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School or Home? Where Early Education of Young Immigrants Works Best

CATHY VAN TUIJL AND P. P. M. LESEMAN

INTRODUCTION

Immigrants offer many opportunities for receiving societies and, in turn, host societies offer many opportunities for immigrants. But not all immigrants succeed in seizing the opportunities and in successfully adapting to the new society. Nor does immigration always result in a homogeneous and cohesive society in which nondominant cultures are smoothly integrated. As Berry (this volume) has shown, there are different modes of acculturation with different degrees of experienced stress on the individual and community level. Sometimes the acculturation process takes several generations before immigrants and the receiving society have finally found a balance. There is little doubt that education, in particular, is crucial to the integration and adaptation of immigrant children. It is mainly through education that immigrants gain access to the opportunities the receiving society offers and, in turn, it is mainly through education that the potentials of immigrants are developed to the benefit of society as a whole.

We start this chapter by describing immigrants in the United States and what acculturation means. To answer the question why acculturation sometimes fails, we point to the accumulation of socioeconomic risks that immigrants face, and how immigrant parents respond to these risks. In addition, low levels of literacy and cultural capital in immigrant families in combination with multilingualism and cultural discontinuities between home and school often prevent children from fully profiting from educational resources. We outline the use and effects of care and education provisions for pre- and primary school immigrant children. Finally, we pay attention to the school context of immigrant children: the resources, the cultural sensitivity of teachers, parent involvement, and teacher–parent partnerships. We conclude that it is important to create

continuity between the different socializing systems in which immigrant children participate. Early education of immigrant children works best when synergy between home and school is established.

IMMIGRANTS

First-generation immigrants are defined here as persons born in another country rather than the receiving country. Second-generation immigrants are persons with at least one parent born in another country. In addition to this demographic country-of-birth criterion, several studies also use self-ascription to determine whether a person sees him- or herself as belonging to a particular immigrant cultural community. Based on the demographic criterion, the number of immigrant children in the United States has almost doubled from 8.3 to 16.5 million between 1990 and 2007 (Mather, 2009). Most of the U.S. immigrant children (93%) are born in the United States and are living with at least one foreign-born parent (Kids Count, 2007). A small minority of current immigrant children (7%) were born abroad and moved to the United States before adulthood, the first generation. In 2000, of all the U.S. children younger than 18 years, 20% lived in immigrant families. Immigrant children are the fastest-growing group of children in the United States (Research Forum on Children, and the New Federalism, 2002; Hernandez, Takanashi, & Marotz, 2009). This underlines the importance of knowledge of development, context, and needs of immigrant children.

In the United States, the largest immigrant groups are the Hispanics or Latinos (representing 55% of the total number of immigrant parents in the United States), consisting of Mexicans (38%), Central and South Americans (7% and 6%, respectively), and Caribbeans (7%). This group is followed by Asians (e.g., Koreans and Chinese), representing over 20% of immigrant parents. Immigrants from Europe and Canada are the third-largest group (14%) whereas the immigrants from Africa constitute a relatively small group (4%) (Hernandez et al., 2009; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2003). These four groups are quite diverse in terms of country of origin, socioeconomic background, religion, fluency in English, length of residence, citizenship, and state of residence. Immigrants live concentrated in a number of states and urban regions within the United States. In 2000, 68% of all immigrant children were living in six U.S. states (California, Texas, New York, Florida, Illinois, and New Jersey). Although immigrants are nowadays rapidly dispersing over the whole country, two-thirds of them still live in the South or the West (Hernandez, Denton, & Macartney, 2007).

While narrowing the focus of this chapter to immigrant families and their children, following the demographic definition, it is important to recognize that much of the literature on educational opportunities for young children is about disadvantaged ethnic minority children in a broader sense, including, for instance, also children from African-American families who live in the United States for generations. Most African-Americans, however, are not first- or second-generation immigrants, although, as a community, they share a past

of immigration and are in many respects a nonmainstream ethnic-cultural community with problems resembling those of the recent newcomers from Africa (e.g., Somali refugees and immigrants). In this chapter, we focus on immigrant families and their children and, whenever useful or necessary, we will explicitly refer to or make comparisons with what research has revealed about African Americans.

ACCULTURATION

Continuous contact between people from different cultural groups differing in power is assumed to generate change in both the nondominant and the dominant groups. This process is referred to as *acculturation*. For the nondominant group, acculturation not necessarily leads to being absorbed in the dominant group and losing its own culture (Berry, this volume). For the dominant group, acculturation is only one aspect of a broader cultural change. As Berry points out in his chapter, outcomes of the acculturation process depend on the interplay of two conceptually and empirically independent dimensions: *contact and participation*, and *maintenance of culture and identity*. The combination of these two dimensions results in four acculturation strategies. From the point of view of nondominant individuals and dominant group, respectively, these strategies are (1) Integration and Multiculturalism, (2) Separation and Segregation, (3) Assimilation and Melting pot, and (4) Marginalization and Exclusion. Within cultural groups, individual acculturation strategies are influenced by educational and occupational background, gender, and family position. However, as Berry (this volume) points out, individual members of cultural groups are restricted in their choice of acculturation strategies, as they are dependent on the opportunities the majority society offers to nondominant groups.

In a study of both first-generation and second-generation immigrant youth in 13 societies, including the United States, Berry, Phinney, Sam, and Vedder (2006) found empirical evidence for the four acculturation profiles, using a wide range of measures of acculturation (for instance, acculturation attitudes, cultural identity, peer contact, family values, perceived discrimination, and psychological and sociocultural adaptation). In this study, the Integration Profile was most frequent (36%) and the Assimilation Profile least (19%) among the immigrant respondents. Both the Segregation and Marginalization Profiles were found with 22% of the immigrants. Remarkably, in settler societies, like the United States, the distribution of immigrant youth over the four acculturation profiles appeared to differ widely from the total sample, both overall and for each ethnic group separately. In the United States, the Integrated Acculturation Profile was reported to be adopted by 53.3% of the youth (ranging from 32.5% to 69% for Vietnamese and Mexicans, respectively), followed by the Assimilation Profile: 16.9% (3.3 % to 52.2 % for Mexicans and Vietnamese, respectively). Third, was the Marginalization Profile, reported by 16.7% of the young respondents (no differences among ethnic groups), whereas the Separation Profile was found with 12.8% of the respondents (0% for Vietnamese and 22%

for Mexicans). The study shows that most immigrant youth prefer to maintain their culture and identity, while they also want to participate in the majority society and engage with members of the dominant community. Thus, loss of one's own culture and homogenization of society are not inevitable outcomes of acculturation but are rather options among others.

