

FROM INSTITUTIONAL EXCLUSION TO INTERNALIZED WORTH: LATINA IMMIGRANT MOTHERS' EXPERIENCES IN THE K-12 EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Latinx immigrant parents have historically been blamed for institutional academic shortcomings and for their children's educational challenges, resulting from systemic and institutional inequalities embedded in the education system (Valencia, 2010; Valencia & Black, 2002). However, current empirical studies on Latina immigrant mothers provide insight into how they encounter systemic barriers when navigating the education system, hindering their role in their children's educational trajectory. The scholarly articles analyzed in this systematic literature review show that administrative gatekeeping, language discrimination, racist nativism, and hegemonic cultural practices emerged as mechanisms that reproduced the exclusion of Latina immigrant mothers. Additionally, revealed in the literature was the institutional impact of self-perception among Latina immigrant mothers. Despite the challenges confronted by Latina immigrant mothers, they continue to have high hopes and aspirations for their children's educational journey. The findings have significant implications for Latinx immigrant parents, Latinx students, and school practices.

Keywords: Latina immigrant mothers, parent experience, K-12 schooling, institutional inequalities

Extensive empirical research has focused on the significant role that parents can have on the academic trajectory and academic aspirations of their children (Crosnoe & Kalil, 2010; Durand, 2011; Fan & Chen, 2001; Juang & Silbereisen, 2002; López, 2001; Valdés, 1996). Within the K-12 education system, parent involvement, engagement, and participation are expected. Despite the literature revealing that there is no difference in conceptual framing and understanding between the terms involvement, engagement, and participation (Carreón et al., 2005; Greenberg, 2012; Poza et al., 2014; Quiocho & Daoud, 2006; Shannon, 1996; Terriquez, 2012), as an institution, there are clear expectations placed by the education system in the ways in which parents are expected to partake within the school setting (Early, 2017; Greenberg, 2012; Nygreen, 2017; Ramirez, 2003). Traditionally speaking, parents are expected to take part in "in-school" forms of participation; this includes Parent Teacher Association, in-class volunteering, and English language interaction while upholding dominant western cultural values (Jasis & Ordoñez-Jasis, 2012; López, 2001).

Scholars have offered critiques of this singular expectation, noting that it creates a dichotomy that defines "parental involvement" within a framework of a dominant perspective that devalues and positions anything else as "non-dominant," "othering," and as an "invalid form" of "parental participation" within the context of the education system (Delgado-Gaitan, 2007;

Fuentes, 2013; Galindo & Medina, 2009; Nygreen, 2017). As a result, immigrants and parents of color have historically been dismissed and framed as not valuing education due to primarily taking part in in-home “parent engagement,” which has often gone unrecognized and devalued in relation to the education system due to challenging western cultural norms and practices (Johnson et al., 2016; Langenkamp, 2019; Montoya, 1994; Valencia, 2010; Velez, 2008; Walker et al., 2011). Further, there is evidence in the scholarly literature that indicates that immigrants and parents of color experience discrimination in the educational setting that implicates their relationship to their children’s schooling and ability to participate (Ramírez, 2004; Valencia, 2010; Valencia & Black, 2002).

This systematic literature seeks to extend the empirical understanding of immigrants and parents of color within the education system by focusing on the parent experience¹ of Latina immigrant mothers² in the public school system. The Latinx³ population is the largest minoritized group in the United States and the fastest-growing segment of the U.S. population under 18 years of age. One in five U.S. residents is either an immigrant or a minor child of an immigrant parent (Camarota & Zeigler, 2016). By 2025, the U.S. Census Bureau predicts that one in four students will be Latinx (Gandara & Contreras, 2009). The American Immigration Council (2020) reported that Latina immigrant women are the largest immigrant group residing in the United States. The steady presence and growth of Latina immigrants and students demonstrate the need to pay special attention to the experiences of this significant demographic in the Latinx community as they are more likely to navigate and engage with institutions on behalf of their families. It is recognized that Latina immigrant mothers continue to be positioned as having a limited role in their children’s educational trajectory without accounting for their multiple identities and treatment within the K-12 education system. In response, this literature review employs a Chicana feminist epistemology as an analytical tool to answer the following research questions:

- What does the literature reveal about the institutional experiences of Latina immigrant mothers navigating the K-12 education system?
- What does the literature assert about the impact on the experiences of Latina immigrant mothers as they navigate the K-12 education system to support their children?

