New Connections: Increasing Diversity of RWJF Programming

Identifying Information
Application I.D.: 34851
Applicant Name: Francisco Palermo
Project Title: Promoting Latino Children’s Sociobehavioral Health and Educational Well-Being
Legal Name of Applicant Organization: University of Missouri

Detailed Measures Description

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<th>Measure</th>
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<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
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Detailed Description of Measures

**Adverse Conditions**

**Economic Distress:** The adequacy of resources was evaluated with the 30-item Family Resource Scale\(^1\). Parents rated using a 5-point scale (0 = Not at all, 5 = Almost Always Adequate) the adequacy of economic (including food, shelter, transportation, money to pay bills and childcare, among others). This measure has been reported to be a reliable measure of families’ economic resources (\(\alpha = .91\)).\(^{14}\)

**Stressful Life Events:** Mothers’ perceptions about life events were evaluated using the 7-item Mastery Scale\(^2\) when children were 14 months of age. These items assess the extent to which participants felt they had control over their problems using a scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree). Previous research has found acceptable reliabilities for this measure (\(\alpha = .77\)).\(^{15}\)

**Maternal Health**

**Depression:** When children were 14 months old, 20 items from the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale\(^3\) were used to measure mothers’ depression symptoms during the last seven days. Mothers reported how often had felt each symptom in a scale from 1 (rarely or never) to 4 (most or all days). The reliability of this scale was been reported as consistently appropriate in previous research (\(\alpha = .90\)).\(^{16}\)

**Parenting Distress:** Parenting distress was assessed by 24 items from the Parenting Stress Index\(^4\) when children were 14 months old. Originally, this measure examines four different dimensions, in this study only parental distress (PD, 12 items) and parent-child dysfunctional interaction (PCDI, 12 items) were included. Parents used a Likert scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree) to indicate the level at which each item described their situation. Adequate reliability indicators have been reported for these subscales (\(\alpha = .87\) for PD and .80 for PCDI).\(^4\)
Maternal Acculturation

Nativity: Mothers were classified into one of three categories. They were classified in category 1 if they were born in Mexico, if they were born in the United States of Mexican-born parents were classified as 1.5 and they were classified as 2 if they were born in the United States of U.S.-born parents. This procedure has been used in previous research as part of the scale to rate maternal acculturation.5,17

English Proficiency: As part of the English proficiency evaluation, when children were 14 months old, mothers reported the language spoken at home (1 = Spanish, 2 = English) and extent to which they spoke English during childhood. Also, mothers reported if they currently speak English, and the extent to which currently read English (1=about half the time or less, 2=most or all of the time).

Parenting values: Parents' traditional beliefs about how to raise their children and whether children should be obedient and not speak up with their own opinions were evaluated with the 10-item Parental Modernity Scale6. Each item was rated in a scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). This measure has two subscales: parental traditionality (authoritarian child-rearing beliefs, e.g., “Children should be treated the same regardless of differences among them", 22 items) and parental modernity (more progressive views of child-rearing, e.g., "It's all right for my child to disagree with me", 8 items).

This scale has been found to be reliable in studies with young children (modernity α= .66 and traditional α=.88).18

Maternal Support

Parental Positive Regard: This observational rating scale was adapted from the NICHD Early Child Care Research Network19 study and from the Manual for Coding Freeplay Parenting Styles 20. This scale was developed to measure parent’s expression
of love, respect and/or admiration for the child (e.g., praising and/or complimenting the child, hugging or other expressions of physical affection) during a 10-minute freeplay session when children were 24 months. This scale measures positive regard based on both the quantity and quality of parent indicators of affection, attention and admiration towards the child. Parents are classified on a scale from 1 (very low positive regard) to 7 (very high positive regard). The inter-rater reliability of this scale has been found to be appropriate (\( \alpha \) from .68 to .76, percent agreement within 1 point ranged from 87% to 96%).

**Parental Sensitivity:** This variable measured child-centered sensitivity expressed by parents during the freeplay session when children were 24 months. It measures the extent to which parents demonstrated to be aware of their children’s needs, moods, interests and capabilities. A key aspect evaluated with this scale was the ability of parents to engage their children in active play or to transition to new activities when they showed lack of interest. Some indicators of this scale are “changing the pace when the child appears under-stimulated” and “changing from one toy bag to another in a way that acknowledges the child’s interest”. Parents were assigned a score from 1 (very low sensitivity) to 7 (very high sensitivity). The reliability for this measure has been reported as appropriate (\( \alpha \) ranged from .68 to .76).

