A Converged Mixed Methods Study: Academic Mastery Among Latino Children in Migrant Farmworker Families

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Introduction

Quantitative

- Youth Survey: After data screening was complete, descriptive statistics, correlations, and scale reliabilities were calculated with age, child sex, and place of birth used as control variables.
- Multivariate linear regression models were used to examine predictors of school attachment and mastery orientation.

Qualitative

- Interviews & Focus Groups: De-identified (pseudonyms used for youth), School screening & analysis using thematic analysis and completed by two independent researchers.
- Integration of convergent mixed methods
- Integration of mixed methods through comparing and contrasting of quantitative and qualitative data results.

Results

Results from the main quantitative analysis are reported in Figures 1 & 2. In all cases solid lines show significant paths, and standardized coefficients and p-values are reported.

Discussion

- This convergent mixed methods study sought to investigate the factors that influence academic mastery among youth from LMFW families.
- Both quantitative & qualitative findings supported the notion that mastery orientation is positively predicted by school attachment.
- Qualitative evidence revealed that aspects of mobility as such as interruptions due to travel and differing school curricula may negatively contribute to school attachment and, in turn, youth’s academic mastery.
- Both data sources confirmed that school attachment is positively predicted by teacher attachment and negatively predicted by perceived rejection by teacher.
- Again, qualitative findings provided greater depth related to how LMFW mothers and fathers (either strong, underdeveloped, or strained) might impact school attachment among LMFW youth.
- While both data sources found that maternal involvement predicted school attachment, qualitative results revealed differences between how teachers and parents perceive parental involvement.
- It may be interesting to explore this phenomena further to see if these differences impact LMFW youth’s academic mastery and school attachments.
- Qualitative analysis found emerging dimensions that were not found significant in this study’s quantitative stage.
- Including mobility and its impact on LMFW youth’s educational success.

Limitations & Recommendations

- Quantitative: Youth Surveys collected from youth only; however obtaining survey data from both mothers and fathers could enhance findings.
- Qualitative: Youth Interview participants were predominantly male and mostly preferred to speak English. Future research should increase female participation. Also, given that findings revealed English fluency as a barrier to academic mastery, increasing participation of youth who mostly prefer to speak Spanish could provide valuable insights regarding this phenomenon.
- Focus groups with both mother and MEP providers were conducted, however no father focus groups and only one mother focus group were conducted. Future studies should increase the perspectives captured from both LMFW mothers and fathers.
- Convergent Mixed Methods: While both sources were collected at the same time this approach does not allow for researchers to use one data source to inform the collection of the second source. However, the strength of converged mixed methods is that it allows for triangulation of data sources which strengthens findings and also helps to control for researcher bias.

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