¹To move beyond the framing of parental involvement (Ceballos et al., 2014; Jasis & Ordoñez-Jasis, 2012; LeFevre & Shaw, 2012; Valdés, 1996) and parental engagement (Greenberg, 2012; Jiménez-Castellanos et al., 2016; Matos 2015) when referencing parents and the education system, this article will rely on the term parent experience. This term is meant to account for the multiple ways that parents experience the education system and account for diverse facets, including but not limited to teacher/administrator interaction, academic expectations, school culture, discourse, framing (i.e., in parent workshops and flyers sent home), and access to support and information (Goldsmith & Kurpius, 2018; López-Robertson, 2017; Valencia & Black, 2002; Velez, 2008; Villenas & Deyhle, 1999; Waterman, 2008). The purpose of this term is to more accurately present the complex and layered ways that Latina immigrant mothers navigate and interact in the K-12 education system.

²This literature review relies on the term Latina immigrant. Latina immigrants consist of Mexicans, Central Americans, and South Americans from diverse racial backgrounds (Suarez-Orozco & Pérez, 2002). The term speaks to an individual and shared experience as a racialized group of people during the colonization and immigration process in the United States (Lopez & Espiritu, 1990; McConnell & Delgado-Romero, 2004; Montero-Sieburth & Meléndez, 2007). It is important to note that the body of empirical studies presented in this article does not account for race or colorism, which can lead to the erasure of the experiences of Afro-Latina immigrants and indigenous immigrant women (Gómez Cervantes, 2021; Suarez-Orozco & Pérez, 2002; Vega et al., 2012). The intent is not to reproduce a harmful essentialist perspective but work within the framings of the articles presented.

³The term Latinx is intentionally used in this article to disrupt the binary language around gender when referring to the panethnic identity of people of Latin American heritage (Salinas & Lozano, 2019).

Framework

Chicana/Latina feminist epistemology shifts the discourse away from patriarchal frameworks and liberal feminist theories. Its purpose is to center the voices and highlight the experiences of Chicanas and Latinas in the United States, including Latina immigrant women (Delgado Bernal, 1998). Chicana feminist epistemology seeks to validate and address the intersectional experiences of Chicanas and Latinas. It explores topics concerning race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, immigration, migration, generational status, bilingualism, and sexuality by centering on the experiences of women of color (Calderón et al., 2012). Recognizing the different experiences between Chicana/Latina and males and White women, Chicana feminist theory challenges and disrupts dominant forms of knowledge and experiences accepted in western society (Delgado Bernal, 1998). The literature on Latina immigrant mothers is limited in recognizing the education system as a site that can uphold and reproduce hegemonic practices (Valencia & Black, 2002). Empirical studies have not fully explored the relationship between Latina immigrant mothers' racialized identities and the K-12 education system (Villenas & Deyhle, 1999). Relying on a Chicana feminist epistemology provides the analytical tool to critically analyze the strengths and limitations of the selected scholarly articles, shifting the conversation from individual practices to institutional impact (Velez, 2008; Villenas & Deyhle, 1999).

Method

This systematic literature review aimed to understand the scholarship that examined the institutional experiences of Latina immigrant mothers within the K-12 public school system in accounting for intersectional identities. The research questions guided the selection of two databases (i.e., EBSCO/ERIC [Education Resources Information Center] and JSTOR [Journal Storage]), the development of search terms, selection criteria, and the analysis of the articles through a Chicana feminist epistemology understanding.

