Public Abstract

First Name:Alicia

Middle Name:H.

Last Name:Miguel

Adviser's First Name:Barbara

Adviser's Last Name:Martin

Co-Adviser's First Name:

Co-Adviser's Last Name:

Graduation Term:FS 2008

Department:Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis

Degree:EdD

Title:AN EXAMINATION OF THE IMPACT OF A PRINCIPALS ACTIONS ON THE PARENT INVOLVEMENT OF LATINO IMMIGRANT PARENTS

Research shows that parental involvement in children's education has been associated with children's school success, including higher academic achievement, better behavior, lower absenteeism, and more positive attitudes toward school (Overstreet, Dvine, Bevans & Efreom, 2005). Parent involvement is considered a wise social investment and it addresses issues of equity and equal opportunity (Desimone, 1999).

Attracting parents to schools has always been a challenge, especially in urban schools. Now, as schools face this charge of involving parents in their children's academic life through the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, they face at the same time an increase in immigrant population. This adds new demands for creating just, equitable and successful schools (Arce et al., 2005, Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Mayers, 2006). School leaders must determine the best ways to attract parents, at the same time that they may have to redefine their concept of what parent involvement means (Henderson et al., 2007; Hoerr, 2005).

The participants for this single case study consisted of 1) the principal of the school, 2) teachers of the school selected for the case study, 3) Latino immigrant parents whose children attend the school, and 4) the school secretary. The study findings revealed two themes that emerged from the actions of the principal: 1) Institutional Receptivity, and 2) Awakening to Self-Reliance. The implications of this inquiry for practice in education could affect both K-12 institutions and higher education institutions as they address the issues of diversity in schools, parental involvement, and giving voice to the marginalized, thus creating truly inclusive school climates.