Family-School Collaboration in Mexico: Perspectives of Teachers and Parents

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Dedication

My work is dedicated to Sebastian and Gabriel, who, each in their own way, have

brought fulfillment and joy to my life.

Abstract

This mixed-methods study examined the perspectives of teachers and parents regarding family-school collaboration in elementary schools of western Mexico through the lens of the cultural-historical contexts of various communities. Third Generation Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) provides the framework for comparing complex contexts of interacting groups (Engeström, 2001). It was employed to make comparisons across public, private, and rural community schools, as well as between teachers and parents. These contexts, as well as perceived access to mediating tools and the psychological beliefs of role construction and self-efficacy (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997), help to build expectations for working with students and with each other.

Results indicated that both teachers and parents are open to adopting various roles in the family-school relationship and have felt some success in engaging in those roles. Gender and teacher perceptions of average family income levels predicted teacher role construction, sense of efficacy, and how they assessed parents, while one's own experience in school and time living in the community predicted how parents reported their own role construction and efficacy. However, the rich descriptions provided through focus group interviews revealed more conflicting experiences with the family-school collaboration than did the survey results. In addition, despite substantial variation in responses, teachers assessed parents as being less committed to and confident about collaborating towards children's education than parents reported themselves. These internal contradictions are characteristic of activity theory and can become the instruments needed to drive change (Engeström & Glăveanu, 2012).

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>
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Introduction

In his 1997 book *For an Inclusive Progress*, internationally renowned author, essayist, and critic Carlos Fuentes challenged Mexicans to include the talent of all of the country's children, adolescents and adults in education (Fuentes, 1997, p. 19). With that challenge is the responsibility to view family, schools, and students as an inseparable triad of educational development. Thus, as nations such as Mexico attempt to prepare their young people for rapid technological, scientific, and economic change and globalization, the need for family-school partnerships has moved toward the forefront of educational policy.

Abundant research over the past three decades points toward the notion that children whose parents share responsibility of their education with schools have stronger academic outcomes and social readiness for entering their most productive years (Epstein, 1995; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Jeynes, 2003). Higher levels of parent involvement also correlate positively with children's mental health, social functioning (Pomerantz, Moorman, & Litwack, 2007), emotional growth (Patrikakou, 2005), and lower rates of academic failure, repetition, and dropout (Gertler, Patrinos, & Rubio-Codina, 2007).

The role of families in their children's education has been the discussion for educational policy initiatives at a global level. Development agencies such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have advocated for decentralization in education as a means of getting parents more directly engaged in improving student outcomes (Gunnarsson, Orazem, Sánchez & Verdisco, 2008). In the United States this is through Title I, Section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 2001, while in Mexico it is through Chapter VII of the General Law of Education (*Ley General de Educación)* of 2007. Each document delineates expectations for parent involvement in education and stipulates responsibilities for federal and state entities, as well as for districts and schools.

However, the research shows that espoused theory represented in national policy has not always translated into implicit theory-in-use (Lewis & Naidoo, 2004) as tensions arise between traditional values and contemporary reforms (Pryor, 2005; Walker, 2007). This divergence between policy and practice may arise when "an attractive goal,

articulated in the context of one set of democratic principles, is transplanted to another setting where its implementation may introduce dissonance in the existing ecology of values" (Louis, 2003, p. 102). If the educational policies fail to fit the context of the countries, it may result in their rejection or lack of implementation (Dimmock & Walker, 2005). Criticism of policy is evident in both the United States and Mexico. Within the United States, the National Policy Forum for Family, School, and Community Engagement addresses the misalignment of school policies as 'random acts of family involvement' and urge policymakers to approach this collaboration through a more systemic and integrated approach (Weiss, Lopez, & Rosenberg, 2010, p. 1). In Mexico, meanwhile, this policy has "encountered significant social rejection given the structural inequalities within the country" (Azaola, 2011, p. 9). Thus, bridging the gaps between theory and practice, tradition and reform continues to be an arduous task in both countries.

Statement of the Problem

In Mexico, the involvement of parents in their children's education is deeply embedded in the national and cultural context, yet in a different way than is being advocated by public policy in the country today. Parents have traditionally been viewed as an integral part of their children's education, along with educational institutions and the Catholic Church, each with distinct roles. While schools have been held responsible for the academic education of children, parents have contributed by fostering early language development, basic rules of behavior, essential skills for social interaction, and technical skills for a future profession (Esquivel, 1995). Today there is still evidence of these roles, while at the same time policy is directing parents to become more active in

the academic lives of their children, school maintenance, budgeting, volunteering at school activities, and in some cases, in school governance (Gertler, Patrinos, & Rubio-Codina, 2007).

The transition from traditional practices to newly defined roles for families in their children's education often causes confusion or tension between parents and teachers. Esquivel (1995) argues that problems can occur when frustrated parents feel that schools are not fulfilling their obligations to prepare their children for a life better than their own, or when they do not feel valued by teachers. She adds that when there are not common goals, values, or attitudes, frustration may cause parents to retreat and ignore their right to participate more actively at schools (p. 56). On the other hand, teachers may feel frustrated with whom they perceive to be disinterested parents, or have a weak sense of efficacy, feeling ill-prepared to engage parents in the educational process (Souto-Manning & Swick, 2006).

Research from Mexico reflects contradictions as to whether and how parents are involved in the educational process of their children. Former Mexican President Calderón expressed the insufficiency of parent involvement in education in his National Plan for Development, 2007-2012, "even as mechanisms exist for family participation in school dynamics and plans for school improvement" (Mexico, 2007, p. 191). In a 2009 study by the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) called *Barómetro de las Americas*, Mexico was rated as third to last place among Latin American countries in the level of participation by parent associations in schools (Cruz, 2009). Other groups are concerned that family-school collaboration exists on paper but not in practice (Huerta, 2009). Vélez, Linarez, Martínez, and Delgado (2008) write that an apparent apathy in society to

participate in education may be due to ambiguity about what is expected or as a form of resistance to the top-down approach to policy after a history of "negligence, abuse or neglect" of schools (translation by author, p. 7). Another issue might be if current policies that are imposed on schools conflict with traditional, more informal ways of participation, or if parents and teachers define involvement differently, both of which could lead to misunderstandings and misinterpretations of efforts (Azaola, 2010; Barraza, 2003). All of these reflect a lack of clarity about what parent participation should look like and how to foster positive relationships between stakeholders.

An urgent concern that reflects the need for increased parent involvement in Mexico is evidence of weakness of the educational system, as revealed by continued low student academic outcomes. In an Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) external evaluation of Mexico's educational system, Mexican students scored 17% lower than the OECD average in reading in 2006, dropping from reported levels in the year 2000. Despite the improvement in educational indicators in Mexico since 2006, it remains well below the OECD average (OECD, 2012b).

Studies on enrollment, graduation rates, and transition to work for young people in Mexico also indicate a greater need for more family involvement in their children's education. According to the publication *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators, Mexico,* Mexico has one of the highest rates of four year-old enrollments in the world, yet one of the lowest enrollment levels for upper secondary, or *preparatoria* (OECD, 2012b, p. 4). Graduation rates within this relatively small group are even grimmer, with the expected completion rate for *preparatoria* at only 47% and last of all OECD countries. Those completing a university education are also rated second to last, although a negative

correlation between education level and employment may deter some students from continuing with their education (p. 8)

As a response to the need for more data-driven policy measures, the Mexican Secretary of Education (SEP) began implementing its first national standardized exam in the year 2006. This exam, called the *Evaluación Nacional del Logro Académico en Centros Escolares* (ENLACE), was applied each spring to students in grades three through six of elementary school (*primaria*) and the three grades of secondary school (*secundaria*) in Mexico City and all thirty-one states between 2006 and 2013. The SEP has published a contextual analysis of the results each year on its official website and the results of 2012 continue to reflect a deficiency in mastery of skills for both language and mathematics. Over the past six years, the scores have improved impressively. Nevertheless, the majority of students in grades three through six still have insufficient or only basic knowledge of math and language, far from representing a solid educational base in Mexico. There are also discrepancies in the 2012 ENLACE scores according to the type of schooling as well as between states (Mexico/SEP, 2012). The low scores among Mexican students reflect a complex array of conditions, yet research points toward family-school collaboration as one important step toward improvement.

Rationale

The nature of this critical relationship between parents and teachers in Mexico, based upon expectations for one's own and each other's involvement in education, is the basis for the current study. This study represents and analysis of the relationship between parent and teacher expectations for family-school collaboration, based on how they

construct their roles and what they believe will have a positive effect on the educational outcome of students (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997, 2005).

The approach to this study is also more relational than structural in nature (Kim et al., 2012) and thus a mixed-methods design is utilized in order to achieve that highlight the nature of relationships in family-school collaboration. While considering demographic and structural factors, the purpose of this study is meant to address a gap in the literature by analyzing parent and teacher perceptions of their relationships with the student, with the school, and with each other. A better understanding of how teachers and parents perceive their own roles and expectations can then lead to discussions toward more meaningful engagement with each other.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to assess the relationship between parent and teacher expectations for family-school collaboration within elementary schools in three municipalities of western Mexico. The assumption is that parents and teachers have expectations of what family-school collaboration should look like that may not match. There may also be differences within groups of parents and teachers, based on the communities in which they are situated, and that in turn influence the effectiveness of family-school collaboration efforts.

Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1) What are teacher expectations for their roles in family-school collaboration?

    1a) What factors predict teacher expectations?

2) How do teachers perceive parental expectations of involvement in their children's education?

      2a) What factors predict teacher perceptions of parental expectations?

3) How do parents perceive their own roles and efficacy in relation to their children's education?

      3a) What factors predict parental expectations?

      3b) How do parental expectations for involvement differ from how teachers perceive them to be?

Theoretical Framework Guiding the Study

Researchers have approached family-school relations from psychological, sociological, anthropological, and even economic perspectives and by employing a variety of theoretical frameworks. However, few approaches sufficiently address the degree of contextual complexity in which parents and teachers are embedded as they attempt to interact as cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT). CHAT has been developed over several generations, beginning with Vygotsky (1978), and provides a framework that is grounded in psychology and relates to Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological framework, in that "human development cannot be adequately understood without significant reference to the proximal and distal systems that work to limit or enhance both developmental processes and outcomes" (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997, p. 5).

The underlying principle of cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) is that human activity is driven by cultural mediation through artifacts or tools (Engeström, 1999). This process has been represented in three generations, beginning with Vygotsky's

intent to address contradictions of contemporary psychological theory in the early

twentieth century between individual and social learning, learning and development, and

decontextualized versus embodied knowledge (Roth & Lee, 2007, p. 187). According to

Vygotsky (1978), the activity of learning takes place through interaction and can be

represented as a triangle with a subject, an object and mediating artifacts, or tools, at the

vertices (Cole & Engeström, 1993) such as portrayed in Figure 1. The subject is an

individual or individuals who are striving toward an object through the mediation of

tools. These mediating tools can include artifacts, social others, as well as prior

knowledge (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010). The object here is not the same as goal. One could

use the example of a child, whose object is to mediate interactions with the environment

through various goals, one of which is to learn how to read (Cole, 1995). In learning to

read, however, the first mediating tool is adult knowledge and modeling. Thus as the

child's actions shift from guided reading to independent reading, the zone of proximal

development becomes narrower and the mediating tool changes from the adult mentor to

the text itself (Cole, 1995). Objects are then goal-directed actions and are fixed, whereas

goals change according to need and ultimately drive actions (Engeström, 2001).

Mediating artifact

(tool)
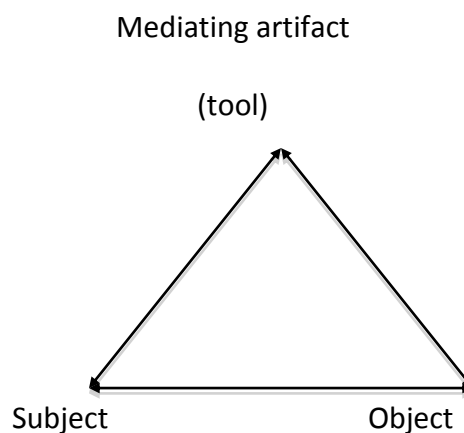
Subject   Object

Figure 1. First generation CHAT

One of Vygotsky's students, Leont'ev (1978), developed CHAT theory further into a second generation by focusing on object-oriented activity within a social context or collective activity system bound by rules and norms, encompassed within a community, and influenced by division of labor (Engeström, 2001). Here, the conditions of and the individual's place within that society steer the activity, thus making it object-oriented. Figure 2 represents the second generation CHAT as a context-embedded activity.
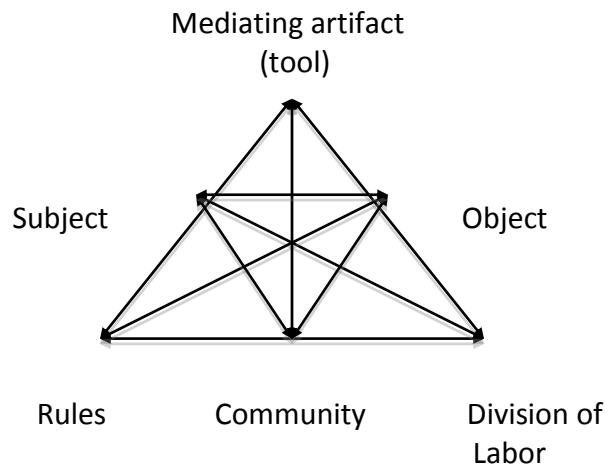
Figure 2. Second generation CHAT: The activity system

Engeström (2001), of the Helsinki Center for Activity Theory and Developmental Work Research, developed the third generation of CHAT, where two or more collective groups interact in order to create a 'third space,' or a 'jointly constructed object.' Figure 3 is a representation of two activity systems and their interaction in first defining their own objects (Object$_1$ and Object$_2$), ultimately creating a jointly constructed object (Object$_3$). Characteristics of third generation CHAT include multivoicedness of activity systems where social engagement is required so that "through dialogue, individuals may challenge

each others' underlying assumptions about root causes of success and failure" of their

efforts (Honig, 2008, p. 637). Historicity also plays a role as actors relate past

experiences to their future expectations (Cole, 1995). Contradictions are inherent within

and between activity systems but offer opportunities for negotiation and change

(Engeström, 1999; Roth & Lee, 2007). Finally, members of two or more activity systems

can engage in 'expansive transformations' as they re-conceptualize a common object and

create new tools of collaboration (Engeström, 2001).

Mediating tools   Mediating tools

Object 2   **Object 2**

Object 1   **Object 1**

SUBJECT$_1$ **SUBJECT$_2$**

Rules   Community   Division   Rules   Community   Division
               of labor   of labor

Object 3:
JOINTLY-CONSTRUCTED
COLLABORATION
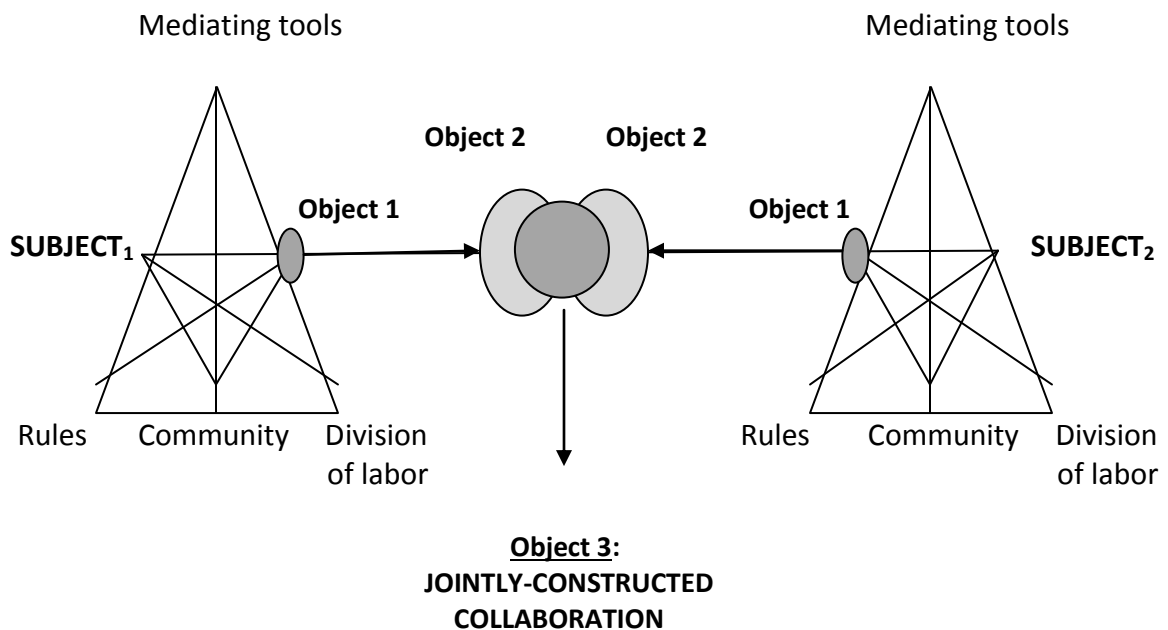
Figure 3. Third generation CHAT: Interacting activity systems

Thus, third generation CHAT can be used to analyze the relationships between

teachers and parents as two interacting activity systems, each embedded in a unique

context. How CHAT will be used to portray the implementation of mediating tools and

role of expectations for family-school collaboration in creating jointly constructed objects are discussed in further detail in Chapters Two and Three.

Definitions of Key Constructs

Family-school Collaboration

Family-school collaboration in this study refers to school personnel and families "working together and sharing responsibility for results" (Anderson-Butcher & Ashton, 2004, p. 40). This is a slightly different approach from the more widely cited construct that Epstein (1995, 2005) developed on family-school-community partnerships. Within the United States, partnerships imply equality among stakeholders, even if they have distinct roles, while research shows this not to be the case in Mexican schools (Azaola, 2011).

Family Participation/Involvement

The concepts of 'parent' and 'family' will be used interchangeably in this study, as well as 'participation' and 'involvement.' Although parents are usually responsible for children's education in Mexico, in some situations other members or even neighbors assume this role (Méndez, Flores, De la Vega, 2009). In addition, although the term 'parent involvement' is more widely used in the United States, its Spanish counterpart in Mexico is *participación de padres*, and so much of the literature written in English about Mexicans uses the term 'parent participation' in their children's education.

Culture

The term *culture* has a very specific meaning within CHAT theory. Rather than focusing on culture as shared values and activities among groups of people, culture is defined by Cole (1995) as a "medium constituted of historically formulated artifacts

which are organized to accomplish human growth" (p. 35). Thus, cultural mediums fit within the activity systems and are created through interventions in order for the subjects to approach their objects. Mejia-Arauz, Keyser, & Correa-Chavez (2013) expand on this definition and its relation to CHAT by stating that "cultural and generational variances within the same community are part of the cultural dynamic that transforms life practices and those, in turn, modify the culture" (translation by author, p. 1020). These variances refer to the modification of mediating artifacts, or tools, that are used by any activity system, within the same community, no matter how large or small.

Expectations

Expectations determine how each group or individual chooses to participate and what is anticipated from others. Cole (1995) states that expectations are formed by past experiences, thus grounded in historicity, and influence present behavior (p. 37). For the purpose of this study the personal psychological beliefs of role construction and sense of efficacy are employed to determine parent and teacher expectations for family-school collaboration (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997), as well as the cultural and historical context of each group. The assumption is that expectations vary not only between teachers and parents, but between groups of teachers and groups of parents.

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Context of the Study

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The current study includes three mid-sized municipalities in a western state of Mexico. Generally, Mexico has a fairly young population. The average years of schooling for citizens ages 15 or over was 8.63 in 2010 and over 2,229,434 children were enrolled in elementary school (INEGI, 2010, pp. 8-9). In Mexico the educational system is centralized through the Secretary of Public Education (SEP).

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There are three types of schools that serve the majority of the population: private (*particular)*, public *(pública)*, rural community (*rural)*. Public school, although located in both urban and rural areas, are under the authority of the Mexican Secretary of Education (SEP), while the rural community schools are self-governing and under the authority of the National Council for Educational Development (CONAFE). Within the public school system, there are also federal and state elementary schools, as well as two different times when schools operate: morning schools operate from 8:00 am to 12:30 pm (*matutino)* while afternoon schools offer classes from 1:30 to 6:00 pm (*vespertino)*. Many school principals and teachers are employed at two different schools, working in the mornings at one and in the afternoons at another.

The primary municipality chosen for this study has approximately 255,700 inhabitants, nestled in the Sierra Madre Occidental mountain range on the west coast of Mexico (State Government, 2012). Within the municipality, there are at least 143 elementary schools with over 34,000 students (Municipality, 2010). The population of in this region is characterized by high rates of economic inequality. The economy of the city center is based on national and international tourism, whereas the income of the surrounding areas of the municipality comes from agriculture and livestock. A significant factor in the population is its rate of "multidimensional poverty," as reported by the State Council for Population (COEP). Multidimensional poverty is defined as when a person's income is "insufficient to acquire the goods and services necessary to satisfy his/her needs in at least one of the following areas: educational attainment, access to health care, access to social security, quality of and space for living, and basic utilities" (translation by author, State Government, 2012, p. 5). In a recent report, 45.5% of the population in

the greater municipality was found to be living at a level of multidimensional poverty, as opposed to the state level, which was 22.1%. This economic inequality is reflected in the types of schools that are available to each social class and, in turn, academic achievement (Muñoz-Izquierdo & Villarreal-Guevarra, 2005) and may be a factor in the context of parent and teacher expectations for family-school collaboration.

Value premises

Interest for this study arises from my experience as an educator at international schools in Mexico for the last twenty years. Although my own training is at the secondary level, I have also served as program director for a student leadership and service program through which I have gained valuable experience with the local public and rural elementary school communities. By working with school directors, teachers, students, and their parents in both urban and rural settings, I have gained a deep appreciation for the desire on the part of many parents and teachers to offer the best education possible within the complex setting of their work.

As a Social Studies teacher, I also appreciate the value of historical perspective and context in understanding an issue. If we are to strive to improve family-school relations, then we must give a voice to both parents and teachers. I would like to extend my knowledge and skills to a better understanding as to collaboration between families and schools can be strengthened for the benefit of the children where I have lived. Having lived in several countries, I am also deeply convinced of the central role of culture in any educational activity. Whether it is defined on a national, racial, ethnic level or as the transformation of mediating tools within an activity system, culture influences our perceptions of reality and must, therefore, be addressed in research.

My specific interest is to bring the internal contradictions within practices of family-school partnerships to light in a western region of Mexico. In the 2002 study of Engeström, Engeström and Suntio, the authors address built-in constraints in the organization of schools that make it sometimes make it difficult for teachers to interact in a transformative way (p. 211), and I will add to that discussion by analyzing how teacher and parent expectations are built upon individual and collective contexts, how these may or may not align with each other.

Study Delimitations

The purpose of this study is to assess parent and teacher expectations for family-school collaboration, recognizing that expectations do not necessarily translate into desired practices. There is an array of social, economic, and psychological barriers to involvement, some of which have come to light through the qualitative portion of this study. However, the focus is on how these barriers add to defining expectations about collaboration rather than leading to the activity itself. The results of this study are meant to serve as a first step toward dialogue and negotiation that could lead to more effective family-school collaboration.

Chapter Two: Review of the Literature

Introduction

The family-school dynamic has been widely researched, revealing the complex and multifarious nature of the relationship rather than providing straightforward answers about how to effectively support every child. Chapter Two is presented in an ecological format, beginning with a broader view of international research on the link between families and schools, and then gradually moving toward the specific population of the current study in Mexico. In Part One, parental involvement in education in relation to student achievement and personal growth is addressed. Part Two is an overview of three types of models for the parental role in family-school collaboration. Part Three presents the conceptual model, based on CHAT, Bourdieu's theory of cultural, economic and social capital, and Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1995, 2005) psychological motivators of role construction and sense of efficacy. Part Four presents an outline of key factors of family-school collaboration as they relate to the three models and to cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT). These include a) demographic characteristics, b) beliefs, attitudes, and expectations, and c) culture. Part Five is a discussion of literature on Mexican parent involvement in education, with an initial focus on research within the larger Latino/a population in the United States and finally on research from Mexico itself. The chapter concludes with a review of gaps persisting in the literature and how the current study addresses those gaps.

Part I: Impact of Family Involvement in Education

Research Related to Academic Achievement

Parents' involvement with schools is widely claimed to positively correlate with their children's academic achievement in the form of higher grades and test scores (Gordon & Louis, 2009; Henderson & Mapp, 2002). However, not all schools are characterized by active parent involvement and not all families participate equally. The literature also reveals conflicting evidence as to what types of activities correlate to strong academic outcomes (Jeynes, 2003). Parental involvement also seems to vary across populations. In Jeynes' (2003) meta-analysis, he found a significant relationship between parent participation and academic achievement for Latino/a, African and Asian American students, although there were differences between groups. The strength of the correlation also varied according to the measure of achievement. There may be additional variations by age or grade level of the student (Englund, Luckner, Whaley, & Egeland, 2004), demonstrating the essential role of defining specific parameters for research.

Results are inconsistent as to whether increased parental involvement leads to higher achievement or vice versa. In a longitudinal study in Canada with 239 parents, Deslandes (2009) found that parents were more likely to become involved at schools when their children are having difficulties than when they are doing well. Englund et al. (2004), however, found a bidirectional relationship between parental involvement at school and student achievement. While in the first grade parents with children who were doing well were reported to be more active at school, their involvement over time was correlated to high achievement of their children in the third grade. Meanwhile, the results of a study of 1,364 students from birth through the fifth grades found no significant correlation between parental involvement and within-child student achievement (Nokali, Bachman, and Votruba-Drzal, 2010). These authors suggest that a difference between

their subjects and those in studies that did seem to lead to a positive correlation may be due to selection bias, where involved parents differ from uninvolved parents in their beliefs about parenting and education. Another possibility could be that questions on the survey instrument are too general and only about thoughts and feelings about parent involvement in education, rather than tied directly to specific subject areas or skills such as reading (p. 1002).

Family involvement at home appears to be equally important for educational achievement yet is more challenging to measure objectively. Some research points toward parental involvement at home as a significant predictor of student achievement for among certain ethnic or racial groups (LeFevre & Shaw, 2012) or in certain subject areas such as mathematics when schools successfully implement strategies encouraging parents to support learning at home (Sheldon and Epstein , 2005). Again, there are discrepancies in results from varying age groups and other factors. In a longitudinal study of 1,968 children from various Head Start programs, authors reported that parent home involvement contributed to early academic growth, albeit in complex ways. For example, children from ethnic- or language-minority backgrounds had a slightly negative association with vocabulary development, yet once in the program their growth exceeded those from non-minority status (Wen, Bulotsky-Shearer, Hahs-Vaughn, & Korfmacher, 2012). There may also be differences in results between naturally occurring forms of support in families and school-mediated methods (Pomerantz et al., 2007). Despite what appear to be inconsistencies in the research, cooperation and partnering between families, schools and the community are considered to be positive ways to ensure the learning of all children (Epstein, 2001).

Research Related to Other Positive Outcomes

Although academic achievement has been the primary focus of research on parental involvement, the literature highlights several other very important outcomes. Benefits of families and schools working together include better attendance, more homework completion, fewer special education placements, more positive attitudes, higher graduation rates, and greater enrollment in postsecondary education (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Increased parent involvement has also been shown to be a predictor of declines in problem behaviors and an improvement in social skills (Nokali et al., 2010) and can enhance both emotional and social functioning (Pomerantz et al., 2007).

Schools also benefit from collaboration with parents. These include improved teacher morale, higher teacher ratings by parents, more family support, and better school reputations within the community (Henderson and Mapp, 2002). Other positive outcomes are improved school safety and security, as well as academic enrichment and material resources (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2008). Overall, the research reflects an array of reasons why families and schools should foster collaboration in children's education early on.

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Part II: Models of Family Involvement in Education

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Over the last few decades several models for parental involvement in education have been developed. The models presented here are categorized into three groups as activity-centered, family-centered, and culture-centered. As their names indicate, these three categories vary by whom or what is at the center of investigation, and may include all family members, not only parents.

Activity-centered Models

Goals: Much of research on the family-school relationship has focused on the types of activities that are most effective in supporting learning and personal development. An advantage with this approach is that social science researchers are able to determine correlations between variables such as demographics, activities, and educational outcomes. These models are conducive to structurally oriented studies and quantitative research.

Examples. Epstein (1996) and her associates at the Center on Family, and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University have developed one of the most widely implemented and rigorously researched models. The author uses the term 'partnership' instead of 'participation,' emphasizing the equal participation of three groups of stakeholders - family, school, and community - who share responsibility for student learning and development through various activities. Six types of partnership activities that their research shows to have an impact on student outcomes are parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with community. This research has been essential in guiding schools in the United States and internationally toward more effective family-school-community partnerships.

A second model was developed by Martiniello (1999) during her time at the Harvard Institute for International Development. Martiniello claimed that illiteracy and educational levels of parents are the greatest barriers to involvement in Latin American countries and that therefore programs should include serving all parents, include training for teachers and parents, have continual contact with parents, and have parents involved in all four of these roles: as caregivers, as teachers, as supporters at school, and as agents for decision-making. Martiniello's (1999) taxonomy for parent involvement is widely

cited in Latin American educational research, yet there has been little testing of the model or instruments based upon it.

Navarro, Pérez, González, Mora, & Jiménez (2006) from the Universidad de Concepción in Chile introduced a model which differentiates between types and places of involvement activities in education and then present data on teacher characteristics and promoting the various types of involvement. In a matrix with four sections, Navarro et al. (2006) differentiate between academic participation at school, academic participation at home, non-academic participation at school, and non-academic participation at home. Their main study was to find the relationship between teacher characteristics and how they promote parental involvement in education in Chile.

Within Mexico, Huerta (2010) of the National Institute of Educational Evaluation (INEE) based a model for parent participation in secondary education on three types of activities: establishing lines of communication, activities that are designed by the school to involve parents, and activities either managed or promoted by parents. Although these categories were used for secondary schools, they align well to the types of activities that take place in elementary schools in Mexico. Huerta's finding was that schools with higher academic levels tend to have more activities that involve parents in comparison to schools with lower academic levels. However, it is not clear whether the parental involvement promoted high outcomes or vice versa.

Weaknesses. There are several weaknesses of the activity-centered model. First is that it's focus on structure does not address the relational nature of the family-school dynamic. It also fails to address why families or teachers become involved in collaboration or how their individual or group context influences the relationship. These

traditional models are also reported to lack in authentic participation, rather focusing on the deficiencies of parents and thereby failing to involve marginalized populations meaningfully in schools (Anderson, 1998; Crozier & Davies, 2007). Some researchers have argued that this approach to family-school collaboration is based on dominant culture values in the United States and fails to take practices of non-dominant population groups or barriers to involvement into account (Baquedano-López, Alexander & Hernandez, 2013; Delgado-Gaitan, 2012) .

Family-centered Models

Goals. As its name indicates, the family-centered models begin by looking into the home. They often focus on psychological motivators for parental or other family member involvement, the home setting, and on what families already offer to the educational process of children, thus moving away from the deficit model of involvement. The last two of these models are also meant to empower families that are traditionally marginalized and thus expand the breadth of positivist, interpretive, and critical theory research paradigms. There is a stronger emphasis on building relationships between families, teachers, and the community.

Examples. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997, 2004) of Vanderbilt University's Family-School Partnership Lab provide a rigorously tested psychological approach to parental involvement in education with five levels. In Level One are motivational beliefs of parents and perceptions of invitations by the student and school, Level Two presents four categories of types and mechanisms of involvement, Level Three assesses how children perceive parents' mechanisms for involvement, Level Four adds factors that include student attributes that contribute to achievement, and Level Five represents the

actual level of achievement. Thus, this model provides a much deeper analysis of various layers of context that contribute to the why and how of parental involvement in. The current study employs the constructs of role construction and sense of efficacy of Level One in defining parent and teacher expectations toward family-school collaboration, taking the psychological approach of motivational beliefs and applying it to both parents and teachers.

Moll & Gonzalez (1994) introduce an alternative in their 'funds of knowledge' conceptual model, where households and families are considered the center for education, rather than the classroom. Funds of knowledge are defined as "those historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being" that families acquire through diverse social networks with other households (p. 443), and are closely related to the CHAT construct of mediating tools. This is a non-traditional approach to parent participation because it holds the family as the source of knowledge rather than only the school, and both teachers and children become researchers through language and literacy in order to learn from the families represented by students within the classroom (Baquedano-Lopez et al., 2013). The goal of this model is to empower families of minority populations by recognizing valuable knowledge and skills that they pass on to their children.

Head Start has also focused on families in its framework for parent engagement in education at the preschool level. This model is based on the research that family, school, and community partnerships ensure greater learning and strives toward six engagement outcomes: 1) family well-being, 2) positive parent-child relationships, 3) families as lifelong educators, 4) families as learners, 5) family engagement in transitions, 6) family

connections to peers and community, and 7) families as advocates and leaders (Henrich, 2013; U.S. Department of Health and Humana Services, 2011). Having worked with marginalized communities across the United States, this Head Start model offers the opportunity for families to identify and challenge traditional barriers to involvement in education.

   Weaknesses. Family-centered models of parental involvement address several of the weaknesses of the activity-centered model, yet have some of their own. Although they identify motivating factors for involvement and address barriers by recognizing and empowering parents, this model focuses more closely on the micro level of family-school relations and lacks insight into how these factors fit into the larger frame of school-, district-wide or national policy. Focusing on the family also fails to address the needs of teachers as those made accountable for family-school policy. Thus, although it addresses critical needs, it is not sufficient to improve relationships between families and schools.

Culture-centered Models

   Goals. Culture-centered models take context into account when analyzing factors that influence involvement in education. The development of these models has often arisen from a concern that conventional, activity-centered approaches to family-school collaboration have been too dominant culture-centric (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Delgado-Gaitan, 2012). A culture-centered model, then, addresses the weakness of the family-centered model by examining the context in which families and schools are placed and recognizes the critical role of the development of social and cultural capital, respect, and trust in relationships (Adams, Forsyth and Mitchell, 2009; Bourdieu, 1986).

   Examples. One such model is the Social Exchange Model of Family Engagement,

developed by researchers from the Association for the Education of Young Children and Pre-K Now (Halgunseth, Peterson, Stark, & Moodie, 2009). Here, family-school partnerships are placed within the context of culture and society, as well as in the exchange between program and family resources. Based on ecological systems theory and social exchange theory, this model combines the importance of family-school partnerships for student outcomes, but also addresses motivations for working together. According to this model, family engagement increases with the development of a strong program-family relationship, thus benefitting the children's development. The authors emphasize the critical role of cultural sensitivity and the cyclical nature of the process (p. 7). However, it assumes that schools are viewing parents as equal partners in the relationship.

A second model, Ecologies of Parental Engagement (EPE), was developed by Barton, Drake, Perez, St. Louis, & George (2004) and based on cultural-historical activity theory, social capital theory, and critical race theory. It is similar to the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) approach in that researchers address how and why parents participate in their children's education, but then take it further to demonstrate how this involvement relates to space and capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Both academic and non-academic activities at school and at home or in the community are within the field of space, similar to Navarro's et al.(2006) model mentioned above. Parental engagement, then, is "a set of relationships and actions that cut across individuals, circumstances, and events that are produced and bounded by the context in which that engagement takes place (Barton et al., 2004).