Data Collection

Databases and Search Terms

The targeted databases consisted of EBSCO/ERIC and JSTOR; these databases were ideal because they primarily featured scholarly articles focusing on educational research and educational empirical studies in relation to families and communities (Alemán, 2018). Similar keywords were used when searching for scholarly articles throughout the databases with mild modifications. These modifications consisted of changes in the order of the keywords, the use of identifiers (i.e., AND, OR), and quotation marks to refine the results further (see Table 1). Special attention was placed on selecting the terminology and the keywords that would capture the various labels and regions encompassing the Latinx community (Calderón, 1992; Rinderle & Montoya, 2008). More pertinent was selecting terms that captured the mothers' experience in the education system that aligned with the terminology in the field of education. The following keywords were used throughout the search: Hispanic immigrant parents, Hispanic immigrant mothers, Latino immigrant parents, Latina immigrant mothers, Mexican immigrant Mothers, Central American immigrant mothers, education system, K-12 schooling, parent-school involvement, and parent-school engagement.

Table 1*Search Strategy*

Database	Search Strings
EBSCO/ERIC	(“Latina immigrant” OR “Hispanic immigrant” AND “Mothers” AND “School Experience” OR “Parent Involvement”); (Latinas OR Hispanic Women AND Immigrant Mothers AND Parent Involvement OR Parent Engagement); (“Mexican Immigrant Mothers” AND “Central American Immigrant Mothers” and Parent Involvement” OR Parent Engagement”); (Latinas” OR “Hispanic Women” OR “Latinas” AND “Immigrant Parent” AND “Education System”); (“Latina mothers” AND “Hispanic Mothers” AND “School Experience”); (“Latina Immigrants” AND “Hispanic Immigrant Women” OR “Parents-School Experience”); (“Hispanic immigrant parents” OR “Latino immigrant parents” AND “K-12 Schooling” OR “Parent School Experience”) Timespan: 2000-2020. Peer Reviewed. Only Academic Journal Articles.
JSTOR	(“Latina Immigrant” OR “Hispanic Immigrant” AND “Mothers” AND “Parent Involvement” OR “Parent Engagement”); (“Latina Immigrant” OR “Hispanic Immigrant” AND “Mothers” OR “Parents” AND “School Experience”); (“Latinas” OR “Hispanic Women” AND “Immigrant Mothers” AND “Education System”); (“Latina Immigrant mothers” OR “Mexican Immigrant Mothers” OR “Central American Mothers”) AND “Parent school engagement” AND disc: education-discipline); (“Latino” OR “Hispanic” AND “Immigrant Parents” AND “School Engagement” OR “K-12 Schooling”); (“Mexican Immigrant Parents” OR “Central American Parents” AND “Education System”) Timespan: 2000-2019. Peer Reviewed. Education-Discipline. English. Only Academic Journal Articles.

Note. All searches conducted from August 2020 through November 2020

Inclusion Criteria

The article search was further bounded by customizing the search of articles to the years 2000–2020. The decision to focus on this 20-year period of empirical research on Latina immigrant mothers’ experience within the K-12 education system was to obtain an insight into the contemporary understanding of historically marginalized voices during a period of growth of the Latinx population in the United States and Latinx student growth in the U.S. education system (Chapa & De La Rosa, 2004; Krogstad, 2020; Passel & Cohn, 2019). The following parameters were used to guide the selection of the final peer-reviewed published research for the purpose of this synthesized review: (a) centered on the voices of Latina immigrant mothers, (b) the primary

participants consisted of Latina immigrant mothers, (c) focused on the context of the K-12 education system, (d) centered on Latina immigrant mothers navigating the education system in support of their children schooling, and (e) the study must be in reference to the U.S. education system. All articles used for the purpose of this review met all five components of the parameters.

I began my search with EBSCO/ERIC, which consisted of searching for articles using seven combinations of keywords; the search for articles stopped once the results began to be repetitive. This search initiated an overall total of 229 article results. After reading the abstracts of the articles, a total of 197 articles were eliminated. Of those 197 articles, 159 were removed from consideration because they were not relevant, and 38 of the eliminated articles were repeated. Articles were eliminated because they focused on the student, teacher, or administrative perspectives; Latinx immigrant students' experience; and parent experience in the preschool setting. The remaining 32 articles were read, 19 were eliminated because they did not meet the required parameters, and the remaining 13 articles were used for this literature review. I then proceeded with my search in JSTOR, using six combinations of keywords with an overall total of 911 articles. The abstracts of the articles were read; based on this total, 875 articles were eliminated, and 49 of the eliminated articles were repeated articles. Most articles eliminated consisted of a sample of U.S.-born Latina, Latina student experience, Latino immigrant experience, Latina professionals, preschool parent involvement, child-rearing practices, health practices, immigration policy, and the implications on Latinx families. The remaining 36 articles were read, 21 articles were eliminated for not meeting the required parameters, and the 15 remaining articles were used for this review. The additional two articles reviewed in this article were obtained from looking through the reference pages of scholarly articles. The final 30 articles are identified with an asterisk (*) in the References section.