WHY ACCULTURATION SOMETIMES FAILS   Q1

Despite the suggestive evidence of the basic willingness of immigrants to participate in the host culture, to interact with members of the majority culture, and to adapt to their values and norms, many fail to do so and either become separated and marginalized or are forced to abandon their own culture and to fully submit to the majority's culture, with likely negative consequences for psychological well-being and school success (Berry et al., 2006). In the next section, we examine determinants of failing integration. First, we outline the four major areas of risk factors involved; then we discuss responses to these risks and evaluate promising policies to promote integration of immigrants. We will focus specifically on the issue of how immigrant families can support their young children in the acculturation process and how society can help the families.

Socioeconomic Risk Accumulation

An increased number of risk factors, present in the family or wider context of the family, negatively affects the development of intellectual skills, school achievement, social-emotional competence, social adjustment, and health (Ackerman, Brown, & Izard, 2004; Atzaba-Poria, Pike, & Deater-Deckard, 2004; Bradley & Corwyn, 2002; Repetti, Taylor, & Seeman, 2002; Sameroff & Fiese, 2000). Risk factors include at child level: low birth weight, health problems, low intelligence (IQ), and difficult temperament; at parent and family level: parents' psychiatric problems (depression, substance abuse), marital conflict, a large number of children, single parenthood, low income, unemployment, and frequent changes of residence; and at neighborhood and community level: poor housing conditions, confrontations with crime and violence, and environmental pollution. Furthermore, it has become increasingly clear that for immigrants the experience of being marginalized, discriminated against, and treated disrespectfully by members of the majority society constitutes an important risk factor in its own right, in addition to general socioeconomic risks (García Coll & Magnuson, 2000).

Poverty is an overarching concept in this context, referring to constellations of risks, such as an unfavorable income-to-needs ratio (income being insufficient to satisfy basic needs), low-quality housing, unsafe and polluted neighborhoods, reduced access to good-quality care and education services, and associated problems at the family level. For immigrants in the United States, living in poverty is usually not caused by unemployment or being a single parent, which are the main causes of poverty for other Americans living in poverty, but by the low wages earned in their jobs due to the, overall, low level of education and

limited English language skills (Mather, 2009). Children in the preschool age are especially vulnerable to poverty. Poverty in early childhood, more than in later years, often results in persistent learning problems and behavioral difficulties. According to a recent study, disparities in children's cognitive, social, behavioral, and health outcomes as related to family income and parents' education, are already evident at 9 months of age and grow larger by 24 months (Halle et al., 2009). Moreover, brain imaging studies have shown that enduring poverty in early childhood has irreversible effects on brain functioning, especially regarding language and executive functions that regulate learning and social behavior (Hackman & Farrah, 2009).

Data on risk accumulation in immigrant families in the United States (Capps, Fix, Ost, Reardon-Anderson, & Passel, 2004; Douglas-Hall & Koball, 2004) show that especially young immigrant children under age 6, compared to native-born American children, live in low-income (defined as 100% to 200% of the official poverty level) or poor (less than 100% of the poverty level) families (viz., 56% of young immigrant children vs. 40% of young native-born American children), with low-educated mothers without high-school diplomas (29% vs. 8%), and with one or both parents having limited English proficiency (LEP) (58% vs. 14%). Almost one-third (32%) of the young immigrant children live in so-called linguistically isolated families, in which all persons of 14 years or older have LEP. Moreover, since half of the young immigrant children have parents who are recent arrivals, of whom 40% do not qualify for citizenship yet, with 30% of them living with one or more undocumented parents, young immigrant children are much less likely than low-income, native-born Americans to receive public benefits (e.g., Temporary Assistance for Needy Families: 7% vs. 17%, or food stamps: 20% vs. 41%). According to Mather (2009), 20% of the immigrant children are exposed to at least three of the above-mentioned risk factors (parents who have a low income, are low educated, LEP, no citizenship). A positive factor that may protect immigrant children against adversities should be mentioned as well. Young immigrant children live in two-parent families more often than native-born American children (86% vs. 75%), but less often in families with two working parents (43% vs. 50%) since mothers in immigrant families more often prefer to stay at home.   **Q7**

Parenting as Mediator

The concept mediator refers to the mechanism through which the focal independent variable (risk accumulation) is able to influence the dependent variable (child development) (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Most of the risks referred to above are strongly related to low income, low education, and immigrant status. Although low income or immigrant status alone may not be a decisive factor in development, it is frequently observed that parents respond to these risks with parenting behavior that leads to serious consequences for child development (Atzaba et al., 2004; Sameroff & Fiese, 2000). Parenting requires a strong child- **Q6** centered motivation, often at the expense of parents' own concerns. However,

an increased number of risks that cannot be dealt with effectively causes chronic stress among parents (also referred to as "allostatic load"; Bradley & Corwyn, 2002). This leads to a shift in the balance between child-centered and self-centered goals, influencing subsequent child rearing negatively. For example, it undermines the motivation to stimulate the child and to monitor the child's safety and well-being; it often leads to harsh parenting (Conger et al., 2002).

