now.

With grace and gratitude, each of the women expressed her appreciation for the opportunity the parent room provides to socialize, to get out of the house and escape the difficult financial times, and to make a difference in the lives of her children.

Informed Consent

*Building Bridges Between Households and Schools: An Ethnographic Approach***Introduction**

You are being invited to take part in a research study. The information in this form is provided to help you decide whether or not to take part. Study personnel will be available to answer your questions and provide additional information. If you decide to take part in the study, you will be asked to sign this consent form. A copy of this form will be given to you.

What is the purpose of this research study?

The purpose of this study is to discover

(a). In what ways are Latino parents participating at school?

(b). In what ways are their household skills and resources being used through participation at school?

(c). Has parent participation changed as a result of parents' interactions with the school and other parents?

Why are you being asked to participate?

You are being invited because you are Latino/a and currently volunteer at school.

How many people will be asked to participate in this study?

Approximately 10-20 persons will be asked to participate in this study. All parent room participants and other school volunteers will be asked to participate.

What will happen during this study?

During this study, the researcher will spend 46 hours observing in the parent room over a three month period. The researcher will conduct one interview (approximately 45 minutes in length) with each participant during the three month period.

How long will I be in this study?

One 45 minutes interview will be needed to complete this study. The observation portion will occur over 3 months during regular parent room activities and will require no direct participation or time of participants.

Are there any risks to me?

The things that you will be doing have *no* risk of the criminal, social, or financial nature or risk of

breach of confidentiality. Although we have tried to avoid risks, you may feel that some questions we ask will be stressful or upsetting. If this occurs you can stop participating immediately. We can give you information about individuals who may be able to help you with these problems.

Are there any benefits to me?

There are no direct benefits.

Will there be any costs to me?

Aside from your time, there are no costs for taking part in the study.

Will I be paid to participate in the study?

You will not be paid for your participation.

Will video or audio recordings be made of me during the study?

We will make audio and video recordings during the study so that we can be certain that your responses are recorded accurately only if you check the box below:

I give my permission for audio/video recordings to be made of me during my participation in this research study.

Will the information that is obtained from me be kept confidential?

The only persons who will know that you participated in this study will be Principal Investigator Melissa Peterson and her advisor at the University of Arizona, Dr. Alberto Arenas.

Your records will be confidential. You will not be identified in any reports or publications resulting from the study. It is possible that representatives of the Federal Government or the Human Subjects Protection Program that supports the research study will want to come to the University of Arizona to review your information. If that occurs, a copy of the information may be provided to them but your name will be removed before the information is released.

What if I am harmed by the study procedures?

There is minimal risk involved in this research. The risk is no greater than that which occurs during your current participation at school.

May I change my mind about participating?

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decide to not begin or to stop the study at any time. Your refusing to participate will have no effect on your child's academic progress. You can discontinue your participation with no effect on your child's academic progress. Also any new

information discovered about the research will be provided to you. This information could affect your willingness to continue your participation.

Whom can I contact for additional information?

You can obtain further information about the research or voice concerns or complaints about the research by calling the Principal Investigator Melissa Peterson, Ed.D. Candidate, at (520)747-5534. If you have questions concerning your rights as a research participant, have general questions, concerns or complaints or would like to give input about the research and can't reach the research team, or want to talk to someone other than the research team, you may call the University of Arizona Human Subjects Protection Program office at (520) 626-6721. (If out of state use the toll-free number 1-866-278-1455.) If you would like to contact the Human Subjects Protection Program by email, please use the following email address <http://www.irb.arizona.edu/suggestions.php>.

Your Signature

By signing this form, I affirm that I have read the information contained in the form, that the study has been explained to me, that my questions have been answered and that I agree to take part in this study. I do not give up any of my legal rights by signing this form.

Name (Printed)

Participant's Signature

Date signed

Statement by person obtaining consent

I certify that I have explained the research study to the person who has agreed to participate, and that he or she has been informed of the purpose, the procedures, the possible risks and potential benefits associated with participation in this study. Any questions raised have been answered to the participant's satisfaction.