Data Extraction

Given this literature review's interest in understanding the systemic experiences of Latina immigrant mothers navigating the K-12 education system, the primary information⁴ that was extracted from the peer-reviewed articles included the following: (a) framing of intersectional identity, (b) institutional experiences, and (c) institutional impact.

Data Analysis

The articles were analyzed using Chicana feminist epistemology, which accounts for the intersectional identities of Latina immigrant mothers (Delgado Bernal, 1998). In coding for the first research question, I was specifically attuned to how researchers framed their findings and analyzed the experiences of their participants, accounting for forms of inclusion (i.e., affirmations and cultural inclusion) or exclusion (i.e., racism, sexism, and racist nativism). For the second research question, I coded for the reference of perception of self, comparison to other parents, and forms of empowerment and disempowerment. The coding of the scholarly articles occurred in two cycles. The first cycle of coding consisted of initial coding by thoroughly reading through each article and identifying themes (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2016; Saldaña, 2013). After extracting the more prominent themes, by thoroughly reading each article and identifying reoccurring themes, for example, barriers and challenges in the education system, the second cycle of coding employed

⁴In addition to the primary information, additional content extracted from the literature review consisted of research questions, methods/methodology, and framing/theory.

focused coding (Ngo & Lee, 2007; Onwuegbuzie et al., 2016). Focused coding assisted in narrowing the data identified during the first cycle of coding and reorganizing by categories and themes (Ngo & Lee, 2007; Saldaña, 2013). This analytical approach was ideal for identifying central themes that specifically answered the research questions guiding this literature review.

Findings

The purpose of this systematic literature review was to critically examine what the research states about the experiences of Latina immigrant mothers in the K-12 public school system and provide further insight into how their racialized identities, including race, gender, immigration, and intersectional identities, shape their interactions within institutions. There are four central themes that emerged from the literature, but for the purpose of this article, this review will focus on the two following themes: (a) Voices from the Margins: Latina Immigrant Mothers Experiencing Systemic Barriers in the K-12 Education System and (b) Institutional Impact on Latina Immigrant Mother Self-Perception. The two themes presented in this review were selected because they highlight the social impact of education practices on the lived experiences of Latina immigrant mothers. The understanding of this literature is necessary to provide an equitable learning environment for Latinx students that incorporates Latina immigrant mothers, parents, and caretakers, to that extent.

Voices from the Margins: Latina Immigrant Mothers Experiencing Systemic Barriers in the K-12 Education System

Historically, the literature in the field of education, centering on the voices of Latina immigrant mothers and other parents of color, has been through a deficit perspective (Montoya, 1994; Valencia, 2010; Valencia & Black, 2002). A deficit perspective argues that the systemic inequalities students of color face are due to their family structure, culture, community, and socioeconomic status (Valencia & Solórzano, 1997). This section focuses on four studies highlighting the systemic barriers that Latina immigrant mothers confront in the K-12 education system. These articles provide insight into how Latina immigrant mothers are pushed out of their children's K-12 educational trajectory. The findings in these articles can provide insight into how to best support Latina immigrant mothers by addressing and reducing forms of systemic barriers that are embedded in school practices and culture. Despite their limitations, these articles begin to push the literature on Latina immigrant mothers beyond parent involvement and deficit understanding. They situate research questions around issues related to institutional inequalities rather than cultural understandings related to the family and schooling.