The negative effects of risk accumulation can be offset by social support (Crnic & Acevedo, 1996; Repetti et al., 2002). The net effect of social support is to reduce stress and to help parents to maintain positive emotions and a child-centered motivation regarding child rearing. However, a reduced social network, or a low-quality social network marked by low emotional involvement and low cohesion, leading to social isolation, is a risk factor in itself. Many immigrant families, mothers in particular, have been reported to have less extensive and/or less supportive social networks compared to low- and middle-income native families. MacPhee, Fritz, and Miller-Heyl (1996) found extensive networks in Hispanic/Latino families in the United States compared to White, low-educated Anglo-Americans but the emphasis in these networks was on family obligations and less on emotional support. Using a nationally representative sample of children from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten (ECLS-K), Turney and Kao (2009b) examined the social networks of immigrants. Controlling for demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, both foreign-born Hispanic and native- and foreign-born Asian immigrant parents reported lower levels of perceived social support compared to native-born Americans. Proficiency in English was positively related to perceived social support, but time spent in the United States as such was not. In both Hispanic and Asian groups, the ethnic groups with very low SES (i.e., Mexicans and Hmong) reported less social support compared to native-born Americans. In the Netherlands, Leseman and Hermanns (2002) found in a large survey that the social networks of Turkish-Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch immigrant families were smaller than those of native-born Dutch families. Moreover, Turkish-Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch informants rated their social networks as less emotionally satisfying and less supportive. This situation is probably a direct consequence of migration to a new country, leaving most family and close friends behind in the home country.

A point of caution is that the mediating pathways from socioeconomic risk factors to child (cognitive) development may differ between ethnic groups and with level of acculturation. Keels (2009) found that the path from maternal cognitive skills to child cognitive outcomes at 24 months *via parenting* was stronger for European-American families than for Hispanic and African-American families. In the Hispanic-Spanish-speaking sample, cognitive skills of the mother had a direct, unmediated effect on children's cognitive development at 24 months. In addition, in a study of cultural differences in parental influences on child achievement, using ECLS-K data, Davis-Kean and Sexton (2009) found that parental beliefs and behaviors mediated the relation between parents' educational attainment and child achievement but with different patterns and to a

different extent for European-American, African-American, Hispanic, and Asian families, respectively. For instance, parental warmth was a mediator only in European-American families.

Informal Education and School Preparation at Home

Studies examining patterns of informal education and school preparation in the family, such as parental teaching strategies in everyday play and problem-solving situations with children, home literacy activities, and parents' talking styles in conversations with children, have consistently revealed big differences between families that correlate with socioeconomic status and immigrant status. Moreover, these differences in informal education were found to be a major cause of early disparities between children in intelligence, cognitive development, language development, school achievement, and academic motivation (Gottfried, Fleming, & Gottfried, 1998; Hoff, 2006; Laosa, 1982; Leseman & van den Boom, 1999; Weizman & Snow, 2001). A particularly important aspect of informal education at home is home literacy, or more specifically, shared reading and writing practices in the family. Differences between families in home literacy, depending on parents' education and own literacy skills, strongly influence children's language and literacy development, and school achievement (Baker, Mackler, Sonnenschein, & Serpell, 2001; Bus, Leseman, & Keultjes, 2000; Leseman & Van Tuijl, 2006).

In a review of research on the contribution of parenting to ethnic and racial gaps in education, Brooks-Gunn and Markman (2005) rank differences in home language and literacy as the most important factors in producing an education gap. Parents of low income and ethnic minority families talk less and read less with their children than native-born middle-class parents, and these differences in parenting, controlled for other factors, are strongly related to the development of children's vocabulary and emergent literacy. Moreover, in the course of children's development, these differences accelerate and increase the gap between children from different cultural communities (Ayoub et al., 2009; Rodriguez et al., 2009). Poverty, low social class, low educational level and functional illiteracy of the parents, nonskilled low-wage jobs, nonmainstream cultural background, particular religious traditions, and low-literate cultural lifestyles, together, have a pervasive influence on the quantity and quality of informal education at home, explaining virtually all educational differences between lower income and ethnic minority families, on the one hand, and majority middle-class families, on the other hand, ultimately leading to children from disadvantaged backgrounds being less prepared for formal schooling (Brooks-Gunn & Markman, 2005; Leseman & Van Tuijl, 2006).

Child-Rearing Beliefs and Parenting Styles

Parents' child-rearing belief systems consist of—often religiously inspired—ideas about the nature of children and children's learning and development,

about developmental timetables (e.g., the age parents expect children to have mastered particular cognitive, emotional, or social skills), about the mutual roles of parents and teachers in child rearing and development, and about more specific values such as the importance of (early) literacy and school achievement. According to current theory, belief systems should be seen as dynamic frames of cognitions and cultural models, providing interpretations, values, goals, and strategies in child rearing, reducing uncertainties, and gearing child development through parenting to the (perceived) conditions of life (Harkness, Super, & Van Tijen, 2000).

A rough but, for the present purpose, convenient distinction is made between "traditional collectivistic" and "modern individualistic" belief systems (cf. Kagitcibasi, 2005; Triandis, 1995). Traditional belief systems are typically characterized by the fact that the interests of the individual child are subordinated to the interests of the greater social unit of the (extended) family and local community. Goals such as obedience and respect for adults and authorities are emphasized. Traditional beliefs are associated with authoritarian parenting styles and relatively late expectations about the age at which children are psychologically mature. Modern beliefs, on the other hand, are characterized by a so-called individualistic orientation. Goals such as emotional independence, self-will, competitiveness, and intellectual and artistic excellence are emphasized. Modern beliefs are associated with both authoritative and permissive parenting styles, and relatively early expectations about the age at which children can be taken seriously as persons.

Parents may hold several conflicting beliefs at the same time, and may adapt their beliefs to new situations and changing circumstances. For instance, parents who migrated from traditional nonschooled cultures to industrialized countries with universal and accessible schooling often combine collectivistic child-rearing beliefs with a strong individualistic commitment to a successful school career for their children (Espin & Warner, 1982). Kagitcibaci (2005) found that low-educated parents moving from rural parts of Turkey to the urban environment of Istanbul adapted their traditional socialization goals and child-rearing practices to the new environment, seeking a new balance between emphasizing close emotional relationships in the family (relatedness) and allowing for individual agency (autonomy), reflected in a new belief system that centered around *interdependence*. Similarly, in a study of Mexican immigrants in the United States, Delgado-Gaitan (1994) found that parents evaluated autonomy of children and their ability to argue with adults more positively than in the culture of origin. Other studies among Mexican immigrants in the United States, however, indicate that in the process of acculturation a fundamental uncertainty regarding values and norms can emerge that leads to more coercive parenting and stricter monitoring of children, which in turn may affect children's development negatively (Bacalao & Smokowski, 2007; Reese, 2002).