Weaknesses. The culture-centered models attempt to address weaknesses in both

activity and family-centered models by recognizing context, barriers, inequities, and focusing on relational trust and authentic participation by all stakeholders. They are better able to be placed within an ecological framework and be analyzed at various levels. However, in themselves they may yet be insufficient to remedy power differences between groups of stakeholders.

Cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) within the three models

When considering the three models for family involvement in education mentioned here, it is possible that each could fit within certain aspects of CHAT theory. The activity-centered model, centering on what parents and teachers *do* in the family-school relationship, fits within the concept of activity systems. As Engeström (2001) states, activity is "artifact-mediated" and "goal-directed" (p. 136). Thus, as we examine what activities families are engaged in, we should be able to identify artifacts or tools that are used in the process and conscious or unconscious goals that drive them.

The family-centered model of involvement in education applies well to second-generation activity theory, where the individual is placed within a collective activity system that is inseparable from its context (Engeström, 2001). This collective group belongs to a community that is characterized by customs and norms, division of labor, and shared artifacts that have developed over time, and its activities change as internal contradictions arise and are negotiated within the group (p. 134).

The culture-centered model of family involvement in education can be viewed through both second and third generation CHAT. Michael Cole of the University of California Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition in San Diego is one of the leading researchers on CHAT and the role of culture and context in learning. Although

there is a strong focus on activity in CHAT, Cole (1999) argues that it also "places

culture at the center of human behavior," thus making the relationship between mediated

activity and culture intimately related (p. 90). In this sense, one could say that there is a

"culture" around the mediated activities of families and teachers at any given school.

Third generation activity, in turn, demonstrates the interplay between at least two

collective groups and their culturally embedded activity systems (Engeström, 2001).

In recent research, international education has been a key area of attention for

CHAT theorists, such as for the study of school co-ops (Marjanovic-Shane et al., 2006),

language (Allen, 2010; Gutierrez, Rymes & Larson, 1995), collaborative learning

(Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, Álvarez, & Chiu, 1999), curriculum development

(Pacheco, 2012), online learning (Liaw, Huang & Chen, 2007; Zurita & Nussbaum,

2007), attitudes toward special education needs (Pearson, 2009), and literacy (Roth &

Lee, 2007). However, there is little research that employs the CHAT model for the

family-school relationship. There are similarities to this type of relationship in studies on

the patient-health care system relationship. For example, Hakkinen and Korpela (2007)

researched patients in maternity clinics where the patient and the institution needs and

objects are viewed within their own contexts, similar to families and schools. This study,

therefore, is meant to address a gap in the literature by framing family and teacher

expectations in their respective culturally situated contexts through the framework of

CHAT.

Part III: Conceptual Framework

Cultural-historical activity theory provides not only the theoretical foundation for

this study, but the conceptual framework as well. Figure 4 employs third generation

CHAT in order to represent the collective activities of parents and teachers in their respective social contexts as they move toward family-school collaboration in the Mexican context.

Mediating tools   Mediating tools

Obj.2:   **Obj.2:**
FAMILY-SCHOOL   **SCHOOL-FAMILY**

Obj.1   **Obj.1:**
CHILDREN   **STUDENTS**

PARENTS   **TEACHERS**

(Expectations)   (Expectations)

Rules   Community   Division   Rules   Community   Division
of labor   of labor

Object 3:
JOINTLY-CONSTRUCTED
COLLABORATION
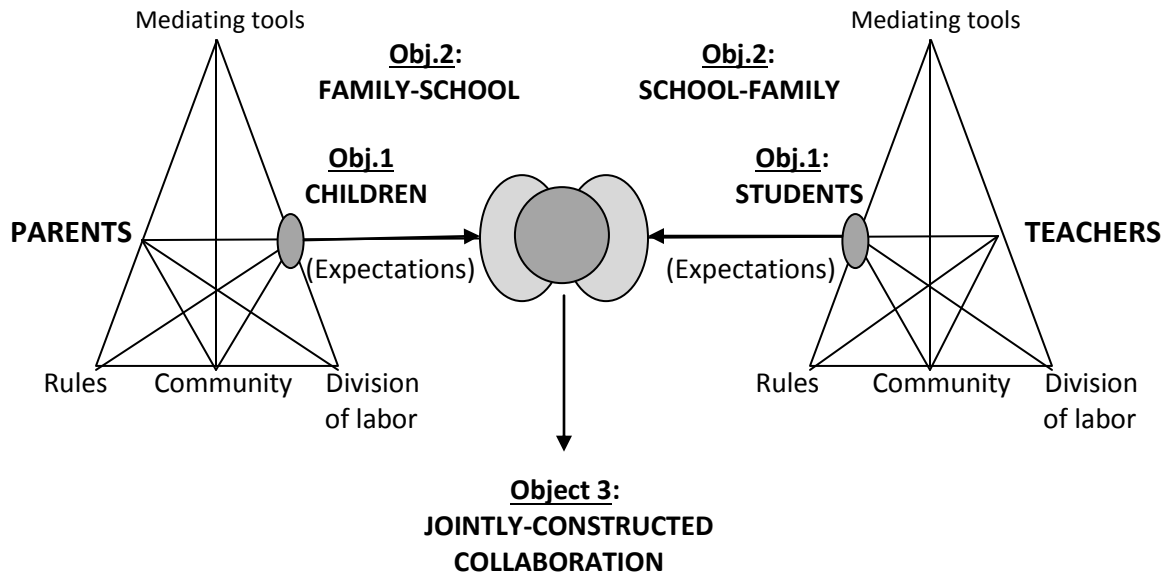
Figure 4. Parent and teacher activity systems in CHAT

Cultural-historical Context

Within the CHAT framework, parents and teachers are members of different activity systems tied to organizational settings and are characterized by their communities, division of labor, and norms, having access to mediating tools that have been developed over time (Engeström, 2001). Members of each system strive for objects through goal-directed actions. As the focus of parents and teachers is on the child's education (respective $Objects_1$), the two enter into a family-school relationship towards

that end (Objects$_2$). However, as stakeholders define this relationship depending on or even within their own contexts, contradictions may lead to misunderstandings and frustration. Thus, in order to reach Object$_3$, which is jointly defined collaboration, it is useful to step back and assess what expectations drive each group.

Expectations

Within the framework of CHAT, expectations arise from the socio-cultural context of each group and influence the actions that lead each group toward their specific objects, as well as behaviors and perceptions of each other. The alignment of these expectations for involvement in children's education may also influence the type and extent of participation. Thus, in order to build opportunities for meaningful dialogue and negotiation about family-school collaboration, stakeholders need first to have a better understanding of each other's context and expectations for their own and each others' roles.

Two ways to assess expectations are through role construction and sense of efficacy, which are how parents and teachers view their roles for supporting children's education in the family-school relationship and how much influence they feel they have in that role. Research suggests that increased levels of parental sense of efficacy and role construction may lead to more active involvement in education (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Anderson & Minke, 2007). This study broadens previous research by assessing the perceptions of both teachers and parents in defining their expectations. The assumption is that the way in which teachers form their beliefs about their roles and ability to influence families and children also arise from their cultural and historical contexts.

Sense of efficacy. Self-efficacy is defined as " beliefs that their involvement activities will make a positive difference in their students' school learning" (Walker, Ice, Hoover-Dempsey, & Sandler, 2011, p. 413) and is based on previous research and theory development by Bandura (1977). Here, thinking about possible outcomes is what guides behavior and goal setting becomes dependent on one's estimates of one's own capabilities. Thus, the stronger the perceived self-efficacy, the higher the goal setting is within a certain area and stronger the commitment to achieve those goals (Bandura, 1977). Those who have stronger self-efficacy in a certain area may respond to setbacks with more effort, believing that to be the lacking element rather than ability (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997).

Both parents and teachers need a sense of efficacy that their interactions with each other will be beneficial for their students. A parent's belief that he or she can positively influence a child increases the power of role construction towards an action (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997) and some research shows that parents who view themselves as efficacious tend to be more involved and will have a greater response to teacher attitudes and behaviors than parents with a lower sense of efficacy (Grolnick, Benjet, Kurowski, & Apostoleris, 1997). However, Anderson and Minke (2007) found a weak correlation between efficacy and involvement at home, and no evidence of it with involvement at school among low SES minority students in the U.S. In Quebec, Deslandes (2009) also reported lower levels of self-efficacy among parents with lower education levels than those with higher levels. Walker et al. (2011) confirm a weak correlation between sense of efficacy and parent involvement among Latino parents in

the U.S. and suggest that contextual factors such as specific invitations for participation may have more influence.

Among teachers, the sense that one *can* foster positive relationships with parents is related to inviting parents to become more involved at home and at school (Anderson & Minke, 2007), which in turn may lead to higher performance (Seitsinger, Felner, Brand, & Burns, 2008). However, many studies reveal weaknesses in teacher efficacy. In the Netherlands, Denessen et al. (2009) found that teachers in training were not confident about their abilities to communicate effectively with parents, despite having a positive attitude toward them. Others claim that they do not know how to work with parents productively (Jensen, 2011; López, Riado, & Sánchez, 2004). The research reveals a strong need for training in order to foster efficacy in teachers as to how to work with parents in partnership (Jenson, 2011; Manoil, 2008; Sanders & Epstein, 2005). Within Mexico, however, Reimers (2006b) urges schools to participate in strengthening the sense of efficacy among illiterate or minimally literate parents so that they can become more effective partners in learning.

Role construction. Hoover-Dempsey, Wilkins, Sandler, and Jones (2004) define role construction as "specific elements that include personal understanding of important others' expectations for oneself in the role as parent of a school child, one's personal expectations for one's own behavior in the role, and one's characteristic role behaviors," developed through observations, and interactions within a group, personal experiences and ideas, and those of important others (p. 4).

Parental role construction seems to be key in their involvement in education (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). A positive correlation between role construction

and involvement was also found by Anderson & Minke's (2007), but only a predictor for involvement at home in a later study (Walker et al., 2011). The perceptions that teachers have of families are critical and have correlated with both actual parental involvement levels and student outcomes (Gordon & Louis, 2009). In their study, for example, teacher perceptions of high parent involvement together with shared leadership correlate with higher student achievement in math scores (p. 19).

Teachers may, however, misinterpret *lack* of school involvement as lack of interest in children's education (Anderson & Minke, 2007; Lee & Bowen, 2006; Rivera & Milicic, 2006), particularly if families do not fit into the traditional paradigm of parent involvement at school (Souto-Manning & Swick, 2006). In a U.S. study on 483 parents and 431 Kindergarten teachers, Nzinga-Johnson, Baker & Aupperlee (2009) found that teachers perceived African American and Latino parents as less involved than White parents. They also perceived parents with higher levels of education to be more involved than those with lower levels. Overall, they found that teachers' and parents' perceptions related to the amount and type of parent involvement. Oraison and Perez (2006) argue that the parent-teacher relationship continues to be asymmetrical and until teachers recognize and address stigmas, stereotypes, and prejudices that they have about families and their participation, they will not move forward in family-school partnerships.

Mediating Tools

The perceived mediating tools that a person feels he or she has available can also influence expectations. These shared tools may vary significantly between parents and teachers, as well as among types of school communities, thus influencing the perceptions

of each group toward each other (Beebe-Frankenberger, Lane, Bocian, Gesham, & MacMillan, 2005). Members of activity groups use historically developed mediating tools in order to move toward their objects, while continually transforming them. These tools can be both ideal - such as patterns of speech or behavior - and material - such as newsletters, meetings, or products - and serve to regulate interactions with the world and between each other (Cole, 1995).

In this study, the mediating tools of teachers and parents are classified by their relation to economic, cultural, and social capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Bourdieu's seminal research presents his theory of cultural fields in reference to unequal academic achievement between social classes, and with a strong influence from Marx and Weber. There are three types of capital according to Bourdieu - economic, cultural, and social. Economic capital can be monetary or material and is the most measurable of the three types. Cultural capital can be defined in three states: the embodied, often self-constructed state of mind and body, the objectified or material state, and the institutionalized state such as educational qualifications, all of which influence social relationships. Social capital refers to "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition" (Bourdieu 1986, p. 248). Portes (2000) defines two elements of social capital: one is the social relationship, in which one can access the resources of others, while the second is the amount and quality of the resources that are accessed (p. 45). Three functions of social capital are social control, such as defining norms, family support, and benefits through networks beyond the family. Porter emphasizes that these functions may interfere or even jeopardize the other. Economic,

cultural, and social capital is often associated with demographical and contextual factors in research, as discussed in the next section.

<div style="text-align:center">Part IV: Factors Related to Family-School Collaboration</div>

A great deal of research has been carried out with the intention of finding the key predictors of parental involvement in education, both at school and at home. Many of these contribute to the cultural-historical context in which collective groups of families and teachers are embedded and will thus be briefly mentioned here. They are organized in three sections: the first section addresses demographic factors, the second section beliefs, attitudes, and expectations, and the final section culture. Elements within each section include information about families, teachers, schools, and school leadership. These factors are then related back to the three types of models for family involvement in education.

Demographic factors

Demographic factors are most often used as predictors for the activity-centered model of family involvement, whether it is to find correlations, variance, or causation.

Socioeconomic status (SES). Socioeconomic status is often calculated by family income or, in the United States, by who receives federally subsidized school lunches (Gordon & Louis, 2009). In the research, there is conflicting evidence as to the extent to which SES correlates with forms of parent involvement at home and at school. Some studies point toward the idea families with higher SES participate more in school events (Frew, Zhou, Duran, Kwok, & Benz, 2012) while others have found little difference between levels of SES in that area (Borgonovi & Montt, 2012). Other results suggest that parents with higher SES engage more in cognitive activities with their

children (Grolnick et al., 1997) and other activities outside of school that can motivate and model to students (Borgonovi & Montt, 2012). In a quantitative study with Arab parents and students in Israel, Zedan (2011) found a clear positive correlation between SES and parents' degree of involvement at both home and school, while results of a study in rural India revealed a significant relationship only with annual expenditure on education (Sanchez, 2011). Researchers that focus on SES also consider confounding factors such as migration status, language spoken at home, and education level of parents (Gonzalez & Uhing, 2008) or construct SES through a variety of variables, including parents' educational levels, occupations, and family income (Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, & Sandler, 2004). These last authors found that by this definition, SES does not predict a significant portion of the variance in home or school activities compared to other variables like role construction or self-efficacy.

     Race/ethnicity in relation to dominant culture. Research shows that for the most part, parents from dominant social or cultural groups tend to become more active at school, while those from the less dominant groups experience more barriers to school involvement (Doucet, 2011; Lee & Bowen, 2006). These barriers can include lack of dominant culture language skills, lack of knowledge of cultural norms, and unfamiliarity with school procedures (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Crozier & Davies, 2007; Nutsche, 2009). It can also include understanding an educator's use of jargon, knowing how to employ help for their children outside from what is offered by the school, and exercising assertiveness rather than deference in attempting to challenge teacher practices or defend their children's interests (Lareau & Weininger, 2003). These barriers exist to some extent for parents of all socio-economic levels (Bernard, Freire,

Pacini-Ketchabaw, & Villanueva, 1998). Many parents of minority racial or ethnic groups are still involved, even if not at school (Lee & Bowen, 2006) or in the traditional ways expected by school personnel (Moll & Gonzalez, 1994). However, when families from minority populations are not actively engaged in school activities, they are often perceived as disinterested, thus permeating a 'deficit approach' to parent involvement which further alienates them (Baqueano-López et al., 2013).

Family structure. Family structure refers to the number of adults living in the child's home, whether in the case of single parents, a two-parent home, or extended family such as is common in Latin America, and to the number of children in the household. Zedan (2011) found a negative correlation between number of children and degree of involvement in a study of Arab families in Israel. This was in contradiction to studies in Latin America that showed that parent involvement increases with the number of children in school (Cruz, 2009). In a large randomized sample of families in the U.S., evidence pointed toward two-parent families being more often involved in school events than single-parent households (Frew et al., 2012). This confirmed the results from an earlier longitudinal study by Grolnick et al. (1997).

Sense of community. Although sense of community is a very abstract term, it may inform social capital (Pooley, Cohen, & Pike, 2005). Based on a series of case studies in communities in western Australia, these authors argue that similar elements exist between communities and can foster social capital, such as the sense of membership, influence, emotional connection, integration, and fulfillment of needs (p. 77). A similar finding was made in Paraguay, where, when families worked collectively toward educational goals, they felt empowered and in turn participated more frequently

(Carolan-Silva, 2011). An interesting finding here was that the participation of parents in school councils was reported to be more strongly associated with private interests in the welfare of parents' own children than on an interest in the welfare of the community itself, at least initially (Corrales, 2006, p. 464).

Parent educational attainment. Research demonstrates a positive correlation between educational level of parents and their degree of several types of home and school involvement (Cruz, 2009; Englund et al., 2011). This correlation may be stronger among women than among men (Nzinga et al., 2009). It is questionable whether there is significant relationship to perceptions about homework strategies (Deslandes, 2009) or that it correlates to all forms of parent involvement (Sanchez, 2011). In a random sample of 1169 persons with children born in 1990 in Norway, Baeck (2009) found that, although parents of a higher education reported being more active than those of a lower level, this was not a significant variable in determining the level of cooperation, positive influence, or lack of influence that families perceive themselves as having with the school of their children (p. 348). On the other hand, some parents who themselves have a low level of educational attainment, view education as a possibility for social advancement, hoping that their children will have a better life than their own (Rivera & Milicic, 2006).

Teacher age, experience, and level of education. There is relatively little research on demographic characteristics of teachers and their levels of facilitation for parental involvement in education. One such quantitative study is out of Chile, where parents reported their perceptions of teacher initiative and these perceptions were correlated to teacher age, years of experience, level of education, and specialization. The authors report that younger teachers tended to facilitate more home

academic/nonacademic and school academic participation, while those with more years at a particular school encouraged home nonacademic and school academic/nonacademic participation. Teachers with less experience overall, higher degrees, or an area of specialization facilitated more home academic activities with parents (Navarro et al., 2006). Limitations in the sample of this study and the lack of reproduction elsewhere indicate a need for further investigation on teacher background as a predictor for fostering parental involvement.

Demographics as informing social and cultural capital

Although the above demographic factors are most often used in positivist research as predictors for family involvement in education or student outcomes, they can also serve to inform about capital in family-centered and culture-centered research, as well as relate to CHAT theory. Social capital includes those networks and actual or potential resources that families have available to them in order to satisfy their needs (Bourdieu, 1986). This may be dependent upon a number of factors, including socioeconomic status, race or ethnicity in relation to the dominant culture, parent gender, family structure, and sense of community. Social capital is also deeply embedded in culture, thus cultural barriers to involvement should not be ignored (Bassani, 2007). There is research on Mexican families both in the United States and in Mexico that aims to demonstrate the key role of building social and cultural capital in order to strengthen the family-school relationship through family- and culture-centered models (Kim, 2009; Lareau & Weininger, 2003; Azaola, 2010).

In relation to the CHAT model for the family-school relationship, economic, social and cultural capital are fostered by each group's cultural-historical context and

also define the ideal and material mediating tools that are available to the members of each system. It is presumable that various groups of parents and teachers will have access to different forms of capital, and that the relationship between families and teachers is also distinguished by this access to capital.

Beliefs and attitudes among school leadership. School leaders' beliefs and attitudes about family-school partnerships appear to strongly influence how they decide to prepare their teachers (Epstein & Sanders, 2006) and how they create a culture for change and improvement in schools (Fullan, 2002; Epstein, Galindo, & Sheldon, 2011). Principal support is also a strong predictor of program success for family-school partnerships (Van Voorhis & Sheldon, 2004) and is found to be only weakly linked to district policy (Gordon & Louis, 2009). Riley (2009) of the London Centre for Leadership in Learning argues that the role of school leaders is to "set the climate of expectations" so that students can benefit from the social capital available in their communities. Pryor (2005) goes further to say that schools should see themselves as a "community of its constituents" rather than as an organization so that social interactions can occur that build social capital (p. 201). This is accomplished through getting to know the community, reconfiguring leadership, and building trusting relationships. School counselors can also play an important role in organizing, implementing, and evaluating family-school programs (Epstein & Voorhis, 2010).

Styles of leadership. Beliefs and attitudes of school leadership inform leadership style and ultimately influence the degree of success of family-school partnerships (Masumoto & Brown-Welty, 2009). Earlier in a mixed-methods study with international schools in Colombia, Adams (2005) found that, although principals need

multiple approaches to leadership in order to address contextual needs, distributive leadership is prominent in promoting a school climate that is open, friendly, and respectful. While not centering on any one leadership style, Gordon & Louis (2009) argue that principals that are open to shared leadership by community members are also more open to parental influence in other ways. This is supported by Walker (2007), who emphasizes the ongoing learning process that occurs as educational leaders negotiate between contemporary policy reforms and traditional values.

School Climate. School climate, defined by the perceptions that stakeholders in school and the community have about it, are also influenced by beliefs and attitudes among school leaders and teachers, and seems to be a far more influential factor in successful family-school collaboration efforts than organizational characteristics such as school type, socioeconomic context, or policies (Feuerstein, 2000; Burch, 2012). Establishing a climate that is conducive to positive family-school relationships includes educators taking initiative, and establishing open communication, empathy, and trust with families (Lopez et al., 2004) and results in building the school around the community rather than the other way around (Pryor, 2005).

Trust. Building relationships based on trust are key in fostering positive parental involvement and leading to successful schools (Thomas, Rowe, & Harris, 2010). In a random sampling of 578 parents in the U.S. Midwest, Adams et al. (2009) conclude that as long as school policies and practices address the affective needs of parents, that parent-school trust can be fostered despite social and contextual challenges. Trust is one of the elements that are reported to be present in the highest performing schools in a meta-analysis by Henderson & Mapp (2002), along with collaborative relationships,

respect for family needs, and shared power and responsibility. This is confirmed by Forsyth, Barnes, & Adams (2006) in their work on relational trust between parents and teachers as a predictor of teacher efficacy and academic success. Mapp (2003) reports that when parents are engaged in caring and trustful relationships with educators, their desire to be involved and participate with schools in their children's education deepens.

However, trust may not be the only element necessary for successful family-school collaboration. In a study from Quebec University, Bergeron and Deslandes (2011) found that although parents felt that the teachers imparted trust, they did not invite them into dialogue, indicating that the relationship was unidirectional instead of being based on negotiation of needs and expectations.

Communication. This leads to another key element for successful family-school relationships, which is communication. A growing number of studies are challenging the fact that traditional family-school relationships are unidirectional and top-down in style, rather than bidirectional and exemplary of a true partnership (Anderson, 1998). In a recent literature review, Kim et al. (2012) reported that less than one percent of the studies on family-school partnerships revealed bidirectional or conjoint relational strategies, implying that parents are still not being truly welcomed into dialogue about shared goals and strategies to improve learning. The most effective family-school collaboration, however, is where families and school personnel work together toward common goals, such as with action research teams (Cox, 2005). Open communication and even home visits are reported as key elements in successful family-program partnerships of Head Start programs in the United States (Henrich, 2013).

Valuing families. Placing value on families and community is another common thread in the literature on school climate that promotes family involvement. Rather than viewing the community as a challenge, an obstacle, or simply disassociated from school education, it can be seen as full of rich sources of ideas and experiences, yet to be discovered and shared (Jimenez, 2011). Moll and Gonzalez' (1994) "funds of knowledge" model, where students and teachers are researchers while families share their areas of knowledge and expertise, can foster more involvement as parents feel more valued by the schools. Another example of inviting families to participate in their children's education outside of the traditional paradigm is with the Mother/Daughter Program in California (Delgado-Gaitan, 2007). Here, a school-university partnership with families was able to empower Latin American women to further their education by engaging them in discussions about aspirations and goal setting, as well as introducing them to the system of college entrance.

Initiative. The question remains as to where change should be initiated for promoting relationships based on trust, communication, and a stronger family voice in goal setting and collaboration. One argument is that change needs to begin with schools, especially given the lower levels of social capital found among many families (López et al., 2004; Oraisón & Pérez, 2006). For example, schools can offer a welcoming environment, two-way communication, shared decision making, adults education, and even transportation to families so that they can participate in school activities (Halgunseth et al., 2009). As early as 1998, Anderson proposed that school policies focusing on broad inclusion, relevant participation, authentic processes, coherence

between means and ends of participation, and working on broader structural inequities

could move the parent-school relationship toward a much more positive end.

Cultural context

The third area in the literature that appears frequently as an important element for

family-school collaboration is culture. While the activity-centered model has less focus

on this area, it is critical for the family- and culture-centered models. Cultural context

plays an important role in how school personnel and families view their roles in the

education of students, and just as home culture is learned or acquired, so are the school

processes encultured (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001; Vareene, 2008). Thus, the role of

culture in evident in role construction, which then influences expectations, goal-setting,

and actions within the CHAT framework.

Cultural barriers. Much of the literature on immigrant families, ethnic and racial

minorities address the barriers encountered when parents are unfamiliar with or do not

share the same expectations as school norms demand (Delgado-Gaitan, 2012; Theodorou,

2007). Such barriers exist in the form of language difficulties, unfamiliarity with the

school system, differences in cultural norms, or an insufficient network of support (Arias

& Morillo-Campbell, 2008). Another limitation is placing a value on traditional forms of

involvement as 'legitimate' vs. 'illegitimate' forms of non-traditional involvement

(Delgado-Gaitan, 2012; Mapp, 2003). Legitimate forms of involvement (those that are

expected) often include volunteering at school fundraisers and attending parent-teacher

conferences and back-to-school nights. Especially families from non-dominant cultures,

such as African Americans, Asian Americans, or Latinos in the United States, or

indigenous families from Mexico, may have difficulty knowing what is expected of them

or are already actively involved in their children's education, but in ways that are not recognized by school staff (Theodorou, 2007). These obstacles are not a dead end for families or communities. As educators create a climate of trust, communication and respect for family as mentioned above, all stakeholders begin to experience a cultural transformation that fosters stronger relationships and more authentic involvement (Varenne, 2008).

Cultural sensitivity. One step toward establishing these relationships is to understand the cultural characteristics of the communities where the students are populated. Dotson-Blake (2010), in a comparative study of family perceptions of family-school partnerships in North Carolina and Veracruz, Mexico, found differences in the structure and function of partnerships that made it challenging for Mexican families in North Carolina to understand the role they were expected to fill at schools. Three suggestions that the author makes for mediating these differences are encouraging parents to become leaders in defining and shaping partnerships with schools, recognizing nontraditional methods of engagement, and plan activities that meet community needs (p. 111).

Questions of power. A few studies also focus on cultural traditions that permeate power relations and their influence on educational policies. In Mexico and Central America, for example, patronage relationships have long dictated how political policies are carried out, and thus have an influence on how family-school collaboration functions (Altschuler, 2013; Romero, 2004). Whatever the approach of identifying differences, the collaboration between families and schools for the benefit of the child needs to remain the focal point. Gordon and Louis (2009) suggest that, rather than changing schools

forms and structure in an attempt to modify traditional power structures, administrators, teachers, parents, and community members need to engage in "a continued and reflective discussion of what each party can and should contribute to a child's learning" (p. 26).

One of the critiques of the later stages of CHAT concerns the role of power in negotiations between collective groups, particularly in the stage of expansive learning. In their research on literacy, Lewis and Moje (2007) have critiqued CHAT as not sufficiently acknowledging the role of power in discourse. This argument also voiced by Young (2001) in his observation that groups with less social capital learn to "keep quiet" and accept the views of more powerful groups (as cited by Engeström & Sannino, 2010, p. 18). This could also become evident when considering the cultural dimensions that are prevalent in Mexico, such as the higher levels of power distance prevalent in the negotiation process between parents and teachers (Guillén & Aduna, 2008; Hofstede & Bond, 1984). This is all the more reason to give voice to parents and teachers separately first, in order to understand each of their expectations for that relationship.

Engeström & Sannino (2010) address this question in a response to critiques of third generation CHAT and on expansive learning theory specifically. These authors claim that action defined as a manifestation of power is too simplistic a concept. Rather, in activity theory setbacks due to power relations are examples of 'object-related contradictions' that historically lead to disturbances and may eventually require new kinds of actions among the actors. In this sense, they argue, expansive learning from an activity theory perspective arises from a historical reality, not as an outcome of public policy (p. 18). This is particularly important when considering WHY rethinking family-school collaboration is important - because policy dictates it as such or because the

historical reality *requires* it to be changed?

Thus, one of the delimitations of the current study is to use CHAT as a theoretical framework through which to view families and teachers as activity systems embedded in distinct socio-cultural contexts and with a partially shared object, but without moving it forward into expansive learning at this point. This next step would involve discourse *between* the activity systems and would thus require the researcher to grapple more deeply with the role of power.

Part V: Family-School Collaboration among Mexican Families

In order to understand how Mexican families position themselves within the family-school relationship, it is necessary to analyze studies in which they are the focus of research. There are two primary sources of literature on Mexican families: one is an ever-increasing number of studies carried out in the United States and the other is the research in Mexico itself. The following is a survey of the literature from both countries, laying way for a deeper understanding of the cultural-historical context in which the Mexican family-school relationship is rooted.

Mexican Families in the United States

Information on Mexican parental involvement in education is more readily and amply accessible through studies in the United States than from Mexico itself. The practices of Mexican families are often analyzed within the context of the broader Latino or Hispanic populations, or among minority populations within the country generally. The studies on this population also represent a shift in paradigm, from positivist/social science approach to a more interpretive and even critical approach as researchers attempt

to explain the deeper contextual roots behind low graduation rates, high dropout rates, and perceived weak involvement of Latino parents in their children's education.

What is noticeably missing in the literature from the United States is reference to studies *from* Mexico, which could serve as valuable references for understanding the social, cultural, and historical context of Mexican families in the States more deeply. This may be due to the language barriers that exist among researchers. The current study is meant to fill that gap by bridging research from the two countries.

Mexican identity. The identities among individuals and families with Mexican heritage vary widely in the United States. In a recent essay referring to intercultural research and communication, Rinderle (2014) presents five identifying signifiers used today among families with Mexican heritage: 1) a Mexican/*mexicano* refers to someone born in Mexico and living in the U. S., 2) a Mexican American may have been born in Mexico or U.S., is a U.S. citizen, and is sometimes viewed as "assimilated" into the dominant culture by other Mexicans, 3) a Chicano/a is a U.S. citizen of Mexican descent who may have a political view of him- or herself as a member of a historically and structurally oppressed group, 4) a Hispanic is anyone from Spanish-speaking origins or ancestry such as Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican, Central or South American, and 5) a Latino/a is a person of Latin American descent, regardless of race, ethnicity, or language. Not all of the researchers presented here have taken the self-identifiers of the study population into account. However, the identifiers are useful for understanding the broader context in which families who are residing in the United States but with Mexican heritage find themselves.

Academic indicators. Parental involvement among Hispanic/Latino families within the United States has been considered a critical issue, due largely to the growing population and persistently low completion and achievement rates (Delgado-Gaitan, 2007). According to the Pew Research Hispanic Center, in 2010 there were about 50.7 million Hispanic families in the United States, of which 65% were Mexican. Although the high school graduation rate for Hispanics is slightly lower than the U.S. average, about 13% of Hispanics aged 25 or older have a bachelor's degree, which is significantly lower than the U.S. average of 28% (Motel & Patten, 2013). Thus, the need to engage families more actively in their children's education is considered a key component to improving opportunities for students from Hispanic/Latino origin. However, one of the observations repeatedly heard from teachers across the nation is that parents of Mexican and other Hispanic/Latino students are disengaged and disinterested in education (Olivos, 2009).

Barriers to involvement. Barriers to parental involvement mentioned in the literature include the lack of English language skills, parent hesitancy to challenge school personnel, unfamiliarity with the school system and processes, low levels of parent education, too many responsibilities, negative experiences in one's own schooling, negative attitudes of school personnel, and lack of transportation and childcare (Quezada, Diaz, & Sanchez, 2003). However, not all of these barriers are shown to consistently correlate with low levels of parent involvement. In a study of Mexican families in non-urban areas of the U.S., Smith, Stern, & Shatrova (2008) found that parents expressed barriers in the inability to speak or understand school communication well in English and

a reluctance to question authority or to advocate for their children, but *not* lack of child care, transportation, a warm reception from schools, or lack of aspirations for children.

Emerging themes. Among the various themes represented in the literature on Hispanic/Latino families, the most evident seems to be de-bunking the myth that Mexican and other Spanish-speaking families are disinterested in their children's education (Goldenberg, Gallimore, Reese, & Garnier, 2001; Ryan, Casas, Kelly-Vance, Ryalls, & Nero, 2010). By using a strengths perspective (what families offer) of family- or culture-centered models rather than a deficit perspective (what families lack), researchers have found various ways that parents *are* engaged in their children's education and discussed how community and parent support groups help to empower parents to become stronger advocates for their children (Beckett, Glass & Moreno, 2012; Bloodworth, 2008; Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001; Valencia, 2002).

An important finding in the literature is that both home - where Hispanic/Latino families are reported to be much more involved - and school engagement in education have positive outcomes on student academic achievement within this particular population group (Jeynes, 2003; LeFevre & Shaw, 2012). As a result of the research, there are several recommendations for enhancing family-school collaboration with Mexican and other families in the U.S. These include:

1) Designing programs that are culturally relevant and linguistically appropriate (Delgado-Gaitan, 2007; Dyrness, 2007)

2) Recognizing nontraditional forms of parental involvement, especially within the home and community (De la Pena, 2012; Henrich, 2013; Walker et al., 2011)

3) Providing specific teacher training in "funds of knowledge" and other methods to capitalize on the knowledge and skills of families (Lopez, 2001; Quiocho & Daoud, 2006; Torres & Hurtado-Vivas, 2011)

4) Exchanging information on school values and expectations for family-school collaboration and how parents can become advocates for their children's needs (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Jasis & Ordoñez-Jasis, 2012)

Despite the abundance of research that includes Mexican families in the United States, it provides only limited understanding of characteristics of parental involvement in education in Mexico itself. There are very few comparative studies of Mexican families in the U.S. and in Mexico. One such study by Dotson-Blake (2010) employed critical ethnology in order to analyze perceptions of family-school-community partnerships among families in small towns of North Carolina and Veracruz. Although very limited in how the results of this study can be generalized, they reveal important differences in the concept of "community" between the two locations, indicating a need for conversation and negotiation around constructs of family-school collaboration. In addition, one should not assume that all Latino or Hispanic populations have the same strengths or challenges (Olivos, 2009), since the Mexican experience with education is based on very different historical and political contexts from countries such as Puerto Rico, Colombia, or El Salvador (Smith et al., 2008).

This brief review of U.S. research on Mexican families within the Latino community offers valuable insight to values of and barriers to involvement. What is decidedly missing is an understanding of the cultural-historical context of Mexican families in the United States, as well as how families expect collaboration with schools to

work. This study serves to address these issues by giving an overview of research that has been based in the country of Mexico and collecting data of Mexican families within their own country and under the current political and educational policies.