Name of study personnel

Study personnel Signature

Date signed

Consentimiento Informado

Construyendo puentes entre padres de familia y la escuela

Introducción

Usted ha sido invitado a tomar parte en un estudio. La información proporcionada en esta forma sirve para que usted decida si desea o no participar, Las personas que harán este estudio estarán disponibles para contestar cualquier pregunta y proveer información adicional. Si usted decide participar en este estudio se le pedirá que firme esta hoja de consentimiento. Se le dará una copia de esta forma.

¿Cuál es el propósito de este estudio de investigación clínica?

El propósito de este estudio es descubrir:

- a. *De que manera los padres Latinos participan en la escuela.*
- b. *De que manera las cosas que se practican en el hogar, alguna destreza y algunos de los recursos pueden encajar en la participación en la escuela.*
- c. *La participación de los padres ha cambiado como resultado de la interacción con la escuela y otros padres?*

¿Por qué se le ha pedido que participe?

Usted ha sido invitado porque es Latino/a y voluntario regular en la escuela.

¿A cuántas personas se les pedirá que participen en este estudio?

A aproximadamente de 10 a 25 personas se les ha pedido participar en este estudio. A algunos padres de los salones y voluntarios de otras escuelas se les pedirá su participación.

¿Qué ocurrirá durante este estudio?

Durante este estudio, las personas que lo realizan pasaran 46 horas observando el cuarto de padres por un periodo de tres meses. La persona encargada de este estudio realizara una entrevista (aproximadamente 45 minutos de duración) con cada participante durante un periodo de tres meses.

¿Por cuánto tiempo estaré participando en este estudio?

Serán necesarios una entrevista de 45 minutos para completar este estudio. La parte referente a la observación ocurrirá durante 3 meses como parte de las actividades regulares en el cuarto de padres y no requerirá participación directa o tiempo de los participantes.

¿Habrá algunos riesgos para mí?

Las cosas que usted hará no son de ninguna manera un riesgo de naturaleza criminal, socia, financiera o de poner en riesgo algunas cuestiones confidenciales. Aunque hemos tratado de evitar riesgos puede ser que algunos de las preguntas pueden ser estresantes o molestas, si esto ocurre puede dejar de participar inmediatamente. Podemos también darle información de personas que están dispuestas

a ayudarles con estos problemas.

¿Hay algún beneficio para mí?

No hay beneficios directos.

¿Habrá costos para mí?

Aparte de su tiempo no se la cobra por participar en este estudio.

¿Me pagarán por participar en este estudio?

No se le pagara por su participación.

¿Se harán grabaciones de mí, en vídeo o audio, durante el estudio?

Haremos una grabación y una filiación durante el estudio para asegurarnos de hacer una grabación correcta solamente si marca en el espacio de abajo

Doy permiso para que me filmen y graben durante mi participación en este estudio.

¿Se guardará confidencialmente la información que se obtenga de mí?

Las únicas personas que saben de su participación en este estudio son Investigador Principal Melissa Peterson y su consejero de la Universidad de Arizona, Dr. Arenas.

Su información será confidencial, so será identificado en ninguno de los reportes como resultado de esta investigación. Es posible que representantes del Gobierno Federal o del programa de protección a asuntos humanos (Human Subjects Protection Program) que apoya el estudio de investigación y quisiera venir a la universidad a revisar su información. Si fuera así una copia de esta información se les dará pero su nombre será removido antes de dar la información.

¿Qué sucede si los procedimientos del estudio me causan algún daño?

Hay un riesgo mínimo involucrado en este estudio. El riesgo no es mayor que el que ocurre durante su participación en la escuela.

¿Puedo cambiar de parecer sobre si quiero o no quiero participar?

Su participación en este estudio es voluntaria. Usted decide no comenzar o parar el estudio cuando lo desee. Si se niega a participar esto no afectara el progreso académico de su niño/a. Puede interrumpir su participación sin que esto afecte el progreso académico de su niño/a. También cualquier descubrimiento nuevo que se encuentre en este estudio se le dará a conocer. Tal vez esta información pudiera afectar su voluntad para continuar participando.

¿Con quién puedo comunicarme para más información?

