Practitioners’ Perspective of Social Services for Latinx Families

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**Introduction.** Children grow and develop, with people, and communities being their most significant influences (Hayes et al., 2023). Studies have shown that the experiences in early childhood and those working in early childhood settings are crucial for children’s healthy development. However, less research has focused on how to better support practitioners for them to better help schools address parent concerns and improve the quality of social services. Using Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model, this study seeks to explore: 1) What supports practitioners need to better address Latinx parents’ concerns and challenges through programs and services?

**Participants.** 37 interviews were conducted in English & Spanish with practitioners. Practitioners included teachers, administrators, community liaisons, after-school program coordinators, staff and nurses, and community-based organizations.

**Methods.** Using Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model, this qualitative study conducted 37 in English & Spanish with practitioners that lasted 30 minutes to an hour. Audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed and will be coded in Nvivo using an inductive & deductive approach.

**Findings.** Preliminary findings indicate that practitioners thought multiple programs were working well for families. For example, early childhood education programs were helping children develop school readiness skills to be well prepared as they entered kindergarten. As well, programs that used technology to support literacy and numeracy, after-school programs, tutoring and mental services. Practitioners believe that these services and programs could reduce the equity gap that starts in early childhood education for many Latinx children. But for them to be able to provide these programs and services, they needed adequate support and resources such as teacher assistants, IT support, money/funding support, and home visiting programs.

**Discussion.** Findings suggest that to provide adequate support for Latinx families, we need to explore further the support that practitioners need to effectively guide Latinx families in accessing resources to support their children’s learning.