Research on Families and Schools in Mexico

Educational research in Mexico has grown significantly in the past decade, both in the number of investigators and the rigor of the research (Colina, 2011). Through the Autonomous University of Tlaxcala, Colina (2011) presents a heuristic study of the growth of investigators in educational research since 2001. According to the study, in 2011 there were at least 712 researchers representing Mexican institutions, of which 52.9 percent were women and 50.7 percent from metropolitan area of Mexico City (p. 17). However, the author argued that not all of the studies represented the same levels of rigor in scientific method. Nor are all registered in such a way that facilitates analysis or their results diffused in such a way as to benefit the wider research community (p. 15).

In order to promote more rigorous research two institutions were created: the National Institute of Educational Research (INIE) in 1970 and the Mexican Council of Educational Research (COMIE) in 1993 (Colina, 2011), both of which offer strict stipulations for membership and opportunities to publish in peer edited journals such as *La Revista Mexicana de Investigación Educativa* and *Perfiles Educativos.*

Of the literature that mentions parent involvement in education and family-school collaboration, a variety of studies were found representing quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods, as well as policy reports, evaluations, books, and reflective essays. Bibliographical sources include several studies from English and French speaking countries, but the majority is representative of the Spanish-speaking world including

Spain, Argentina and Chile as the most abundantly cited. Table 1 in the Appendix

displays the studies that are referred to in this section and which directly or indirectly

refer to family-school collaboration in Mexico. The table includes authors, date of

publication, research methodology, region of study within Mexico, and the institutions

represented by each researcher. It should be noted that in the majority of the studies, the

family-school relationship is *not* the main focus.

From the review of over 50 studies, one can observe a tendency toward the

positivist approach to research through quantitative methods, as well as a noticeably

limited representation of mixed methods research. Of the 25 studies that included

quantitative methods, only those of the World Bank were randomized or experimental in

nature. This confirms concerns that very little of educational research in Mexico is

sufficiently rigorous (Colina, 2011; Patrinos, 2009). In reference to the three models of

family involvement discussed above, the majority of these studies employ the activity-

centered model. From the review of the literature, five common themes arise that

contribute to the understanding of the cultural-historical context of family-school

collaboration in Mexico:

    1) Research and evaluation of policy measures

    2) Predictors of parental involvement

    3) Types of family involvement at home and at schools

    4) Socioeconomic status (SES) and student outcomes

    5) Parent and teacher expectations as predictors for student outcomes and family-

       school relations

Research and evaluation of policy measures. Since the 1990s, the Mexican government has followed the lead of many other countries worldwide in decentralizing aspects of education in order to engage citizens in decision making at the local level and thereby increasing accountability (Azaola, 2011; Patrinos, 2009). Among these are creating a legal basis for parent associations (APF) and councils of social participation (CPS) in all schools, as well as through compensatory programs such as the Quality Schools Program (PEC).

Parent participation in associations appears to be low at the elementary school level (Hopkins, Ahtaridou, Matthews, Posner, Figueroa, 2007). In order to increase participation and accountability, the Mexican government authorized the Support for School Management Program (AEG), which provides extra funds and training to parent associations for school infrastructure improvements (Gertler et al., 2007). In their study for the World Bank, Gertler and his colleagues argue that, not only are AEGs linked to reduced grade failure and repetition, but they also increase parental participation in schools and their demands for teacher quality. In a later study, however, Gertler, Patrinos, and Rodríguez-Oreggia (2012) found that success by providing extra funds to parent associations over time became impeded by low autonomy of Mexican schools and weak accountability. They argue that training for parents has a stronger impact on student outcomes than extra funds, even within a year, as well as it generating more interest among parents for involvement in their children's education.

Another policy change regarding parental participation has been in forming the Program for Quality Schools (PEC). Here, councils of social participation (CPS) made up of the school director, teachers, and parents plan and implement structural changes to the

school, thereby also receiving additional funds from the municipal governments. However, studies reveal that in many schools, the CPS is evident only on paper, and not in practice (Martínez, Bracho, Martínez, 2007; Vélez et al., 2008). In a qualitative study by Santizo (2006), results indicate that the success of PECs depends on an already existing participative community of parents, directors, and teachers, rather than fostering such a community. Two of the reasons for the limited success of PECs are continued teacher "closed door policy" and parents uncomfortable with participating in school matters, even though the programs exist in twenty percent of all public schools (Santizo, 2011). In this later study, Santizo finds a number of other barriers to successful *participación social*, including viewing parents as clients rather than co-educators, persisting centralized rather than shared leadership, and fear among teachers that parents will interfere with pedagogy and the curriculum (Cardemil & Lavín, 2012). Olivo, Alaníz, and García (2011) argue that in order for CPSs to function successfully, one must assess the historical and cultural context of governing in a given community, rather than imposing policy based on other contexts and assumptions (also in Vélez et al., 2008).

Predictors of parental involvement.

Parent factors. Results from the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP), including over 38,000 participants in 23 Latin American countries, reveal that the highest levels of involvement in parent associations in the region are among women, young parents, those with higher levels of education, working parents, and those who live in rural areas (Cruz, 2009, p. 3). In Mexico, women continue to hold the tradition of being the primary caretaker in education, including raising the children, registering for classes, taking them to school, and attending meetings about homework and grades, while

the father typically enters only when there are behavioral issues (Esquivel, 1995, p. 54). The level of each parent's education is a factor that is often associated with involvement in education in the literature in Mexico, despite some discrepancy in the results. Several researchers have found a positive relationship between level of parent education and their involvement in their children's schools (Sánchez, Valdés, Reyes, & Carlos, 2010; Urías, Márquez, Tapia , & Madueño, 2008; Valdés, Martin, & Sánchez, 2009). Illiteracy is a barrier to many families in historically poor states of Mexico, including Chiapas, Guerrero, and Oaxaca, where the indigenous populations are the largest (INEGI, 2010, pp. 82, 94). Students from illiterate or newly literate families are less able to build the cultural capital needed to develop sufficient self-efficacy to continue studying (Reimers, 2006b).

Student factors. Only a few studies were found that assess the relationship between student factors and parental involvement in education. Student factors that have been found include the age, gender, academic progress, and level of communication with the parents. Sánchez et al. (2010) report that parental involvement decreases with the age of each child, confirming results from other countries. They also found no correlation with child gender, in contrast to a study that showed favoritism toward boys and support to stay in school longer (Azaola, 2010).

School factors. Concerning school factors that influence parental involvement, one that is commonly addressed in the literature in Mexico is teacher attitude. In two different qualitative studies on the councils of *participación social* in Quality Schools (PEC), participating directors expressed their concern that teachers fear parental interference with "their realm" of pedagogy and curriculum (Martínez et al., 2007;

Santizo, 2006). This remains to be confirmed with evidence from the teachers themselves.

Types of family involvement. As with the studies on Mexican and other Latin American families in the United States, research in Mexico addresses family involvement in education both at home and at school (Valdés, Martin, & Sánchez, 2006).

Home involvement. In many studies, parents were found to place more value on home educational involvement than at school (Urías et al., 2008). However, these beliefs may be associated more with elementary school rather than preschool or *secundaria* (Delgado, González, & Martínez, 2011; Huerta, 2010). At home, parents are shown to value having conversations with their children, forming appropriate behavior, and encouraging their children to do well (García-Cabrero, 2010; Valdés & Urías, 2011). Families in rural areas also include children in their day to day activities, teaching them skills and passing on their knowledge even if at a basic level (Barraza, 2003). The evidence on parental beliefs about homework supervision is less consistent. For example, a study by Delgado et al. (2011) revealed that some parents do not fully understand the need for homework assistance, while in other studies supervision of homework is reported to be highly valued (Valdés & Urías, 2011).

The most numerous studies that were found on family home involvement in education is in the area of literacy (*alfabetización)*, despite a nationally reported literacy rate of 97.6% for Mexican of ages 15-24 and 90.5% for those of age 25 or older (INEGI, 2010, p. 9). According to the 2006 National Survey of Reading, only 36.2% of the respondents of age eleven or older had parents who read to them while they were children (CONACULTA, 2006, p. 119). Although with a very small sample in a pilot study, Vega

and Macotela (2005) did not find parent reading with children to be a predictor of aptitude in reading or writing at the preschool age. This may be because those parents that were observed worked with their children on comprehension of the story rather than using specific literacy skills, and remains to be further tested (p. 27). Vega and another colleague note in a very recent study that the parents they observed used the pictures of books to elaborate on stories, but that they were used to explain, not encourage dialogue, with their children (Salazar-Reyes & Vega-Pérez, 2013, p. 321). Nevertheless, Vega mentions an earlier study in 2004 that showed that families that engaged in a variety of activities frequently, their children gain more knowledge and develop more motivation in writing (Vega, 2006, p. 24). Three ways in which Vega argues that families can promote pre-literacy skills at home are with interactions intended to promote reading and writing experiences, a physical environment with a variety of tools for reading and writing, and an emotional and motivational climate supportive of literacy (Vega & Macotela, 2007). While preschool education is not the focus of this study, experiences at earlier ages may influence how newly arrived first grade students and their families approach the family-school relationship.

Aside from shared reading, several studies reveal additional ways that families are promoting literacy with their children at home and in the community. These include reading instructions in order to assemble toys or games together (Salazar-Reyes & Vega-Pérez, 2013), reading recipes together, calendars, street signs, advertisements, and writing notes, shopping lists, and in agendas (Seda & Torres, 2010). However, many of these activities are implicit, meaning they are informal and spontaneous, rather than explicitly recognized for teaching literacy skills (Salazar-Reyes & Vega-Pérez, 2013). Therefore,

Mexican researchers recommend more intent training with parents in order to offer guidance in their home practices (Seda & Torres, 2010).

   School involvement. One of the most commonly mentioned challenges in Mexican research is the lack of participation by families in activities at schools (Cruz, 2009; Santizo, 2006). The most common type of involvement appears to be attending meetings as per request by the school administration in order to receive information on academic progress, child behavior, or new school developments (Estrella, Esquivel, & Sánchez, 2004). Other activities consist of preparing for national festivals (Vélez et al., 2008), planning excursions (Estrella et al., 2004), or collecting quotas for maintenance and physical improvements on the school (Martínez et al., 2007). Parents may also be called upon for consultation, such as in a CPS, and in even fewer instances, invited as decision-makers for the school. Based on the 2006 PISA reports however, only eighteen percent of Mexican principals reported parents as serving as decision makers in their schools or staff (Hopkins et al., 2007).

   The lowest level of participation among parents appears to be in workshops for parents (*escuela de padres*) and in true decision making as partners (Guzmán & Martín del Campo, 2004; Huerta, 2009). Even when the structure has been put into place by policy, such as in CPSs in the Quality School Program or in the CONAFE community schools, the amount of parents actively involved and the amount of decision making is limited (Gertler, et al. 2007; Martínez et al., 2007). The type of authority given most to parents is in the collection of *quotas*, or contributions from the families for school materials and infrastructure (Vélez et al., 2008). In impact evaluations of the parent support programs through AEGs, however, parents reported putting more pressure on

teachers and principals to ensure that the needs of their children were attended and that teacher absenteeism was reduced (Gertler et al., 2007, p. 24).

The role of expectations. The research from Mexico addresses expectations in two ways: as a variable that may predict family-school collaboration and one that predicts student outcomes.

As a predictor of family-school collaboration. Parent and teacher expectations influence why and how they interact with each other. Many researchers in Mexico have used qualitative methods in order to understand why parental involvement in schools is so low. One reason may be the frustration parents and students feel with what they perceive as undedicated teachers or when their expectations that higher levels of education fails to bring them the economic stability and better life that they had hoped for (Esquivel, 1995). Another may be the frustration of being called on committees only to be given the role of collecting money in the form of *quotas* from families for maintenance of the school grounds, rather than being able to engage in authentic participation toward their children's education (Martínez et al., 2007).

Teachers, on the other hand, have expressed concern about parents interfering with school affairs. Several studies report negative attitudes and fear of teachers that more involved parents with interfere with what they believe to be "their" area of authority, namely in pedagogy or curriculum (Martínez et al., 2007; Santizo, 2011). These expectations of teachers and parents will in turn influence the kind, amount, and quality of communication that they have between each other. In some studies, both parents and teachers reported a value in, but low levels of communication between home and school, or that the communication was unidirectional, from school to home (Huerta,

2009; Valdés et al., 2006). In a recent publication within the *Somos Maestros* (We are Teachers) series in Mexico, authors Cardemil and Lavín (2012) found a lack of trust and clarity of each party's roles and responsibilities (p. 65), suggesting there is much yet to be done in establishing these relationships.

As a predictor of student outcomes. Bazán, et al. (2007) argued that one of the key principles to parents becoming engaged in their children's learning is the belief that they can contribute and that their help will make a difference and that these expectations can predict the academic progress of the student. This sense of efficacy, translated into expectations and aspirations for the student, correlated with higher levels of learning in reading and mathematics (Fernández & Blanco, 2003). Parental beliefs and expectations toward education also influence the type of home environment that they provide for their children (Cardemil & Lavín, 2011), which in turn may influence motivation and literacy skills (Vega & Macotela, 2007). However, pessimistic ideas of parents can also negatively influence students. In a study of students at the early secondary level, Jiménez, Ito, and Macotela (2010) found that parental depreciation of schooling, worry about their children's future, or lack of confidence in their children's abilities correlated with lower levels of motivation among those students at school (p. 66). Jiménez et al. (2010) stress the need for programs with parents that focus on motivation building at home whether or not the child is currently doing well in school.

Conclusion

The purpose of this literature review was to present a comprehensive outline of research on parental involvement in education at home and at school through an ecological lens, beginning with the concept generally and on an international level, then

gradually moving toward research on Mexican families in the United States and finally in Mexico itself. The literature reveals the complex and multifaceted nature of the family-school relationship. This review began with an overview of family involvement in children's education as having positive academic and personal outcomes, and the subsequent policy measures that have evolved globally toward fostering the relationship between families and schools. These policies are based on good intentions, but often lack appropriate evaluation and negotiation by all stakeholders in order to narrow the gap between theory and practice. In the second section a framework is presented with which to view models of parent involvement in education: as activity-centered, family-centered, or culture-centered. The model upon which the current study is based, cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT), analyzes activity, but through the lens of culture and context, thus filling a gap in the approach to the study of families and schools. Part three of the review discusses various factors that are at play in predicting family involvement in education both at home and at schools. These are framed around demographic factors, beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions, and culture. Finally, there is a review of literature on Mexican families within the context of U.S. schools and finally within Mexico itself.

Throughout the literature there are several gaps that are apparent and this study will serve to address. The first is the lack of research that places the family-school relationship within the complex cultural-historical of its stakeholders. Chapters One and Two offer insight into that context for Mexican families and the use of CHAT theory will help to guide the study by taking that context into account. In this way, the current study is placed within the culture-centered model of investigation of families and schools. A second gap in the literature concerns the role of expectations in driving mediated activity.

This study will focus on expectations, defined as role construction and sense of efficacy, as what drives teachers and parents to create goals and move towards their objects. It is diagnostic in the sense that these expectations will serve to reconsider family-school collaboration as it fits within the Mexican national culture and also within specific school contexts, whether they are private, public, or rural community institutions. Finally, research from the United States tends to group Mexican families together with other Spanish speaking populations and there is a noticeable gap in the literature about the social, cultural, and historical context from which these families come. The current study is meant to bridge that gap, acknowledging the valuable work that has been done in the United States toward understanding the perspective of Mexican families, while building upon and sharing that knowledge through research in Mexico itself and the wealth of investigation already there.

In regard to the family-school relationship, this study is meant to approach this multidimensional topic through the lens of cultural-historical activity theory. Essentially, parents and teachers are striving toward the same object -- to provide young people with the tools they require in order to become productive adults. The challenge has been in finding ways to establish trust and collaborate in what have traditionally been separate fields of work. By focusing on parent and teacher expectations as what drives mediated action, we can better determine how parents and teachers situate themselves within the family-school dynamic in order to proceed toward greater engagement that serves every child.

Chapter Three: Research Methods

This research study takes places in a western state of Mexico with the purpose of assessing teacher and parent expectations for family-school collaboration in elementary schools. Chapter Three begins with the research questions, followed by a brief review of the theoretical framework for examining family-school relations. This leads to the methodology and methods, data collection and analysis, researcher perspective, and limitations of the methodology. The following research questions direct the study:

Research Questions

1) What are teacher expectations for family-school collaboration?

    1a) Which factors predict teacher expectations?

2) How do teachers assess parental expectations for their involvement in family-school collaboration?

    2a) Which factors predict teacher perceptions of parental expectations?

3) How do parents perceive their own involvement in their children's education at home and at school?

    3a) Which factors predict parental expectations?

    3b) How do parental expectations differ from how teachers perceive them to be?

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

The role of theory is central to this investigation. This study employs cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) as both a theoretical foundation and conceptual framework in order to demonstrate the role of stakeholder context in family-school relations and *why* it is so important to analyze expectations. It is essential to consider this

difference in context and the consequent expectations among stakeholders when evaluating models for family-school collaboration or redefining existing practices. CHAT provides the language for that conversation and thus also serves as a conceptual model. The study employs the psychological beliefs of sense of efficacy and role construction in defining teacher and parental expectations. These constructs were developed by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997, 2004). In addition, Bourdieu's theory of social, cultural, and economic capital contributes to the study, particularly in the comparisons between private, public, and rural school communities.

Methodology

Research Design

The research design for this study is mixed methods, where a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods is used in order to gain a deeper understanding of the research problem and overcome limitations presented by using one method alone (Creswell, 2014). Combining the perspective of the researcher with those of the subjects through mixed methods may also give light to underlying factors that could influence the relationship between variables (Punch, 2005). The specific design for the study is convergent parallel mixed methods, where the data is collected and analyzed separately and then compared in order to confirm findings, as viewed in Figure 5 below. Each method requires data reduction and data display, as explained in the sections below. Once all of the data has been displayed, the two methods are compared and integrated in order to find overlying themes, patterns, and contradictions. The rationale is that each method can provide original interpretations rather than one method leading the other (Creswell,

2014). This also increases both the extrnal and internal validity of the conclusions and

may generate new hypotheses for future research (Wolff, Knodel, & Sittitrai, 1993).
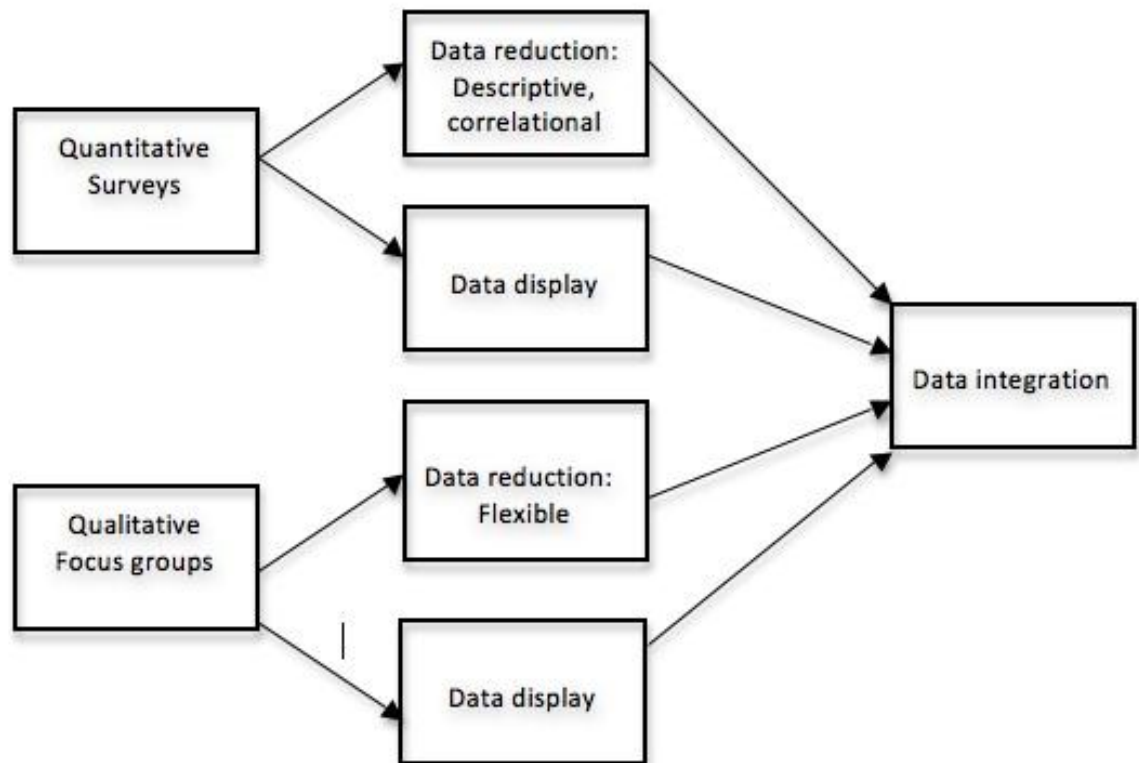
Figure 5. Convergent parallel mixed methods

Methods

Quantitative

     Survey Rationale. Surveys were administered in order to collect data on specific

expectations that teachers and parents have for themselves, as well as perceptions that

teachers have of parental expectations for family-school collaboration in education. The

purpose was to be able to assess the correlations between the dependent variables

(expectations as defined by sense of efficacy and role construction) and the independent

demographic and contextual variables, as viewed in Figure 6.
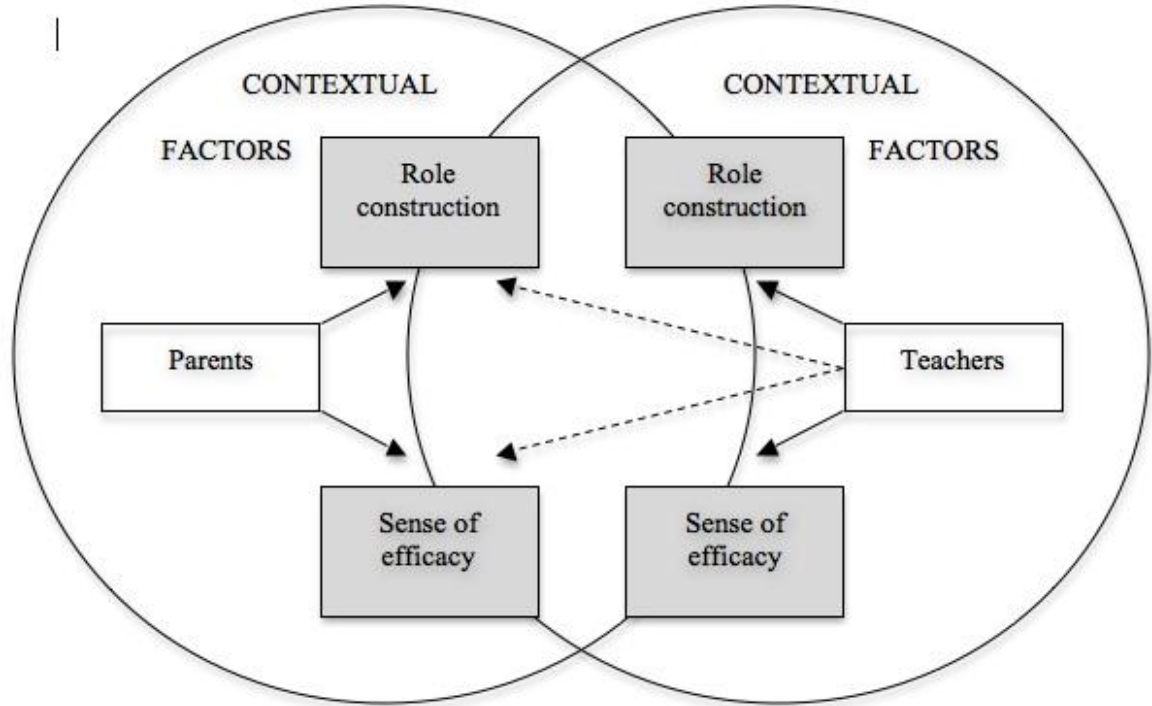
Figure 6. Parent and teacher expectations as defined by sense of efficacy and role

construction

The solid lines represent the responses of the participants about their own sense of

efficacy and role construction for family-school collaboration, while the dotted lines are

the perceptions that teachers have of parental sense of efficacy and role construction. The

circles behind each group of participants represent the contextual factors, some of which

may overlap. By analyzing these relationships, we have a clearer idea as to how the

family-school relationship is approached by the various stakeholders.

Qualitative

Focus Group Rationale. Focus groups with groups of teachers and parents are meant to gather their perceptions in a nonthreatening environment (Krueger & Casey, 2009). Thus, not all respondents were restricted to the survey questions; rather, a representative sample was given the opportunity to express their expectations in their own words. The analysis of these conversations gives a much richer understanding of the complexity of the research problem. An additional purpose of the focus group method is to aid in the analysis and interpretation of statistically significant and practically significant findings. As participants use their own words to define their roles and beliefs, these differences between what appears to be important in the data and what they emphasize as important may confirm or contradict each other, thus leading to new understanding and possible new research questions (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005).

Ryan, Gandha, Culbertson, and Carlson (2014) introduced a descriptive framework for focus group design characteristics and evidence that is divided into three approaches. Type A, the scoping focus group, is grounded in individualistic social psychology and meant to generate hypotheses based on personal opinions from the interview. Type B, the narrative focus group, comes from social constructivist theory and attempts to empower participants through collective knowledge building. This study employs the Hybrid approach, a mix of Type A and B where both individual and collective experiences are sought, often in order to build theory or constructs. In this case, the moderator takes on an empathic role by attempting to break down barriers in the group while maintaining some control with semi-structured questions. The goal is for the participants to provide rich description, both personal and collective, of what are often subjective experiences. This approach within the CHAT framework allows for the

discovery of tensions and internal contradictions that often characterize a complex

phenomenon such as the family-school relationship.

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Sampling Population and Strategies

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Population

The population sample for this study was taken from private, public, and rural

schools in a western state of Mexico. Although time and access limitations were not

adequate for random sampling, stratifying the samples by inviting participants from three

types of schools and in various communities ensured a more representative sample of

convenience from the population (Patton, 2011). A total of 160 teachers and 69 parents

participated in the quantitative portion of the study, while 17 teachers and 24 parents

participated in the qualitative segment. All of the teachers were Mexican nationals

currently work in public, private, or rural community elementary schools. The sample

excluded any teachers who are not Mexican nationals or whose teacher training had been

completed in other countries. All of the parents were Mexican nationals who had children

enrolled in grades one through six of private, public, or rural community elementary

schools.

Sampling Method

Such as is characteristics for mixed methods research, the quantitative and

qualitative samples were different in size, yet were equally sufficient for reliable research

(Creswell, 2014, p. 222). In this case, the quantitative sampling was N = 229, while the

qualitative sampling was N = 41. In both methods the participants were chosen from the

three types of schools in Mexico (public, private, rural community) and represented a

variety of neighborhoods, or *colonias*, of the municipality. Among the public schools,

there was also representation from both federally- and state-funded schools, as well as the morning (*matutino*) and afternoon (*vespertino*) shifts for the quantitative portion of the study.

Sampling Strategies

Survey. There were several approaches to recruiting. I presented my research with a letter of intent to various public and private school principals whom I already knew or who had been recommended by Mexican colleagues. I also met with the municipal director of the Secretary of Education (DRSE) in order to present the project and request assistance in finding additional school participants. Through the DRSE I was introduced to several school *supervisores*, who agreed to have me present the study to the school principals at monthly meetings.

In order to find participants from the rural community schools, I contacted the regional director of the National Council for the Development of Education (CONAFE), with whom I had worked on other projects. I requested his authorization in writing and offered to present the study and the survey at a regional meeting of elementary school instructors. This was the preferred method since the teachers work in over thirty different rural communities throughout the region.

Focus Groups. The focus group design was double-layered, in that one focus group of teachers and one group of parents was used for each type of school: private, public, and rural (Krueger & Casey, 2005). The purpose of the separate groups was to ensure that each one had a significant homogenous characteristic, in this case the type of school community (Ryan et al., 2013). Although it is ideal to conduct more than one focus group at each level, resources and time limitations kept the number to six groups in

total. The selection of parent participants for the focus groups varied according to my relationship to each of the school leaders. The principals or a parent leaders were asked to recommend and possibly contact parents that had representative backgrounds within each community, considering factors such as age, number of children, socioeconomic status, level of education, and level of involvement at school (Krueger & Casey, 2005). The selection of teacher participants for the focus groups was based on principal recommendations in order to get a cross-section of gender, levels of experience, and education.

Data Collection Strategies

Survey

For the teacher surveys at private and public schools I introduced the study and consent process ahead of time to the principals and to the teachers at staff meetings, handed out surveys to all teachers so that they could view them and ask preliminary questions, invited them to either fill in the survey or hand it in blank, and asked one teacher to volunteer to collect them in an envelope, which I retrieved a week later. In the case of the rural schools, all of the volunteers responded to the survey during one of the periodic regional meetings. Classroom teachers collected the parent surveys at two public schools. The surveys included a consent letter and introduction by the researcher and were distributed across grades one through six.

Focus Groups

All of the focus group discussions were conducted in Spanish. Although I was prepared to ask a community member to assist in facilitating part of the meeting, it was not necessary. All discussions were audio recorded and I transcribed them into Spanish

for analysis. The focus groups took place in public spaces that were familiar to the participants. In all six cases, teachers and parents requested that the interview be conducted at the respective schools, in four cases inside a classroom and in two cases outside on the grounds.

<div align="center">**Instrumentation**</div>

Survey

   The survey for this study is based on the Hoover-Dempsey et al. (1997, 2004) Model of Parental Involvement and Bandura's (2006) Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale. The Hoover-Dempsey instrument has been rigorously tested within the United States and includes scales for parental role construction, parental self-efficacy and the *Cuestionario para Padres de Familia* scale in Spanish (Walker et al., 2011). Since the present survey was to be administered to educators as well as parents, the Hoover-Dempsey scales were also modified so that they also represented a teacher perspective. There are four sections to the teacher survey: teacher self-efficacy, teacher role construction, teacher perceptions of parental self-efficacy, and teacher perceptions of parental role construction. They reflect the three themes from Bandura's scale under "Efficacy to Enlist Parental Involvement": 1) getting parents to become involved in school activities, 2) assisting parents in helping their children do well in school, and 3) making parents feel comfortable coming to school (Bandura, 2006, p. 328). Since most of the Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler efficacy scales for parents address helping their children do well in school, the questions for the other two themes of Bandura's scale were added according to previous research on family-school policies and practices in Mexico. The questions for role construction are from the *Cuestionario para Padres de Familia,* as well as others

that fit within Bandura's three themes and are support by research on Mexican education. Similar questions are used in the sections for teacher self-efficacy/role construction and teacher perceptions of parental self-efficacy/role construction so that their perspectives can be compared and correlated with the independent variables. Similarly, the parent survey had the same questions as the second half of the teacher survey so that teacher and parent perspectives could be statistically compared.

Reliability and Content Validity. The Hoover-Dempsey scales have already been rigorously tested for reliability and validity, and have only been used at least once on an exclusively Latino population of the United States in Spanish (Walker et al., 2011). There were several steps taken to increase the reliability of this instrument as an expansion of the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler scales. One step was to write the additional questions directly into Spanish, rather than risking loss of meaning through translation. Second, a panel of experts including three Mexican teachers with Masters degrees reviewed the Spanish survey questions. Once the survey was complete, it was then pilot-tested on Mexican elementary school teachers, who were asked to give written comments, questions, and suggestions on the document. The survey was administered to the same teachers a month later and each question checked for significant differences by a paired t-test. There was a significant difference (< 0.05) in only two items, one of which was later removed and the other reworded. Selective interviews with two teachers were then conducted in order to clarify, reword, eliminate, or add questions based on the suggestions of the group. The piloted survey had 63 items, which was then revised to include 62 items.

Although the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) scales had already been tested, adjusting and applying them to the Mexican population of this particular sample required additional reliability and validity tests. Once the data for this study were collected, alpha tests were conducted in order to test each scale for reliability. Chronbach's alpha is used to calculate the level of internal consistency of a scale as a measure of reliability. An alpha level of .70 or higher is considered to have an acceptable level of internal consistency (UCLA/IDRE, 2014). The teacher efficacy scale consisted of 18 questions had an alpha of 0.93; the teacher role construction scale consisted of 15 questions and had an alpha of 0.89; the teacher perception of parental efficacy scale consisted of 14 questions and had an alpha of .0.91; the teacher perception of parental role construction scale consisted of 15 questions and had an alpha of 0.96; the parental efficacy scale consisted of 14 questions and had an alpha of 0.89; the parental role construction scale consisted of 15 questions and had an alpha of 0.85. Thus, all of the scales utilized for this study had very high levels of internal consistency for the population sample in western Mexico.

The content validity of the instrument is demonstrated through the Hoover-Dempsey scales, which are based on a theoretically and empirically grounded model (Walker et al., 2011, p. 421) and Bandura's (1977, 2006) theory of self-efficacy. Through pilot testing and using selective interviews, each question was also rigorously examined in order to assure contextual meaning and clarity for the participants in Mexico.

Focus Groups

The focus group questions were semi-structured, so as to guide the conversation while inviting unexpected input that may provide a new understanding of the research

problem. They are based on same theoretical structure as the survey, including questions that reflect self-efficacy and role construction, as well as cultural-historical context. They were also similar in structure and order for both the parent and teacher groups in order to facilitate interpretation and the ability to draw comparisons from their responses. Questions range from being introductory in nature, transition, key, and closing (Krueger & Casey, 2009). The questions for the teacher and parent focus groups are found in Appendices H and I.

The discussion opened by asking for examples of how parents support their children's education at school and at home. This was followed by questions about obstacles that inhibit supporting education and how there have been changes over time. Two questions were based on "Picture Talk," where a drawing represents a problem scenario in order to generate responses (Zaveri, 2013). One scenario showed a boy with a tear in his eye as he holds an exam with a failing grade; the other showed two girls fighting at school. Both teacher and parent respondents were asked what they would do in order to resolve the situation, assuming it was their child or student. The use of Picture Talk had two purposes: (1) to facilitate addressing a more abstract situation for parents that may have lower literacy skills, and (2) to assess whether parents and teachers took primarily parent-focused, school-focused, or partnership-focused approaches to solving academic and behavioral issues.

Reliability and Content Validity. In order to ensure the reliability of the focus group process Krueger and Casey (2009) emphasize the importance that focus group analysis is systematic, verifiable, sequential, and continuous (p. 115). The analysis procedure of the data for this study was systematic in that it has been documented and

made available for inspection. Verifiability of the research was secured through recorded and summarized documentation that was laid out for review by the researcher as well as by Mexican colleagues. In this case after I had completed the first step of my own coding procedure, I invited two Mexican colleagues to examine the transcripts and draw their own conclusions. We discussed their interpretations, which initially were different and broader than my own. For example, one reviewer classified family expectations as their own, for the school, and for their child. I then explained the CHAT conceptual model and my approach to coding and finding overall themes. The reviewers agreed that my observations were culturally appropriate and valid based on the evidence from the transcripts. The process was sequential in that the questions were designed with analysis in mind, asked in a certain order, the interview summarized for the participants, and the transcript written and annotated. Finally, the process was continuous. Each session was transcribed shortly after each interview and the sessions spaced so as to lessen the tendency to mix data. For further reliability, three Mexican educators reviewed the questions before they were utilized for the study and the focus groups were conducted in Spanish rather than using a translator. Using the same theoretical models as the survey instrument and a Mexican panel of experts to review the questions helped to ensure content validity.