**Parental Cognitive and Language Stimulation:** This observation scale was rated during the 10-minute free play session when children were 24 months old and focused on parent’s effortful attempts to enhance children’s perceptual, cognitive, and linguistic development. If the strategies used by the parents were not an appropriate match for their child’s developmental level or interest, parents were assigned a low score in this variable and a parent scoring high on this scale provided frequent stimulation through explanations, activities, or toys. Parents’ attempts were evaluated
as minimally stimulating (e.g., encouraging the child to participate actively in activities), moderately stimulating (e.g., reading from and elaborating on text from the book) or highly stimulating (e.g., elaborating on the pictures, words, and actions in the book or on unique attributes of objects). High scores were given to parents showing techniques from all three categories and lower scores to those who engaged in lower-level behaviors associated with cognitive development. Parents received a score from 1 (very low cognitive stimulation) to 7 (very high cognitive stimulation). This scale has been shown to have appropriate reliability coefficients ($\alpha$ ranged from .68 to .76).\(^7\)

**Child Trait Characteristics**

**Emotion Regulation:** emotional regulation was assessed via trained observers when children were 24 months old with the 30-item behavior rating scale of The Bayley Scales of Infant and Toddler Development-Second Edition\(^8\). Appropriate reliability coefficients for this measure have been reported in other studies ($\alpha = .90$).\(^8\)

**Hyperactivity:** Children’s hyperactivity levels were assessed by the 6-item subscale for hyperactivity behavior from the Social Skills Rating System-Teacher Version\(^9\). This subscale has been reported to be reliable in previous studies with preschool children ($\alpha = .89$).\(^21\)

**English Language Learner Status:** This was measured when children were 14 months and indicated if children were learning English as a second language.

**Children’s Sociobehavioral Health**

**Internalizing and Externalizing Symptoms:** The Child Behavior Checklist 1.5-5\(^{10}\) was used to assess children’s symptoms of internalizing (36 items) and externalizing (24 items) problems when children were in preschool and in 5\(^{th}\) grade. Parents indicated how often their children displayed each of the behavioral problems during the last two months in a 3-point scale (0 “Not true,” 1 “Somewhat or Sometimes True,” or 2 “Very
True or Often True.”). Both internalizing and externalizing subscales have appropriate reliability (.90 and .94 respectively).10

**Social Skills:** Children’s social skills in preschool settings were evaluated with a 12-item teacher report from the Social Skills Rating System-Teacher9 when children were in preschool and in 5th grade. This scale has been shown to be a reliable indicator of children’s social competence (α = .93).22

**Compliance:** A teacher report was used to measure children’s compliance when they were in 5th grade9. Teachers rated in a scale from 0 (never) to 3 (very often) a series of items evaluating their tendency to comply in school settings. The reliability of this scale has been reported to be appropriate (α = .91). 23

**Delinquency:** Delinquency was measured with the 12-item subscale of the Youth Self-Report11. The adolescent selected his/her response from 0 (not true) to 2 (very true or often true). This subscale is part of the externalizing problems component measured in 5th grade and it has acceptable reliability (α = .70).24

**Aggression:** Aggressive behaviors in preschool and in 5th grade were measured with the 13-item parental report from the Child Behavior Checklist 4-1810. This measure has demonstrated to be a reliable indicator of children’s aggressive tendencies (α = .95).10

**Prosocial Behavior:** A teacher report of children’s prosocial behavior9 was used to evaluate their tendencies to help others in school environments. Prosocial behaviors were rated during play between the target child and other children. This scale has been reported to be a reliable measure in previous research (α = .91).23

**Children’s Academic Adjustment**

**Vocabulary:** Form A of the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test12 was administered to children when they were in preschool and in 5th grade. This measure was
administered and scored according to the published guidelines of this test. This measure has been demonstrated to be a reliable and fair measure of children’s vocabulary ($\alpha = .80$).\textsuperscript{25}

**Literacy:** The Letter-Word identification subtest of the Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey\textsuperscript{13} was used to evaluate children’s ability to identify letters when they were in preschool and in 5th grade. The Letter-Word identification test has appropriate reliability indicators ($\alpha = .90$).

**Mathematics:** Children’s quantitative abilities were evaluated with the Applied Problems subtest of the Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey (Woodcock & Muñoz-Sandoval, 1995) when children were in preschool and in 5th grade. This test was administered and scored according to the published guidelines.\textsuperscript{13} The original authors reported adequate reliabilities for this test ($\alpha = .91$).\textsuperscript{13}
References