A consistent finding in several countries is that higher-educated urban parents with a higher socioeconomic status mostly subscribe to modern, individualistic beliefs, whereas lower-educated nationals and immigrant parents with a

lower socioeconomic status mostly subscribe to traditional beliefs. Typically, also higher-educated immigrant parents often have a more individualistic orientation, yet they may continue to differ in this respect from native-born middle-class parents. Comparing the beliefs regarding long-term socialization goals and the quality of mother–child interaction of Puerto Rican and native-born American mothers, Harwood, Scholmerich, and Schulze (2000) reported considerable heterogeneity in beliefs in both groups. In addition to an overall difference revealing a stronger collectivistic orientation among Puerto Rican mothers, the beliefs of the mothers within both groups were also strongly related to their educational level. Puerto Rican middle-class mothers reported more individualistic beliefs compared to the Puerto Rican lower-class mothers. American working-class mothers reported a stronger collectivistic orientation compared to American middle-class mothers.

Generally, traditional beliefs correlate with cognitive delays, lower IQ, more psychosocial problems, lower school achievement, and less successful social integration (Okagaki & Sternberg, 1993; Stoolmiller, Patterson, & Snyder, 2000). However, the pattern of relations between beliefs and development may actually be more complex. For instance, Okagaki and French (1998) found that in Asian-American (and to a lesser extent Latino-American, but not in African-American) communities in the United States, traditional beliefs and authoritarian parenting were associated with better school achievement. A possible explanation is that in both Asian-American and Latino-American communities traditional beliefs functioned in the context of cohesive extended families with a strong sense of cultural identity (see also Crosnoe, 2005). In addition, Parmar, Harkness, and Super (2004) showed that European-American parents valued play as a vehicle for early development, whereas Asian-American parents believed more strongly in early academic training for optimal cognitive development of their children. Consequently, Asian parents attempted to facilitate cognitive development by being more directive compared to European-American parents. As a consequence, preschool teachers reported Asian children to be academically advanced initially compared to European-American children. Perhaps, then, it is the combination with other risk factors, such as low socioeconomic status, poverty, stress, low informal learning level, or low family cohesion, or a stagnating acculturation process leading to deep uncertainty that causes the negative outcomes associated with traditional beliefs.

Bilingualism

Most immigrants in today's society speak a different first language than English, the language of the majority in the United States and the language of schooling. Many first- and second-generation immigrant children start to learn English only after some years, usually upon entrance in preschool or kindergarten. The language situation in immigrant families may be even more complex. For instance, Leseman, Mayo, and Scheele (2009) found that in immigrant Moroccan and

Turkish families in the Netherlands often *several* languages were used on a regular basis: the first language (Moroccan-Berber, Moroccan-Arabic, and Turkish, respectively), the language of the religion (Standard Arabic), the language of television and other media (frequently English), the language of the neighborhood (Dutch dialect), and the language of the school and wider society (Standard Dutch).

Experimental evidence shows that in favorable social circumstances bilingualism need not be a detrimental condition (Bialystok, 2005). On the contrary, being a "balanced" bilingual is associated with cognitive and linguistic advantages in areas such as attention control and linguistic awareness. Moreover, the total vocabulary size of first and second language together often exceeds the vocabulary sizes of monolinguals. Balanced bilingualism means that the child's proficiency in L1 (mother tongue) and L2 (second language, usually the school language) has reached the same *mature, age-appropriate level*. This, in turn, implies that L1 and L2 inputs must have been balanced in the course of development, both quantitatively (e.g., exposure, instruction time) and qualitatively (e.g., social prestige, level of complexity, function and use). However, as will be argued below, these conditions are seldom met in the case of immigrants.

Bilingual development roughly occurs in two ways: simultaneously or successively. Simultaneous bilingual development means that the child starts acquiring L1 and L2 at the same time, in his or her first year of life. Far more common, however, is the situation of successive bilingualism, meaning that a child first acquires L1 up to a certain level of proficiency, before starting to learn L2. L1 is the predominant language at home, the language that the parents speak best; L2 is the predominant language used in school and often a language that the parents do not speak well. This situation is typical for most bilingual (immigrant) families in Europe and in the United States today.

Despite the experimental evidence for the advantages of bilingualism, several studies show that successive bilingualism has a negative effect on L2 development and on school achievement in L2 contexts, in general, often exacerbated by the home environment. Evidence suggests that there is a competitive relation between L1 and L2 concerning available (formal and informal) instruction time and children's cognitive resources in the acquisition process (Bialystok, 2005; Hoff, 2009; Pearson, 2007; Scheele, Leseman, Mayo, & Elbers, 2010) This effect is reinforced by linguistic dissimilarities of L1 and L2, and by different uses of L1 at home (e.g., L1 may not be used for reading and writing, or for discussing academic topics), compared to the uses of L2 in school. Hoff (2009) studied the vocabulary development of bilingual Spanish-English children from affluent middle-class Hispanic families in the United States who deliberately raised their children bilingually from birth. Even under these relatively favorable circumstances, children's vocabulary development was significantly delayed compared to the vocabulary development of monolinguals in either language. Similarly, studies with young Turkish and Moroccan immigrant children in the Netherlands showed significant delays in *both* first and second language vocabulary development that could be explained by the diminished exposure to each

language separately, although the total language exposure was roughly similar to that in native Dutch families (Scheele et al., 2010).

