

1. Descriptive Information

Breakout Session C1: Examining Early Care and Education Use and Access Among Hispanics and Immigrants From Three Complementary Perspectives: National Survey Data, State-Focused Qualitative Data, and State CCDF Policy Analysis

This breakout will examine equity in ECE access and utilization, with a focus on supporting the needs of diverse immigrant and Hispanic children and families. Our breakout will use a complementary set of studies as an illustrative example, using different methodological approaches and drawing on multi-method information obtained from a national study of ECE, surveys with CCDF participants, qualitative interviews with policy stakeholders, and a scan of CCDF and other relevant policies. The goal of the breakout is to encourage a discussion among researchers, State administrators, and policymakers about the context and dynamics of various policy-relevant factors influencing ECE eligibility, access, and utilization in different cities and localities by the large and rapidly growing population of immigrants in general and Hispanics in particular.

Facilitator

Michael López, Abt Associates and National Research Center for Hispanic Children and Families

Presenters

- Danielle Crosby and Julia Mendez, University of North Carolina, Greensboro | *Hispanic Children's Participation in Early Care and Education: Type of Care by Household Nativity Status, Race/Ethnicity, and Child Age*

- Julia Henly, University of Chicago | *Dynamics of CCDF Subsidy Use Among Hispanics and Immigrants in the IL/NY Child Care Research Partnership Study: Lessons from Integrating Survey and Qualitative Data*

- Zoelene Hill, Duke University | *Do State CCDF Policy Guidelines Differentially Affect Hispanic Families' Access and Utilization? A Seven State Scan*

Scribe

Anne Partika, Child Trends

2. Documents in Session Folder

Slides will be made available on Research Connections.

3. Brief Summary of Presentations

- **Hispanic Children's Participation in Early Care and Education: Type of Care by Household Nativity Status, Race/Ethnicity, and Child Age**
Danielle Crosby, University of North Carolina, Greensboro
 - Motivations for this work:
 - Facts about Hispanic children:
 - 1 in 4 of all U.S. children are Hispanic
 - Roughly 1 in 3 live in poverty
 - Vast majority children are U.S.-born (94%)
 - 1 in 2 have a foreign-born parent
 - ECE participation among Latinos is lower than other racial/ethnic groups. One long-standing explanation for this pattern has been the suggestion that Hispanic parents have a preference for parental care and are hesitant to place children in ECE settings, particularly those which are center-based.
 - Two general sets of findings in the literature underscore the importance of learning more about ECE access and utilization for Hispanics and the body of literature in this area is growing. First, we know that ECE serves as a critical work support for parents and a key developmental context for children in many low-income families. Second, there is ample evidence of benefits of high-quality ECE for school readiness and early academic success for low-income children in

particular, and positive effects are often shown to be larger for Hispanic children, especially when there may be limited English spoken at home.

- Study aims:
 - To provide a contemporary national snapshot of ECE utilization for young Hispanic children from low-income households
 - Overall participation in ECE, broadly defined
 - For children in any non-parental arrangements – type of settings, multiple arrangements, amount and timing of hours in care
 - To examine variations in Hispanic ECE participation by child age and household nativity, and to provide comparison estimates for white and black peers
- Data source:
 - 2012 National Survey of Early Care and Education household survey
 - Focused on the young child sample (ages 0-5), excluding children who have begun kindergarten
 - Sample: 5,153 children in low-income households
 - 35% in native HHs, 65% in immigrant HHs
 - 1,717 White, non-Hispanic and 1,043 Black, non-Hispanic
- Key variables:
 - Household nativity
 - Immigrant: 1+ adults in the household is foreign-born
 - Native: all adults in the household are U.S. born
 - ECE – any non-parental care arrangement, 5+ hours per week
 - Type of care
 - Center-based: any center- or organization- based care
 - Home-based: care provided by an individual in a home-based setting (paid or unpaid)
 - Nonstandard hours of care – any time spent in ECE outside of 8am-6pm, Monday-Friday
- Results:
 - A majority of Hispanic preschool-aged children (3-5) from low-income households are in ECE arrangements
 - ECE participation is lower for infants and toddlers than for preschoolers, across racial and ethnic groups
 - Among those in ECE, Hispanic children are as likely as white and black peers to be in center-based programs and no more likely than their non-Hispanic peers to be in home-based arrangements
 - Hispanic children in immigrant homes are *less* likely than their peers to be unpaid family/friend care and *more* likely to be in paid care with an unknown provider
 - This was counter to the expected findings
 - Roughly one-third of low-income Hispanic children in ECE are in multiple arrangements
 - Low-income Hispanic children in ECE spend an average of more than 30 hours per week in care, and more than 25% of this time in care takes place during nonstandard hours (e.g. early mornings, weekends, late night)
 - A majority of low-income Hispanic children in ECE spend some time in nonstandard hours care. The only significant difference is that Hispanic pre-k children in immigrant households spend less time in nonstandard care.
- Summary:
 - Unexpected findings regarding ECE utilization for young Hispanic children in low-income families call into question commonly held assumptions
 - Center-based programs are the most common ECE arrangement for Hispanic preschoolers
 - Other Hispanic Center work with the NSECE finds that:
 - Hispanic parents are no more or less likely than other parents to hold negative perceptions about centers
 - They are also less likely than white and black parents to report having relatives available to provide child care