Field Notes

During each of the visits to the school sites and focus group interviews, I took continuous field notes in which I documented observations of the school settings, informal conversations, and questions that could advance my research. These field notes

were then processed separately from the focus group interviews and used during the

triangulation stage of analysis.

Data Analysis Strategies

In a convergent parallel mixed methods design the data is collected and analyzed

separately and then compared in order to draw conclusions (Creswell, 2014). Both the

quantitative and qualitative methods in this study measured expectations for family-

school collaboration through the constructs of sense of efficacy and role construction.

However, where the quantitative analysis of teacher and parent demographics gave

insight into contextual data, the qualitative portion allowed for a richer description of this

context within the framework of Third Generation CHAT.

Quantitative Analysis

The data from the survey was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics

with SPSS 21.0 software. The descriptive statistical analysis included the calculation of

frequencies and percentages, mean values, standard deviation, and variation through

boxplots and histograms. Boxplots were of particular interest for this study since they

revealed finer differences between school community types. Multiple linear regression

analysis was then used in order to determine how much of the variances in the dependent

variables could be predicted by the independent variables. There were six independent

variables, including teacher sense of efficacy for family-school collaboration, teacher role

construction, parental sense of efficacy, parental role construction, teacher perception of

parental efficacy, and teacher perception of parental role construction. Regression

analysis was conducted on each of the dependent variables separately. Table 1 lists the

dependent and independent variables.

Table 1

Research Variables

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables
Teachers	Teacher
Gender	Sense of efficacy
Level of education	Role construction
Years of experience	Perception of parental efficacy
School type	Perception of parental role
Perception of average community income level	construction
Parents	Parents
Gender	Sense of efficacy
Number of adults in household	Role Construction
Number of children in household	
Level of education	
One's own experience in school	
Type of student one was	
Number of years living in the *colonia*	
Perception of average community income level	

Qualitative Analysis

I used the classic approach to analysis in three phases (Krueger & Casey, 2009).

First, I read through each transcript and made notes in the margins about reoccurring

codes, based on theory and corresponding literature (Saldaña, 2009). Some of the codes

were descriptive in nature, such as (1) home practices, (2) school practices, (3) changes in

responsibilities over time, and (4) obstacles to involvement. Other codes were

interpretive, again reflecting theory and the literature, such as (1) community, (2) norms,

(3) division of labor, (4) cultural capital, (5) economic capital, and (6) social capital.

After coding each of the six transcripts, I began to categorize the codes. For examples, home and school practices fell into the category of role construction, while community, norms, and division of labor were categorized as context. I also allowed for some unexpected categories to emerge

These categories were further classified under themes that more closely relate to the theories that are utilized in this study. The final themes were the following:

(1) Cultural and historical context

    As reflected in community, norms, and division of labor

    Changes over time

(2) Mediating tools

    As reflective of cultural, economic, and social capital

    As related to sense of efficacy

(3) Expectations

    As related to role construction

    For parents, school, and government

Once the themes were established, this enabled me to find patterns between private, public, and rural school communities, as well as between parents and teachers. I first analyzed for clusters and patterns across the parent groups from the three types of communities, then the teacher groups across communities, and finally cross-examined teacher and parent responses (Punch, 2005).

Mixed Methods Analysis

There are two ways to merge the data in convergent parallel mixed methods. The first approach is side-by-side comparison, where one set of data is reported first and then

the second analyzed in order to confirm or disconfirm the results (Creswell, 2014). The second approach is data transformation, where the qualitative codes or themes are actually counted and used as quantitative measures, then displayed jointly with the quantitative results (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). This study utilizes the side-by-side comparison approach. Once the quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed separately, they were triangulated along with field notes and the research literature in order to find common patterns or contradictions (Krueger & Casey, 2009). This triangulation also enhanced the validity of the findings (Punch, 2005).

Researcher Perspective

My own experiences have influenced study design in several ways. As a researcher, I value both the ability to generalize with quantitative data while sensing a strong need to give stakeholders a voice to clarify their perspectives and concerns. Thus a mixed method is the most meaningful way to approach a topic as personal as the family-school relationship. Having lived and worked in Mexico for many years has also presented opportunities to learn Spanish fluently and meet educators in all types of schools – public, private, and those in rural communities, which in turn has aided in securing a more representative sample for the study. Hearing concerns of educators and parents alike has influenced my decision to delve deeper into the problematic of the family-school relationship in order to offer a possible starting point for evaluation of current policies and practices.

Having already worked with various types of school personnel through other projects facilitated an easier access to participants for this study, although the cultural considerations for designing the research have been critical to its success. Background

and training in intercultural sensitivity and communication played an important role in how to approach school leaders, set up the research, plan the instrumentation, and search for appropriate participants. Understanding fundamental ideas of leadership and policy within the Mexican context has also played a vital role in securing access and credibility within the educational community here.

<div align="center">**Limitations**</div>

There are several limitations to the research design that may affect the findings. One limitation is using a sample of convenience rather than a random sampling of the population, thus limiting the ability to generalize the findings to outside of the study area. Obtaining a random sampling of all teachers in and around the municipality was not feasible, so measures were taken to make the convenience sample as representative as possible, such as choosing from three different types of schools and in various communities within the area. Second, a limitation that made it more difficult to recruit private school teachers than expected was the fact that I was currently employed at one myself and represented a competitor in the market, despite the fact that my own school only participated in the pilot study. As I introduced the study to each private school I mentioned my place of employment and my commitment to take measures to ensure the confidentiality of the identity and findings of their teachers. Convergent parallel mixed methods also have some limitations in the unequal sample sizes and possibly incomparability or incomplete merging of data. Some measures in order to address this have already been mentioned above. Any divergent themes or scores are addressed in Chapters Four and Five. Finally, my own biases from living and teaching in the country for 20 years may limit the reliability of the findings. I was able to reduce this bias by

checking my study design, instruments, and findings with several Mexican colleagues for linguistic appropriateness and cultural or other bias during the stages of instrument design, participant recruitment, and data analysis.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to assess teacher and parental expectations for family-school collaboration in a mid-sized municipality in western Mexico. By employing a mixed methods research design, I used surveys with teachers and focus groups with both parents and teachers in order to discover relationships and find common or conflicting themes and patterns in expectations for this relationship. This research fills a gap in the research by providing a contextual insight into Mexican experiences in education and family-school collaboration in western Mexico, data that will be useful both for U.S. and Mexican educators and researchers. Chapters Four and Five provide separate analyses of the qualitative and quantitative data.

Chapter 4: Qualitative Analysis

Overview

The qualitative part of the research study is comprised of focus group interviews and field notes that were taken throughout the data collection process. This section presents the results of six focus group sessions, while comments from the field notes will be added in Chapter 6. Six focus group interviews were conducted in order to gain a deeper understanding of the contexts in which teachers and parents form their expectations (Krueger & Casey, 2009). There were three focus groups with teachers, one

each in a private and public school and with a group of rural community school instructors from five different schools. The process for recruitment varied, based on what was culturally and institutionally appropriate, and will be discussed below. Chapter Four begins with an overview of the school and group of participants, then presents the analysis of each focus group interview by discussing emerging themes, responses along the conceptual themes of CHAT (cultural-historical context, mediating tools, and expectations), and finally a brief summary and discussion of major findings. The interviews begin with teachers in private, public, and rural schools, followed by parents of private, public, and rural school communities. All school and participant names are replaced by pseudonyms so as to protect their identities. In addition, all quotes that follow have been translated into English by the researcher.

Focus Groups with Teachers

Colegio Gabriela Mistral: Private School Teachers

Overview. This interview took place in the principal's office of *Colegio Gabriela Mistral*, a private urban school that offers preschool through the 9th grade on one campus. The researcher discussed the possibility of an interview with the principal and then made a formal invitation to the group of elementary school teachers at the same meeting where they participated in filling in the survey. The group consisted of four female teachers and one male teacher from grades one to six, as well as the principal. They all had a Mexican university degree (*licenciatura*). Four participants had been teaching for 11 to 15 years, one for 6 to 10 years, and one for over 20 years. One of the teachers worked at the *Colegio* in the morning and at a public school in the afternoons. Four of the teachers rated the school community income as medium-high and the other two teachers felt the income

was at a medium level overall. When the principal requested participation, the researcher asked the other teachers if they were in agreement and also asked that she be the last person to respond to any given question.

Emerging themes from discussion. Although the teachers at *Colegio Gabriela Mistral* felt they make many invitations for parent involvement in a variety of ways at school, they sensed that many parents were too busy or too tired to be as engaged as they should be with their children. Teachers were not able to articulate many ways that parents support their children's education at home and demonstrated concern with how these students were being raised.

Interview along conceptual themes.

Cultural-historical context. Colegio Gabriela Mistral is a private Mexican school that was founded in 1991and the mission statement mentions the involvement of families in the education of their children. The school professional *community* includes three schools: a preschool, an elementary school and a middle school through the ninth grade. The school personnel includes administrative, teaching, and support staff. According to the school mission statement, families are considered and essential part of the school community. The *norms* that have been created within this school make it a selling point for the community. Posted on the school webpage is the mission statement, which states the goal to "achieve efficiency in attitudes, knowledge and skills within an environment of equity, trust, liberty, and security." From the interview, teachers implicitly referred to a school culture that provided multiple opportunities and modes of family participation. *Division of labor* was primarily within the school setting, where there was a school board,

principals of each school section, the administrative staff, the teachers of each section, and support and maintenance staff.

Changes over time that teachers and parents referred to can be categorized into four areas: change in roles, change in family structure, change in technology, and change in values. The teachers at *Colegio Gabriela Mistral* mentioned that today both parents are working rather than just the father, and expressed concern about this change in roles resulting in less time for their children, inadequate care at home, and fewer opportunities to become engaged in school activities. Family structure has also changed, with more divorces and single parent families today. Again, the concern was that parents have less time and energy to focus on their children's needs at the end of the day. Although there was little discussion about changes in technology, Juan felt that today students are less likely to pick up a book to read or engage in the traditional pastimes of playing outside or with each other. Instead, they are on their devices. Finally, there seems to be a shift in values. This includes mention of the loss of traditional values, such as respect for authority. Iris felt that students showed more respect to adults at school than they do to their parents at home. She also said that instead of parents deciding what the child needs, children today are dictating their desires to their parents. Overall, the change that *Colegio Gabriela Mistral* teachers mentioned was negative.

Mediating tools. Cole (1995) describes mediating tools as "cultural artifacts" that are both ideal and material, historically cumulated, and used in order to impact a future expectation (pp. 32, 37). Mediating tools also reflect the social, economic, and cultural capital that is available to participants. Teachers employ their knowledge and past experiences around the family-school relationship in order to create or modify tools that

can mediate the activity of educating students. Teachers at *Colegio Gabriela Mistral* mentioned a variety of social situations in which parents can participate at school. Parents receive numerous invitations from the school each year to participate in cultural events such as *Día de la Familia,* as well as the support of the parent association (APF). Each morning, parents are invited to participate in fifteen minutes of *motivación* to get students focused on school. As Maria mentioned, "it is transparent here. They enter and have as much access to the school as they like." Teachers also invite parents to visit classes to read or talk about their professions, in this way modeling desired behaviors or outcomes for students. The mediating tools available to teachers at *Colegio Gabriela Mistral* reflected their access to cultural capital that they had through their training and ongoing professional development. Although teachers did not mention specific modes of *communication* with parents, they considered it to be frequent and inviting. Thus, in terms of capital, *Colegio Gabriela Mistral* appeared to make use of its economic, cultural, and social capital in order to foster family-school collaboration.

Teachers were less certain about the mediating tools being employed by parents at home. When asked what parents do at home to support their children's education, there was initially silence and uncertainty in responding. Maria stated, "Well, uh...ok, I personally am not aware, uh...the majority of the...of our families, what their activities are at home...." Another teacher, Juan, mentioned that he was aware that several families were using shared time with their children as a tool, following a "20-minutes-a-day" reading program that he initiated. Two teachers mentioned that homework supervision seemed to occur at home for children through about grades three, but that beyond that parents seemed to foster more independence. Argelia also mentioned that parents were

working and seemed busier with their personal lives than giving attention to their children. The fact that teachers were uncertain of what their families are doing at home could be viewed as a weakness in social capital in that the network was not available in which to access the resources that the parents possessed.

Expectations. Within the CHAT framework, the mediating tools that a subject has available influences the expectations that one has, which then contribute to how one defines goals for achieving the object. As Cole (1995) wrote, past experiences help to form future expectations, which in turn influences present behavior (p. 37). For the purpose of this study, expectations were defined as being influenced by the psychological motivators of role construction and a sense of efficacy, as was discussed in Chapter Two.

In order to determine role construction, focus group participants were given two scenarios which appeared on separate placards: one of a crying child with a failed exam before him and the other of two girls fighting over a toy. Participants were asked how they would resolve the issues in the pictures in order to see whether their beliefs were more school-centered, family-centered, or partnership-centered (Walker et al., 2011). The teachers at *Colegio Gabriela Mistral* gave various responses that reflected a school-centered approach. Emilia and Camila felt that first one should talk to the student in order to have a clearer idea as to the context of the problem. Once that is established they would schedule a meeting with the parents to plan a strategy together. Juan said that he would ask other colleagues for their input before conversing with the child. Argelia emphasized that at their school their goal is to intervene with students before the situation becomes too serious. They agreed that the first step was in the classroom, indicating a

school-focused strategy, and involving parents when the issue could not be solved there or went beyond the scope of what the school could offer.

In addition to solving issues with the students, teachers from *Colegio Gabriela Mistral* defined their roles as establishing communication with parents and providing training in areas that they felt needed parental support. They expressed a strong sense of efficacy in the procedures for parental involvement that they already had in play, but recognized a lack of awareness of what parents already did at home or what the school could do to support families better. Concerning the roles that teachers felt parents should have, the focus was on more commitment. Parents needed to work with the school as a team rather than feel defensive when asked to participate. They needed to take on the time and responsibility required to support the educational tasks that the school would like them to complete, as well as establishing discipline at home.

José Vasconcelos Elementary School - Public School Teachers

Overview. The focus group at *José Vasconcelos* Elementary School took place at the end of the school day. As at *Colegio Gabriela Mistral*, I first introduced the idea of doing a focus group to the principal, and then made a formal invitation to the teachers on the day that I presented the research study and survey. Five of the six teachers at Efrain Gonzalez Luna participated in the focus group, as well as the principal, and so I used the same procedure to include the principal as mentioned above. There were three male and three female participants; four had university degrees (*licenciatura*) and two had a master's degree (*maestría*). One teacher had taught for 6-10 years, two for 16-20 years, and three for over 20 years. Five out of six teachers worked a double shift, one in the

morning and one in the afternoon. Four of the teachers rated the school community income level as low income, while two of the teachers rated it as medium-low.

Emerging themes from discussion. Emerging themes from the teachers at *José Vasconcelos* were lack of parent support, lack of economic cultural capital, and responsibilities placed on teachers to make up for these deficiencies. Although teachers planned events for parents to participate in at school, they mentioned that there was little attendance, and at home, teachers claimed that parents are not able to help because of low levels of education, economic distress, and lack of time or motivation. There was little knowledge of how parents are involved with their children's education at home and the teachers emphasized the need for more collaboration.

Interview along conceptual themes.

Cultural-historical context. *José Vasconcelos* is a federally supported elementary school that operates during the afternoon shift, from 2:00 to 6:30 p.m. It is a separate legal entity from the morning school but in the same building complex. It originated as a rural community school on the outskirts of the city and once the population grew and expanded, there were eventually enough students for it to become under the responsibility of the Secretary of Education (SEP). The school staff consisted of one principal and six teachers for 160 students, grades one through six. The school grounds were gated and include six classrooms and one office, a cemented courtyard, covered seating area at the entrance, a kitchen and a storage room. As is customary in public schools in Mexico, the students wore uniforms. They used the required national curriculum with subsidized textbooks and had had state-subsidized Internet since 2012. All but one teacher worked

two shifts and some also took continuing education courses on Saturdays. Both are ways for teachers to increase their salaries.

The *community* at *José Vasconcelos* was small and with no support staff, as is customary for public elementary schools in the region. However, they belong to a larger, very structured hierarchy within the educational system, including school supervisor, a chief of sector, a regional educational board (DRSE), and the state and national administrations. Federal and state schools differ in their origins and which level of government is responsible for financial support. Although parents are technically considered part of the school community, there was limited interaction between teachers and parents, both as reported and as observed. The *norms* within the school community are established both at the national and school level. At the national level norms such as the value of patriotism are implicit in the national curriculum, in standardized exams, teacher training and, more recently, evaluation. Although a hierarchical relationship exists on the school level between the principal and the teachers, there was evidence of participatory leadership for much of the daily functions of the school.

The teachers at *José Vasconcelos* mentioned *changes over time* in roles, family structure, technology, and values. Parents' roles had changed with more women in the workforce in order to obtain economic stability. The result of this, according to Pedro, was that there was less adult support or time for children. The mothers arrive at home to reassume the role of housekeeper and the fathers want to rest. Family structure has also changed. Ileana mentioned that several of her students came from single-parent home, which in her opinion meant that the children were left alone much of the day with no one to reinforce values. Changes in technology have resulted in a problem with the teacher's

ability to comply with the national curriculum. Guillermo expressed frustration that students are required to investigate topics at home and look at pages on the Internet, which most families cannot afford and to which have little if any access. "The reform is not based on reality," added Adolfo. The teachers at *José Vasconcelos* did not address changes in values.

   Mediating tools. Although the teachers at *José Vasconcelos* possessed cultural capital from training and professional development, worked as a team and invited parents to participate, their responses indicated that their mediating tools were limited and minimally effective. Parents are required to come to the school five times per year in order to sign the report cards and in the spring to reregister their children for the following school year. Ileana mentioned that she wrote observations about each student on the back of the report card so that the parent could read it and respond, feeling that her strategy had worked well. She said it was also a good time to collect family financial contributions (*cooperación*) for school maintenance. Jimena added that she took advantage of the presence of parents to put up posters that listed term objectives, grading standards, themes, and classroom discipline expectations. The school also attempted to accommodate for working parents and sponsored cultural events such as *Día de la Madre* as a way to involve parents, but teachers felt that the attendance was not adequate. When asked what percent of the school community did attend, teachers responded by saying fifty to seventy percent. Ileana said, and her colleagues agreed that she felt some parents viewed the school as simply a day care center (*guardaría*).

   Modes of *communication* as mediating tools were limited. Without availability of the Internet among the parent community, communication was limited to sending notes

and verbal messages home with students, announcements posted at the front gate, and posters outside the classroom doors. In addition, although a discipline code was mentioned by one of the teachers, it was not clear whether parents had been given a copy or had access to it.

Similar to the private school above, teachers at *José Vasconcelos* seemed unaware of the mediating tools that parents employed at home with their children. Adolfo mentioned that some parents helped with homework, but Ileana followed by saying that with the lack of culture and education of the parents, they could not require much of the parents. Jimena refered to parents' lack of mediating tools by saying, "The father doesn't have the tools or knowledge to support the child. This is reflected in the [lack of] support with homework. It is...well,...the economic situation." The deficit approach reflected in the responses by teachers is a reflection of the lack of economic and cultural capital at *José Vasconcelos*. Economically, teachers said that parents did not have access to necessary materials for education such as computers. Culturally they lacked necessary education levels. Socially, there was no mention of a network of support among parents or between the school and parents, and social capital appeared to be used more for social control in addressing problems at school rather than creating benefits through extrafamilial networks (Portes, 2000).

Expectations. As a result of the severe obstacles that the teachers at *José Vasconcelos* felt their families at school were experiencing, their sense of efficacy in working with parents also appeared to be low. As Ileana stated, "we cannot expect much because parents don't have the knowledge in terms of [helping with] homework." Pedro added, "...they don't have any studies or a profession. It makes it very difficult t o support

their children." Ileana admitted that this also affected the motivation of teachers: "We do what we can. Personally, I would like them to come to me and say '*Maestra*, what can I do to support my daughter?' 'Please explain this to me...' or whatever. Only two or three have come to see me, that's all."

By responding to how they would resolve the academic and behavioral issues in the two scenarios, teachers revealed how they constructed their own and parents' roles in education. Ideally, mentioned Pedro, parents and teachers needed to be working as a team, but this was not the reality. Ileana also mentioned that a parent had become very defensive when having to come into school to discuss academic issues of her child. The role of the teacher thus became focused on making observations, speaking with the child, and seeking to change the student's behavior herself, reflecting a school-focused approach. Roles that the teachers felt the parents should have included attending school activities when asked or invited, helping their children at home, teaching values and discipline, and communicating with teachers. The school should then reinforce these values, but should also take on those responsibilities if they felt the parents were not contributing sufficiently. Pedro also mentioned the role of the government, mentioning that more needed to be invested in schools and that education should be a stronger political priority. During the interview, teachers did not mention any concerns about parents becoming too involved in pedagogical decisions of the school, in contrast to some recent qualitative studies in Mexico (Martínez et al., 2007; Santizo, 2011).

Summary

In summary, the teachers at *José Vasconcelos* Elementary School assumed a deficit approach toward the parent community, due to the perceived lack of cultural and

economic capital. Because of this viewpoint, teachers felt that they were very limited in the extent to which they could foster family-school collaboration.

CONAFE rural community schools - Instructors

      Overview. The focus group session for the rural school instructors took place about one and a half hours from the primary municipality of this study in order to make the location accessible to all five participants. In this case, the researcher had been invited to a general meeting with CONAFE instructors there the week before in order to apply the survey and make a formal invitation for the focus group interview. Because community instructors can be as young as 15 years of age (CONAFE, 2011), only those who were over 18 and interested in the session were asked to write their names and telephone numbers on a notepad, which I collected at the meeting. Time during the meeting was made to arrange the date and location with the volunteers. CONAFE educators are young people who are essentially volunteering their time and effort in exchange for technical school and college scholarships and thus are referred to as instructors rather than teachers (CONAFE, 2011).

      The participants represented four different rural school communities within three municipalities, each made up of between five and fifty families. Among the participants were four women and one man. One participant had completed the 9th grade (*secundaria*), while the others had finished the 12th grade (*preparatoria*). Four of the instructors had been working in rural community schools for 0 to 6 years and one for 6 to 10 years. All of the instructors estimated the school community to have a low-income level.

Emerging themes from discussion. There were several emerging themes from the focus group interview with rural community school instructors that contrasted with information from teachers of the private and public schools. A central theme was the triangle of commitment that the CONAFE instructors referred to throughout the conversation. The triangle represents the relationship between the student, instructor, and family and is a fundamental element of the decentralized approach to rural community education through the CONAFE. Related to this theme was the role of the instructor as needing to foster the relationship with parents and to insist on their participation. Other themes that arose during the interview were a familiarity with the community, a strong sense of role construction and efficacy, and a balance between successes and challenges of parent involvement despite lacking resources.

Interview along conceptual themes.

Cultural-historical context. Instructors of the rural CONAFE schools viewed themselves and parents as members of the same *community* and were otherwise only supported pedagogically and administratively from a distance. There might be two to three instructors per community, depending on the number and ages of the children, but they have no other immediate support than the families themselves. The *norms* of the rural community school were provided by CONAFE structure at a federal level, and were founded on the ideas of community responsibility and the right to education. There was limited *division of labor* within the community school since the instructor was essentially responsible for all pedagogical and administrative tasks. Within the CONAFE, the instructors had received an initial month-long training and then monthly workshops as a group within each region, and are supervised by an educational trainer (*capacitador*).

Change over time that the instructors mentioned was focused on social progress.

An important change that was mentioned was that of roles of women in their access to

educational and, consequently, professional opportunities. This, however, has not been

without fierce disruptions to family norms. Maribel gave an example of how she broke

away from the restrictive norms enforced by her grandfather:

> I remember what my grandfather said when I finished elementary school.
>
> That's right...my grandfather said that women shouldn't study because they
>
> are born to be mothers and at home tending to their husbands, that
>
> women didn't study.... So I said, "How is it possible that I like to study
>
> and if my parents are the ones who tell me what to do, why do I have to
>
> listen to my grandfather?" So...I made a...well, that's how I have to put it....
>
> I went and registered for middle school and with nothing at all, because
>
> I had talked with the principal about my situation that they didn't want me
>
> to study and all, and that I wanted to go....I don't have that idea that women
>
> are made for the home anymore. Not anymore.

Maribel was able to break away from the traditional norms restricting education to

women through the help of her aunt, who took her away to live with her. Now Maribel's

daughters are continuing with their studies as their mother had done. Elena also reflected

about changes in family structure in both positive and negative ways. Even though

women were more able to leave an unhealthy home life and start on her own, she also

expressed concern about the impact on the children involved in separation from family.

In addition the change in women's roles, the participants mentioned that there are fewer

children per family today than earlier. The CONAFE instructors did not mention changes

in technology, possibly because of the low socioeconomic levels of the families living in the community. Economic changes or improvements were also not mentioned.

When discussing changing values, the instructors gave both positive and negative examples. More liberty in making one's own decisions was mentioned both for women and in respect to raising children, although Maribel felt that it could lead to an excess or misuse of liberties. The instructors also discussed the loss of "strong" values, such as in respectfulness toward adults and practicing salutations. Maribel practiced these behaviors with her students and gave prizes to those who used it most with their families. Some instructors also felt that earlier it was more *tranquilo*, or peaceful. Today, mentioned Liliana, even the songs that children listened to were filled with violence and drugs.

Mediating tools. The mediating tools mentioned by CONAFE instructors were largely centered on building social capital with students, among students, and with families. At the school itself, a degree of self-governance and shared leadership between instructors and parents were tools that had been created at a federal level and were meant to become part of the daily structure of events. This begins with the creation of the Association for the Community Promotion of Education (APEC), similar to the APF of public schools but, as the title indicates, more focused on community involvement. The instructors explained that the level of participation in the APEC varied, but the emphasis was that all families were required to carry out the responsibilities that the APEC approved. Such activities also included organizing cultural events at schools such as *Día de la Madre* and *Día de la Independencia*, as well as having meetings about academic progress and community health measures such as the *Acción de Salud.* The instructors also mentioned how parents had approached them with questions they had concerning

how to support their children with the homework. All of these are examples of how social

capital through extrafamilial networks has become a tool for family-school collaboration

in order to build upon available resources.

There were also several examples of how families use mediating tools at home,

including providing meals, uniforms, and academic support. Some parents work on the

homework with their children and others provide additional practice, based on what they

think might help. Others seem to reject their role academically and tell the child to ask

someone else for help, possibly for lack of institutionalized cultural capital in levels of

education and literacy. Marisa gave an example of how a family worked together on

pealing *nopal* cactus leaves while assisting the daughter with her homework. In this way,

the parents demonstrated dual roles, assisting with homework while teaching their

children the skills they might need for future labor:

> In one instance there was a man who made a living by cutting *nopales*.
>
> And every afternoon, every afternoon, all of the children would sit in a
>
> circle. And in this circle everyone is cutting *nopales*...fine. They make a
>
> circle, and in this circle they are talking. There is amazing communication
>
> because the children say, "*Oye*, *papá,* guess what?" about this or that. And
>
> the girl that is the smallest, my student, would sit and do her homework.
>
> Everyone is peeling. "*Oye*, they left me this homework to research about an
>
> animal..." and everyone is participating. "Well, write '*cocodrilo*', write....,"
>
> So everyone is like that and in this way they are educating their children,
>
> including the work that they do, because they say to them, "You can play,
>
> you can watch television, but you need to help peel the *nopales* because

that's how we support ourselves as a family." So, every family helps,

I think. Every family teaches the children according to how they make

a living, but at the same time one is learning to be responsible.

This scenario resembles an earlier study of environmental practices among families of an indigenous community in Michoacan, Mexico. Although the skills and knowledge taught by the parents did not necessarily align with the national geography curriculum in elementary school, parents teaching their children about fundamental knowledge of the environment such as distinguishing types of plants and animals, starting and putting out fires, and learning agricultural processes is a valuable contribution to their children's education (Barraza, 2003).

Expectations. The expectations of instructors on parents were based on the contractual approach of the self-governing school, where the relationship is represented by the triangle of student, parent, and teacher and reflects the quote by Carlos Fuentes at the beginning of Chapter One. The instructors implied that this relationship could exist despite the lack of tools that cultural and economic capital would provide. Above all, the instructors demonstrated a strong sense of efficacy in their work. This seemed to be independent of their own lack of teacher training or access to adequate educational materials. This efficacy was reinforced by a trusting relationship between instructors and families. Heriberto gave an example of a mother who had approached him to have him teach her how to do division so that she could help her third grade child with his homework.

Although the expectations for parent and teacher roles were based on a partnership approach, it became evident in the interview that the CONAFE instructors

felt they needed to occasionally take on other roles. In response to the scenario of the child with academic difficulties, the instructors mentioned that they were able to detect changes in students fairly early and would begin working with the child immediately, providing both emotional and academic support as needed. This included working one-on-one with the child after classes. They would also discuss the academic need with parents and expect support at home.

The approach to the scenario based on a behavioral issue was more school-centered and tended to focus on general behavioral expectations rather than on the specific child. Here, three of the instructors gave examples of how they would model appropriate behavior in the classroom and have the students practice it. Elena would have the students practice saying positive things about each other, while Marisa focused on modeling the behavior she would like the students to have. Maribel's approach was more in conjunction with the creation and review of school rules. She mentioned that she would involve the students in revisiting classroom rules and discuss them in a general meeting with parents rather than singling out parents. Each instructor had designed a mediating tool through which they reinforced values and appropriate behavior, thus using social capital in order to reinforce norms (Portes, 2000).

With both of these scenarios, the CONAFE instructors viewed their roles as working with parents to provide education and insisting on the triangular contract with the community. This included providing multiple occasions for meetings and workshops outside of school hours. Heriberto mentioned that he felt they sometimes had to take on additional roles as mentors, psychologists, or even parents, while Marisa said, "We need to stimulate parents, help them to realize that education is important. They don't know

that, and that is why they don't support us. Not everyone." *Communication* was a primary tool for developing the family-school collaboration. The instructors mentioned notes home, posted on the school door or windows, as part of a monthly newspaper that is posted, through meetings, and through daily conversations with parents.

The instructors expressed high expectations for parents and their roles. These included building and maintaining the school, participating in decision-making and organization of school events, and motivating the children. Expectations for the government and its role also surfaced during the interview. Marisa mentioned that parents were sometimes in disagreement when, for example, they were required to provide lunch for constructions workers when receiving material support from the federal government. Parents argued that they already pay taxes and should not have to provide additional economic support for the school. Hector argued that this was part of decentralized education policy and that there was simply a lack of understanding of the role that each party should play.

Summary. In summary, the CONAFE instructors were able to provide rich examples of the context of rural community education. Although they felt that there was a lack of economic and cultural capital among many families, the instructors shared ways to encourage participation and empower families to take a stronger role in their children's education. Their reflection was largely positive and focused on creating the social capital necessary for shared leadership.

Focus Groups with Parents

Colegio Gabriela Mistral - Private School Parents

Overview. The parent focus group interview took place at the *Colegio Gabriela Mistral* school library, as per request by the parents. In this case the researcher first discussed the idea with the elementary school principal, who then invited her to speak directly to the Parent Association (APF). On a separate date the researcher introduced the study, explaining the purpose and need for parent participation. They discussed it further with the principal, who then confirmed the date. Eight mothers and one father of children ages six to twelve participated in the discussion. Six of the parents were between 26 and 40 years old and three were between 41 and 60 years old. Four were born in the state of Jalisco, three in Mexico City, one in Michoacán, and one in Nayarit. Although they did not all live in the same *colonia* as the school, they had lived in the municipality for between two and 36 years. One of the parents studied through the 9th grade, five through the 12th grade, and three had a university degree. They all had one or two children between the ages of six and fifteen living at home.

Emerging themes from discussion. Generally speaking, the parents from *Colegio Gabriela Mistral* expressed being pleased with their relationship with the school. Their concerns were centered on raising their children and finding balance between time and activities, but felt that the school supported them in positive ways.

Interview along conceptual themes.

Cultural-historical context. The *Colegio Gabriela Mistral* parent *community* consisted primarily of nuclear families, some with at least one grandparent living in the household. Three of the participants mentioned that they were single parents. Unlike the public or rural schools, the families did not all live in the same neighborhood or even nearby the school. On the contrary, several parents expressed distrust for their neighbors

and did not let their children simply play outside but only with certain neighbor children or at their own home where they knew there was supervision. In a couple of cases, both parents worked while the grandparent cared for the children and supervised activities at home. *Norms* were established by the parents at home as well as through the school. An example of school-initiated norms was the requirement that parents sign for the child's homework each evening, thus reinforcing a value in parent participation with the child's work. At home, several parents expressed value in their children working independently but also mentioned that they would provide extra support as much as needed. Their children also had a variety of activities in the afternoons such as tae kwon do and gymnastics, and so the parents organized the day around school, work, and their children's activities. The *division of labor* between the adults in the household varied. The presence of eight mothers and one father at the interview confirms research that the mother is still the primary link between home and school (Esquivel, 1995). However, several parents mentioned shared responsibilities between parents for childcare, whether living together or separately. Children were described as sharing responsibility for household chores, although the specific tasks and levels of responsibilities varied.

There were contrasting responses in the discussion of *changes over time* in the areas of roles, family structure, technology, and values. There was little mention of changes in roles or family structure, or that there are more single parent families now than earlier. Roles of parents varied in that some participants had had mothers who had worked, while others did not. Some of the participants had parents who were highly educated and very active in their schooling, while others had parents who had not completed elementary school and had not been able to help with homework. Several

participants mentioned the changes in technology, both in positive and negative ways. Transport has become more accessible today, while the Internet and electronic devises have brought immense challenges to parents. As Horacio expressed:

> Twenty years ago...what could influence you? There wasn't very much. The television channels weren't the same, the cartoons were different from today. The influences on our children today are overwhelming. So you are afraid, not so much about safety but about what can influence them, that they come home and are used to things that we aren't familiar with, with ideas that we don't agree with.

Participants from *Colegio Gabriela Mistral* did feel that values had changed over time. Several mentioned that children seemed to be more conscious of what they wanted. Adriana mentioned that before she had felt embarrassed to express what she wished to adults, whereas today children demanded it. Elena also commented on how children often addressed adults in a more informal way, although she felt that earlier the degree of respect one was required to show had been exaggerated. Lucia's observation was that parents seemed more permissive today and permitted more than their parents had done with them. Her and Horacio's concern was tied to that of technology above, and that society itself had more influence on children than they themselves.

> *Mediating tools*. The mediating tools for supporting their children's education included accompanying their children to and from school, to school events, and supervising their homework time in the afternoons, as well as providing for their material needs. All of these reflect an emphasis on building embodied and objectified cultural capital with their children through familial social capital (Portes, 2000). The parents also

expressed an interest in building stronger social capital with the teachers by asking about their children's progress, requesting support when there were family concerns or changes, or when there was an issue with discipline. Communication as a tool between the school and families was spoken of positively. When Elena mentioned that she had often missed the opportunity to be present at school when her daughter received a recognition certificate, Lolita emphasized the availability of the school calendar online and the importance of referring to it regularly. They also commented on the availability and willingness of the teachers to meet with them and the value of receiving student invitations to attend events at school. The parents' general view of the relationship with the school was positive and suggests a welcoming school climate.