Nonetheless, evidence suggests that immigrant children can profit from the conceptual knowledge and more complex "academic" language skills they acquired in the first language when learning the second language, even at a young age, which counterbalances the negative consequences of competition for scarce exposure and instruction time. However, whether there will be positive transfer from the first to the second language also depends on the first language itself, in particular whether this language is scripted, provides printed materials and models of formal academic language use, and has a long-standing literary and academic tradition (Scheele et al., 2010). Even if the first language provides rich linguistic resources, parents, due to being low educated or functionally illiterate, may not have sufficient access to these resources to support their children's development via the first language.

Provisions for Immigrant Children

In the remainder of this chapter, we will discuss and evaluate the policy reactions to the risks associated with immigration, focusing on care and education provisions for pre- and primary school immigrant children. Several controlled studies indicate that especially high-quality early child care and education can support the integration and upward social mobility of socioeconomically disadvantaged groups, in particular immigrant groups (Heckman, 2006). However, studies also indicate that there are many barriers for immigrants to use quality provisions and that the quality of care and education provisions used by immigrants often stands under pressure.

Prekindergarten Child Care Arrangements: Use

With regard to prekindergarten child care and education, distinctions can be made between parental care at home and care by relatives (both considered informal care) versus formal care, like center-based care, with day care for infants and toddlers and preschool for 3- to 5-year-olds. In center-based care provisions and targeted preschools serving disadvantaged children, the quality of care and education can be significantly enhanced by special intervention programs such as (Early) Head Start, Chicago Child-Parent Centers, High/Scope Perry Preschool Project and the Carolina Abecedarian Project, and several others, which focus on both structural quality characteristics, such as group size, children-to-staff ratio, and staff training level, and process quality characteristics, such as sensitive and emotionally supportive caregiving, the quantity and quality of verbal interactions between children and staff, and active parental involvement (for a recent overview and summary of several meta-analytic reviews on this topic, see Bus, Leseman, & Neuman, in press).

Several studies (Capps et al., 2004; Fram & Kim, 2008) indicate that immigrant children, especially Hispanic and to a lesser extent Asian, are

underrepresented in center-based care and in targeted preschool programs like Head Start, in contrast to native African-American children who are overrepresented in these provisions. Immigrant children are also underrepresented in state-funded preschools (Halle et al., 2009; Hernandez et al. 2007; Magnuson, Lahaie, & Waldfogel, 2006; Turney & Kao, 2009a). In the seven states with the highest concentration of immigrant children, immigrant communities differ strongly in preschool enrollment. Foreign-born Hispanic children are less likely enrolled in Head Start than native-born Hispanics; Hispanic foreign-borns are less likely to attend Head Start than Asian native-born children. Demographic and socioeconomic characteristics explain the differences in Head Start participation for native-born but not for foreign-born Hispanics (Turney & Kao, 2009a). The Hispanic immigrants' lower use of center-based care compared to informal parental care and relatives care is partly the result of economic barriers to formal care (Fram & Kim, 2008; Hernandez et al., 2007, 2009), but also reflects the comparatively low degree of female labor market participation in this community (Fram & Kim, 2008) and the cultural preference for informal care, in which family cohesion and family warmth for young children are highly valued (Kim & Fram, 2009). Cultural preferences for informal care also explain the lower use of center-based care of foreign-born Asian immigrants. Among Asians, ethnicity is an important predictor of child care usage, with Chinese parents more often using center-based care than Filipino parents (Turney & Kao, 2009a). Another determinant of child care use is speaking English: Immigrant parents who are fluent in English use child care more often than parents who are not fluent in English. Whether limited English proficiency is a cause or merely reflects an underlying cultural factor that also determines the preference for home based care, or whether legal barriers are involved when citizenship is not permitted, is not known.

Although the evidence is limited, a number of studies both in the United States and abroad indicate that immigrants who use center-based care and education provisions tend to use centers that provide less structural and process quality (Arnold & Doctoroff, 2003; LoCasale-Crouch et al., 2007; Magnuson, Ruhm, & Waldfogel, 2007; Sylva, Stein, Leach, Barnes, & Malmberg, 2007). Stipek et al. (1998) concluded that socioeconomically disadvantaged children, including immigrant children, more often attend preschools with an academic skills oriented, "didactic" curriculum, which they consider of lower quality. Price, location, neighborhood poverty level, and a lack of information about what constitutes good quality, are probably important determinants of self-selection tendencies (Phillips, Mekos, Scarr, McCartney, & Abott-Shim, 2000). Cultural beliefs and values explain the preferences of immigrant parents for particular types of care. Liang, Fuller, and Singer (2000) examined in a large sample the role of child-rearing beliefs as a factor explaining ethnic–racial differences in child care utilization. The choice for center-based professional quality care and preschool education programs versus informal forms of care was related to a range of predictors. For instance, whether the mother was employed at the start of pregnancy was positively related to the use of professional day care

and preschool, and partly explained ethnic differences. The number of children in the family (in particular when exceeding the number of two) and the presence of other adults in the household (spouse, grandparents) were negatively related to day care or preschool use and additionally explained ethnic differences. Finally, also cultural child-rearing beliefs and, most importantly, the importance parents attached to preliteracy development and school preparation, were related to the choice of center-based day care or educational preschool, and explained additional choice variance between ethnic groups.

