

A Case Study of Latinx Parents' Perceptions of Gifted Education

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Abstract : The focus of this research study was to explore barriers, if any, faced by parents or legal guardians who are of Latinx background and speak Spanish as a primary language or are bilingual speakers of Spanish and English; barriers that limit their understanding of and involvement in their gifted child's academic life. This study was guided by a qualitative case study design. The primary investigator hosted focus group interviews at a Magnet Middle School in Southern California. The groups consisted of 25 parents, or legal guardians of bilingual (English/Spanish) or former English learner students enrolled in a school serving 6th-8th grades. The primary investigator interviewed Latinx Spanish-speaking parents or legal guardians of gifted students regarding their perception of their child's giftedness, parental involvement in schools, and fostering their child's exceptional abilities. Parents and legal guardians described children as creative, intellectual, and highly intelligent. Key themes such as student performance, language proficiency, socio-emotional, and general intellectual ability were strong indicators of giftedness. Barriers such as language and education inhibited parent and legal guardian ability to understand their child's giftedness, which resulted in their inability to adequately contribute to the development of their children's talents and advocate for the appropriate services for their children. However, they recognized the importance of being involved in their child's academic life and the importance of nurturing their 'dón' or 'gift.' La Familia is the foundation and core of Latinx culture; and, without a strong foundation, children lack guidance, confidence, and awareness to tap into their gifted abilities. Providing Latinx parents with the proper tools and resources to appropriately identify gifted characteristics and traits could lead to early identification and intervention for students in schools and at home.

Keywords : gifted education, gifted Latino students, Latino parent involvement, high ability students

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