At home, some of mediating tools that were mentioned in order to support their children educationally were providing materials, a time and place for homework, assistance in developing study habits, responsibilities around the home, and additional activities such as sports classes or therapy if needed. Elena said she felt she had more tools available to her today than her parents had had, but other parents added that life was also much more challenging today in an ever-changing society.

Expectations. The sense of efficacy expressed by the parents at *Colegio Gabriela Mistral* was high in that they were able to articulate specific strategies for supporting their children's education and for addressing the two scenarios presented during the interview. Their challenges seem to be more influenced by a lack of time and organization than ability. In response to the scenarios, the parents focused on a partnership-centered approach. For the scenario based on academic needs, the parents agreed that providing emotional as well as academic support was essential, but disagreed

on whether to protect or encourage the child to worry, or *preocuparse*, about the situation. For Lidia, the focus was on building confidence in her child and making learning enjoyable, while Elena mentioned the importance of her child taking responsibility for his work. Both mothers said that they would immediately speak to the teacher in order to get their perspective and ask for recommendations. Lidia, who actually did have a son who had academic difficulties after the parents' separation, had worked with teachers and at home to provide more structured supervision, conversation, and therapy.

The approach toward behavioral issues was more focused on the home. Lucia emphasized maintaining an honest relationship and teaching her children that she could only defend them if they did not lie. Elena said she taught her children to put themselves in the others' place, focusing on empathy and finding compromises that would be beneficial to everyone. Lolita used an example of teaching how to share from a preschool, while Lidia was the only participant to include a conversation with the classroom teacher.

Concerning their roles as parents and expectations for the school, there was more of a discussion about their own responsibilities. The parents recognized that the school communicates expectations and opportunities for collaboration, and so their responsibilities included knowing what is happening at school and complying with those expectations. They spoke of their personal involvement in their children's education and did not mention it in comparison to other parents at the school. There was also no mention of the government role in their children's education.

Summary. In summary, the parents from *Colegio Gabriela Mistral* expressed a positive relationship with the school and mentioned a number of specific ways that they are involved in their children's education. Their access to economic and cultural capital appeared to be adequate, although they expressed feeling pressured due to lack of sufficient time each day. Their comments also demonstrated social capital in all three of the functions: as social control in adhering to school norms, family support, and some benefits through extrafamilial networks (Portes, 2000).

José Vasconcelos **Elementary School - Public School Parents**

Overview. The focus group at *José Vasconcelas* Elementary School took place after classes at the school. As with the teacher focus group at the same school, the researcher discussed it with the principal first, who then introduced her at a general parent meeting the following week. During the meeting he invited parents to participate and took down names of volunteers immediately, who would then meet with the researcher outside in the courtyard after the general meeting was over. Eight parents met outside afterwards and agreed to meet the following day at school.

Four of the eight parents came to the focus group session, which was then conducted over two meetings in order to alleviate the pressure from parents to attend to their children's needs after school. Two mothers and two fathers were present, three from the state of Jalisco and one from Michoacán. One of the parents had studied through the 6th grade and three through the 9th grade. There was one parent between the ages of 18 and 25, two between 26 and 40, and one between 41 and 60. They had between two and five children between the ages of 10 months to 17 years old living at home.

Emerging themes from discussion. The primary theme from the interview with public school parents was the lack of sufficient resources to adequately support their children's education. These needs included material resources, ongoing training for parents and teachers, as well as increased commitment on the part of the school in the areas of discipline and presence of personnel. They felt that they needed more support from the school as well as from the government.

Interview along conceptual themes.

Cultural-historical context. The *community* that the four parents represented was made up of both nuclear and extended families living in the same household. From the discussion, there seemed to be little interaction among parents and thus minimal social capital in the *colonia* and only limited interaction with classroom teachers. Parents did mention that many families in the community were experiencing separation and divorce. Cultural *norms* seemed to be rooted in the family rather than in the community and included the value on participating in the children's education, albeit at differing degrees, as well as inculcating values and discipline. However, there was a general expression of the need for guidance. The participants agreed that not all parents comply with these norms at the same level. Concerning *division of labor*, the observation that more women attended the general parent meeting at school than men leads to the conclusion that women are still considered responsible for the child's education and link to school (Esquivel, 1995). However, the two male participants explained how the role of the father was becoming increasingly important.

The parents from *José Vasconcelos* commented on *changes over time* with respect to gender roles, family structure, technology, and values. Although some women had

always worked in order to contribute to the family economy, they mentioned that parent participation in education was becoming more of an expectation by schools. Fathers were also contributing more to the raising of children and to their education. Fernando commented that his role changed drastically upon separating from his wife and his caring for the two children:

> I have been practically their father and mother at the same time....
> Sometimes my daughter has asked me things that...that women should
> address, you know? And I have to answer. I can, but sometimes they are
> things that are more appropriate for a mother.... So in this aspect my life
> has changed a lot. It's a role that really I never expected, but you have to
> go with it and move on.

Jorge had also noticed changes in the role of the father by making observations in the community. Twenty-two years old and father of two infants, Jorge and his wife were also caring for three of his sister's children:

> ... well, now all of the sudden I'm out driving and I see a father walking
> with his child or I see a father carrying the child in a baby pouch. So you
> see this change in society and realize you have to change even more.

The participants felt a strong change in the influence of technology both on their children and on themselves as parents. They recognized that computers were a necessity in their children's education today, as homework assignments often required research beyond the textbook. Access to the Internet provided challenges for parents like Fernando, who wanted to protect his children from pornography sites or other negative influences now readily available with technology. Gemma and Fidela mentioned, however, that they did

not even have access to the Internet. In the discussion of change in values, the parents agreed that they had had more liberty and safety to play within the neighborhood independently or walk to school than their children have today. Today they were very concerned about safety from neighbors who may be using drugs or are violent and streets or rivers that were not adequately protected. They also felt that children needed more guidance today and thus required the parents to accompany them more throughout the day. Their focus was on increased responsibility, while at the same time they needed guidance in how to do so appropriately.

Mediating tools. The participants mentioned a number of tools are available in order to support their children's education, although they expressed concern that the majority of families at the school do not employ them. The spaces that were available for parental involvement in the school included accompanying the children to and from home, taking snacks to them during the break, attending fund-raisers (*kermés*) and cultural events, contributing financial for the maintenance of the school through *cooperaciones*, becoming part of the parent association (APF), attending general parent meetings, picking up report cards, or approaching teachers individually to discuss the student's progress, many of which are ways to build upon embodied cultural capital even when objectified and institutionalized capital are lacking (Bourdieu, 1986). However, there did not appear to be any formal networks between teachers and parents. Communication with teachers or the principal was largely verbal and required the parent to be present the school, which often conflicted with their daily work schedules. The participants mentioned the need for telephone numbers of the teachers or at least the school office, which they felt was not readily enough available. Fidela also felt that each

teacher should have the phone numbers of all parents in case there was an accident or special concern with her children at school or to check why a student did not attend classes any given day.

At home the tools depended more on family social, economic and cultural capital, since there was a perceived lack of common network or resource availability that would indicate strong social capital within the *colonia.* Parents could provide supervision, materials, and support for homework, respond to their children's questions, and help them to get access to materials outside the home. Very importantly, parents mentioned a number of topics that they discussed with their children, including appropriate behavior at school, showing respect, and how to stay safe, all of which are uses of social capital for social control (Portes, 2000).

Expectations. The sense of efficacy that was expressed by the parents at *Efraín González Luna* was relatively low. Fidela gave an example and the effect that she believes it had on her child:

> ...because what if the child doesn't know and you don't know? Well, how
>
> are you going to direct her? So the parent often doesn't know and then that
>
> works against the child in class. Right? One point less. It affects her grades.

During the interview, the participants consistently mentioned the need for training as parents to better guide their children through their education. Areas of training that were mentioned included computer training, Internet use, home discipline, and parent guidance for following the class textbooks. The general conclusion was that if they had more resources, they could help their children more effectively.

The role construction for academic and behavioral issues varied among the parents that were interviewed. In the scenario where the student has academic challenges, the parents agreed that they would talk to the child and try to find out what was wrong, thus taking a more parent-centered approach. The examples that they gave focused more on the child's emotional welfare than academic. For example, Guadalupe felt that her son sometimes lost motivation at school when he had had a fight with a classmate or was not being treated fairly by the teacher. They mentioned trying to resolve the issue with their children but did not articulate any specific strategies for doing so. With the behavioral issue, the two mothers said they would speak to their children but let the school decide what to do about it, reflecting a partnership-centered or even school-centered approach. Fidela said that she and her husband would then apply consequences at home as well, but separate from those of the school. Guadalupe mentioned that if her son was having an issue with another child, she would go in to talk with the teacher in order to resolve it. Overall, the approach to resolving these issues seemed to be dependent on the individual parent and cannot be generalized.

The parents discussed a variety of roles that they had in supporting their children's education. There was a strong emphasis on protecting and defending their children from harm, and talking with their children about appropriate behavior. The participating parents expressed a sense of responsibility towards their children but a lack of it by other parents in the school community. The expectations for the school's role were high. These parents expected the school to support parents, provide resources and training, communication and order on the grounds. They felt that there needed to be better teacher punctuality and more presence of the principal at school. They expressed a

concern for lack of discipline, supervision, and order at the school and implied that these were teacher-dependent rather than part of the school culture. They would like more teacher training and higher levels of professionalism. Parents also mentioned the role of the government repeatedly during the interview in providing the resources that parents need in order to adequately support their children's education. These are primarily material goods including computers, Internet access, meals, uniforms, parent guidebooks, English classes, and ongoing training for parents and teachers.

Summary. Generally speaking, the discussion among parents at *José Vasconcelos* Elementary School was based largely on needs. The parents expressed a concern for and interest in their children's education but felt that they did not have access to the necessary resources. They approached the focus group interview as an opportunity to voice these needs and request support. The parents also mentioned that the type of involvement that they have with their children was not widespread among the families of the school community.

Los Tabachines **- Rural Community School Parents**

Overview. The focus group in the rural community of *Los Tabachines* took place outside in a shaded area of the school grounds during the school day. The researcher first consulted with the instructors and they suggested that a meeting with the parents to make a formal invitation. Invitations were printed and read to the parents at the meeting, followed by and invitation to sign up and suggest a day and time for the interview. Those who were interested signed their names and gave the names and ages of their children who were in elementary school. Eleven parents signed up for the focus group and all were present on the day of the discussion. As had been stated in the invitations the

parents were each given a children's storybook in Spanish as a gesture of appreciation for their time.

All of the participants were women, although it was made explicit at the previous meeting that men were also welcome and their opinions would be valued. As with the other two parent focus groups, the participation of the women confirms recent research in rural communities of Mexico and the role of mothers in the educational lives of their children (Esquivel, 1995; Azaola, 2010). Three of the women were between the ages of 18 and 25, six were between 26 and 40, and two were between 41 and 60 years old. The members of this community came from a variety of states. Four had been born in the state of Jalisco, three in Michoacán, two in Guerrero, one in Guanajuato, and one in Queretaro. They have lived in *Los Tabachines* and the nearby village for between two and eight years. Three of the mothers had never finished elementary school (*primaria*), five had studied through the 6th grade, and three had finished the 9th grade. The families had between two and seven children between the ages of a few months to 17 years living at home.

Emerging themes from discussion. Emerging themes from the interview with the parents at *Los Tabachines* included education as the tool for increased standard of living and quality of life, limited access to resources, and community participation in education.

Interview along conceptual themes.

Cultural-historical context. The *community* at *Los Tabachines* was small, diverse, and fairly new to the region. Only 4 of the 11 participants had been born in the state of Jalisco and the others had migrated there from other states within the last eight

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years. The village was in a rural agricultural region immediately outside a city of over 200,000 inhabitants and would therefore be considered "semi-rural." Although most families had running water and electricity, their homes were only partially finished and often had temporary roofing, windows, and doors. The parents had relatively low levels of education and three of them said they were not able to read or write. Concerning *norms*, they represented multiple cultural backgrounds that would influence their approach to their children's schooling. Norms within the community were also developing by working together to build and maintain their community school. There was distinct *division of labor* within these families. The husbands looked for work, although several had contractual rather than full-time employment. Women in the village ran the household and were also primarily responsible for the children's education, confirming Mexican research (Esquivel, 1995). Only a few women worked outside the home. Children helped with both the mother and father's tasks and older siblings were expected to care for the younger ones.

The participating mothers mentioned several *changes over time.* They did not comment on changing roles of men and women in the family, but rather in education. They felt there were higher expectations for parents to be able to explain the homework or have access to resources, but they were not always able to comply with those expectations. In reference to family structure, they mentioned having fewer children than their parents had had. Most had between two and four children, while many of their parents had had from 8 to 12. They did not mention separation or divorce as a changing element. In technology, mothers agreed that computers were necessary tools for their children's education, but they did not all have them. Concerning changing values, they

also agreed that they tried to give their children more play time today than they had had growing up. They said they were more independent earlier in getting to school and doing homework, whereas today they choose to accompany their children more in both areas.

Mediating tools. The mediating tools employed by the parents in *Los Tabachines* were more closely tied to the school than used at home and were focused on building extrafamilial social capital in order to establish educational norms within the community. Self-governing schools are co-directed by the instructors and parents according to the contract that they have with the federally operated CONAFE. The parents are expected to build the school with their own material and human resources, receiving only minimal, if any, resources by the CONAFE or municipal government. In *Los Tabachines* the elementary school was made with branches, scraps of wood and corrugated metal, with chicken wire as windows. Upon receiving some material support by local donors, the men in the village had been able to begin the construction of a new, two-room school with cemented floors and walls. The parents set up a schedule with the instructor for cleaning the school grounds each week, so that every family would contribute. Most parents also used their time to accompany their children to and from school and some come again during the mid-morning break to take them breakfast. There were several meetings during the school year where parents had the opportunity to express their concerns and learn how to assist their children at home. The parents mentioned communication as being largely verbal and in person, and they felt it could be improved in both directions: from parent to teacher and from teacher to parent.

The participants viewed their children's schooling as a mediating tool towards a better future than they themselves have. In fact, having an education was not only

mentioned as bringing economic stability, but as increasing the value of a person. Flavia mentioned how her son wanted an education to *be someone:*

> Mine says he wants to be someone in life, that he doesn't just want to
>
> be like his father, carrying around bags of cement or concrete mix and
>
> everything. He says he wants to be someone in life. Get a profession.

The mothers mentioned how their husbands referred to education as a way of getting better opportunities in life. Alba shared her thoughts:

> Ok, my husband says that he wants my children to be something and
>
> that he didn't have the chance. Because he did, he would liked to have
>
> had the opportunity to study, because right now he is like everyone else,
>
> he goes to the jobs and look, he really needed the schooling, he says. So
>
> since we couldn't have it, at least our children deserve it so that they can
>
> move forward.

Flavia added, "My husband also says to the children, he says that the only future that we can leave them is their schooling." Thus, parent used supervision of homework and conversation about the children's future as mediating tools to build cultural and eventually economic capital. Several mothers mentioned talking with their children about what they did in school, what they want to be when they grow up, and how they need to do well in school and keep going in order to achieve their goals. In this sense, they were using family social capital in order to help their children access other social relationships and resources, as well as improve the amount and quality of those resources in the future (Portes, 2000).

Expectations. Low levels of efficacy but a clear sense of their own roles in

encouraging their children to study characterize the expectations of the mothers in *Los*

Tabachines. Several participants mentioned that they were not able to help their children

with their homework, either because they did not read or write well or because they did

not understand the materials. Laurita said she referred her child to others within the

community for help, characteristic of shifting family social capital to informal

extrafamilial capital in order to build cultural capital, a practice that is still common in

rural Mexico:

> What makes it difficult for me is that I don't know how to read or write
>
> well. If it's a math question I have so say, "Well there it is, *hija*, I can't
>
> help you. I don't understand it myself." And I send her with the neighbor,
>
> and she will help her.

> When discussing their roles in resolving academic and behavior issues with their

children, the majority of participants suggested a more family-approach, while three

mentioned a partnership approach. All of the mothers said they would first talk with their

children to find out what the root of the problem was. Fernanda recognized that problems

at school could also have emotional roots, such as issues with other students or within the

family at home. The participants did not articulate specific strategies for finding the

reasons for the problem or helping their children to get through them. Rather, they said

they would "find out what was wrong," "encourage them," or "help them." Although their

approach was generally more family-centered, three of the participants mentioned that

they would talk to the teacher to find out more details or prevent it from getting worse.

The mothers also expressed their expectations for the school, families, and the government in relation to their children's education. The school was viewed as the provider of education as a means for a better future. When asked if they preferred their small, local school to the much larger, more established government school one kilometer away, the mothers unanimously agreed that they wanted their children in their own village where they had closer contact with them and with the school. However, there were other families in the community who did walk their children to the next village so that their children could attend school there. The mothers also expected the instructor to communicate with them about how they should help their children at home. The participants viewed the family's role as motivating the children to continue through school as far as was economically feasible. They would provide what they could and expected their children to do their part by studying hard and eventually contributing economically once past middle school. However, two mothers expressed a lack of efficacy in convincing their older children to continue their studies. This reflects research in Mexico relating the lack of cultural capital among newly literate families with lack of self-efficacy among students to continue their studies (Reimers, 2006b). The community of parents had agreed to build a school in *Los Tabachines*, based on a general agreement about their role in maintaining it.

The participants also voiced their opinions as to the role of the government in their school. They said that they needed the school to be better equipped, with proper classrooms and bathrooms. They also felt their children should have English classes, since when they entered the middle school in another town, they were expected to have some knowledge of it already. Their concern was that without a foundation in English,

their children would lag behind other students and have low grades. Flavia commented that her daughter had brought home the English book to complete assignments even though she did not have the skills or background do it. The mothers also felt that they needed workshops on other topics such as bullying. So, despite the understanding of their contract as a self-governing school, the parents expected their children to be given the same educational opportunities as elsewhere.

Summary. Overall, the mothers from *Los Tabachines* viewed their children's education as imperative for improving their social and economic standing, and so placed a value on schooling. They were starkly limited in economic and cultural capital themselves, yet were able to compensate to some extent somewhat through building extrafamilial social capital in the community and with the instructors. Despite their aspirations, there was a general agreement that the government and school should provide more equitable resources.

Chapter Summary

Chapter Four presented a discussion of the qualitative findings about teacher and parental expectations for family-school collaboration in a region of western Mexico. Through a hybrid approach to focus group analysis (Ryan et al., 2014) and cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) as the lens, both individual and group experiences were highlighted in order to delve deeper into the meanings behind family-school involvement. Results demonstrated the critical roles of context and access to mediating tools through cultural, economic and social capital in forming expectations for family-school collaboration. Not only did expectations differ between teachers and parents, but among groups of teachers and groups of parents as well. The quantitative findings of the study

are presented in the following chapter in order to draw conclusions about 1) the role of

culture and context, 2) how teachers and parents define expectations, and 3) other factors

that may influence the forming of expectations, and 4) how teacher and parent

expectations for family-school collaboration compare.

Chapter 5: Quantitative Analysis

Overview

This chapter presents the results of the surveys that were administered to teachers and parents in the participating schools in western Mexico. The surveys were designed, as described in Chapter 3, to address three research questions:

1. What are teacher expectations for family-school collaboration?

2. How do teachers assess parental expectations for involvement in family-school collaboration?

3. How do parents define their own expectations for family-school collaboration? The chapter is divided into four parts. First is a presentation of the participant demographics according to descriptive statistics; parts two, three, and four present the descriptive and inferential statistic results for research questions one, two, and three, respectively.

Demographic Description of the Participants

Demographic information on the participants was gathered through additional questions at the ends of the teacher and parent surveys. Teacher demographic data consisted of five variables: level of education, years of teaching experience, type of school, and perceived average family income of the school community. Parent demographic data consisted of eight variables, including gender, number of adults and children living in the household, level of education, experience at school as a child, type of student one was, number of years living in the neighborhood (*colonia*), and perceived average *colonia* income level. All of the parents came from the public school system.

Teachers. Table 2 summarizes the demographic characteristics of participating teachers by number and is categorized according to school type. The teacher participants for this study came from three private, 18 public, and at least 15 rural community elementary schools within three municipalities in western Mexico. In order to participate the teachers needed to have been trained within the Republic of Mexico and currently teaching at an elementary school in grades one through six. Because rural school instructors can be as young as 15, only those who were 18 or older were asked to respond. Following initial visits with the principals of the schools, the researcher was invited to staff meetings at each of the private and public schools in order to introduce and leave the surveys, collecting them a week later. Contact with rural school instructors was made differently because of the distance between schools. In this case the researcher contacted the regional director and was invited to present the study during a regional meeting in a nearby town, collecting the surveys on the same day. Mailed or telephone surveys were not used based on previous experience in working with school personnel, recommendations by Mexican colleagues, and research on cultural dimensions in Mexico (Hofstede, 1984; Yerman, 2005).

Of the 160 respondents to the teacher survey, 73.8% came from public schools, 15% from rural community schools, and 11.3% from private schools. This is fairly representative of how students are distributed within the school system in this region of Mexico. The distribution of male and female respondents was even, with 49.4% male respondents, 47.5% female respondents, and 3.1% not giving their gender. There are differences in levels of education and years of experience that are worth noting. While the private and public school teachers have undergraduate and graduate education

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degrees, the rural community schoolteachers do not. The approach to rural education through the *Consejo Nacional de Fomento Eduacativo* (CONAFE) is to hire young people as of the 9th grade in order to work on a minimal salary, room and board in exchange for scholarships to finish high school and college (CONAFE, 2011). For this reason, they are called community instructors rather than teachers. Of the 24 rural school participants, 23 have worked in schools for fewer than five years, whereas in private schools most have between 11 and 15 years of teaching experience and in public schools the distribution is concentrated above 16 years of experience. Teachers were also asked about their perceptions of the average level income of their school community families. In private schools, participants rated the levels from mid-low to mid-high income, whereas in public schools the range was larger and extended more into the lower income levels. Through personal observation of the surveys, the researcher noticed that teachers within school communities did not always agree as to the average level of income of their families. The rural school participants also perceived the family income levels to be in the lower ranges. None of the participants rated the income at a high level. Relationships between respective variables are discussed under each research question.

Table 2

Teacher Demographics by School Type and Frequencies

	Private schools	Public schools	Rural community schools
Number of respondents	18	118	24
Percent	11.3	73.8	15
Gender			
Female	13	49	14
Male	5	64	10
Not given	-	5	-
Level of Education			
Through 9th grade	-	-	8
Through 12th grade	-	-	16
Associate degree (*normalista*)	-	4	-
Undergraduate degree	18	93	-
Masters	-	21	-
Doctorate	-	-	-
Years of experience			
0 to 5	2	15	23
6 to 10	1	20	1
11 to 15	10	10	-
16 to 20	1	20	-
More than 20	4	51	-
Not given	-	2	-
Perceived average family income level			
Low income	-	54	12
Mid-low income	7	44	4
Middle income	6	17	7
Mid-high income	5	1	1
High income	-	-	-
Not given	-	2	-

Parents. Sixty-nine parents participated in the study, of which 61 were female and 8 male. They came from two public schools, one of which was located in an urban neighborhood and the other in a semi-urban neighborhood of the same municipality. Although parent surveys were not originally considered for this study, two public school staff requested them as a means of comparison with their teacher responses. With permission from the schools and the University of Minnesota IRB, the survey results have been included for analysis and have provided valuable insight. The parent surveys were applied in two different public school communities. Table 3 summarizes the demographic characteristics of participating parents. This table includes both the number and percentage of valid responses and the number of participants who did not respond to each question. There were 45 respondents from an elementary school in an urban *colonia* and 24 respondents from an elementary school in a semi-urban *colonia* of the same municipality. Both schools operate during the morning shift (*matutino*).

Demographic results revealed that in the majority of cases there were two adults living in the household, yet 25% of the households comprised at least three adults. This reflects the cultural tradition in Mexico of having grandparents or other family members living in the household when needed. Although having additional adults in the household could result in more supervision and assistance in the children's education, there is also the potential to distract from this assistance if the mother - traditionally the one responsible for supervising education and participating at school - is also solely responsible for feeding and caring for the others.

The number of children in each household tended to be from one to three, covering 85% of the families in this study. Over 60% of the parent respondents had a 9th

grade level of education or lower, 23.2% a high school degree, and 8.7% a university

degree. These relatively low graduation rates have been recently addressed by the

Mexican government by requiring students to finish through the 9th grade (Mexico,

2012). About 49% of the respondents reported that their own school experience was good

or excellent, while 36.2% said it was not a good experience and 11.6% said it was very

bad. Nevertheless, over 72% responded that they were a good or excellent student. Over

55% of the respondents had lived in the *colonia* (neighborhood) where the school was

located for fewer than ten years, suggesting a fair amount of mobility among families.

Over 82% rated their *colonia* as mid-low to middle income.

Table 3

Parent Demographics by Frequencies and Percentages

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Total	69	100
Gender		
Female	61	88.4
Male	8	11.6
Number of adults in household		
1	3	4.3
2	40	58.0
3	9	13.0
4	3	4.3
5	6	8.7
6 or more	7	10.1
Missing	1	1.4
Number of children in household		
1	12	17.4
2	17	24.6
3	31	44.9
4	6	8.7
5	1	1.4
6 or more	1	1.4
Missing	1	1.4
Level of education		
Did not finish elementary school	3	4.3
Elementary	7	10.1
Middle School (through 9th grade)	36	52.2
High School	16	23.2
Undergraduate degree	6	8.7
Graduate degree	0	0.0
Missing	1	1.4
School experience		
Excellent	16	23.2
Good	18	26.1
Not very good	25	36.2
Very bad	8	11.6
Other	1	1.4
Missing	1	1.4
Type of student one was		
Excellent	13	18.8
Good	38	55.1
Not very dedicated	7	10.1
Found it difficult	8	11.6
Don't remember	2	2.9

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Years living in the *colonia*		
0 to 5 years	18	26.1
6 to 10 years	20	29.0
11 to 15 years	9	13.0
16 to 20 years	12	17.4
Over 20 years	9	13.0
Missing	1	1.4
Perceived income level of the *colonia*		
Low income	7	10.1
Mid-low income	16	23.2
Middle income	41	59.4
Mid-high income	3	5.8
High income	0	0.0
Missing	1	1.4

Summary

Overall, while respondents to the teacher survey were divided fairly evenly between male and female, the parent survey respondents were predominantly female, reflecting research of the dominant role of mothers in their children's education (Esquivel, 1995). The levels of education of most of the teachers were higher than those of the majority of parents. Private and public school teachers had higher levels of education and predominantly more years of experience than the rural school instructors. Also, while it appeared that families of middle level incomes sent their children to private schools, the public and rural schools had students from families with lower levels of income. Among the families, there were largely two adults but often more living in the households, and the number of children is usually between one and three. Although parents' own experiences in school had sometimes been negative, most of them reported being fairly good students. Just over half of the parent respondents having lived in their

colonia for less than ten years and rate the average neighborhood income level as mid- to mid-low.

<div align="center">**Measures**</div>

The methods used for analyzing the data depended on the research questions and requirements for assumptions of each procedure. For each research question the First, the researcher made observations of comparative boxplots showing medians and variability in responses for each of the scales according to school type and then made comparisons between the medians of individual items within each scale. Multiple linear regression (MLR) was used in order to determine the predictive value of the independent variables on the response variables. Descriptive statistics were assessed in order to compare teacher and parent data, as well as an independent-samples *t*-test and a Shapiro-Wilkes test for Normality. The rationale for each test is given under the respective research questions below.

Research Question 1: What are teacher expectations for their roles in family-school collaboration?

The following section addresses the results about teacher expectations. Expectations were measured through two constructs that were introduced in Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler's Model of Parent Involvement (1997, 2004): role construction and sense of efficacy. Role construction refers to the responsibilities that one feels one has, in this case to work with families and support a child's education, while efficacy is the belief that one's actions will have successful results. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler developed scales for parental role construction and sense of efficacy in their involvement in their

children's education. These scales were then modified and written in Spanish in order to represent the teacher's point of view as well.

Teachers' roles. A scale of 15 survey questions was used to determine how strongly teachers felt their roles should be in respect to family-school collaboration. The scale included questions about responsibilities for fostering relationships with parents as well as encouraging family involvement both at school and at home. Teachers agreed or disagreed with comments about roles and responsibilities on a Likert Scale of one to six, where one was "strongly disagree" and six was "strongly agree." A high score was interpreted as stronger assumption of various roles, while a low score meant a weaker approach to family-school collaboration roles. The revised scale had a high level of internal consistency, as determined by a Cronbach's alpha of .89 (see Appendix C).

An examination of the individual item means and standard deviations provides more specific information on types of roles that teachers valued more highly or not as highly. Out of a Likert scale of one to six, teachers agreed most strongly with communicating with parents about situations at school that concern their children, $M =$ 5.44, SD .791 and establishing trust with parents, $M = 5.44$, SD .716, whereas they showed far less agreement about locating the parents when their children do not come to school, $M = 4.31$, SD 1.458 or requesting that parents organize school events, $M = 4.43$, SD 1.204, as is also apparent in the larger standard deviations from the mean score.

Figure 7 below shows a comparison of boxplots of the total scores for teacher role construction across school types. Boxplots are a valuable tool for comparing two or more groups and identifying outliers (Utts & Heckard, 2006). The colored box shows the middle 50% of the responses, or upper and lower quartile, the line within the box

represents the median score, and the lines extending from each side of the box show the minimum and maximum scores of the data. The small circles outside of the area are the outliers.
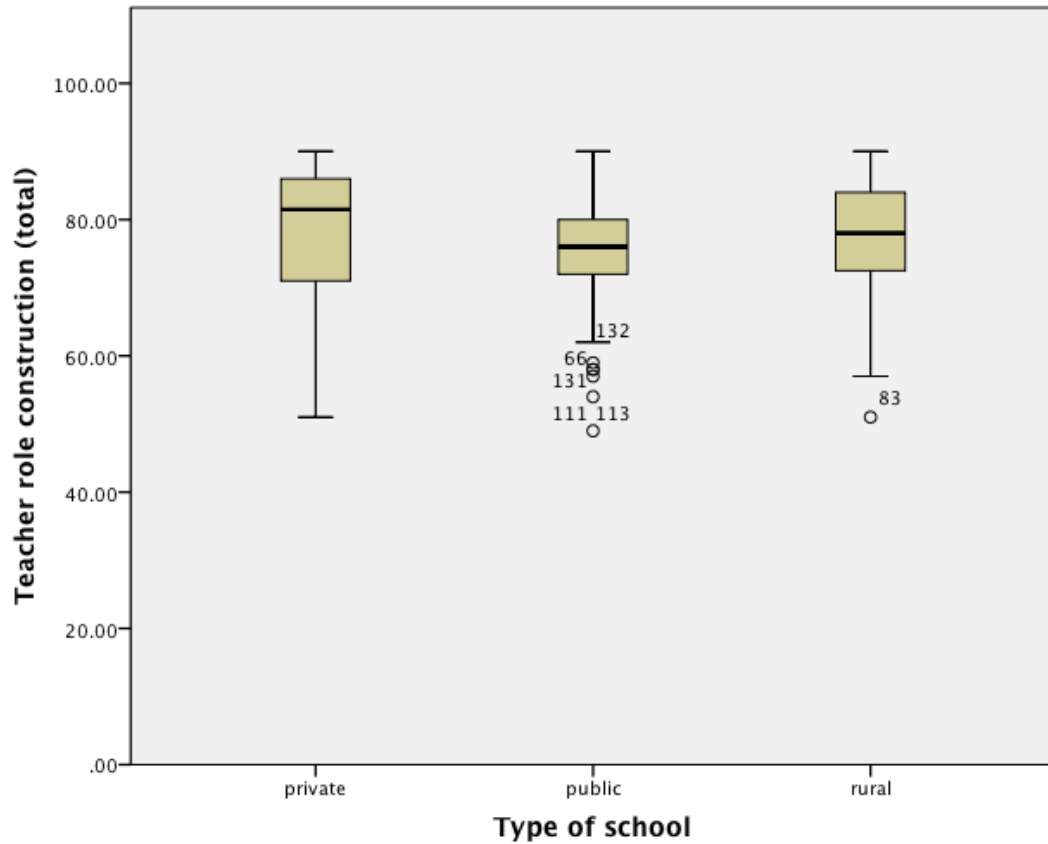
Figure 7. Boxplots of teacher role construction by school type

These boxplots compare median scores and variability of responses between teachers of the three school community types: private, public, and rural community schools. An important note is that in Mexico public schools are under the auspices of the Secretary of Education (SEP), while the National Council for the Development of Education (CONAFE) operates the rural community schools until they have enough enrolment to enter the SEP system. Teachers reported high scores across school types for the various roles that were presented in the survey, with private school teacher median

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score somewhat higher than public or rural schoolteacher score. However, the private school teachers also had slightly more variability in their responses, indicating more disagreement in their roles. While there was somewhat less variability in the public school teacher scores, there were many outliers on the lower end of the scale, suggesting that these individuals did not accept the same roles in building the family-school relationship as their colleagues.

A Kruskal-Wallis test was then run in order to determine if there were differences in the teacher role construction scores across school types: "private," "public," and "rural." The Kruskal-Wallis is a nonparametric test which determines differences in median scores and mean rank and can replace an ANOVA test when the data has outliers that the researcher considers to be valid in the study (Utts & Heckard, 2006). Distributions of scores were similar across all groups, as assessed by a visual inspection of boxplots. Median teacher efficacy scores increased from public (76.0) to rural (78.0) to private (81.5) schoolteachers. The differences, however, were not significant, $X^2(2) = 3.202$, $p = .202$.

Teacher sense of efficacy. Sense of efficacy is the extent to which one feels that one's actions are successful. A scale of 18 survey questions was used to determine teacher sense of efficacy in promoting family-school collaboration among the various items. The scale had a high level of internal consistency, as determined by a Cronbach's alpha of .93 (see Appendix C).

An examination of the means and standard deviations showed that teachers scored themselves as feeling most successful in making parents feel welcome at school, $M = 5.55$ out of 6.00, SD .604, and getting parents to understand the importance of

participating in school events with their children, *M* = 5.49, *SD* .720, while they scored

themselves as least successful in convincing parents to help in organizing school events,

M = 4.84, *SD* .925, and getting parents involved in decision-making about school

improvements, *M* = 4.85, *SD* 1.026. Two additional items that revealed noteworthy

disagreement between teachers through the large standard deviations were in their ability

to establish communication with parents who do not attend school events, *M* = 4.93, *SD*

1.170, and get parents to send materials that their children need at school, M = 5.24,

1.015.