Prekindergarten Child Care Arrangements: Effects

Especially very young immigrant children can benefit from preschool programs, preventing an early gap in cognitive, language, and social-emotional development relative to native-born peers before starting in kindergarten and primary school (Bus et al., in press; Wertheimer, Croan, Moore, & Hair, 2003). Children living in poverty with low-educated mothers, as quite a lot of immigrant children do, without attending a high-quality child care or preschool program, show a significant slowing down in their cognitive development between 1 and 3 years of age (Ayoub et al., 2009), leading to an ever-widening gap in cognitive skills. There is growing evidence that child care and preschool programs can decrease this gap. Studies have reported positive and persistent effects on cognitive development, grade retention, and reduced referral to special education for children in preschool compared to children in informal care at home or with relatives (Barnett, 1995, 2002; Bus et al., in press). Effect sizes are commonly expressed as Cohen's *d*, that is, in units of the pooled standard deviation of the outcome measure for a treatment and control or comparison group. Based on several meta-analytic reviews, Bus et al. (in press) estimate the immediate short-term effects of early education and care programs on cognitive outcomes in the $d = .3$ to .5 range (small- to medium-sized) for large-scale and universal programs (including state public preschool and kindergarten) and in the $d = .6$ to .8 range (medium-sized to strong) for small-scale high-quality programs with more resources and better-trained staff. Effects assessed after several years are generally smaller, reflecting fading of effects. It should be noted, however, that persistent gains in academic achievement and also in so-called social outcomes, such as reduced crime, less welfare dependency, and improved health, are only found for rather intensive high-quality programs that offered additional services to the families (Bus et al., in press). In general, studies focusing on diverse ethnic groups have found that the bigger the disadvantage (e.g., in terms of a lower income-to-needs ratio, a lower education level and less proficiency in English of the parents), the more and longer children profit from quality child care and preschool (Magnuson et al., 2006).

In addition to cognitive and language development, socioemotional competences and behavioral adjustment are crucially important for successful school careers and increased labor market opportunities (Carneiro & Heckman, 2003). In general, children from low-income families, including

immigrant families, are less able in the self-regulation of their emotions and behaviors than middle-class children are at a young age (Evans & Rosenbaum, 2008), which make them more susceptible to variations in quality of early education and care provisions. A number of studies have reported negative effects of child care on social-emotional and behavioral outcomes and found elevated levels of disruptive and aggressive behavior in the day care centers (Belsky, 1999; Hegeland & Rix, 1992; Magnuson et al., 2007; NICHD Early Child Care Network, 2005). **Q3** Moreover, this effect continued into elementary school (Magnuson et al., 2007; NICHD Early Child Care Network, 2005). However, other studies failed to find such a negative effect on social-emotional and behavioral development (e.g., Gormley & Gayer, 2005; Turney & Kao, 2009a). According to some researchers, detrimental social-emotional effects of child care are a consequence of very early starting of intensive day care use (e.g., Belsky, 2002; NICHD, 2006) or reflect the vulnerability of children with a difficult temperament or low intelligence in face of low to moderate quality of care and education (Sylva, Sammons, Melhuish, Siraj-Blatchford, & Taggart, 2009). Using data from the ECLS-K, Loeb, Bridges, Bassok, Fuller, and Rumberger (2007) reported that the negative association between extensive use of day care and social-emotional development varies across ethnic groups of children. For example, they found no negative impact of early entry or intensive exposure on social-emotional and behavioral outcomes of English-proficient Hispanic children, which contrasted sharply with the findings for European-American children. Loeb et al. (2007), however, emphasize that their results cannot be generalized to *non-English-speaking* Hispanic children. Similarly, De Feyter and Winsler (2009) compared the socioemotional development of 4-year-old preschool African-American and Latino children. Although the two groups of children did not differ in the number of protective factors (e.g., closeness to adult or self-control), Latino children had fewer behavior problems than African-American children. An explanation for this difference could be that immigrant parents succeed better than European-American and African-American parents in imposing behavioral norms on their children and can thereby compensate for low-quality care (cf. Okagaki & Sternberg, 1993). More research is needed, both in families and in preschools, to explain why immigrant children's behavior seems to be less affected by preschool than that of European- or African-American children.

Home-Based Preschool Education and Family Support

A number of widely implemented home-based preschool education programs such as the Home-based Instruction Program for Pre-school Youngsters (HIPPY in among others Israel, the Netherlands, Turkey, and the United States) and the Mother (or Parent) Child Home Program (in the United States, Bermudas, and the Netherlands) have specifically targeted immigrant families with young children. Although these programs occasionally had sizeable effects on some measures of children's cognitive and language skills and their social-emotional behavior, a meta-analytic review, comparing home-based

programs with center-based programs, indicates that home-based education programs are less effective, the difference in effectiveness amounting to $d = .5$ (Blok, Fukkink, Gebhardt, & Leseman, 2005). There may be several explanations. Home-based programs often cover a wide range of goals. A clear focus on stimulating cognitive and language development of children may be lacking. Parents as primary intervention agents are not always sufficiently skilled to carry out the program activities. For example, they may be illiterate or the home language may not be the language of instruction. Another explanation is that the home situation may not be conducive to optimal learning. For example, there may be multiple stressors present, hindering the effective implementation of the program (Van Tuijl, Leseman, & Rispens, 2001). According to a recent review of parent training programs, training parents to educate or cognitively stimulate their preschool children may even increase negative parenting and children's problem behavior instead of reducing them (Kaminski, Valle, Filene, & Boyle, 2008).

Nonetheless, home-based education programs are occasionally effective, especially when parents are motivated and sufficiently skilled to work with the program. Moreover, the home-based education model may be an appropriate instrument for promoting balanced bilingual development and empowering ethnic minority families. In view of the fact that it is often not possible to provide bilingual education in preschool centers and elementary schools because of financial or staffing constraints, involving parents as L1 experts may offer an alternative approach. Leseman and Van Tuijl (2001) reported medium-sized effects (Cohen's $d = .4$ to $.5$) of the Turkish version of a home-based education program on Turkish-Dutch children's L1 vocabulary and grammar (but, of course, not on their L2) development as well as on general cognitive and academic skills tested in Dutch, indicating transfer at the cognitive level, whereas the participation of these children in the preschool promoted their L2 development. Based on a narrative review of several studies on bilingual center- and home-based programs for preschoolers, Kohnert, Yim, Nett, Kan, and Duran (2005) recommend parent and paraprofessional training as a way to support L1 development without impeding L2 acquisition.