Para obtener más información sobre la investigación clínica o para expresar sus inquietudes o presentar sus quejas sobre la investigación clínica, usted puede hablar con el Investigador Principal Melissa Peterson, doctoral candidate al teléfono (520)747-5534. Si usted tiene alguna pregunta sobre sus derechos como participante en investigaciones clínicas o si usted tiene preguntas, preocupaciones o quejas de carácter general o si le gustaría hacer sugerencias o comentarios sobre la investigación clínica y no puede comunicarse con los investigadores del estudio o si quiere hablar con otra persona que no sea uno de los investigadores, usted puede llamar a la oficina del programa de protección de sujetos humanos de la Universidad de Arizona (*University of Arizona Human Subjects Protection Program*) al (520) 626-6721. Si hace su llamada desde fuera del Estado de Arizona, marque el número gratis 1-866-278-1455.) Si prefiere comunicarse por correo electrónico con el *Human Subjects Protection Program*, por favor utilice esta dirección: <http://www.irb.arizona.edu/suggestions.php>.

Su firma

Al firmar este formulario de consentimiento, yo ratifico que he leído la información que contiene este formulario, que me han explicado este estudio de investigación clínica, que han contestado mis preguntas y que convengo en tomar parte en este estudio. Al firmar este documento no renuncio a mis derechos legales.

Nombre (En letra de molde)

Firma del Participante

Fecha en que fue firmado

Declaración de la persona que obtiene el consentimiento

Certifico que le he explicado el estudio de investigación clínica a la persona que ha convenido en participar, y que esta persona ha sido informada sobre el propósito, los procedimientos, los posibles riesgos y los posibles beneficios relacionados con la participación en este estudio. Todas las preguntas planteadas han sido contestadas a entera satisfacción del participante.

Nombre del miembro del personal del estudio

Firma del miembro del personal del estudio

Fecha en que fue firmado

APENDIX B: INTERVIEW TOOL

MELISSA PETERSON INTERVIEW TOOL (SPANISH)

1. Tiene niños que asisten a esta escuela?
2. Como se llaman y cuantos anos tienen?
3. Cuanto tiempo han asistido a esta escuela?
4. Pasa usted tiempo en esta escuela?
5. Ayuda como voluntario en el cuarto de padres de la escuela? Con cuantos frecuencia?
6. De que manera participa usted en los terrenos de la escuela?
7. Cuanto tiempo pasa usted trabajando en los terrenos de la escuela?
8. Cuanto de tiempo que usted pasa en los terrenos de la escuela es por propósitos sociales?
9. Sus relaciones sociales impactan su participación?
10. Ha ayudado en el jardín de la escuela?
11. Esta usted interesado en ayudar en el jardín de la escuela?
12. En donde nació?
13. A que edad llego usted a los Estados Unidos?
14. Que idioma habla?
15. Que tipo de trabajos ha tenido?
16. Usa usted algunos de sus habilidades de las experiencias de su trabajo para participar en la escuela?
17. Cuantos niños (18 anos o menos) viven con usted actualmente?
18. Cuantos adultos (18 anos o mas) viven con usted actualmente?