Similar to the boxplot comparisons above, those in Figure 8 show that teachers

reported high median levels of efficacy across all types of schools, with those from

private schools slightly higher than those from public or rural schools. The variability of

responses is similar across types of schools, as are the presence of outliers on the lower

end of the efficacy scale. This suggests that, although most teachers reported feeling

confident of their own work with fostering the family-school relationship, there were a

few that did not feel so confident and needed more support in how to work more

successfully with parents.
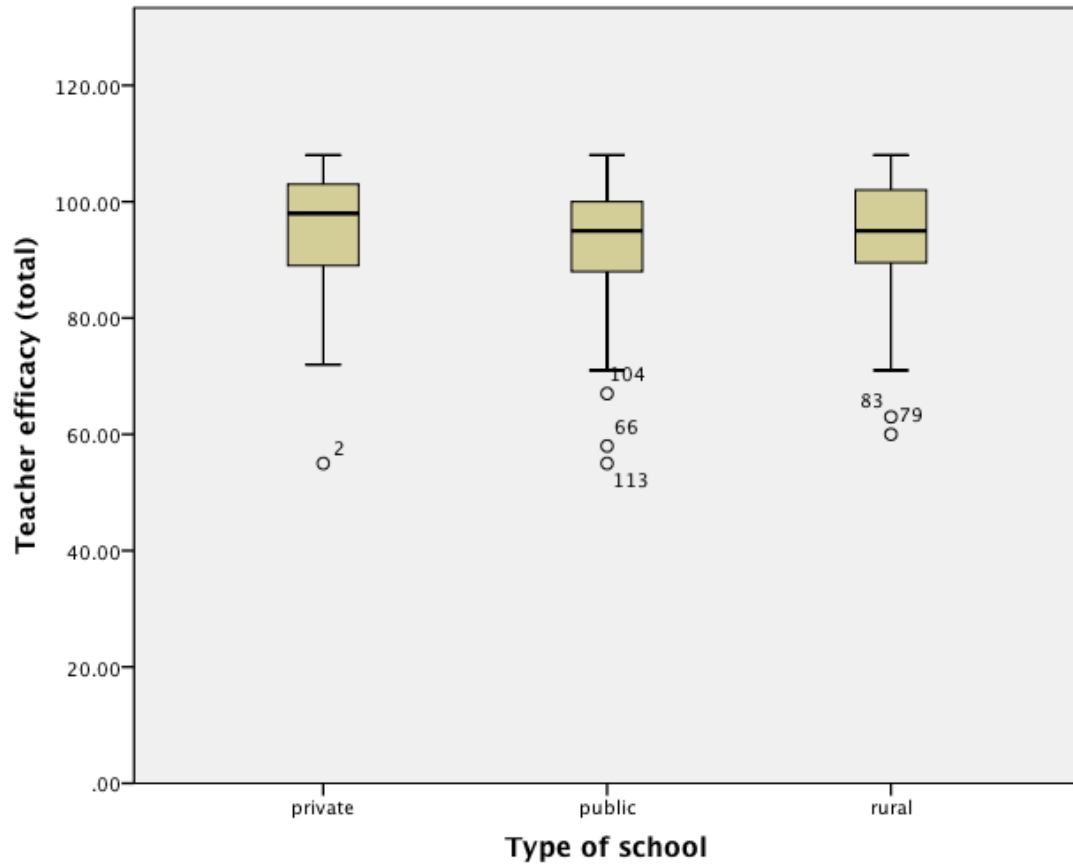
Figure 8. Boxplot of teacher efficacy by school type.

The Kruskal-Wallis test showed similar distributions of scores, as assessed by a visual inspection of boxplots. Median teacher efficacy scores were equal between rural and public school teachers (95.0), both of which were lower than private school teachers (98.0). The differences, however, were not significant, $X^2(2) = .895$, $p = .639$.

Teacher role construction and efficacy correlated. Spearman's correlation coefficient was then calculated in order to determine the relationship between teacher role construction and efficacy scores. Spearman's correlation coefficient can be used to find the strength and direction of correlation when continuous or ordinal data is not normally

distributed (Hinkle, Wiersma & Jurs, 2003), such as a Shapiro-Wilk's test revealed in this case ($p < .05$), even though the distributions were similar across the three types of schools. Results showed a strong positive and significant correlation between the two scores, where increased sense of efficacy was associated with increased levels of role construction for family-school collaboration, $r_s(147) = .649$, $p < .001$. What is not clear is the causal effect, but this may suggest that as teachers feel more successful in specific tasks within the family-school relationship, their willingness to take on more roles increases. Alternatively, in schools that promote engagement through expanded teacher roles, the teachers may feel more supported in their work with families.

Research Question 1a: Which factors predict teacher expectations?

Teachers' roles. Multiple regression analysis was run in order to predict teacher role construction from the independent variables teacher gender, levels of education, years of experience, perception of average family income level in the school community, and urban/rural locality. Multiple linear regression (MLR) analysis is used to "describe the relationship between one or more explanatory variables (*x* variables) and a quantitative response variable (*y*) (Utts & Heckard, 2006, p. 631). Somewhat different from the "private"/"public"/"rural community school" categorization utilized for the boxplot analysis, "urban" here refers to those *colonias* that are located within the city limits, whereas "rural" communities are those that lie outside and have a 2010 population of less than 1,500. Using these variables for the multiple regression analysis provides an opportunity to discuss possible distinctions based on locality in addition to type of school system. Table 4 shows the correlations between the variables in order to determine the strength and direction of the relationships.

The zero-order correlation results were very small and only teacher gender correlated significantly with teacher role construction, implying little relation between the explanatory variables and the response variable. Teacher gender (-.135), level of education (-.002), years of experience (-.086), and perceived average level of family income (-.120) all correlated negatively with acceptance of teacher roles in family-school collaboration, while and urban locality (.019) correlated positively with acceptance of teacher roles. Females scored themselves slightly higher than males in acceptance of roles in family-school collaboration, as well as teachers with lower levels of education, less experience, and in urban communities. The assumptions of linearity, independence of errors, multicollinearity, homoscedasticity, unusual points and normality of residuals were met.

Table 4

Zero Order Correlation Matrix: Teacher Role Construction

	Teacher role construction	Gender	Level of education	Years of experience	Perceived average family income level	Urban/rural locality
Teacher role construction	1.00					
Gender	-.135*	1.00				
Level of education	-.002	.002	1.00			
Years of experience	-.086	.342**	.456**	1.00		
Perception of average family income level	-.120	.143*	-.128	.105	1.00	
Urban/rural locality	.019	.036	.707**	.535**	.073	1.00

Note. Levels of significance *p* < .05; **p* ≤ .001

The regression model itself, however, was not sufficient to significantly predict teacher perceptions of their roles in family-school collaboration, $F(5, 145) = 1.071$, $p = .379$, and accounted for less than 1% of the variability in scores, adj. $R^2 = .002$. Nor did any of the explanatory variables add significantly to the prediction, thus confirming the null hypothesis that there is no significant multivariate correlation between the explanatory variables as a group and teacher role construction, even though gender was significant by itself. The implication is that other factors have a stronger influence on the variation of scores for how teachers perceive their roles, which warrants further research. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 5.

Table 5

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Teacher Role Construction

Predictors	Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.	R^2	Adjusted R^2
(Constant)		23.095	.000		
Gender	-.097	-1.092	.277		
Level of education	-.066	-.546	.586		
Years of experience	-.073	-.688	.493		
Perception of average family income level	-.115	-1.349	.179		
Urban/rural locality	.117	.932	.353		
F = 1.071			.379	.036	.002

Teacher sense of efficacy. Sense of efficacy is how confident one feels that one's actions will be effective. Multiple linear regression analysis was run in order to predict teacher sense of efficacy in promoting family-school collaboration from teacher gender, levels of education, years of experience, perception of average family income level in the school community, and urban/rural locality. The zero-order correlation results in Table 6 show each explanatory variable individually as it correlates with the others and the response variable.

The correlation matrix showed that level of education (.014), years of experience (.005), and urban/rural locality (.084) all correlated positively with teacher sense of efficacy, while teacher gender (-.117) and perceived average level of family income (-.199) correlated negatively. Thus, while teachers with higher levels of education, more years of experience and working in a more urban setting reported higher efficacy scores, female teachers scored themselves higher than men and, the lower teachers perceived the average family income to be, the higher their sense of efficacy. Teacher perception of average family income in the school community was also the only variable with a significant correlation to teacher sense of efficacy, albeit with several outliers in the model.[1] In this case the researcher felt that the outliers represented an important subgroup in the population and therefore chose to run the analysis while retaining the outliers. The other assumptions of linearity, independence of errors, multicollinearity, homoscedasticity, and normality of residuals were met.

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[1] Footnote: In a comparison of MLRA with the removal of the six outliers, the model approached significance in predicting teacher efficacy, $p = .052$. Without the outliers, urban/rural locality ($p = .007$) and teacher level of education ($p = .011$) both contributed significantly to the change in efficacy scores.

Table 6

Zero-order Correlation Matrix: Teacher Sense of Efficacy

	Teacher sense of efficacy	Gender	Level of education	Years of experience	Perceived average family income level	Urban/rural locality
Teacher sense of efficacy	1.00					
Gender Female = 0	-.117	1.00				
Level of education	.014	.019	1.00			
Years of experience	.005	.355**	.469**	1.00		
Perception of average family income level	-.199**	.153*	-.096	.121	1.00	
Urban/rural locality Rural = 0	.084	.057	.707**	.547**	.121	1.00

Note. Levels of significance *p* < .05; **p* < .001

The MLR model significantly predicted teacher sense of efficacy, $F(5, 143) =$ 2.330, $p = .045$, and accounted for 4.3% of the variability in responses, adj. $R^2 = .043$. Teacher perception of the average family income level in the school community significantly added to the model, while the other explanatory variables did not. This is particularly interesting since the correlation is negative, indicating that the lower the perception of average family income, the higher the sense of efficacy among teachers. It may be that when teachers believe the income levels are lower, they find more immediate results from working with them toward their children's education. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 7.

Table 7

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Teacher Sense of Efficacy

Predictors	Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.	R^2	Adjusted R^2
(Constant)		28.881	.000		
Gender 0 = Female	-.101	-1.147	.253		
Level of education	-.183	-1.536	.127		
Years of experience	.028	.260	.795		
Perception of average family income level	-.233	-2.744	.007		
Urban/rural locality	.232	1.859	.065		
F = 2.330			.045	.075	.043

Summary. The analyses of teacher role construction and sense of efficacy led to several conclusions. First, teachers scored themselves highly in both areas, meaning that they were supportive of taking active roles toward family-school collaboration and felt that their actions could have positive results. This is an essential first step toward having successful programs. Private school teachers scored themselves slightly but not significantly higher than public and rural schoolteachers on both variables. There was also little variation in the responses within school types, implying that there was general agreement as to what they perceive their roles to be and their levels of confidence in those roles. Although there were a few outliers in the data, they represent important members of the teaching community and should not be disregarded. In this case, several individual teachers across schools scored themselves much lower than their peers in both the roles they felt they should have and their sense of accomplishment in working with families in the communities where they work. School programs can address the needs of these teachers. Multiple linear regression analysis showed that the full models significantly predicted teacher sense of efficacy, but not role construction. The only explanatory variable that contributed significantly to models was teacher perception of average family income, in reference to teacher efficacy. These results lead to the need for further research in what other factors correlate with teacher expectations more strongly in western Mexico.

Research question 2: How do teachers perceive parental expectations of involvement in their children's education?

In addition to analyzing teachers' own expectations, this study addresses how teachers assess parent expectations within their respective school communities. Parent

expectations are also measured by the roles they believe they should have (role construction) and the degree of success they believe they have (sense of efficacy) in each of the roles.

Teacher assessment of parental acceptance of roles. A scale of 15 items was used to measure teacher perceptions of parental role construction. The scale had a very high level of internal consistency, as determined by a Cronbach's alpha of .961 (see Appendix C). The Likert scale was from one to six, with a score of one representing a belief of complete disagreement about a parental taking on a specific role, while a score of six represented complete agreement. Teachers scored parents most highly in the responsibility to be aware of situations that arise at school and concern their children, *M* = 4.48, *SD* 1.153 and supporting the teacher's decisions, *M* = 4.32, *SD* 1.156, while they scored parents lower in volunteering at school, *M* = 3.67, *SD* 1.342 and explaining difficult homework assignments to their children, *M* = 3.73, *SD* 1.361. There was a relatively large variation of scores among teachers for each question, as is apparent in the standard deviations of each mean score, and which demonstrates disagreement among teachers as to what roles parents take on. The two items where teachers were in strongest disagreement were that parents converse with their children about the school day (*M* = 3.92, *SD* 1.444) and that parents explain difficult homework assignments to their children (*M* = 3.97, *SD* 1.377).

The boxplot in Figure 9 below show the medians and degrees of variance of teacher perceptions of parental role construction by type of school.
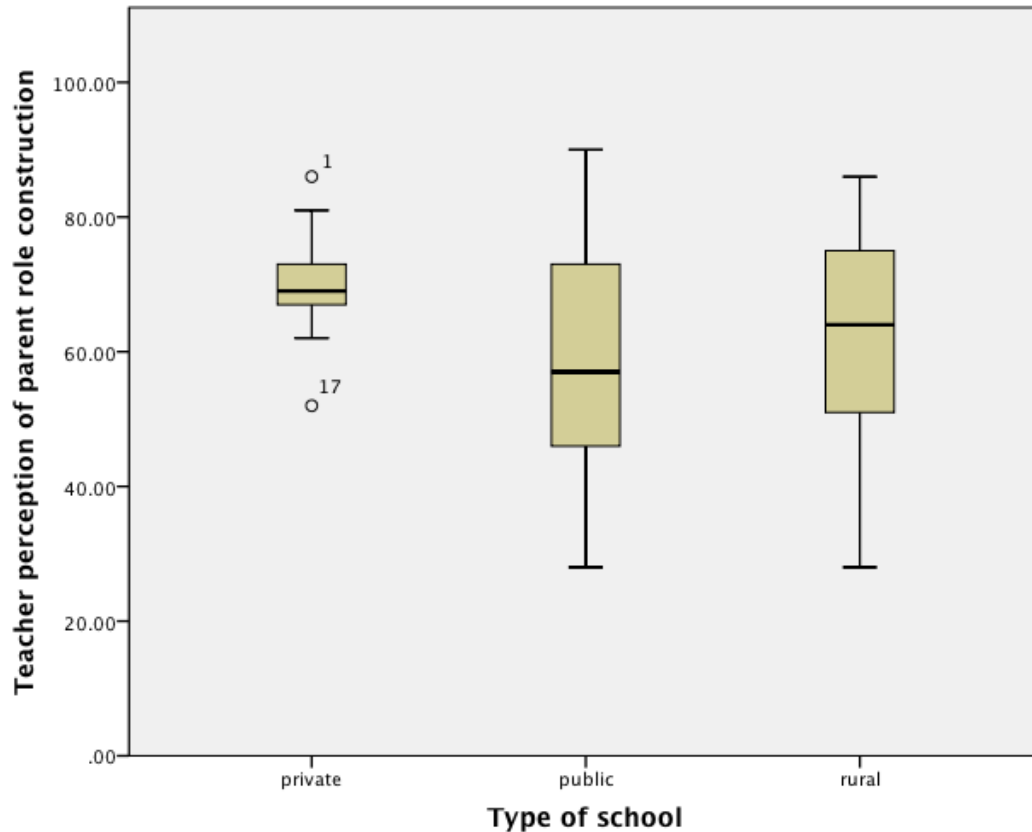
Figure 9. Boxplots of teacher assessment of parental role construction by school type

The private school teachers had a much smaller degree of variability in their scores than teachers from public or rural schools, demonstrated by the smaller length of the box, as well as a more positive perception of the roles that families are willing to take on, indicated by the level of the line within the box that shows the median score. This suggests that there is more agreement among private school teachers about what their roles are for family-school collaboration and that the beliefs support active involvement. The responses by public and rural schoolteachers show a much larger degree of variability in scores, demonstrating disagreement about what roles they believe parents take on in family-school collaboration. The public schoolteachers had the lowest median

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score and the largest degree of variability and scored parents the lowest in terms of role construction.

The Kruskal-Wallis test showed similar distributions of scores across all groups, as assessed by a visual inspection of boxplots. Median scores of teacher perceptions of parent role construction were significantly different between school types, $X^2(2) = 7.600$, $p = .022$. Pairwise comparisons were performed using Dunn's (1964) procedure with a Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons. Adjusted p-values are presented. This post hoc analysis revealed statistically significant differences in teacher perception scores for parent role construction between the public ($Mdn = 57.0$) and private ($Mdn = 69.0$) school teachers ($p = .019$), but not between the rural school teachers ($Mdn = 64.0$) with either of the two groups.

Teacher assessment of parental sense of efficacy. A scale of 14 items was used to determine teacher perceptions of parental sense of efficacy for family-school collaboration. In this case, parental sense of efficacy means the level of confidence they have that their actions will be successful. The scale had a high level of internal consistency, as demonstrated by a Cronbach's alpha of .914 (see Appendix C).

The calculations of means and standard deviations also revealed differences in how teachers rated parental sense of efficacy in the various activities associated with the family-school relationship. Teachers scored parent confidence in their actions the highest in asking for support from the classroom teacher, $M = 4.35$, SD 1.132, feeling confident about voicing their opinions about school maintenance, $M = 4.21$, SD 1.037, and being satisfied with their relationship with the school, $M = 4.17$, SD 1.132, whereas they scored parental efficacy the lowest in knowing how to help their children learn, $M = 3.52$, SD

1.068 and knowing how to foster appropriate behavior in their children at school, $M =$ 3.59, *SD* 1.247. Observation of the standard deviations indicates a rather large degree of variation between responses overall. Figure 10 shows the boxplot comparisons of teacher assessment of parental sense of efficacy in their roles across school types.
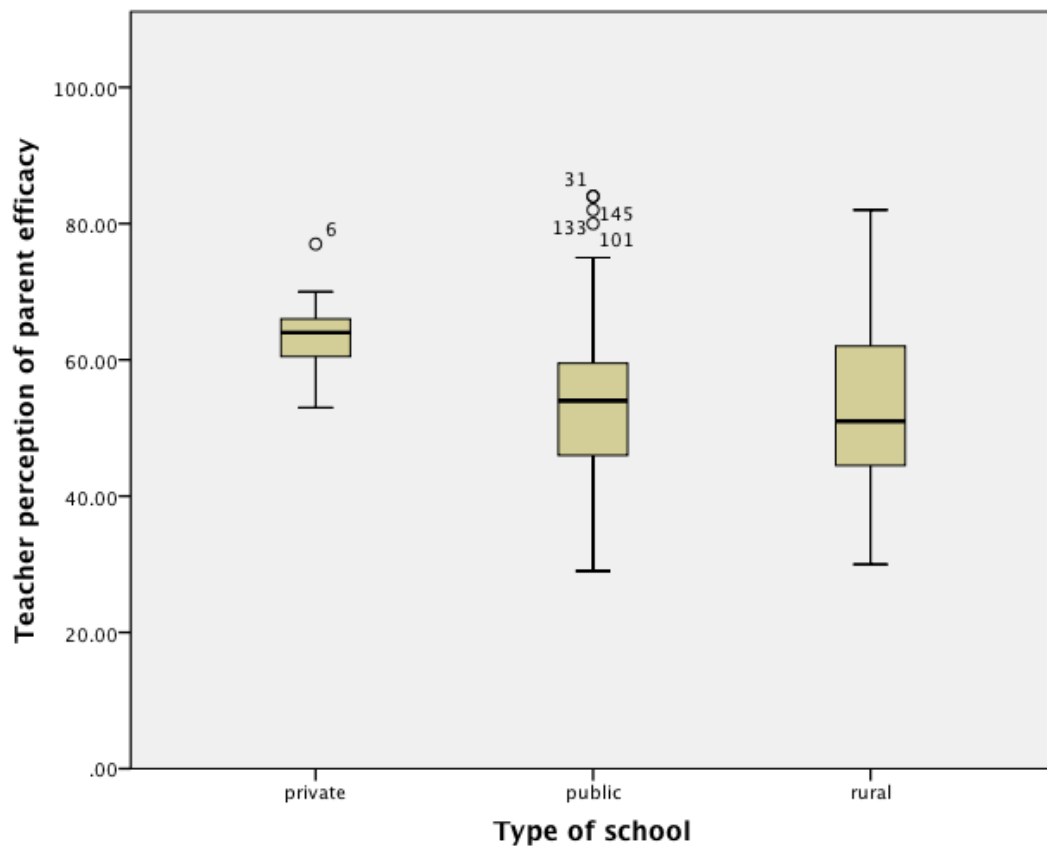
Figure 10. Boxplots of teacher assessment of parental sense of efficacy by school type

The boxplots in Figure 10 show that teachers scored parental efficacy lower than they scored their own sense of efficacy. The boxplots also reveal interesting differences in variability of scores between school types. In the private schools, the median teacher score for parent efficacy was higher than for those of public or rural schools and the

variability much smaller. This suggests general agreement among teachers of the private

schools concerning their perceptions of parents, except for the one outlier who believes

that parents have a much stronger sense of efficacy. In both the private and rural schools

the variance is much larger, indicating much less agreement among teachers about

parental confidence in promoting their children's education. Females tended to score

themselves higher in both constructing roles and their sense of efficacy in working with

families. The outliers among the public school teachers represent those who felt that

parents have a much stronger sense of efficacy than what the majority of their colleagues

reported.

The Kruskal-Wallis test showed that distributions of scores for private, public,

and rural schools were not similar, as assessed by a visual inspection of boxplots. The

distributions of scores between groups were statistically significant, $X^2(2) = 16.063$, $p <$

.001. Pairwise comparisons were then performed using Dunn's (1964) procedure with a

Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons. Adjusted p-values are presented. The

post hoc analysis revealed statistically significant differences in teacher perception scores

for parent efficacy between the public (Mean rank = 69.90) and private (Mean rank =

117.27) school teachers ($p < .001$) and between rural (Mean rank = 72.04) and private

school teachers ($p = .005$), but not between public and rural schoolteachers.

Research Question 2a: Which factors predict teacher assessment of parent

expectations?

Similar to the assessment of predictive relationships between variables in relation

to teacher expectations, inferential statistics were used to evaluate the relationships

between the demographic and contextual variables among teachers and their assessments of parental expectations in their respective school communities.

Teacher assessment of parental role construction. Multiple regression analysis was run in order to predict teacher assessment of the roles that they believe parents adopt for family-school collaboration in their children's education. Table 8 shows the correlations between the variables in order to determine the strength and direction of the relationships. The results showed positive correlations between the explanatory variables and teacher perception of parent role construction, with the exception of level of education (-.067). This indicates, although the correlation was weak, that the higher teachers in this region of Mexico have studied, the lower their assessment was of the roles that parents take on. Gender (.176) and perceived average family income level (.215) correlated at levels of significance, while level of education, years of experience (.067), and urban/rural locality (.092) did not. Thus, male teachers reported higher scores for parental roles than female teachers across schools and the higher the teachers perceived the average family income in the community, the stronger they assessed parental roles.

Table 8

Zero Order Correlation Matrix: Teacher Assessment of Parental Role Construction

	Assessment of parental role construction	Gender	Teacher level of education	Years of teaching experience	Perceived average family income level	Urban/rural locality
Assessment of parental role construction	1.00					
Gender Female = 0	.176*	1.00				
Level of education	-.067	.021	1.00			
Years of experience	.049	.359**	.446**	1.00		
Perception of average family income level	.215**	.128	-.128	.095	1.00	
Urban/rural locality Rural = 0	.092	.083	.713**	.546**	.078	1.00

Note. Levels of significance *p* < .05; **p* ≤ .001

The MLR model significantly predicted teacher perception of parental role construction, $F(5, 138) = 2.867$, $p = .017$, and accounted for 6.1% of the variability in teacher perception of parental role construction, adj. $R^2 = .061$. Although none of the explanatory variables added significantly to the model, teacher gender and perception of average family income were each significant individually. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 9.

Table 9

Regression Model for Teacher Assessment of Parental Role Construction

Predictors	Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.	R^2	Adjusted R^2
(Constant)		8.705	.000		
Gender 0 = Female	.164	1.853	.066		
Level of education	-.189	-1.555	.122		
Years of experience	-.067	.628	.531		
Perception of average family income level	.157	1.850	.066		
Urban/rural locality	.238	1.891	.066		
F = 2.867			.017	.094	.061

Teacher assessment of parental efficacy. Multiple regression analysis was run in order to predict teacher assessment of parent efficacy. Parental efficacy in this sense refers to how effective parents feel they are in each of the roles they adopt. Table 10 shows the zero-order correlation results of the survey scale. The matrix showed positive correlations between the explanatory variables and teacher assessment of parental efficacy with the exception of teacher level of education (-.048). Gender (.189) and perception of average family income level (.272) correlated at levels of significance, while level of education, years of experience (.105), and urban/rural locality (.115) did not. Contrary to how teachers scored themselves, male teachers scored parents higher in efficacy than their female colleagues did. In addition, as perceptions of average family income increased, so did assessment of parental efficacy.

Table 10

Zero Order Correlation: Teacher Assessment of Parental Efficacy

	Assessment of parental efficacy	Gender	Teacher level of education	Years of teaching experience	Perceived average family income level	Urban/rural locality
Assessment of parental efficacy	1.00					
Gender Female = 0	.189*	1.00				
Level of education	-.048	.044	1.00			
Years of experience	.76	.346**	.475**	1.00		
Perception of average family income level	.272**	.153*	-.140*	.118	1.00	
Urban/rural locality Rural = 0	.115	.068	.716**	.562**	.093	1.00

Note. Levels of significance *p < .05; **p ≤ .001

As a model, these variables significantly predicted teacher assessment of parental efficacy, $F(5, 139) = 3.767$, $p < .003$, and together accounted for 8.8% of the variance in scores, adj. $R^2 = .088$. The single outlier was retained. Teacher perception of the average family income in the school community added statistically significantly to the prediction, $p < .05$, while gender and urban/rural locality approached significance and level of education and years of experience did not. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found on Table 11.

Table 11

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Teacher Assessment of Parental Efficacy

Predictors	Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.	R^2	Adjusted R^2
(Constant)		11.637	.000		
Gender 0 = Female	.179	2.089	.039		
Level of education	-.168	-1.396	.165		
Years of experience	-.016	-.157	.876		
Perception of average family income level	.231	2.733	.007		
Urban/rural locality	.202	1.603	.111		
F = 4.368			.001	.137	.105

Summary. The results from the teacher assessments of parental role construction and efficacy in family-school collaboration highlighted some important contributions to the understanding of teacher and parent expectations for family-school collaboration. Overall, teacher scores for parental expectations were fairly low, suggesting a deficit approach that could inhibit parental involvement (Delgado-Gaitan, 2007; Kim 2009). In addition, teacher level of education correlated negatively with their perceptions of both areas of parental expectations for family-school collaboration, suggesting that current professional development for public school teachers may not be sufficiently preparing them in the area of family-school collaboration. The combined variables predicted teacher assessment of both parental role construction and efficacy strongly, and within the regression models, perceptions of average family income levels appeared to be most influential, with both gender and urban/rural locality nearing significance. Contrary to teacher reports of their own expectations, male teachers tended to view parents more positively than females, and perceptions of parental expectations tended to generally increase from the public to rural to private school teachers.

Research question 3: What are parental expectations in relation to family-school collaboration?

   Parental roles. A scale of 15 items was used to measure parent role construction, or how strongly they believe they should adopt certain roles in the family-school relationship. The scale had a high level of internal consistency, as determined by a Cronbach's alpha of .852 (see Appendix C) and was administered with a Likert scale of 1 meaning "strongly disagree" to 6 meaning "strongly agree."

   The highest scores were in talking with their children about continuing their

education, $M = 5.81$ (SD .398), helping their children to be successful in school, $M = 5.79$ (SD .407), and talking with their children about their day at school, $M = 5.75$ (SD .560), while they scored themselves the lowest in volunteering at school, $M = 4.79$ (SD 1.229), participating in school activities, $M = 5.88$ (SD 1.058), and participating in school maintenance, $M = 4.94$ (SD 1.091). Again, there was a large degree of variability in the three latter responses, as is signified by the higher standard deviations of each score. These scores indicate that public school parents of these communities were more comfortable taking on roles with their children at home than at school.

Parental sense of efficacy. A scale of 14 items was used to measure parents' reports of their own sense of efficacy, or the degree of effectiveness they feel they have in their various roles. The scale had a high level of internal consistency, as determined by a Cronbach's alpha of 0.89 (see Appendix C).

Parents scored themselves somewhat lower in efficacy than in adopting roles for family-school collaboration. Parents scored themselves the highest as having an important role in their children's educational progress, $M = 5.39$ (SD .861) and knowing how to help their children make educational progress, $M = 5.32$ (SD .866), while they scored themselves the lowest in their satisfaction with their relationship with the school, $M = 4.46$ (SD 1.389). This is consistent with the results of their role construction, as well as with earlier studies in the United States that high levels of efficacy among parents tended to relate more strongly to home involvement than at school (Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2007).

Parental role construction and efficacy compared. An observation of the boxplots in Figure 11 reveals differences between efficacy and role construction scores of

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parents. Although both median scores were relatively high, the median for parental sense efficacy in the family-school relationship was lower than the median for role construction. This suggests that parents agreed that they have high levels of responsibility in education, but did not all feel that their actions have positive results. There was also a larger variation in scores on for efficacy as observed in the distance between the top and bottom lines, revealing a larger variety of opinions about how effective parents felt they were in family-school collaboration. Two respondents are also scored as outliers, having rated themselves much lower in efficacy than the other parents. In the figure depicting role construction, the variation is smaller and with no outliers, indicating more agreement among parents about what their roles were in family-school collaboration.
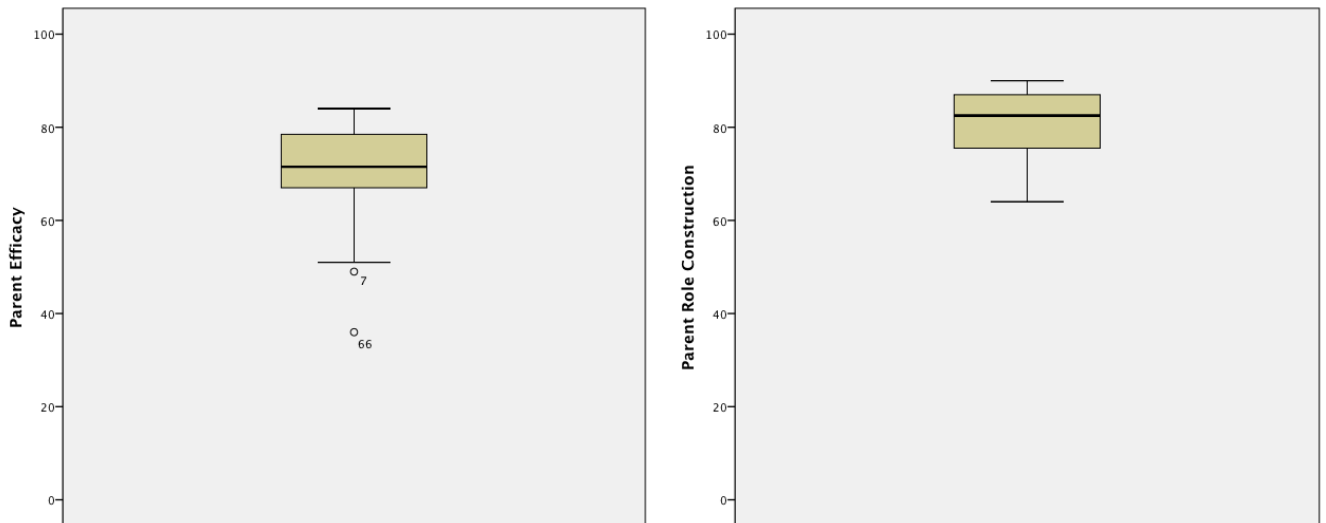
Figure 11. Boxplots of parental sense of efficacy and role construction scores

Parental role construction and efficacy correlated. To assess the relationship between parent efficacy and role construction scores, a Spearman's rank correlation test

was used. Spearman's correlation is preferred over Pearson's correlation when results of a Shapiro-Wilkes test show that not all variables are normally distributed ($p < .05$), such as in this case (McDonald, 2014). Preliminary analysis also showed the relationship to be monotonic, as assessed by visual inspection of a scatterplot. Results of the test showed a strong positive correlation between the scores, where increased sense of parental efficacy was associated with increased levels of parent role construction for family-school collaboration, $r_s(64) = .631$, $p < .001$. Similar to the situation for teachers, these results suggest the when these parents have successful experiences with family-school collaboration they may accept further roles more readily. Another possible interpretation may be that as schools work with parents to collaborate in more roles, the efficacy of parents increases.

Research Question 3a: Which factors contribute to parent expectations?

  Parental roles. Multiple regression analysis was run in order to predict how parents construct their roles based on the set of predictor variables. The zero-order correlation results are displayed on Table 12. Results showed that the parent level of education (.100), one's own experience in school (.329), type of student one was (.419), number of years living in the *colonia* (.250), and perceived income level of the *colonia* (.030) correlated positively with parental role construction, while gender (-.126), the number of adults in the household (-.196), and number of children in the household (-.134), had negative correlations. Concerning gender, female respondents scored themselves higher in adopting roles in the family-school relationship than their male counterparts. One's own experience as a student, the type of student one was, and the number of years living in the *colonia* all had significant levels of correlation, $p < .05$,

emphasizing the importance of each of those factors on parental beliefs about their roles.

The assumptions of linearity, independence of errors, multicollinearity, homoscedasticity,

unusual points and normality of residuals were met.

Table 12

Zero Order Correlation Matrix for Independent Variables: Parental Role Construction

	Parental role construction	Gender	Adults in household	Children in household	Level of education	Experience in school	Type of student	Years living in *colonia*	Perceived income level of *colonia*
Parental role construction	1.00								
Gender	-.126	1.00							
Adults in household	-.196	-.019	1.00						
Children in household	-.134	.082	.150	1.00					
Level of education	.100	.085	-.253*	-.177	1.00				
Experience in school	.329*	-.041	-.116	-.120	.406**	1.00			
Type of student	.419**	-.149	-.033	-.119	.144	.618**	1.00		
Years living in *colonia*	.250*	.057	-.104	-.053	.107	.090	-.050	1.00	
Perceived income level	.030	-.064	.120	-.113	-.101	.124	.290*	.034	1.00

*$p < .05$; **$p \leq .00$

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The combined variables significantly predicted parental role construction, $F(8, 53) = 2.764$, $p = .012$, and the model accounted for 18.8% of the variability in teacher perception of parent efficacy, adj. $R^2 = .188$. The type of student one was and how many years one had lived in the *colonia* added significantly to the prediction of parental adoption of roles, $p < .05$, while gender, adults and children in the household, level of education, one's own experience in school, and perception of the average *colonia* income level did not. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 13.

Table 13

Regression Model for Parental Role Construction

Predictors	Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.	R^2	Adjusted R^2
(Constant)		12.614	.000		
Gender 0 = Female	-.076	-.645	.522		
Adults in household	-.144	-1.188	.240		
Children in household	-.060	-.499	.620		
Level of education	-.066	-.490	.626		
Own experience at school	.066	.410	.683		
Type of student one was	.408	2.606	.012		
Years in the *colonia*	.262	2.219	.031		
Perception of average income level in *colonia*	-.107	-.861	.393		
F = 2.764			.012	.294	.188

Parental sense efficacy. Multiple regression analysis was run in order to predict parental sense of efficacy. The zero-order correlation results can be viewed in Table 14. Results showed that level of education (.065), parents' own experiences in school (.394), the type of student one was (.312), years living in the *colonia* (.064) correlated positively to parent efficacy, while gender (-.400), number of adults in the household (-.125), number of children in the household (-.237), and perceived average income level within the *colonia* (-.052) showed negative correlations. In terms of gender, this means that female (0) respondents scored themselves highly in terms of efficacy than their male (1) counterparts. It is also worthy to note that as the number of children and adults in the household increased, the sense of effectiveness in the roles related family-school collaboration decreased. Gender, number of children in the household, one's own experience in school, and the type of student one was all had significant correlations, *p* < 05.