Parenting education programs, family support programs or family support systems that integrate multiple services to low-income families, with children targeted only indirectly, do not yield clear effects on children's cognitive and language development (Blok et al., 2005; Brooks-Gunn & Markman, 2005; Goodson, Layer, St. Pierre, Bernstein, & Lopez, 2001; Sweet & Appelbaum, 2004). The exception is when a high-quality center-based educational program (provided in a day care center or preschool) is a standard service offered to all participating families. Sweet and Appelbaum (2004) reviewed 60 home visiting and family support programs from several countries with different design characteristics. Although most approaches had weak to medium-sized effects on parenting skills and children's social-emotional development, and were successful in preventing child abuse and neglect, they had less impact on children's cognitive and language development. However, family support programs do probably

protect children against negative child-rearing conditions, prevent child abuse and dysfunctional social-emotional development (MacLeod & Nelson, 2000; Sweet & Appelbaum, 2004), and may be essential for sustaining the effects of a child-focused early education program (Reynolds, Ou, & Topitzes, 2004). Programs for parents, especially mothers, that run parallel to the child-focused preschool care and education program and address issues of child rearing, if culturally sensitive and respectful, may provide essential support to the acculturation process, helping parents to reconstruct their beliefs and to adapt to the changed context (Kagitcibasi, Sunar, Bekman, Baydar, & Cemalzilar, 2009).

Elementary School Context of Young Immigrant Children

Immigrant families more often live in impoverished neighborhoods than native-born American families. Immigrant children more often attend socioeconomically and ethnically segregated schools which have an above-average share of socioeconomically disadvantaged children, children with LEP, and children with behavioral problems. The schools attended provide less supportive social relations and have less resources, equipment, general physical surroundings, and often less skilled teachers. Immigrant children are disproportionately assigned to poor-quality teachers, that is, with the least preparation and the weakest academic background (Murnane & Steele, 2007). Segregated elementary schools with an overrepresentation of disadvantaged pupils (Crosnoe, 2005; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2007) negatively affect achievement (Lee, Loeb, & Lubeck, 1998; Roscigno, 1998; Rouse & Barrow, 2006) and can nullify the positive effects of early childhood care and education (Lee & Loeb, 1995), whereas a socioeconomically and culturally mixed composition of the student population in elementary schools is a buffer against the further widening of the achievement gap (Schechter & Bye, 2007).

Compared to native-born American children, most immigrant children lag behind in English language, general cognitive skills, and emergent math and literacy when they start elementary school (NICHD, 2005). This gap, although narrowing over time, persists during the entire school career and increases the chance of grade retention, special education placement, and early school dropout (Alexander & Entwisle, 1988). However, the observed narrowing of the math and reading gaps for Hispanic children during the first 2 years of schooling, especially for Hispanic children with LEP, reveals that immigrant children can, at least partly, catch up in elementary school, which may be due to effective instructional practices and increased exposure to English (Reardon & Galindo, 2009). Effective instructional practices in kindergarten and the early grades of elementary school with, for instance, dual-language programs that employ the positive transfer mechanism between first and second language described above, support proficiency in oral English of immigrant children and lead to rapid gains in learning during the first grades (Hernandez et al., 2009). A relentless focus on English language learning and basic school skills training in a social-emotionally secure and respectful context with a positive multicultural

orientation will further help to narrow the achievement gap between immigrant and native-born American children (Slavin & Madden, 1999).

In the United States, as well as in other countries, the ethnic composition of the elementary schools' staff does not match the diversity of the student population (Kim, 2009; Murnane & Steele, 2007). Focusing on school factors, teachers' expectations and perceptions of immigrant families and their children have been shown to influence students' achievement and identification with the educational objectives of the school (Kim, 2009; McKown & Weinstein, 2008; Roscigno, 1998). When the home and school culture do not match, as is frequently the case with immigrant and socioeconomically disadvantaged families, children tend to be perceived by their teachers as less advanced in academic skills and their parents as less involved in the school and in children's school achievement. Teacher perceptions and expectations of immigrants may function as self-fulfilling prophecies, much in the sense of the Pygmalion effect described by Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968). They may influence the learning opportunities and achievement of immigrant children negatively, especially ethnically diverse classrooms in which teachers ~~use to differentiate between treat high and low achieving children~~ Q8 (McKown & Weinstein, 2008). In McKown and Weinstein's study, teachers' expectations accounted for an average of .3 to .4 standard deviation of the year-end ethnic achievement gap. Huss-Keeler (1997) examined the influence of teacher perceptions on the language and literacy achievement of Pakistani second-language-learning children in Great Britain. The Pakistani parents were very interested in their children's learning but demonstrated their interest in a culturally different way than native-born middle-class parents, which was interpreted by the teachers as lack of interest. Consequently, teachers tended to underestimate Pakistani children's learning and achievement, and limited their access to literacy resources.

Improving Cultural Sensitivity of Early Childhood Teachers

According to Lovelace and Wheeler (2006) creating continuity between home and school is primarily a responsibility of the school and the teachers. In the case of low-educated, perhaps even semi-illiterate immigrants with cultural values and norms from the home country, the danger of a home–school cultural mismatch is substantial. Mutual awareness of one's cultural beliefs can help teachers and immigrant parents to understand each other better and to recognize how a discontinuity in interaction styles and behavioral norms between home and school may affect children. Preservice and in-service training that addresses cultural diversity may help teachers to improve their teaching of young children from diverse cultural backgrounds. A recent action research project of Rothstein-Fisch, Trumbull, and Garcia (2009) examined the efforts to support teachers to bridge cultures. Explicating the cultural child-rearing beliefs and related child-rearing practices of Latino families in the United States, using the individualism–collectivism framework, not only stimulated teachers to adjust their views on students with a Hispanic immigrant background, but also led to changes in

the communication with the families. With the increasing number of immigrant children in the next few decades to come, more attention to culturally sensitive and responsive teaching will be needed both in the pre- and in-service training of teachers. However, there is still a long way to go. A recent study reported that, despite widely supported recommendations, for example, by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), to prepare culturally responsive early childhood teachers, preservice training on this topic is still not systematically provided across states (Lim, Maxwell, Able-Boone, & Zimmer, 2009).