- Similar to other low-income parents, many Hispanic parents currently use multiple arrangements and have their children in care during non-standard hours
 - Future directions:
 - Uncovering the variation behind these numbers
 - More detailed characteristics of these arrangements – e.g., specific types of center-based care, subsidized arrangements
 - Within-group heterogeneity among Hispanic families
 - Understanding the factors that shape utilization
 - Descriptive work on Hispanic parents’ employment schedules and their connection to ECE utilization patterns
 - Community characteristics – child care markets. What options are available to parents?
 - Policy levers, barriers and facilitators
- **Immigrant Experiences with Child Care Subsidies: Findings From the Illinois/New York Child Care Partnership**
Julia Henly, University of Chicago
 - Illinois/New York Child Care Research Partnership:
 - 4 targeted regions in NY (Nassau and Westchester counties) and IL (Cook county and 7 counties in southwestern Illinois)
 - Sample includes “new entrants” into the subsidy program w/child not yet in Kindergarten
 - Mixed methods study
 - Using linked survey/administrative data, they examined the relationship of employment, subsidy program, child care, and demographic factors to leaving the subsidy program and leaving child care arrangements. Hypothesized factors related to instability include:
 - Subsidy program characteristics: Duration of eligibility period, program rules, administrative hassles
 - Parental employment circumstances: Job loss, precarious employment characteristics
 - Child care characteristics: Type of care, provider characteristics, parental view of provider
 - Key findings:
 - Subsidy spells were short and clustered around the eligibility period
 - Subsidy program experiences, employment instability, and child care characteristics contributed to duration of subsidy use, as did demographic variables including immigrant status.
 - After subsidy exit, about half of people in the survey were able to maintain their child care arrangement. If parents left their arrangement, they almost always moved to a less formal, less expensive arrangement or left child care altogether. If they stayed, they used three strategies to manage it: (1) negotiated payment plans with providers, (2) received help from support networks, (3) reduced hours of care
 - Immigrant focus: For this presentation, Julia uses survey and qualitative data to do two things: (1) look descriptively at the sample of immigrants, and (2) consider factors that might explain longer subsidy spells, based on qualitative data
 - Immigrants showed a consistently lower risk of leaving the subsidy program during the 18-month observation period, as well as a lower risk of leaving their child care provider during the 18-month observation period
 - Immigrants disproportionately used their subsidy for center care
 - Compared to the overall sample, the Hispanic and immigrant subsidy samples were more likely to have less than a high school degree, be married, and use center care. They were less likely to be on TANF and use informal care.
 - Subsidy experience for immigrants was similar to the overall sample.
 - Most common positives
 - Allowed them to work and purchase care they wanted
 - Made care more affordable
 - Helped with staying on track of family budget

- Limited trouble understanding process or paperwork, but some unique challenges.
 - Most common negatives
 - Hassles with office, lost paperwork
 - Unavailable/Rude and unresponsive caseworkers
 - Long wait times
 - Reimbursement too low, copay too high
 - Unique experiences: Language issues, poor translation, and few Spanish-speaking staff. However, these weren't universal complaints.
 - 9 of 16 qualitative participants with limited English proficiency said their assigned caseworker did not speak Spanish, leading to poor communication, especially over phone
 - 5 of 9 above explicitly described caseworkers as rude and unfriendly because of language barriers.
 - 8 of 16 with limited English proficiency took unpaid time off work to visit program office to resolve problems or to ensure paperwork was stamped/received (20% overall sample).
 - Shared quotes from the participants about challenges resulting from caseworkers not speaking English. Specifically, calling the phone and not having anyone who speaks Spanish was a notable challenge for immigrant parents.
 - Subsidy spells were longer for immigrants, but not for Hispanic non-immigrants. Research team is examining this finding further in their ongoing work. One possibility is simple selection –the group of immigrants who use the subsidy are different in important ways than nonimmigrants, Hispanic or otherwise. Another possibility is that the immigrant subgroup is getting more help from child care providers than other groups in terms of completing paper work for the subsidy, follow up with caseworkers, etc.
- ***Do State CCDF Policy Guidelines Differentially Affect Hispanic Families' Access and Utilization? A Seven State Scan***
Zoelene Hill, Duke University
 - Background on CCDF and CCDF utilization
 - The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) is the primary federal program devoted to providing low-income working families with child care subsidy.
 - The federal government distributes money to States. States (and counties) establish their own policy guidelines for distributing subsidies.
 - Funds are distributed through certificates (vouchers) or grants and contracts with providers to subsidize child care.
 - Approximately 1.4 million children use CCDF. However, approximately 8.6 million children are in families that are eligible. Users tend to be younger (66% are under the age of 5), from families with lower income levels, and less likely to be Hispanic.
 - Hispanic families' use of CCDF
 - GAO found that in 23 of 44 states examined, the percentage of Hispanic children served by CCDF was lower than the percentage of children who would be eligible (GAO, 2016).
 - Do state CCDF policy guidelines differentially affect Hispanic families' access and utilization? To answer this, the Hispanic Center conducted a scan of policies in seven, intentionally selected states (California, Illinois, New York, New Mexico North Carolina, and Texas)
 - Data sources included the Urban Institute Policy Inventory, state policy manuals, and investigation of the online user experience
 - Data Sources
 - Urban Institute Policy Inventory
 - State Policy Manuals
 - Investigation of the online user experiences
 - Notable policy guidelines:

- Eligibility Guidelines
 - How is work defined?
 - Some states accept ESL classes a substitution for work, which may facilitate program utilization by Hispanic families.
 - States vary in their work hour requirements, from no minimum to 30 hours per adult in the household. Hispanic families are more likely to live in multi-family HH
- Documentation Guidelines
 - What information does application solicit?
 - Request for SSN may make Hispanic families less likely to apply for CCDF
 - What documents must applicant provide?
 - Documentation of HH members may make Hispanic families less likely to apply for CCDF
- Priority Guidelines
 - Which groups of families are given priority in instances of fund shortage?
 - Are TANF users given priority? If yes, that may lead to fewer Hispanics using CCDF because fewer Hispanics use TANF
- Examining the applications various states use, researchers find that even information requested as optional (e.g. SSN) can be threatening for Hispanic families
- Implications:
 - This seven state scan uncovered new aspects of variation in states' CCDF policy guidelines that may differentially affect Hispanic families.
 - Some aspects of CCDF implementation practices that may *facilitate* and may *constrain* eligible Hispanic families from applying. New Mexico is a good example of how policies may facilitate and constrain practices. They had ESL counting as work, but they also asked for SSN and information on the entire HH. This indicates that some factors may pose larger barriers than others.
 - Whether or not the uncovered variation in policy and practice actually affect CCDF utilization and other child care and family outcomes remains an open question.
 - The Hispanic Center is engaging in a similar review of state SNAP and TANF guidelines with the aim of synthesizing and mapping the variation to program utilization and outcomes.

4. Brief Summary of Discussion

- Throughout the discussion, the issue of selection arose. Are Hispanic families less likely to be selected for CCDF due to agency factors? Julia felt that accounting for selection is important, but at this stage, selection is still being understood. Examining the process of accepting applications for CCDF was suggested, but Zoelene noted that there are elements of the application itself (e.g. SSN) that may turn Hispanic applicants away before even applying.
- When examining subsidies, what is the context? With the proliferation of pre-k and expansion of Head Start, some communities have a greater array of options for families to choose from. For example, it may be easier for families to use state pre-k programs because they don't need as much documentation or have an many requirements to participate. CCDF has the highest burden, followed by Head Start. Public pre-k may be an easier option for families.
- Even within states, there's a lot of local variation. Some programs have more Spanish-speaking staff than others, some assign individual caseworkers while others don't, etc.

5. Summary of Key Issues Raised

Michael López, Abt Associates and National Research Center for Hispanic Children and Families

- Several recent reports looking at Hispanic ECE utilization rates have examined only Head Start or CCDF; however, future work should focus on including the full array of options available to families.
- Depending on the way the community is structured, there are many things that can contribute to patterns of utilization. For example, when the latest Chicago mayor was elected, he set the tone for an immigrant-

friendly context within the city of Chicago. Additionally, in terms of facilitating pre-k use for Hispanics, the state had passed bilingual education legislation that mandated if publicly funded preschool programs have at least a certain percentage of children speaking the same language, those programs must offer classes in that language.

- Often times, researchers conduct rigorous quantitative analysis of large data sets, but then may make somewhat far reaching inferences when trying to interpret the data and related patterns of findings. As Danielle pointed out, one of the most common inference that has been made in child care research is that patterns of low Hispanic utilization rates of general ECE, or specifically center-based care are due to cultural preferences. However, people have recently started looking more carefully to see if there are barriers to child care access or other critical factors that can explain these low utilization rates
- Danielle's presentation also exemplified how, even with large data sets, just disaggregating by race and ethnicity isn't always enough to capture differences (i.e. Danielle's work also looked at different age groups).
- It also is important to examining heterogeneity within racial/ethnic groups (e.g. Hispanics), given the tremendous variability that exists within the Hispanic population. Julia's qualitative work was vital for bringing in that perspective and raising more questions.
- Examining the impact of different policies, and how these may vary from one state to the next, also is vital for understanding, as exemplified by Zoelene's work.