Auerbach (2002) studied working-class Latinx parents' narratives of their children's schooling challenges in their empirical research. Through the employment of an ethnographic case study research design, Auerbach interviewed two Latina immigrant mothers and two Latino immigrant fathers from Mexico and Central America. At the time of the study, the participants' children were enrolled in a racially and socioeconomically diverse high school in Los Angeles. Auerbach relied on critical race theory and sociocultural theory to analyze the data. Findings revealed that participants encountered hostile interactions with school staff. Alicia, an immigrant mother from Guatemala, described her son's counselor as a gatekeeper and critiqued their lack of communication regarding her son's failing grade. This was a similar interaction that Estrelle, a Mexican immigrant mother, encountered; she could not get in contact with her daughter's

counselor; once they communicated, the counselor was unsupportive of Estrelle's request to place her daughter in AP classes. Participants described the power struggle over their children's education and lack of support from key administrators; they recognized the low expectations school staff had towards their children and felt they were being excluded from having any say in their children's education. The data indicated that parents associated school staff "rudeness" as a form of discrimination and associated this treatment with their identities as parents of color. Auerbach's article provides insight into how Latina immigrant mothers' identity as Latina immigrants shapes how key school figures racialize them and how they experience discriminatory practices that hinder their voice and power as parents and their ability to impact their children's academic opportunities.

Plata-Potter and de Guzman's (2012) study expanded on Auerbach's (2002) research by illustrating how language was a barrier to Latina immigrant mothers. Plata-Potter and de Guzman conducted a qualitative study exploring how Mexican immigrant parents helped their children navigate the education system and barriers when supporting their children. Seven Mexican immigrant mothers and one Mexican immigrant father participated in the study. At the time of the study, participants had children enrolled in elementary, middle, or high school. Their narratives reflect their experiences across the educational pipeline with no clear indication of different experiences based on student grade level. Through an ecological systems model as an analytical tool, the data revealed that Mexican immigrant mothers encountered challenges in assisting their children due to unfamiliarity with the U.S. public school system. All participants in the study were Spanish speakers and struggled to communicate with school staff and teachers. Further, they indicated that school flyers and homework were all in English, preventing them from fully engaging in their children's schooling. Participants described the language barrier as a source that prevented them from voicing their concerns to key school figures. Participants described the lack of access to information about the U.S. K-12 and higher education pipeline as creating barriers for them to advocate and guide their high school children on qualifying or applying for college. Through the analysis of ecological systems models, Plata-Potter and de Guzman highlighted how Latina immigrant mothers' experiences in the U.S. K-12 pipeline are nested in the context of inequalities embedded in the education system. Still, their analysis is limited in revealing the lack of a critical connection between language exclusion and racist nativist practices. Plata-Potter and de Guzman explained how English exclusionary practices push Spanish-speaking parents from fully engaging in the school setting.

Fernandez and Paredes Scribner (2018) expanded on the previous two articles by demonstrating the connection between U.S. sociopolitical context and systemic barriers to Latinx students and Latina immigrant mothers' experiences in the education system. Fernandez and Paredes Scribner drew on Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth framework to analyze how a Latinx parent group negotiates tensions between Latinx immigrant parents and school officials, the nurturing of community cultural wealth, and the cultivation of parent leadership. Through the employment of a qualitative study, five Latina immigrant mothers (three Mexican, one Guatemalan, and one Colombian) participated in field interviews. The study was conducted in an urban elementary school in the Midwest in which 80% of students qualified for free or reduced lunch and 29% of students identified as Latinx. Findings revealed that participants relied on various types of community cultural wealth. Participants relied heavily on aspirational capital; this was when the threat of deportation was present in their community. Participants discussed the impact immigration policy and racist nativism had on their children's ability to focus and succeed in school; some participants discussed the deportation of their husbands. Mothers described a lack

of ability for the principal and school administration to recognize the connection between immigration policies and their children's schooling experience. The school was a place where Latinx immigrant families did not feel valued, experiences were dismissed, and knowledge, culture, and language were excluded. Fernandez and Paredes Scribner illustrated the emotional labor carried by Latina immigrant mothers to support their children through heightened anti-Latinx immigrant policies and schooling.