Parent Involvement and Teacher–Parent Partnership

Parent involvement in children's schooling can take many forms (Epstein, 1995). The three main forms, often used to qualify parent involvement in school, are (1) parents can establish home environments to support children's academic achievement (see informal education and school preparation at home above); (2) parents can help in school; or (3) parents and teachers can establish contact to monitor children's progress (Kohl, Lengua, & McMahon, 2000). Parent involvement in school can be initiated by the parent, the teacher, or the school principal, each from his or her own perspective. For example, Epstein (1996) reported that teachers initiate more contact when children are doing poorly, in contrast to parents who were found to initiate more contact when children were doing well. Parent involvement reported by parents is positively related to school achievement and social competence (Miedel & Reynolds, 1999). Partnership activities between schools and parents, as reported by teachers, are related to fewer behavioral problems of children (Sheldon & Epstein, 2002).

Teachers' trust in the parents of the student has also been found to predict academic performance (Goddard, Tschannen-Moran, & Hoy, 2001; Lee, 2007). Trust is based on cultural norms regarding educating children. With immigrant parents who have different cultural beliefs on child rearing and education, there is distinct risk of miscommunication, stereotyping, and diverging expectations, which in turn may affect the trust relationship negatively. Brewster and Railsback (2003) found poor communication and negative experiences, for instance, when the child is achieving below parents' expectation, to be an important risk factor for the development of distrust. Distrust may occur when parents doubt the effectiveness of school or the competence of the teacher. In a large-scale Dutch study, Smit, Driessen, and Doesborgh (2005) found that immigrant parents evaluated the teacher–child relationship in Dutch primary schools as too informal. They preferred a more authoritarian, formal teacher–child relationship. Dutch primary school teachers, in turn, reported lower trust in immigrant parents relative to native-born parents.

Ethnic groups differ in the type of parent involvement they show (Huntsinger & Jose, 2009). Minority parents are often viewed as less involved in their children's school because they do not appear at school voluntarily.

According to Kim (2009), the limited visibility of minority parents in school does not mean that minority parents are not interested in their children's education. Kim reviews research findings on school factors that prevent minority parents to participate in their children's school. These factors range from teachers' perceptions of the efficacy and capacity of minority parents to school friendliness, positive communication, and school leadership. Teacher expectancies, attitudes, and practices toward immigrant parents have been shown to influence parent involvement. In order to increase parent involvement, it is crucial not only to focus on the parents but, often neglected, also on increasing the schools' efforts to bridge school and family culture. Solicitation of parental help in school is less frequent if teachers expect the parents to be less resourceful and to be limited in English proficiency. However, teachers who reach out to parents more often, enhance parental engagement with the school (Seitsinger, Felner, Brand, & Burns, 2008). Schools can also enhance parent involvement in school conferences by adopting a more personal and caring attitude, and decrease parents' feelings of alienation by using more frequently informal contact moments to communicate positive messages about how children are doing in school.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Like other industrialized countries, the United States faces an increasing number of immigrants with very diverse cultural backgrounds from countries all over the world. Immigrants have a lot to offer the receiving society, but realizing the full potential of immigrants to the benefit of both the individual and society presents several challenges. Regardless of the differences between and within immigrant groups, many immigrants share the common fate of accumulating socioeconomic, cultural, educational, and sociolinguistic risks that hinder successful acculturation and integration. A substantial number of immigrant children in the United States grow up in poverty with low-educated parents who are not proficient in English. Especially young children are vulnerable to such adverse conditions which may have long-lasting negative effects on their cognitive and social-emotional development, educational attainment, and labor market opportunities. Since these issues concerning young immigrant children are at the crossroads of several policy frames (such as health, nutrition, income security, social welfare, day care, and education), it is important to strive for concerted actions that address the different types of risks simultaneously and synergistically.

In order for young immigrant children to profit from early-childhood education, three major points in this chapter have been chosen: the accumulation of risks, the way risks translate into parenting and affect informal learning at home, and the school context. As has been documented by others (Magnuson et al., 2007), educational intervention efforts at the level of the family or the child are beneficial, especially for the most disadvantaged children, but insufficient to undo the negative effects of poverty and related risks. Since immigrant families

in poverty are affected by low wages, in combination with being unable to profit from public benefits, this has important implications. Providing a financial safety net and access to public benefits, including facilities to learn or improve English, for immigrants with young children is the first step. Second, since many immigrant mothers are (very) low educated, combination programs like Early Head Start could foster the development of young immigrant children. Combination programs combine high-quality child care with family support and education, and have been shown to be successful to promote cognitive and language development of immigrant children at an early age. High-quality care should start early, and be comprehensive and continuous in order to moderate demographic risk factors for young immigrant children. The main problem is how to persuade immigrant parents to use these facilities (earlier). Removing economic barriers is insufficient. Active outreach within some communities will be required to bridge cultural and language barriers if child care facilities and preschools are to be used by those who need them most.

Early education of young immigrant children works best when parents and **Q9** teachers of prekindergarten child care arrangements or (pre-)school work together. From a social-ecological framework, it is important to promote parent–school partnerships in order to create continuity across contexts in which young children grow up. Parents need to become actively involved in their children's schooling from their early years and therefore strategies and good practices need to be developed. On the other hand, the quality of the (pre)schools attended by immigrant children needs attention. Disadvantaged children need the most effective teachers to diminish the achievement gap; they also need teachers with high expectations and respect for immigrant children and their families and with knowledge of cultural models. The reality is far from that. To create supportive and effective elementary schools, improving the working conditions for teachers, providing sufficient resources and preservice and in-service training seems necessary.

To solve inequality and cultural discontinuity between immigrant families and the receiving societies, immigrant parents need to adapt and be responsive to the mainstream cultural beliefs and practice. And broader contextual institutions of the receiving society and their agents, like schools and teachers, need to adapt to their new population with their cultural beliefs and practices to enhance the chances of a new generation immigrants. In the case that more equality and cultural continuity are established, the potential of immigrant children will be stimulated. As a result, immigrant children and their families as well as society will benefit.

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