

# The Importance of Latino Parent Involvement within the K-12 School System

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## Introduction

Latino youth in the K-12 education system do not have high percentage rates of achieving academic success. There are several factors that affect Latino students' education, such as, lack of academic resources, insufficient support from educators, and limited parental involvement. In my research, I am focusing on parent involvement and how essential it is for their child's education. I aim to uncover the barriers and challenges that Latino parents face for effective involvement and support of their children.

## Research Questions

Parental involvement is a foundation for student success, especially within the K-12 system. I will be conducting research based on these two questions about parental involvement:

- What are some of the barriers Latino parents face that prevent them from getting involved?
  - How is language a barrier for Latino parents?
  - What are the values and views Latino parents have towards education?
  - How are school environments important in recruiting parent involvement?
  - How can the adoption of the "Mexican Myth" by educators affect parent involvement?
- In what ways are educators essential to gain parental involvement?



Be involved.  
Your child's  
future  
depends on  
it.

## Background

### The Role of Educators

It is important to study why educators occupy an important role in the education system and the educational success of their students. Educators carry a tremendous responsibility as, according to McKenna and Millen, educators not only teach and care for their students, but also the parents. In other words, educators create opportunities for parents to engage in their children's education.

*"It is not that our parents are not interested in our education, but language barriers and ignorance in general are directly affecting the improvement of the Latino Students."*

### Parent Voice and Parent Presence

In addition to the importance of educators for student success is parent involvement.

#### •Parent Voice

•Parents and/or caregivers have the right and opportunity to express and understand their child's education.

○For example, to state their desires, dreams, goals, and hopes for their children.

#### •Parent Presence

•Is the action parents/caregivers do in order to be involved in their child's education in formal and informal settings. It allows parents to help their child build their social and cultural capital.

•For example, volunteering at school and being involved in their child's extra curricular activities.

### "Mexican Myth": Not Valuing Education

The "Mexican Myth" is a derogatory stigma that is aimed at Mexican parents, implying that they do not value the importance of education. As a result this affects both the parents and children. Parents who are classified within this myth are:

- Mexican American
- Have low socio-economic status
- Have children who are deficit thinkers.

This belief affects how educators may or may not take the extra time and effort in helping parents become engaged in their child's education.

## Methodology

### Methodology

For this research, I have analyzed qualitative sources with a quantitative perspective to frame this project and the importance of parent involvement. For the next stage, I will be conducting semi-structured interviews with the following participants in the Ceres Unified School District:

- Elementary Teacher
- Parent Teacher Association Member(s)
- Parents
- School District Administrator
- High School Counselor

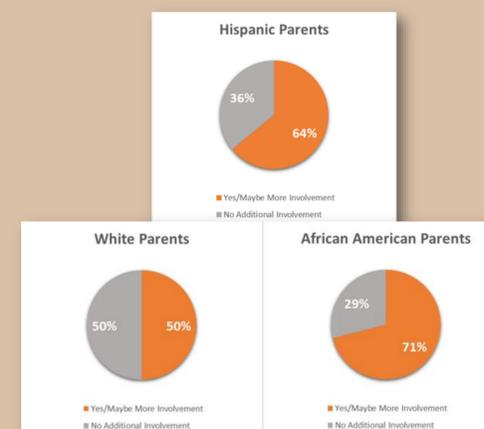


## Significance

The significance of this research is to see how parental involvement is essential for student academic success.

To this day, parental involvement is not a normal occurrence for many families, especially within the Latino community. Thus, I will uncover what is needed to improve and gain parent involvement.

Parental involvement not only helps students engage better in school, but also provides a support system, which also helps motivate them to achieve an education.



## Anticipated Outcomes

I anticipate I will gain evidence that supports my argument of how critical and important parental involvement is for the academic success of Latino youth.

If these findings highlight language barriers as one of the reasons for the lack of Latino parent involvement, I will share this with the Ceres Unified School District so they respond by eliminating language barriers within the school district with a more effective bilingual school districts' webpage.

Lastly, I hope that my research will continue to bring awareness to the topic of parental involvement and the barriers Latino parents face that hinder their opportunity to participate.



## References

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