19. Por favor provea la siguiente información de los adultos de su casa.

Parentesco con usted.	Que tan bien habla Usted ingles?	Ocupación	Nivel mas elevado de educación?
Adulto 1: <input type="checkbox"/> usted <input type="checkbox"/> esposo <input type="checkbox"/> pariente <input type="checkbox"/> amigo <input type="checkbox"/> otro	<input type="checkbox"/> no lo hablo <input type="checkbox"/> un poco <input type="checkbox"/> bien <input type="checkbox"/> muy bien	<hr/> (por favor especifique)	<input type="checkbox"/> Escuela primaria <input type="checkbox"/> Escuela secundaria <input type="checkbox"/> Preparatoria <input type="checkbox"/> Algo de colegio/Estudios universitarios <input type="checkbox"/> Bachillerato <input type="checkbox"/> Maestría
Adulto 2: <input type="checkbox"/> usted <input type="checkbox"/> esposo <input type="checkbox"/> pariente <input type="checkbox"/> amigo <input type="checkbox"/> otro	<input type="checkbox"/> no lo hablo <input type="checkbox"/> un poco <input type="checkbox"/> bien <input type="checkbox"/> muy bien	<hr/> (por favor especifique)	<input type="checkbox"/> Escuela primaria <input type="checkbox"/> Escuela secundaria <input type="checkbox"/> Preparatoria <input type="checkbox"/> Algo de colegio/Estudios universitarios <input type="checkbox"/> Bachillerato <input type="checkbox"/> Maestría
Adulto 3: <input type="checkbox"/> usted <input type="checkbox"/> esposo <input type="checkbox"/> pariente <input type="checkbox"/> amigo <input type="checkbox"/> otro	<input type="checkbox"/> no lo hablo <input type="checkbox"/> un poco <input type="checkbox"/> bien <input type="checkbox"/> muy bien	<hr/> (por favor especifique)	<input type="checkbox"/> Escuela primaria <input type="checkbox"/> Escuela secundaria <input type="checkbox"/> Preparatoria <input type="checkbox"/> Algo de colegio/Estudios universitarios <input type="checkbox"/> Bachillerato <input type="checkbox"/> Maestría
Adulto 4 <input type="checkbox"/> usted <input type="checkbox"/> esposo <input type="checkbox"/> pariente <input type="checkbox"/> amigo <input type="checkbox"/> otro	<input type="checkbox"/> no lo hablo <input type="checkbox"/> un poco <input type="checkbox"/> bien <input type="checkbox"/> muy bien	<hr/> (por favor especifique)	<input type="checkbox"/> Escuela primaria <input type="checkbox"/> Escuela secundaria <input type="checkbox"/> Preparatoria <input type="checkbox"/> Algo de colegio/Estudios universitarios <input type="checkbox"/> Bachillerato <input type="checkbox"/> Maestría

MELISSA PETERSON INTERVIEW TOOL (ENGLISH)

1. Do you have children that attend this school?
2. What are their names and ages?
3. How long have your children attended this school?
4. Do you spend time at this school?
5. Do you volunteer in the parent room at this school? How often?
6. In what ways do you participate on campus?
7. How much time on campus do you spend working?
8. How much of your time on campus is for social purposes?
9. Do your social relationships impact your participation?
10. Have you helped in the school garden?
11. Are you interested in helping with the school garden?
12. Where were you born?
13. (To be asked if participant was not born in the U.S.) At what age did you arrive in the U.S.?
14. What languages do you speak?
15. Which types of jobs have you had?
16. Do you use any of the skills from your work experiences to participate at school?
17. How many children (18 years and younger) currently live with you?
18. How many adults (18 years and older) currently live with you?

19. Please provide the following information about the adults in your household:

Relationship with <u>you</u>	How well do they speak English?	Occupation	Highest level of education
Adult 1: <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse <input type="checkbox"/> Child <input type="checkbox"/> Relative <input type="checkbox"/> Friend <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all <input type="checkbox"/> A little <input type="checkbox"/> Well <input type="checkbox"/> Very well	<hr/> (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary school <input type="checkbox"/> Middle school <input type="checkbox"/> High school <input type="checkbox"/> Some college <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate degree
Adult 2: <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse <input type="checkbox"/> Child <input type="checkbox"/> Relative <input type="checkbox"/> Friend <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all <input type="checkbox"/> A little <input type="checkbox"/> Well <input type="checkbox"/> Very well	<hr/> (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary school <input type="checkbox"/> Middle school <input type="checkbox"/> High school <input type="checkbox"/> Some college <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate degree
Adult 3: <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse <input type="checkbox"/> Child <input type="checkbox"/> Relative <input type="checkbox"/> Friend <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all <input type="checkbox"/> A little <input type="checkbox"/> Well <input type="checkbox"/> Very well	<hr/> (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary school <input type="checkbox"/> Middle school <input type="checkbox"/> High school <input type="checkbox"/> Some college <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate degree
Adult 4: <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse <input type="checkbox"/> Child <input type="checkbox"/> Relative <input type="checkbox"/> Friend <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all <input type="checkbox"/> A little <input type="checkbox"/> Well <input type="checkbox"/> Very well	<hr/> (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary school <input type="checkbox"/> Middle school <input type="checkbox"/> High school <input type="checkbox"/> Some college <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate degree

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