Table 14

Zero Order Correlation Matrix for Independent Variables: Parental Sense of Efficacy

	Parental sense of efficacy	Gender	Adults in household	Children in household	Level of education	Experience in school	Type of student	Years living in *colonia*	Perceived income level of *colonia*
Parental sense of efficacy	1.00								
Gender	-.400**	1.00							
Adults in household	-.125	-.039	1.00						
Children in household	-.237*	.144	.140	1.00					
Level of education	.065	.076	-.230*	-.173	1.00				
Experience in school	.394*	-.056	-.097	-.111	.415**	1.00			
Type of student	.312*	-.218*	-.019	-.155	.139	.606**	1.00		
Years living in *colonia*	.064	.039	-.096	-.080	.128	.102	-.040	1.00	
Perceived income level in *colonia*	-.052	-.098	.130	-.147	-.080	.128	.302**	.053	1.00

*p < .05; **p ≤ .001

The combined variables significantly predicted parental efficacy, $F(8, 57) =$ 4.138, $p = .001$, and the model accounted for 27.9% of the variability in parental efficacy, adj. $R^2 = .279$. Gender and one's own experience in school added statistically significantly to the model, $p < .05$, while number of adults and children in the household, level of education, type of student one was, number of years living in the *colonia*, and perception of average income level in the *colonia* did not. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 15.

Table 15
Regression Model for Parental Sense of Efficacy

Predictors	Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.	R^2	Adjusted R^2
(Constant)					
Gender 0 = Female	-.356	-3.239	.002		
Adults in household	-.081	-.738	.463		
Children in household	-.172	-1.554	.126		
Level of education finished	-.151	-1.233	.223		
Own experience at school	.406	2.752	.008		
Type of student one was	.307	.260	.796		
Years in the *colonia*	.045	.420	.676		
Perception of average income level in *colonia*	-.180	-1.578	.120		
F = 4.138			.001	.367	.279

3b) How do parent and teacher perceptions of parental expectations compare?

Public school teacher (N = 110) and parent (N = 66) responses were used order to make comparisons between teacher assessment of parental expectations (Research Question 2) and parents' self-reports of their expectations.

Parental role construction. Table 16 shows the means and standard deviations of teacher and parent scores for the survey questions on parental role construction. Here, teachers scored parent role construction lower than parents scored themselves. On a Likert scale of 1 to 6, teachers generally scored parents with "slightly disagree" (3) or "slightly agree" (4) on efficacy in the family-school relationship, whereas parents scored themselves with "slightly agree" (4) and "agree" (5). There were also differences in the types of roles that teachers and parents claimed parents adopt. Whereas teachers scored parent roles as strongest in being aware of situations at school that affect their child (4.41) and supporting the teacher's decisions (4.27), both school-centered activities, parents scored their own roles as strongest in talking with their child about continuing his/her education in the future (5.81) and helping the child to be successful at school (5.79), both family- and child-centered activities. On the contrary, teachers and parents both had similarly lower scores in the roles of parents volunteering and participating with regular maintenance at school. Among teachers, the strongest disagreement was in whether parents talk with their children about their school day (*SD* 1.426) or help their children with the homework (*SD* 1.403)), both activities centered on the home, while there was little disagreement among parents in these areas and they scored themselves quite highly in both (*M* = 5.75, *SD* .560 and *M* = 5.74, *SD* .444, respectively).

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Table 16

Means and Standard Deviations for Parent Role Construction Scale

Question	Teacher		Parent	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Motivate their child at school	4.00	1.298	5.56	.761
Help their child with the homework	3.92	1.403	5.74	.444
Talk to their child about continuing with education in the future	4.13	1.308	5.81	.398
Make an effort to be at school regularly	4.03	1.254	5.66	.477
Volunteer at school	3.51	1.374	4.79	1.229
Communicate with their child's teacher regularly	3.99	1.294	5.46	.742
Attend school events	4.13	1.223	5.23	.941
Be in contact with other parents	3.79	1.262	5.01	.954
Support the teacher's decisions	4.27	1.160	5.07	.951
Participate in school activities	4.04	1.127	4.88	1.058
Participate with regular school maintenance	3.85	1.334	4.94	1.091
Be aware of situations that arise at school that affect their child	4.41	1.157	5.65	.567
Help their child to become successful at school	4.09	1.285	5.79	.407
Explain difficult homework assignments to their child	3.70	1.320	5.54	.721
Talk with their child about their day at school	3.83	1.426	5.75	.560

The next step was to determine whether there was a significant difference in scores between public school teachers' assessment of parents and parents themselves. In this case, although a boxplot revealed no outliers in the data, the Shapiro-Wilkes test for nomality indicated that neither parent nor teacher scores had normal distributions ($p >$ .05). Since this violates one of the main assumptions of the independent t-test, a new independent-samples Mann-Whitney U test was used with the null hypothesis that the distribution of the dependent variable "role construction" is the same across categories of teacher or parental role construction. Graphing of the two group scores revealed differences in distributions between parents and teachers. The Mann-Whitney U test showed a significant difference in role construction scores between parents (mean rank 129.62) teachers' assessment of parents (mean rank 63.00), U = 824.50, $z =$ -8.419, $p <$ .001, thus rejecting the null hypothesis that the distributions are similar.

Parental sense of efficacy. Table 17 shows a comparison of the means and standard deviations of teachers and parents for the survey questions on parent efficacy. Here, teachers also scored parent efficacy much lower than parents scored themselves. On the Likert scale of 1 to 6, teachers generally scored parents with "slightly disagree" (3) or "slightly agree" (4) on efficacy in the family-school relationship, whereas parents scored themselves with "slightly agree" (4) and "agree" (5). Again, teachers scored parents the highest in feeling confident about asking for support from the classroom teacher (4.24) and feeling confident about voicing their opinions about school maintenance (4.09), both school-centered activities, whereas they scored parents the lowest in feeling confident about knowing how to help their children learn (3.41) and

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knowing how to foster appropriate behavior in their children (3.46), both home

activities. Parents, however, scored themselves quite differently. Their scores

demonstrated the most confidence in feeling that they have an important role in their

children's progress (5.39) and knowing how to help their children make educational

progress (5.32), while they felt the least confident in their satisfaction with their

relationship with the school (4.46) and their support for the school (4.68).

Table 17

Means and Standard Deviations for Parent Efficacy Scale

Question	Teacher		Parent	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Know how to help their child make educational progress	3.73	1.046	5.32	.866
Know if they have good communication with their child	3.61	1.247	5.20	1.008
Know how to help their child get good grades at school	3.75	1.099	5.10	.894
Know how to influence their child's motivation at school	3.82	1.052	5.16	1.009
Feel valued as a team member with the school	3.51	1.217	4.77	1.274
Believe that their children's success depends on them, not on their teachers	3.64	1.258	5.06	1.235
Know how to help their child learn	3.41	1.042	5.22	.808
Can help their children with homework even if they do not understand it themselves	3.55	1.286	5.17	1.098
Feel that they have an important role in their child's educational progress	3.98	1.182	5.39	.861
Know how to foster appropriate behavior in their children at school	3.46	1.270	5.25	.847
Feel confident about their support for the school	4.05	1.140	4.68	1.207
Are satisfied with their relationship with the school	4.00	1.022	4.46	1.389
Can ask for support from the classroom teacher	4.24	1.123	5.17	1.043
Feel confident about voicing their opinions about school maintenance	4.09	1.149	4.71	1.341

An independent-samples *t*-test was run in order to determine whether a significant difference existed between teacher and parent scores for parent efficacy. There were two outliers in the parent data and five outliers in the teacher data. Although these scores represent important groups in society and will be discussed later, they were removed in order to achieve normality of distribution according to Shapiro-Wilk's test ($p > .05$). There was homogeneity of variances for efficacy scores as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p = .095$). Parents rated themselves higher in efficacy ($M = 72.05$, $SD = 7.77$) than teachers rated them ($M = 51.92$, $SD = 9.42$), with a significant difference in mean efficacy score, $M = 21.12$ (95%CI, 17.39 to 22.85), $t(170) = 14.540$, $p < .001$.

Summary. In contrast to how teachers perceived them, parents in public schools scored themselves relatively highly for both adopting and believing in the effectiveness of their roles in family-school collaboration. Their scores demonstrated a stronger sense of what their roles should be at home than at school and that they believed actions had positive consequences. Beliefs about efficacy also correlated positively with beliefs about role construction. Overall, expectations about their own roles within the family-school relationship were high. One's own experiences at school and with others seem to have a stronger influence on parental expectations than demographic factors, confirming international research (Green et al., 2007). Parents also scored themselves significantly higher than teachers scored them under both constructs, indicating a possible deficit approach on the part of educators, and which may negatively influence the productivity of family-school collaboration (Kim, 2009).

Chapter Summary

An analysis of the quantitative data has presented a number of important findings that may affect parent involvement programs in western Mexico. Although both teachers and parents scored themselves highly in two aspects of expectations for family-school collaboration, role construction and sense of efficacy, there were differences in mean scores across and variability within public, private, and rural community schools. While teacher expectations appear to be most influenced by gender, urban/rural locality, and perceptions of average family income in the school community, parental expectations have stronger correlations with their own experiences in school and time living in their communities. Results also showed that public schoolteachers assessed parents significantly lower in the areas of adopting roles for and having efficacy in family-school collaboration than parents assessed themselves. The final chapter thus begins with cross-examination of quantitative and qualitative results, followed by a discussion of limitations to the study and implications for practice, policy, and further research.

<center>**Chapter Six: Summary, Discussion, and Conclusion**</center>

Chapter Six presents the cross-analysis of the qualitative and quantitative findings of this study and a discussion of implications for policy, practice, and further research. This study was guided by the following research questions: What are teacher expectations for family-school collaboration in education? How do teachers assess parent expectations for their involvement in family-school collaboration? What are parent expectations for family-school collaboration? The chapter begins by reviewing the purpose and significance of the study. The sections that follow include discussions of each of the research question findings, limitations of the study, and implications for policy, practice, and further research.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the relationship between teacher and parental expectations for family-school collaboration in elementary schools in western Mexico. This was accomplished through a convergent parallel mixed methods study with teachers and parents from private, public, and rural community schools in three municipalities. The problem motivating the study is the persistent gap between theory and practice that has made family-school collaboration in elementary schools in Mexico seem unsuccessful. Through the conceptual model of cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) and the constructs of sense of efficacy and role construction, the researcher assessed the expectations of teachers and parents and then measured the relationship between them. CHAT provides the opportunity to analyze teachers and parents as interacting activity systems that are deeply embedded in cultural and historical contexts.

Although teachers and parents may have similar objects they are attempting to reach, their access to and development of mediating tools can be vastly different from each other.

Cross-Analysis of the Findings

With convergent parallel mixed methods research, qualitative and quantitative results are analyzed independently of one another, with the goal of "mutual enhancement of the analysis and understanding of each component by the other" (Wolff, Knodel, & Sittitrai, 1993). Through this triangulation of the data, the researcher combined results from both the qualitative and quantitative analyses in order to present a richer, more in-depth understanding of family-school collaboration in western Mexico. Within each research question, the cross-analysis is organized by a discussion of expectations, cultural-historical context, and mediating tools across school communities.

Research Question 1: What are teacher expectations for family-school collaboration?

Teachers' expectations for parents and for themselves in the family-school relationship were fairly consistent across private and public schools, while in the rural community schools expectations expanded into further responsibilities of self-governance. Teachers across all schools expected parents to have a commitment to working together in their children's education. Expected responsibilities included but were not limited to supervising and helping with homework, teaching values, discipline and appropriate behavior, communicating with the school, and responding to invitations for school meetings, activities, and events. Teachers' expectations for themselves

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included providing academic preparation and reinforcing behavior and values taught at home, even taking on those responsibilities when deemed necessary. In the rural community schools, parents were also expected to provide and maintain the school, give room and board to the instructors, and participate in shared decision-making with the CONAFE instructors, all characteristic of self-governing schools.

The results, however, also suggest an inconsistency between how teachers reported their expectations on the surveys and how they addressed the family-school relationship when given the opportunity to express themselves more freely in focus group interviews. The survey results showed high levels of teacher sense of efficacy and commitment to roles in fostering the family-school relationship, with private schoolteacher scores slightly higher than public and rural schoolteachers. Teachers scored themselves higher on encouraging home-related activities than on school-related activities. However, through focus group interviews, the educators expressed opinions suggesting a low sense of efficacy in getting parents more involved in their children's education in both areas. The difference may lie in what their general beliefs are (those on the survey) as opposed to what specific experiences they tend to share with their colleagues (in the focus group). Epstein (2013) called this the difference between knowing and doing. In terms of the CHAT model, it can be considered an inherent internal contradiction within the teacher activity system that has the potential for becoming the "driving force for transformation" (Engestrom & Sannino, 2010, p. 5).

Results from statistical analysis also failed to provide clear indications about how teacher expectations are formed. The combination of teacher gender, level of education,

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years of experience, perceptions of average family income in the school community, and urban/rural locality significantly predicted how confident teachers feel in their roles for family-school collaboration (efficacy), but not how strongly they believe they should have those roles (role construction). In addition, teachers' perceptions of average family income seem to be important contribution to the forming of their expectations; the lower the perception of average family income, the higher was the reported sense of efficacy. This was reflected somewhat during the focus group interviews with teachers, where the rural community school instructors gave more specific examples of positive family-school collaboration than the public or private school teachers. One might also expect more highly trained and experienced teachers to have stronger sense of efficacy and definition of roles, yet the results of this study do not support this in either the qualitative or quantitative analyses. It may be that teachers' role construction and sense of success in the family-school relationship are more dependent on personal beliefs or school contextual factors such as leadership and organizational culture than on work experience.

Teachers reported offering multiple opportunities for parents to collaborate with the school but expressed frustration about limited levels of parental involvement in private and public schools both at school and at home. In addition, where teachers from private, public, and rural community schools addressed academic and behavioral issues of students with a school-centered approach, rural school educators expressed more success in developing partnership strategies with families than private or public school teachers. This was surprising, due to the large gaps in professional training and experience between the rural instructors and public/private schoolteachers, yet may have

been representative of the closer contact that rural school instructors have with their students' families while co-operating self-governing schools.

  Cultural-historical context. The contexts from which teachers formed their expectations for family-school collaboration varied and reflected school type and locality. In the private schools there was an extended professional community on location and with a clearly defined vision, upon which the school norms are founded. In the public schools, the professional community was limited to a principal (two of the participating schools had no principal assigned to them) and classroom teachers, but was strongly connected to a hierarchy of authority within the local, state, and national educational systems. Norms were also largely dictated by the Mexican Secretary of Education (SEP) in the form of a national curriculum, materials, teacher training, and evaluation, as well as through an influential teacher union. Although the rural community schools used SEP materials, the norms were established through the National Council for Educational Development (CONAFE) and established through summer and monthly training sessions. There were only one or two instructors per rural school and the only other professional communities that they had access to were through mentorship by pedagogical trainers and monthly regional meetings. These three school contexts have been fairly consistent over time. New educational reforms promoted by the current government have brought many changes to the public schools, however, bringing some support by some and sharp criticism by others who felt the were unrealistic and reflected a lack of understanding of the family context.

Mediating tools. Within the CHAT framework, access to mediating tools for family-school collaboration were addressed in relation to cultural, economic, and social capital (Bourdieu, 1986) and are instrumental in forming expectations. In terms of cultural capital, private and public school teachers had higher levels of education and years of experience than the rural school instructors, which may have led to more developed mediating tools in working with parents. However, no significant differences in sense of efficacy or role construction between school types were apparent and thus no evidence that expectations varied based on these factors.

Observations at and field notes from each of the schools showed that the private schools were equipped with more economic capital than either the public or rural schools in terms of resources. This access to capital enabled private school teachers to have the space and resources available to communicate with families in several different ways, whereas the public and rural schoolteachers were more limited. Private school teachers also benefitted from a higher quality of resources provided by a tighter social network, school vision, a longer workday with time incorporated for team planning, professional development, and meetings with parents. Rural school instructors, given their work with fewer families from one village, were also able to provide extra time for parents despite a four-and-a-half hour workday. Their own access to economic and cultural capital was extremely limited, but they compensated by building strong social relationships with families. Public school teachers, on the other hand, gave classes continually from 8:00 until 12:30 pm or from 2:00 until 6:30 pm with only one half-hour break. The majority of public teacher participants also worked both the morning and afternoon shifts, giving

them little time to meet with parents in between. Thus their mediating tools were primarily limited to invitations for scheduled school events and meetings, posters on the classroom windows or front gate, and notes home with students. In this sense, although there was an effort to build social capital, there was only limited access to and amounts of resources.

Despite their limitations in cultural and economic capital, the rural community instructors displayed a much clearer vision of family-school collaboration than the teachers from either public or private schools. During the focus group interviews, the instructors consistently made reference to the triangle of education - student, instructor, and parents - as a mediating tool, thus demonstrating an emphasis on building social capital within the community.

Research Question 2: How do teachers assess parental expectations for involvement in family-school collaboration?

The quantitative analysis indicated that teachers across schools and locality in the study perceived parental expectations as relatively low in both sense of efficacy and role construction with the exception of a few outliers. This reflects a deficit approach to family-school collaboration often mentioned in the research in relation to minority populations (Delgado-Gaitan, 2007; Kim, 2009). Perceptions of parental expectations were strongly related to teacher gender and perceptions of average family income, yet in the opposite direction from teachers' own expectations. While female participants scored themselves higher than males in efficacy and role construction, they reported parents as

having lower expectations than their counterparts. These differences in gender were not apparent during the focus group interviews.

Teachers also tended to score parental expectations as higher as their perception of average family income in the school community increased. Private school teachers assessed parental expectations as highest, while public school teachers assessed parent expectations the lowest. The focus group interviews allowed for a deeper understanding in that, although several teachers assessed parental involvement and expectations as fairly low, the reasons that were given varied across school types and contexts, as well as between urban and rural locality.

In terms of sense of efficacy, teachers generally scored parents as higher in having a voice in school-related situations concerning their children and lowest in volunteering at school and home-based activities such as helping their children learn and fostering appropriate behavior. The focus group discussions confirmed these beliefs, as many teachers lamented over lack of sufficient academic and behavioral instruction at home. In contrast to some research in Mexico, teachers did not express concern about parents interfering with the pedagogical matters of the classroom (Martínez et al., 2007; Santizo, 2006).

Despite their lower assessment of parental expectations, both private and public schoolteachers had difficulty articulating specific home involvement activities that families practiced during the interviews, whereas rural community instructors were able to give more concrete examples. This reflects the close contact that rural school instructors have with the communities, such as witnessing a family share the tasks of

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pealing *nopal* cactus while assisting the younger children with homework. Private school teachers scored parents higher in both efficacy and role construction than their public and rural community school peers, which would most logically reflect availability of cultural and economic capital to families.

   Cultural-historical context. In terms of cultural and historical context, private and public schoolteachers expressed largely negative views about the families of their schools, whereas rural community instructors' opinions were mixed. All groups mentioned negative influences on parental involvement due to changes in family structure as separation and divorce rates increase, yet the rural instructors also viewed this as a step toward self-sufficiency and redefining of women's roles. None of the teachers mentioned the demands for family-school collaboration as being higher today than in previous generations, yet private and public schoolteachers felt that parents are not doing enough. The reasons, however, differ and reflect the mediating tools that each group can access.

   Teachers from private and public schools also mentioned changes in expectations set by the national curriculum for the use of technology by students. Whereas private schoolteachers expressed concern about technology as a distracter, public schoolteachers were concerned that their study guides required the use of technology when in fact few of the families in the community had sufficient access or knowledge to comply. Rural school instructors did not mention changes in technology, perhaps because of such limited access to it in the communities where they are working.

Mediating tools. Private school teachers did not mention limitations to economic or institutionalized cultural capital of private school families, but rather focused on the lack of time, organization and will of parents to provide appropriate guidance to their children. This differed starkly from the input by public school teachers, whose focus was almost entirely on the lack of cultural and economic capital. This included low levels of parental education and limited access to material resources including technology and Internet, in addition to time and energy factors associated with both parents working or single parent households. Demographic data of the parents, however, revealed that there were more adults and fewer children living in the households than public school teachers perceived there to be. Rural schoolteachers, while acknowledging low levels of education and resources among the parents, focused more on building familial and extrafamilial social capital, as well as establishing norms for education. There was general agreement among these instructors that if parents were given the tools they needed and taught how to use them, they would do so.

Research Question 3: How do parents define their own expectations for family-school collaboration?

Although only public school parents from two schools responded to the survey, the focus group interviews provided valuable information from parents of all three of the school community types, as well as between rural and urban locality. Through the analysis of survey data, public school parents scored themselves highly both in sense of efficacy and role construction and significantly higher than how teachers had scored them. This suggests that parents in public schools have an idea of what they should be

doing and feel that what they do will bring results, yet they scored themselves higher in home activities than in school activities. This may indicate more parent-focused rather than partnership-focused activity beliefs (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2004). The efficacy scores also correlated significantly with the role construction scores, implying that as parents have successful experiences in supporting their children, they may be willing to take on more roles. On the contrary, the focus group discussions revealed only a limited sense of efficacy, particularly among public and rural school parents, and a stronger sense of roles at home than of collaboration with the schools among public school parents, as is confirmed by research in Mexico (Valdés et al., 2006). Private school parents were able to articulate their roles more clearly and specifically than public or rural school parents.

A key finding in this study was the difference between how public school parents placed their own expectations for family-school collaboration and how teachers from the same school viewed them. Teachers scored parent expectations significantly lower than parents scored themselves, revealing a deficit approach to parent involvement. What may be the case is that families are adopting a parent-focused approach to their activity at home, while teachers are interpreting this as being "disengaged" (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2004).

Expectations that parents voiced during the focus group interviews provided much richer information on their concerns and needs. Across schools and urban/rural locality, parents expected teachers to guide them concerning their child's academic and personal development, including when there were behavioral concerns. Parents of all three types of school wanted teachers to communicate with them and offer training and support. In

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addition, the public school parents expressed concern about their school being a safe environment for their children and both teachers and principals being available and professional in their work.

Parents' expectations for themselves tended to vary according to type of school community. Those in private schools understood their role to be complying with school expectations and offering their children a well-rounded education both in school and with extra-curricular activities, thus demonstrating social capital as a form of social control in establishing norms. The rural community school parents were also aware of their responsibility to support their school, both in their children's academic development and with school maintenance and governing. However, they expressed feeling limited in their own abilities to support their children, other than to encourage and motivate them. In the public schools, parents' primary concerns focused on supporting their children's academic development, protecting, and defending their children from potential harm. Thus, their expectations of the school reflected these concerns and on strengthening social capital within the family. Both the public and rural community school parents expressed expectations of the local and national governments as well, feeling that those resources that had been provided were not sufficient to adequately support their children's academic progress.

Cultural-historical context. Focus group discussions showed differences in family context by school community type. Private and rural school parents felt that they were part of a school community, whereas public school parents did not mention this. Norms for approaching education seem to be established both by school requirements and

through family. Parents also discussed changes over time. Although a variety of family structures were mentioned, the focus in the private and public schools were on changing gender roles, where the father was taking on more responsibility for childcare. Across all three types of school, however, the mother was still the key liaison between home and school, consistent with other research in Mexico (Equivel, 1995; Urías et al., 2008; Valdés & Urías, 2011). Parents across all school types mentioned a decreased sense of safety in their communities, thus the importance of accompanying their children to and from school and children having less independence as when the parents themselves were younger. Public school parents, however, felt that many of their peers did not comply with this necessity. Parents across schools also mentioned increased involvement in their children's education from the home, while only private and rural school parents emphasized the importance of participating in school activities. The public school parents underscored contacting teachers concerning their children's academic and social welfare more than attending school events.

Mediating tools. Public and rural school parents expressed concerns reflecting a lack of sufficient cultural and economic capital to provide their children with the necessary knowledge and materials to do well in school. Rural school parents gave examples of strengthening extrafamilial stronger social capital within their communities, while private and public school parents seemed to be more wary of other families in their neighborhoods. Parents from all school types mentioned the increase in technology, albeit with varying concerns. Private school parents provided the technology but felt that they needed to protect their children from its negative influences, while public and rural

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school parents expressed frustration about not having the means to provide their children with the technological equipment and knowledge that is expected of them. Both public and rural school parents expressed disappointment that the government was not providing sufficient resources to parents and schools for education.

Results of the regression models suggest that both parental sense of efficacy and role construction are tied to embodied cultural capital, or their dispositions that had been formed through their own experiences in school (Bourdieu, 1986). For example, gender and one's own experience in school significantly predicted sense of efficacy with one's own children, while the type of student one was had the same predictive value on role construction. The latter was also significantly related to the number of years that the family has lived in the *colonia*, suggesting that social capital is strengthened as families within the neighborhood share their experiences and expectations about education.

Unexpected findings. An unexpected finding of this study was the strength and clarity with which rural community instructors could articulate their roles in the family-school relationship. Despite their lack of formal teacher training, experience, and working with communities that lack cultural and economic capital, the instructors that participated in this study revealed a clear vision of family-school collaboration based on the student-instructor-family triangle as a mediating tool. This tool, coupled with shared leadership of maintaining the schools, appears to enable them to create the culture of respect and trust necessary for fostering family-school collaboration, although they repeatedly mentioned the challenge of engaging all families. Further research is necessary in order to confirm

whether this strength is evident across regions of Mexico or dependent on the leadership of this particular region.

Limitations

The nature of this study presented several limitations. First, while the survey was applied across at least forty schools in over twenty neighborhoods (*colonias*) of three municipalities, it was implemented with a sample of convenience rather than a random sample. For this reason, the results are valid for measuring these constructs among teachers and parents in this region of western Mexico, but not for other parts of the country, Latin America or for Mexicans residing in the United States. Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological systems theory, however, suggests that beliefs and actions are influenced by various systems in which an individual or group operates, and so there may be important similarities in some aspects. Second, the survey responses are respondents' self-reports and may be influenced by the wish to impress (Utts & Heckard, 2006). The scales were also used to measure expectations for family-school collaboration, but not actual parent or teacher involvement or in connection with student outcomes. Parent surveys were only applied in two public schools and do not represent the expectations of parents in private or rural schools, or parents of other *colonias*.

The use and transformation of the Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler (1997, 2004) scales also presented limitations to the study. The psychological beliefs of role construction and sense of efficacy have generally been employed as predictors for types of parental involvement, whereas the intention of this study was to establish factors that

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predict these beliefs. Thus, there was little research available with which these results can be compared.

In terms of the qualitative analysis, the focus group participants were purposefully selected across types of school communities, but may not be representative of all perspectives. In two focus groups, the principals participated with the teachers and may have had an influence on topics or depth of discussion that occurred. This was also a cross-cultural study, in which the researcher was examining perspectives from a culture other than her own. Although having lived in the country for twenty years and able to conduct the study in Spanish, there may be an inherent bias or pre-existing opinions about expectations of parents and teachers in the various communities (Kruger & Casey, 2009). Appropriate measures were taken in order to reduce any bias.

Implications for Policy, Practice, and Research

Implications for policy. The results of this study lead to recommendations for policy in three areas. First, policy should be concentrated on closing the gap between theory and practice, as is mentioned in Chapter One. The findings of this study indicate a need more training on fostering family-school collaboration, rather than simply assuming that teachers have the knowledge and skills to develop trusting relationships. Epstein (2013) has recommended coursework for teachers-in-training built on four directions: teamwork, goal-linked activities, equity in outreach, and evaluation. Once teachers are placed, continued professional development on family-school collaboration through the already existent *magisterial* program should be offered so that teachers can better

customize practices to the context of their own schools and family communities (Epstein, 2013).

In addition to training, teachers need access to professional networks and learning communities around family-school collaboration. Learning about others' success stories and how to develop or revise mediating tools can result in shared leadership for change within schools, thus narrowing the gap between teachers' beliefs and daily practices. The results of this study demonstrate that private schools and rural community school educators have valuable experiences in engaging families in nontraditional ways.

Finally, the structural inequities within the Mexican school system cannot be disregarded. As was highlighted in Chapter One, public and rural school communities (as well as indigenous bilingual schools which were not included this study) are severely lacking in cultural and economic capital that can make family-school collaboration more effective, despite the notable amount of federal spending that is put into education (Guzman & del Campo, 2001; Chiquiar & Ramos-Francia, 2009). This, coupled with the short school day and teachers working double shifts, makes time, energy, and resources for fostering family-school collaboration even more challenging. However, the resources are not what make parents feel welcome. Epstein et al. (2011) noted that levels of poverty did not predict quality of programs; rather, a teamwork approach and school leadership support did. In this sense, school leadership should focus on building strong social networks with and among their families, taking the triangle of family-student-school rural community schools as an example.

Implications for practice. The findings of the study offer several opportunities for educational practice. First, the findings also suggest a wide variety of teacher attitudes toward collaboration and the persistence of a deficit approach toward families and their involvement in their children's education. Educators need to address unacceptable generalizations such as that parents view schools as day care centers (*guardarias*), when there is little evidence to support such claims. What the evidence does demonstrate is that teachers defined "parent involvement" more as attending school meetings and events, while parents were focusing on their involvement in the home. This misalignment of expectations results in misunderstandings of family commitment toward education. It may also not be clear to all families what the expectations of the school are for collaboration. By engaging in dialogue with parents to negotiate what "involvement in education" means, as well as implementing research-based strategies that are tailored to specific contexts and needs, educators need to "reconceptualizing the object" of parent involvement (Engeström et al., 2002).

Much of what needs to be done in Mexican schools depends on leadership at all levels, which is more predictive of success in family-school collaboration than parent demographics (Epstein et al., 2011). School leaders need to become informed, foster a school culture based on trust, communication, value placed on families, and teacher initiative. This study revealed differences in cultural-historical context, mediating tools, and expectations of families from differing communities, suggesting that a "one-size-fits-all" approach will fail. In addition, they need to work in shared leadership with parents

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and teachers in order to create relationships based on respect and build programs that are meaningful for community members (Epstein, 2013).

Finally, recognizing that role construction toward family-school collaboration is socially constructed and thus continually developing, educators need to build social capital by institutionalizing a welcoming school climate and opportunities for families toward active and positive engagement in children's schooling (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2004, p. 12). The type of social capital that is needed will depend on the context. According to the study results, this needs to go beyond invitations for school celebrations or picking up grades and toward helping parents to create a "wider vision" of involvement (Valdés & Urías, 2011). Parents need to feel welcome to discuss their concerns about their children and educators need scheduled time to do so. Teachers should also recognize nontraditional forms of participation and include families in the learning process by valuing their experiences as funds of knowledge for the classroom (Moll & Gonzalez, 1994). Through these efforts and the creation of shared tools, schools can create social networks and access to more and higher quality resources within their communities, thus laying the foundation for strengthening both cultural and economic capital as well.

Implications for further research.

An important implication for further research that this study presents is the use of CHAT as a theoretical foundation and conceptual model for assessing the family-school relationship in national and cross-national contexts. CHAT provides researchers with a model that puts culture "at the center of human behavior" and then relates it to activity

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and collective activity systems (Cole, 1999; Engeström, 2001). It also recognizes the complexities of human systems while offering the language for comparisons so that behaviors such as involvement and collaboration between groups can be more appropriately interpreted and understood.

In addition, by combining qualitative focus group interviews with quantitative survey analysis, this mixed methods approach has produced "conflicting, inconsistent, or unexpected results that naturally prompt the development of new explanatory hypotheses" (Wolff, Knodel, & Sittitrai, 1993). There are a number of questions arising from the results of this study that warrant further research. The first question is to what extent urban/rural locality in Mexico influences expectations and involvement of families in the education of their children. Both focus group interviews and demographic data revealed stark contrasts between urban and rural access to cultural and economic capital that seem to be closely related to their expectations for family-school collaboration. According to one of the teacher participants in this study, rural communities in Mexico have traditionally offered strong social networks albeit often lacking in resources. However, as families migrate to this region of Mexico in search for better opportunities, these networks may be lacking, and an even stronger disconnect between families and with schools as families move toward more urban *colonias* on the outskirts of the city. Further research offers the opportunity to address issues based on locality and migration.

New research is also needed in relation to the adapted scales of this study and their reliability across population groups. The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model of parent involvement scales of efficacy and role construction were expanded beyond

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beliefs of parents to those of teachers, as well as for teacher perceptions of parental beliefs. Further research can test the validity of the adapted scales among other population samples, in other regions, and through random design. Within the scales that were implemented in this study, a deeper look into differences between expectations for home and school involvement, as well as relationship building, is also warranted and could provide educators with specific areas of focus for improving the family-school relationship.

The findings of this study also confirm that parental efficacy and role construction for family-school collaboration are both social constructed and influenced by one's own experiences in school. Further research both in Mexico and among Mexican immigrant families in the United States based on these ideas may provide deeper insight into where they situate themselves within the expectations of the respective school system and how to design more meaningful programs of collaboration that strengthen social capital and take the cultural context of family expectations into account. This way, educators can create mediating tools with Mexican families that capitalize on their previous experiences while adopting new forms of involvement (Vygotsky, 1978).

Finally, further research is necessary in order to test whether the CHAT framework employed in this study is compatible enough to be used as a mediating tool itself to improve family-school programs in Mexico through the process of expansive learning (Engeström et al., 2002). CHAT can serve as a conceptual framework for examining the complex, multilevel contexts in which teachers and parents define their objects and utilize the mediating tools available to them. As a developmental theory,

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CHAT can be also be used for qualitative changes (Roth & Lee, 2009). The question is whether this model is culturally appropriate for the type of "inherently multi-voiced process of debate, negotiation and orchestration" that is needed for change, in a region where rigid hierarchies and deep social inequalities persist (Engeström & Sannino, 2010, p. 5). According to Engeström, this process also needs to include critical aspects of timing, alignment, and vertical dialogue with those in administration and policy making (Engeström & Glăveanu, 2012).

Chapter and Study Summary

This chapter has been devoted to a cross-examination of the qualitative and quantitative results of the study on teacher and parental expectations for family-school collaboration in elementary schools in Mexico. Collaboration between families and school personnel is recognized as necessary for improving the educational levels of Mexican students of private, public, and rural schools, yet it there are still many perceived and real obstacles in making this process successful. The findings of this study provide valuable insight into the expectations that teachers and parents have for family-school collaboration in a western region of Mexico and what factors may be influential. This and further research will help educators to understand the significance of context for the family-school relationship and offer guidance in how to make it work for each family.

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Table 1

Studies Referring to Family Involvement in Schools within Mexico

Authors	Type of Study	Location	Publishing Institution
Bazán, Sánchez, & Castañeda, 2007	QT	Sonora	Sonora Autonomous University of Morelos State, National Politechnical Institute, National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM)
Durán & Raesfeld, 2011	QT	Hidalgo	Autonomous University of Hidalgo
Estrella, Esquivel, & Sánchez, 2004	QT	Yucatán	Autonomous University Yucatán
Fernández, 2003	QT	National	National Institute for Educational Evaluation (INEE)
Gertler, Patrinos, & Rodríguez-Oreggia, 2012	QT*	National	World Bank
Guevara, Hermosillo, Delgado, López, & García, 2007	QT	Mexico State	UNAM
Guevara, López, García, Delgado, Hermosillo, & Rugerio, 2008	QT	Mexico State	UNAM
Guevara-Benítez, Rugerio, Delgado-Sánchez, Hermosillo-García, & López-Hernández, 2010	QT	Mexico City	UNAM
Hopkins, Ahtaridou, Matthews, Posner, & Figueroa, 2007	QT	National	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
Huerta, 2009	QT	National	INEE

Authors	Type of Study	Location	Publishing Institution
Muñoz-Izquierdo & Villarreal-Guevara, 2005	QT	National	Iberoamericano University, Technological Institute for Advanced Studies
Muñoz, Márquez, Sandoval, & Sánchez, 2004	QT	Eight states	INEE
National Council of Culture and the Arts (CONACULTA)	QT	National	CONACULTA
Patrinos, 2009	QT*	National	World Bank
Romero, Pérez, Bustos, Morales, & Hernández, 2013	QT	Hidalgo	Autonomous University of Hidalgo
Salazar-Reyes & Vega-Pérez, 2013	QT	Mexico State	UNAM
Sánchez, Valdés, Reyes, & Carlos, 2010	QT	Yucatán	Autonomous University of Yucatán, Technological Institute of Sonora, Superior Technological Institute of Cajeme
Skoufias & Shapiro, 2006	QT*	National	World Bank
Urías, Márquez, Tapia, & Madueño, 2008	QT	Sonora	Technological Institute of Sonora
Valdés, Martin, & Sánchez, 2009	QT	Yucatán	Autonomous University of Yucatán, Technological Institute of Sonora
Vega & Macotela, 2005	QT	Mexico City	UNAM
Azaola, 2010	QL	Michoacán	University of Bristol
Azaola, 2011	QL	Michoacán	University of Bristol

Authors	Type of Study	Location	Publishing Institution
Delgado, 2008	QL		Hacía una Cultural Democrática (ACUDE)
Delgado, González, & Martínez, 2011	QL		ACUDE
Doston-Blake, 2010	QL	Veracruz	East Carolina University
Guzmán & Martín del Campo, 2001	QL	Jalisco	University of Guadalajara
Jiménez, Ito, & Macotela, 2010	QL	Mexico City	UNAM
Martínez, Bracho, & Martínez, 2007	QL	Michoacán	Michoacán University of San Nicolás de Hidalgo
Sánchez, Estrella, & Juárez, n.d.	QL	Yucatán	Autonomous University of Yucatán
Santizo, 2006	QL	National	Autonomous Metropolitan University
Seda & Torres, 2010	QL	Mexico City	UNAM
Valdés & Urías, 2011	QL	Sonora	Technological Institute of Sonora
Barraza, 2003	MM	Michoacán	UNAM
Gertler, Patrinos, & Rubio-Cotina, 2007	MM*	National	World Bank
Huerta, 2010	MM	National	INEE
Cardemil & Lavín, 2012	Book		Ediciones SM (publisher)
Reimers, 2006	Book		Harvard University Press
Vega, 2006	Chapter		UNAM

Authors	Type of Study	Location	Publishing Institution
Vega & Macotela, 2007	Book		UNAM
Colina, 2011	Essay		Autonomous University of Tlaxcala
Esquivel, 1995	Essay		Autonomous University of Yucatán
García-Cabrero, 2011	Essay		UNAM
Guzmán & Martín del Campo, 2004	Essay		University of Guadalajara
Olivo, Alaníz, & García, 2011	Essay		National Pedagogical University
Sánchez, 2006	Essay		Autonomous University of Yucatán
Santizo, 2011	Essay		Autonomous Metropolitan University
Torres & Fanfani, 2000	Report		Mexican Secretary of Education (SEP) and UNESCO
Vélez, Linares, Martínez, & Delgado, 2008	Report		ACUDE
Villarreal, López, Bernal, Escobedo, Mata, & Valadez, 2008	Report		Technological Institute of Higher Education in Monterrey, Autonomous University of Nuevo León

Note. QT = quantitative studies; QT* = quantitative, randomized and/or experimental; QL = qualitative studies; MM = mixed methods studies; MM* = mixed methods with randomized and/or experimental.

APPENDIX B

Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler (2005) Scales vs. Study Survey Items

Back-translations Spanish-English for modified items.

Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler (2005) items	Modified Parent items
ROLE CONSTRUCTION: I believe it is my responsibility to...	As a parent it is my responsibility...
1. volunteer at the school.	to volunteer at school.
2. communicate with my child's teacher regularly.	to communicate with my child's teacher regularly.
3. help my child with homework.	to help my child with homework.
4. make sure the school has what it needs.	to participate in regular school maintenance.
5. support decisions made by the teacher.	to support the teacher's decisions.
6. stay on top of things at school.	to be aware of situations that arise at school that affect my child.
7. explain tough assignments to my child.	to explain difficult homework assignments to my child.
8. talk with other parents from my child's school.	to be in contact with other parents.
9. talk with my child about the school day.	to talk with my child about the school day.

Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler (2005) items	Modified Parent items
SENSE OF EFFICACY:	
1. I know how to help my child do well in school.	I know how to help my child make educational progress.
2. I don't know if I'm getting through to my child.	I know if I have good communication with my child.
3. I don't know how to help my child make good grades in school.	I know how to help my child get good grades at school.
4. I feel successful about my efforts to help my child learn.	I know how to help my child learn.
5. Other children have more influence on my child's grades than I do.	I believe that my child's success depends on me, not on their teachers.
6. I don't know how to help my child learn.	(not used)
7. I make a significant difference in my child's school performance.	I feel that I have an important role in my child's educational progress.

APPENDIX C

Internal Consistency of Revised Survey Scales

Table 1

Item Analysis: Teacher Role Construction

	N	Mean	Variance	SD
Statistics for Scale	15	75.94	77.126	8.782

Item Total Statistics	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
Item 1	70.99	68.923	.549	.455	.883
Item 2	70.62	69.553	.543	.515	.884
Item 3	70.66	68.884	.585	.469	.882
Item 4	70.90	69.009	.496	.510	.885
Item 5	70.88	66.224	.637	.563	.879
Item 6	70.97	67.161	.580	.486	.882
Item 7	71.19	65.133	.692	.623	.877
Item 8	70.49	69.542	.596	.595	.882
Item 9	70.68	66.284	.631	.620	.879
Item 10	71.63	64.996	.435	.360	.894
Item 11	70.47	70.135	.513	.490	.885
Item 12	70.67	69.292	.542	.469	.883
Item 13	70.84	67.684	.550	.518	.883
Item 14	70.67	69.615	.550	.449	.883
Item 15	71.52	63.283	.652	.544	.879

Reliability Statistics for Scale	Chronbach's Alpha	Standardized Item Alpha
	.890	.897

Table 2

Item Analysis: Teacher Sense of Efficacy

	N	Mean	Variance	SD
Statistics for Scale	18	93.40	123.518	11.114

Item Total Statistics	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
Item 1	88.15	110.708	.613	.582	.927
Item 2	87.84	117.712	.422	.469	.930
Item 3	87.92	113.512	.612	.554	.927
Item 4	88.30	113.251	.528	.438	.929
Item 5	88.23	108.704	.674	.612	.925
Item 6	88.18	106.580	.749	.730	.924
Item 7	88.22	108.420	.707	.596	.925
Item 8	88.13	112.601	.624	.469	.927
Item 9	88.14	111.571	.609	.653	.927
Item 10	88.55	110.697	.605	.483	.927
Item 11	88.42	115.641	.328	.319	.934
Item 12	88.12	109.868	.625	.684	.927
Item 13	88.12	111.491	.702	.617	.925
Item 14	88.47	104.251	.745	.685	.924
Item 15	88.05	110.445	.688	.623	.925
Item 16	88.56	107.708	.686	.580	.925
Item 17	88.31	109.819	.649	.675	.926
Item 18	88.07	108.298	.788	.745	.923

Reliability Statistics for Scale	Chronbach's Alpha	Standardized Item Alpha
	.930	.897

Table 3

Item Analysis: Teacher Perception of Parental Role Construction

	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>SD</u>
Statistics for Scale	15	60.62	236.116	15.366

Item Total Statistics	Scale Mean if Item <u>Deleted</u>	Scale Variance if <u>Item Deleted</u>	Corrected Item Total <u>Correlation</u>	Squared Multiple <u>Correlation</u>	Alpha if Item <u>Deleted</u>
Item 1	56.60	207.376	.733	.648	.959
Item 2	56.66	204.632	.749	.719	.959
Item 3	56.45	204.533	.785	.739	.958
Item 4	56.51	208.035	.737	.668	.959
Item 5	57.00	203.824	.812	.746	.958
Item 6	56.62	206.211	.796	.693	.958
Item 7	56.40	206.337	.798	.715	.958
Item 8	56.77	207.235	.764	.684	.959
Item 9	56.29	209.707	.768	.672	.959
Item 10	56.48	209.224	.825	.745	.958
Item 11	56.69	204.364	.775	.672	.959
Item 12	56.15	212.172	.669	.594	.960
Item 13	56.43	204.733	.831	.791	.957
Item 14	56.90	205.321	.751	.678	.959
Item 15	56.70	200.091	.833	.806	.957

Reliability Statistics for Scale	<u>Chronbach's Alpha</u>	<u>Standardized Item Alpha</u>
	.961	.962

Table 4

Item Analysis: Teacher Perception of Parental Sense of Efficacy

	N	Mean	Variance	SD
Statistics for Scale	14	54.21	123.139	11.097

Item Total Statistics	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
Item 1	50.44	107.194	.632	.552	.907
Item 2	50.48	107.900	.614	5.03	.908
Item 3	50.38	105.533	.708	.708	.905
Item 4	50.40	105.335	.713	.703	.905
Item 5	50.53	104.359	.697	.522	.905
Item 6	50.46	106.845	.587	.449	.909
Item 7	50.68	105.866	.723	.633	.904
Item 8	50.59	106.608	.551	.421	.911
Item 9	50.08	107.061	.608	.495	.908
Item 10	50.63	102.883	.731	.624	.904
Item 11	50.10	107.861	.613	.519	.908
Item 12	50.04	109.350	.591	.520	.909
Item 13	49.88	109.742	.506	.428	.912
Item 14	50.02	109.790	.507	.488	.912

Reliability Statistics for Scale	Chronbach's Alpha	Standardized Item Alpha
	.914	.914

Table 5

Item Analysis: Parental Role Construction

	N	Mean	Variance	SD
Statistics for Scale	15	81.28	45.031	6.710

Item Total Statistics	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
Item 1	75.72	41.539	.290	.593	.853
Item 2	75.53	42.221	.460	.491	.846
Item 3	75.44	43.107	.372	.675	.850
Item 4	75.61	42.147	.433	.616	.847
Item 5	76.45	34.506	.672	.646	.831
Item 6	75.80	39.593	.512	.674	.841
Item 7	76.05	37.347	.580	.644	.837
Item 8	76.25	37.556	.546	.609	.840
Item 9	76.13	39.063	.516	.480	.841
Item 10	76.34	35.975	.630	.665	.834
Item 11	76.34	36.864	.514	.530	.843
Item 12	75.59	41.261	.512	.522	.843
Item 13	75.47	42.602	.443	.469	.848
Item 14	75.70	40.022	.484	.745	.843
Item 15	75.52	40.825	.548	.637	.842

Reliability Statistics for Scale	Chronbach's Alpha	Standardized Item Alpha
	.852	.865

Table 6

Item Analysis: Parental Sense of Efficacy

	N	Mean	Variance	SD
Statistics for Scale	14	71.18	85.162	9.228

Item Total Statistics	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
Item 1	64.81	79.052	.402	.361	.889
Item 2	64.93	73.771	.654	.679	.879
Item 3	66.03	77.492	.488	.565	.886
Item 4	65.97	73.492	.670	.580	.879
Item 5	66.35	71.127	.625	.562	.880
Item 6	66.06	76.056	.393	.352	.891
Item 7	65.96	77.804	.471	.628	.887
Item 8	65.94	74.683	.563	.546	.883
Item 9	65.76	77.824	.441	.511	.888
Item 10	65.93	75.114	.630	.627	.881
Item 11	66.49	69.209	.718	.713	.875
Item 12	66.66	68.257	.687	.770	.877
Item 13	66.00	73.075	.612	.525	.881
Item 14	66.41	69.768	.649	.684	.879

Reliability Statistics for Scale	Chronbach's Alpha	Standardized Item Alpha
	.890	.891

Letter of Intent to the Regional Secretary of Education (DRSE)

_____, el 2 de diciembre de 2013

Maestro Roberto Palomera Preciado
P R E S E N T E
Director de la DRSE
Delegación de _____.

CARTA DE PRESENTACIÓN

Investigación para doctorado
Universidad de Minnesota, E.U.
**"Profesores y padres de familia: expectativas
sobre la relación familia-escuela"**

Introducción/ Propósito: <u>LISA KATHLEEN SCHALLA</u>, residente en México durante veinte años, soy maestra y candidata al Doctor en "Política y Liderazgo Educativa" en la Universidad de Minnesota en los E.U. con el plan de empezar mi investigación para el año 2014.

Durante los próximos dos años llevaré a cabo una investigación a cerca de la relación familia-escuela, específicamente en relación a las expectativas de padres y docentes y el papel que asumen al trabajar conjuntamente. El estudio incluirá padres de familia y profesores de escuelas públicas, particulares y rurales a nivel primaria y dentro y alrededor del municipio de _____.

Metodología: La participación de los profesores consistirá en llenar un cuestionario. Sus respuestas se registrarán de forma anónima en una base de datos y se analizarán sin hacer uso de sus datos personales. Posteriormente, algunos profesores serán invitados a participar en un grupo focal, para discussiones más detalladas.

Beneficios: La investigación tiene como objetivo llegar a un mejor entendimiento de las expectativas de los profesores y padres de familia sobre la relación familia-escuela. Con este fin, la investigación podrá ayudarnos a crear prácticas eficaces y apropiadas que disminuyan las dificultades de colaboración a futuro.

Pago/Compensación: No recibirá ningún pago o compensación por participar.

Participación de Carácter Voluntario: La participación en esta investigación es completamente voluntaria. El profesor puede negarse a participar o retirarse en cualquier momento sin que esto implique ninguna consecuencia.

Confidencialidad: Los registros de la investigación se guardarán de manera confidencial. Solamente la investigadora tendrá acceso a la información provista, la cual será guardada en un archivero con candado y/o en una computadora con acceso protegido por contraseña y en un cuarto con llave para mantener la confidencialidad. Para proteger la privacidad de los participantes, información personal será separada de los documentos del estudio y reemplazada con un identificador dentro del mismo. La información personal será guardada de forma separada de los datos y será conservada indefinidamente. El identificador será guardado por cinco años, y después de dicho periodo será destruido.

PARA ESTE ESTUDIO LE PIDO <u>UN OFICIO</u> CON LA AUTORIZACIÓN DE LA D.R.S.E. PARA TRABAJAR CON LAS ESCUELAS PÚBLICAS Y PARTICULARES MENCIONADAS EN EL ANEXO Y <u>OTRAS ADICIONALES</u> SIEMPRE CUANDO LOS DIRECTORES DEN SU PERMISO.

Muy atentamente,

Lisa Kathleen Schalla
322 152 3549
schallal@gmail.com
schal142@umn.edu

APPENDIX E

Letter of Consent for Parents: Focus Group

"Teachers and Parents: Expectations for family-school collaboration
in Mexican elementary education."
University of Minnesota
Lisa K. Schalla

Parent/Guardian Consent Form

Dear Parents:

We would like to learn more about your thoughts about how you are engaged in your children's education in elementary school. Your family's point of view is important to us so that we can understand these experiences. The person leading this study is Lisa Schalla, a doctoral student in Educational Policy and Leadership at the University of Minnesota.

Your participation in this study is your choice. If you agree to be in the study but then change your mind, you can leave the study any time. If you choose to leave, we will not use any of the information you have shared with us. There are no direct benefits to participation in the study.

If you agree to be in this study, we would like to invite you to a small group discussion about your experiences with your child's education and school. The group discussion will last about forty-five minutes to an hour, when you will have the opportunity to share about your role in your child's education and your relationship with your child's school.

If you agree to participate, Lisa will contact you to schedule the group discussion in a familiar place. At the interview, Lisa will go over the consent form with you again to be sure you understand that your participation is voluntary and that what you talk to us about is confidential.

Lisa would like to record our talk so that she can give you full attention when you are talking. If you would like the recorder turned off, let Lisa know and she will turn it off. Only Lisa will listen to the recording. If she decides to publish a paper and include anything you have told her, she will not include your real name.

You will be given a copy of this paper to keep. Please keep it in case you have questions that you want to ask before, during or after the study. Signing here means that you have read this paper or had it read to you and that you would like to be in this study. Do not sign if you do not want to be in this study. If you have questions now or later, please contact Lisa at 322-152-3549 or schal142@umn.edu.

(Signatures below)

"Expectativas sobre la relación familia-escuela en México"
Universidad de Minnesota
Lisa K. Schalla

Consentimiento para participación
Entrevista en Grupo

Estimada madre/padre de familia:

Queremos aprender cómo piensan sobre su papel en la educación de sus hijos durante la primara. Su perspectiva es muy importante para que entendamos estas experiencias. La persona encargada de esta investigación es Lisa Schalla, una estudiante de doctorado de la Universidad de Minnesota con un enfoque en Política y Liderazgo Educativo.

Su participación es voluntario. Puede dejar de participar en cualquier momento durante la plática. Si decide dejar de participar, no utilizaremos ninguna información de usted.

Si decide participar en la investigación, le invitaremos a compartir sus experiencias sobre la educación y la escuela de su hijo(a) en grupo. La plática durará entre cuarenta y cinco minutos y una hora. Durante la plática, Lisa le explicará el proceso de consentimiento para que entienda bien su participación **voluntario** y **confidencial**.

Lisa grabará la plática para poder poner mejor atención al grupo y para tener una copia exacta de sus respuestas. Si prefiere que se apague la grabadora, avísela a Lisa y la apagará. Solamente Lisa tendrá acceso a la grabación. Si alguna publicación resulte de esta plática, no incluirá su nombre. Para su participación le regalará un libro de lectura para llevar a su casa y compartir con la familia.

Lisa le dejará una copia de esta hoja para cualquier pregunta que tenga durante o después de la investigación. Si pone su firma abajo, es decir que entienda este escrito y que le gustaría participar en la investigación. Favor de no firmarlo si prefiere no participar. Para cualquier duda, favor de contactar a Lisa en el teléfono 322-152-3549 o por medio de correo electrónico en schal142@umn.edu.

Nombre/Apellido: _____

Firma: _____Fecha: _____

Investigadora: _____

Firma: _____Fecha: _____

Demographic Survey: Parents

"Teachers and parents: Expectations for Family-School Collaboration
in Mexico"
University of Minnesota
Focus Groups - Parents

Thank you for coming today! Please fill in the following information. This will help us to have a better understanding of our group of parents participating in this study.

Sex: _____ female _____ male

How old are you? (check one)
_____ 18 to 25 years old
_____ 26 to 40 years old
_____ 40 to 60 years old
_____ Older than 60

What state were you born in within Mexico?
_____

What level of education have you completed? (check one)
_____ I have not finished elementary school
_____ Elementary school
_____ Junior high school
_____ High School
_____ University (any level)

How many children under the age of 18 live in your household?

_____

How old are the children under the age of 18 that live in your household?

_____

"Docentes y padres de familia: Expectativas para la colaboración familia-escuela en Jalisco, México"
Universidad de Minnesota, EE.UU.

Entrevista en grupo - Padres de familia

> *¡Muchas gracias por su participación de hoy! Favor de completar este cuestionario. Su información nos ayudará a entender mejor nuestro grupo de participantes.*

Yo soy _____ mujer _____ hombre

¿Qué edad tiene usted?
_____ 18 a 25 años
_____ 26 a 40 años
_____ 41 a 60 años

¿En qué estado de México nació usted?
_____

¿Cuántos años ha vivido usted en esta comunidad? _____

¿Hasta que nivel completó su educación?
_____ no terminé la primaria
_____ Primaria
_____ Secundaria
_____ Bachillerato/Preparatoria
_____ Universidad (cualquier carrera terminada)

¿Cuántos niños viven en su casa? _____

¿Qué edades tienen los niños que viven en su casa?

_____

_____

APPENDIX G

Demographics Survey: Teachers

"Teachers and parents: Expectations for Family-School Collaboration
in Mexico"
University of Minnesota
Focus Groups - Teachers

Thank you for coming today! Please fill in the following information. This will help us to have a better understanding of our group of teachers participating in this study.

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1. Sex: _____ female   _____ male

2. The highest level of education that you have completed:

_____ Middle School
_____ High School
_____ *Normalista* (2-year
    teacher program)
_____ *Licenciatura/* Bachelor's
_____ Master's
_____ Doctorate

3. How many years have you been teaching?
_____ 0 to 5 years
_____ 6 to 10 years
_____ 11 to 15 years
_____ 16 to 20 years
_____ more than 20 years

4. What type of school do you work at? (If you work at more than one school, mark the one where you are filling in this survey)

_____ Public, federal, morning
    shift
_____ Public, federal, afternoon
    shift
_____ Public, state, morning
    shift
_____ Public, state, afternoon
    shift
_____ Private
_____ Rural community
    (CONAFE)

5. How would you characterize the socioeconomic level of the *majority* of parents at your school?
_____ low income
_____ mid-high income
_____ mid-low income
_____ high income
_____ middle income

"Docentes y padres de familia: Expectativas para la colaboración familia-escuela en Jalisco, México"
Universidad de Minnesota, EE.UU.
Grupo Focal - Docentes

¡Muchas gracias por su participación de hoy! Favor de completar este cuestionario. Su información nos ayudará a entender mejor nuestro grupo de participantes.

1. Su género:

_____ femenino
_____ masculino

2. Su nivel de educación más alto que ha terminado:

_____ Secundaria
_____ Bachillerato/Preparatoria
_____ Normalista
_____ Licenciatura
_____ Maestría
_____ Doctorado

3. Cuántos años ha trabajado como docente?

_____ 0 a 5 años
_____ 6 a 10 años
_____ 11 a 15 años
_____ 16 a 20 años
_____ más que 20 años

4. En qué tipo de escuela trabaja Usted?

(Si trabaja en más que una escuela, ¿en cuál llenó este cuestionario?)

_____ Particular
_____ Pública, federal, turno matutino
_____ Pública, federal, turno vespertino
_____ Pública, estatal, turno matutino
_____ Pública, estatal, turno vespertino
_____ Rural comunitario (CONAFE)

5. Cómo caracteriza la comunidad de padres de familia de su escuela?

_____ Ingresos bajos
_____ Ingresos medio-bajos
_____ Ingresos medianos
_____ Ingresos medio-altos
_____ Ingresos altos

APPENDIX H

Focus Group Questions: Parents (English/Spanish)

English	Spanish
1) What types of activities do you do at home that that help your children in their education?	1) ¿Qué hace Ud. en casa para apoyar a su hijo con su educación? (¿Cómo trabaja con su hijo/a para educarla y prepararla para la escuela?)
2) How are you and your family involved with your child's school?	2) ¿En qué situaciones se acerca a la escuela? (Por qué no se acerca más en seguido?)
3) How have family roles for children's education changed over time?	3) ¿Cómo ha cambiado el papel de los padres con la escuela desde que Ud. era niña o niño?
4) What are some challenges you have had in becoming more involved in your child's education?	4) ¿Qué le detiene para participar más en la educación de su hijo(a)?
5) (Scenario 1: Participants are shown a drawing of a child having academic problems at school and asked to respond) How would you solve this problem if this were your child?	5) (Escenario 1): (un dibujo de un niño que tiene problemas académicas) ¿Qué haría Usted para resolver este problema si fuera su hija o hijo?
6) (Scenario 2: Participants are shown a drawing of a child having behavior problems at school) How would you solve this problem if it were your child?	6) (Escenario 2): (un dibujo de una niña que tiene problemas de comportamiento en la escuela) ¿Qué haría Usted para resolver este problema si fuera su hija o hijo?
7) What would help you to become more active in your child's education?	7) ¿Qué le ayudaría para poder apoyar a sus hijos mejor en su formación?
8) What would you like your child's school to do to help you support your child better?	8) ¿Qué podría hacer la escuela para ayudarle a apoyar la educación de sus hijos?
9) Is there anything you would like to add about families and schools?	9) ¿Hay algo que quisiera agregar sobre el tema familia-escuela?

APPENDIX I

Focus Group Questions: Teachers (English/Spanish)

English	Spanish
1) What types of activities do your students' parents do at home to support their children's education?	1) ¿Qué tipo de actividades tienen en su escuela donde participan los padres de familia?
2) How are your students' families involved at your school?	2) ¿Qué actividades realizan los padres de familia en casa para apoyar la educación de sus hijos?
3) How have expectations for family-school collaboration changed over time?	3) ¿Cómo ha cambiado la participación de los padres en la escuela desde que Ud. era niña o niño?
4) What are some challenges you have had in working with your students' families?	4) ¿Qué obstáculos tienen que vencer los padres para estar involucrados en la educación de sus hijos?
5) What is your role in the family-school relationship?	5) ¿Cuál es su papel como docente en la relación familia-escuela?
6) (Scenario 1): Academic issue How would you solve this problem if it were your student?	6) (Escenario 1): Problemas académicas ¿Qué haría Usted para resolver este problema si fuera uno de sus alumnos?
7) (Scenario 2): Behavior issue How would you solve this problem if it were your student?	7) (Escenario 2): Problemas de comportamiento ¿Qué haría Usted para resolver este problema si fuera una de sus alumnas?
8) What would help parents to become more active in their children's education?	8) ¿Qué apoyo necesitan los padres para que participen más en la educación de sus hijos?
9) Is there anything you would like to add about families and schools?	9) ¿Hay algo que quisiera agregar sobre el tema familia-escuela?

APPENDIX J

Coding Framework for Qualitative Analysis

1st Stage: Selected codes	2nd Stage: Categories	3rd Stage: Theory-based themes
Demographics	Context	CULTURAL-HISTORICAL CONTEXT
School information		(Engeström, 2001)
Community information		• Community • Norms • Division of labor

Change over time
 	
    of parent role
    of teacher role
	Change over time	• Changes over time

Invitations to school		MEDIATING TOOLS (Engeström, 2001)

Obstacles, barriers to involvement	Obstacles
	    (influenced by access to
	    capital)
		• Invitations to school
		• Cultural capital
		• Economic capital
		• Social capital
		  (Bourdieu 1977)
		• Sense of efficacy

Home involvement	Efficacy (expectations)	EXPECTATIONS
School involvement	Role construction (expectations)	• For parents
Teacher roles		• For teachers • For government

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APPENDIX J

Cross-Case Summary Matrices - Qualitative Analysis

Table 1. *Teachers across School Communities*

	Private School Teachers	**Public School Teachers**	**Rural Community School Teachers**
Cultural-historical Context Community	• Principal, teachers, support staff	• One per classroom; principal (usually); no support staff; hierarchy within SEP[2]	• 1-2 instructors per school, no support staff; trainer, regional director
Norms	• Based on school vision and mission	• Centralized SEP curriculum and training	• Centralized CONAFE training; community responsibility, right to education
Division of labor	• School board, principal, department head	• Teachers, principal, supervisor, DRSE hierarchy; participatory leadership among staff	• Teachers and parents, trainers, CONAFE regional director; shared leadership
Changes over time	• Working parents, less time at home or to come to school; students on devices rather than with books; less	• Teachers working double shifts (morning/afternoon); more women working; more separation and single	• Social progress; more opportunities for women, with positive and negative effects on family; fewer

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[2] SEP = Secretary of Education; CONAFE = National Council for the Development of Education; DRSE = Regional Office of the Secretary of Education

	respect for authority; children dictate needs to parents	parents; educational reform emphasizes technology use but families don't have access; changes in family values not mentioned	children per family; more liberty vs. libertarianism; more violence; less home teaching in respectful and cordial behavior
Mediating Tools **Invitations to school**	• Cultural events; APF; Motivation Time; invitations to share professions or read; formal meetings with teachers	• Register students; sign report cards; APF[3]; *Dia de la Madre*; monthly meetings	• APEC - parents build and maintain schools, provide food and board to instructors; participate in governance; triangle of student-teacher-family collaboration; cultural events; *Acción de Salud*
Cultural capital	• Teachers with university degrees (*licenciatura*); in-house professional development; school library	• Teachers with university degrees (*licenciatura* and Masters); regional and centralized professional development; families not well educated; some Internet access and school libraries (500+ books)	• Instructors with 9th - 12th grade schooling; regional on-the-job training; families not well educated; some with low literacy; 10 - 50 library books
Economic capital	• Tuition provides for school facilities and instructional materials; subsidized	• Limited for the school; dependent on family contributions (*quotas*	• Very little; often substandard construction; dependent on gaining

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[3] APF = Parent association (public and private schools); APEC = parent association (rural community schools)

	national textbooks	*voluntarias*) and municipal, state/federal support; families also have little access to capital; subsidized textbooks	community support and maintenance; limited municipal or federal support; subsidized textbooks
Social capital	• Fair social capital between teachers and parents; unfamiliarity with home practices; varied and frequent communication	• Weak social capital with parents; stronger with SEP network; unfamiliarity with home practices; limited modes and frequency of communication	• Fairly strong social capital; triangle of collaboration; mothers often present near school grounds; parents request help from instructors to support homework; instructors open and inviting with parents; feel they can and should motivate parents despite limited cultural and economic capital
Sense of efficacy	• Teachers know what to do and try to include parents; deficit approach - parents aren't interested, too busy	• Teachers express frustration over barriers to parental involvement; deficit approach - parents aren't equipped, don't have time	• Fairly strong sense of efficacy; believe they can make a difference; will insist on participation if necessary; strong belief in triangle of collaboration; recognize limitations; parents will support if they are shown what they need to do

Expectations			
For parents	• Commitment to work together with school; should take the time and responsibility; establish discipline at home	• Ideally to work as a team - not reality; should teach values, discipline; attend school activities; communicate with teachers	• To build and maintain school, provide necessary materials; participate in decision-making and organization of school activities; motivate children
For teachers	• School-centered approach to solving academic and behavioral issues; communication; tell parents how they should support at home; parent training	• School-centered approach; reinforce values and discipline; must sometimes take over parent role; guide parents in academic support	• Partnership- and school-centered approach; teach and model correct behavior and values; provide training to parents of how they can support education; stimulate parents; sometimes serve as mentors
For government	• Not mentioned	• Should invest more in schools; stronger political priority	• Some parents argue about why community should provide school structure - role of government vs. community in providing free education

Table 2. *Parents across School Communities*

	Private School Parents	Public School Parents	Rural School Parents
Cultural-historical Context			
Community	• Nuclear families, some grandparents in home; live in various neighborhoods; both parents often work; feeling that neighborhood is not safe	• Nuclear and extended families in household; little contact or trust within neighborhood	• Relatively newly settled, semi-rural community; families from other states; multiple generations in the household; about 12 students grades 1-6 with two instructors
Norms	• Established at home, and through school expectations; parents must sign homework; child in afternoon activities	• Established at home, in cultural region; participating in child's education, inculcating values and discipline - varies from family to family	• Established in their home communities of other states; education as a tool for a better life and opportunities
Division of labor	• Mothers responsible for education; often shared responsibilities if both are working or separated; children have chores to support housework	• Mothers responsible for education; some fathers contribute	• Mothers responsible for education, fathers for discipline when necessary; father looks for work outside; children help with housework and caring for younger siblings
Changes over time	• Family structure still varies;	• Roles of fathers in raising	• Higher expectations on

	more access to technology but must now protect children; children define their needs, less formal with adults; parents more permissive; negative influence of society (through Internet)	children and participation in education increasing; schools expect parents to participate more in academic growth - homework; increased need for technology and skills; less safe; parents need to accompany children and need guidance to raise them appropriately	parents in supporting education; fewer children per household; increased need for technology; try to give their children more play time; children less independent; no comments about family structure or changing roles
Mediating Tools **Cultural capital**	• Varying levels of education (9th grade through university); help with homework	• Studied through 6th - 9th grades; lack technical knowledge; need training in how to support child's education; lack of nearby libraries or available books	• Education levels between not finishing elementary and the 9th grade; some illiterate; lack technical knowledge; lack of access to books other than school; often lack sufficient knowledge to help children with homework; education in order to *be someone*
Economic capital	• Provide materials necessary for school work; mobility; urban access to resources	• Very limited; often cannot afford technology or Internet services; should provide necessary materials (not all parents do); expected to contribute to	• Very limited; do not have access to technology or Internet; expected to provide necessary materials for the school building and maintenance; will help

		maintenance of the school (*quotas*); limited mobility and access to resources; urban or rural	children with education as much as they can, but limited; child must do his/her part; extreme limitations in mobility or access to resources; rural
Social capital	• Accompany children to and from school; attend school events when possible; be available when children are out of school; drive to activities; feel welcome at school and have access to teachers; online school calendar; often invited by students; don't live in school neighborhood	• Could build networks at school but many parents don't; accompany children to and from school; attend cultural events, meetings; join APF; approach teachers about questions; must take time off work; sometimes teacher or principal not available or present; live in school neighborhood but don't feel safe; sense of community varies	• Work closely with instructors in decision-making and planning of activities; talk with children about what they want to be when they grow up - to have better lives than their parents, *be someone*; accompany children to school and take lunches; *always there*; help with maintenance, APEC; send children with neighbors when they cannot help with homework; feel cut off from municipal support; instructor often lives in community; social ties in community may be stronger
Sense of efficacy	• Feel challenged by time and responsibilities, but	• Low sense of efficacy; worried that lack of	• Low sense of efficacy; *do what we can*; yet clear

	supported by school; feel better prepared to support in education; could articulate specific strategies to help children	knowledge and access to necessary materials will affect child negatively at school; efficacy for behavioral issues varied; little articulation of specific strategies	sense of their role in encouraging children to continue; some cannot help with reading, math; sometimes cannot convince children to continue studies; little articulation of specific strategies
Expectations **For parents**	• Partnership-centered approach for academic difficulties, parent-centered for behavioral issues; should comply with school expectations	• Parent-centered approach; protect and defend children; discuss appropriate behavior at school; supervise homework, help when necessary, find needed materials; other parents need to participate more	• Parent- and partnership-centered approach to academic and behavioral issues; encourage children; help as much as they can; should accompany children; ask for help; prefer school nearby; should contribute to maintenance (not all contribute equally)
For teachers	• Should provide guidance; support child at school; communicate with parents	• Should be present, punctual; provide training in how to support child's education; communicate with parents; provide order and security at school; high level of professionalism and dedication	• Should provide education for a better future; help parents with knowledge and skills to support children, e.g. bullying

| For government | • No mention | • Needs to provide better maintenance for schools, security, parent resources, uniforms, teacher training, technology and Internet access, meals, English classes | • Should provide a better-equipped school; proper classrooms and bathrooms; should offer access to technology and Internet, English classes equal to other schools; equitable opportunities |