Similar to the previous three studies, Sanchez-Suzuki Colegrove (2019) conducted a qualitative study to research Latinx immigrant parents' experiences in their children's school settings. Fifty-five Latinx immigrant parents were interviewed; participants immigrated from Chile, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela. The study took place in six elementary schools, four in Texas and two in California. This study did not divide the data based on gender and regional location; further, Sanchez-Suzuki Colegrove did not rely on any theory to analyze the data. It is important to note that data overwhelmingly highlighted the voices of Latina immigrant mothers. Findings indicated that parents had minimal access to their children's classes, with minimal opportunities to volunteer. Participants also described having limited communication with their children's teachers and were only contacted when an issue occurred. The data revealed that parents were aware of the power dynamics embedded in the education system; they feared that it would negatively impact themselves or their children if they raised any concerns. Parents described experiencing racism, unequal treatment, and discrimination due to their ethnicity and Spanish-speaking status. Participants stated that their children's schools favored parents with higher educational levels and who spoke English. Sanchez-Suzuki Colegrove's study demonstrated how Latinx immigrant parents are contextualizing how their identities shape and inform the power struggles they experience in relation to the education system.

The findings in this section demonstrate the various systemic barriers that Latina immigrant mothers confronted when communicating with staff, administrators, and teachers in the K-12 education system. The articles in this section highlight examples of the unbalanced power dynamics between the participants and key school figures due to individual interactions and educational practices (Sanchez-Suzuki Colegrove, 2019). Parents reported experiencing unequal treatment and discrimination due to their ethnicity, Spanish-speaking status, and intersectional identities (Auerbach, 2002; Plata-Potter & de Guzman, 2012). The reliance on English only practices and communication was a barrier for the participants, limiting Latina immigrant mothers' ability to engage with key school figures and advocating on behalf of their children (Plata-Potter & de Guzman, 2012; Sanchez-Suzuki Colegrove, 2019). The experiences of Latina immigrant mothers and their children were further shaped by the larger sociopolitical context in the form of immigration policy and racist nativism, highlighting the inability of school administration to recognize the connection between immigration policies and students' negative schooling experience (Fernandez & Paredes Scribner, 2018). Despite attempting to participate in their children's schooling experience, Latina immigrant mothers continuously confronted barriers that excluded their engagement in the education system.

Institutional Impact on Latina Immigrant Mother Self-Perception

The overview of the current literature on the experiences of Latina immigrant mothers within the K-12 education system has assisted in bringing forth critical voices and experiences that have historically been silenced. While the previous section provided an overview of the systemic barriers endured by Latina immigrant mothers, this section highlights articles that address the

impact of institutional discrimination and institutional affirmation on Latina immigrant mothers' self-perception. These articles provide insight into the institutional harm that is often ignored and gone unrecognized with an emphasis on how Latina immigrant mothers view themselves in relation to the education system.

Institutional Harm to Latina Immigrant Mother Self-Perception

Three articles discuss the role of institutional harm in shaping mothers' self-perception. Ramirez (2003) researched the experiences of Latinx parents in a predominantly Latinx community in California. The purpose of the study was to determine the concerns of Latinx immigrant parents regarding their children's schools. A total of 43 participants took part in the study—29 females and 14 males—and participants had children throughout the K-12 pipeline. Ramirez did not provide insight into the analytical process, indicating no theoretical framing to analyze findings. Data revealed that parents wanted to be more involved in their children's schooling but were prevented due to school policies and practices. Participants felt abandoned and helpless to assist their children in their education. Parents expressed not feeling welcomed and recognized the low expectations school figures had towards them and their children. Participants spoke about the framing of Latinx parents by school administrators as “not caring for their children's education” (Ramirez, 2003, p. 30). Due to these experiences, participants described feeling “stupid” and not qualified to assist their children. Ramirez provided important insight into how Latina immigrant mothers internalize discrimination and microaggressions in the education system.

Expanding on Ramirez's (2003) findings, Auerbach's (2007) study demonstrated how parents of color constructed their role in promoting their children's access to educational opportunities. This article brings forth important insight into how Latina immigrant mothers contextualize their role in their children's education and demonstrates an internalization of deficit narratives that ignore the impact of institutional inequalities. It further illustrates how cultural practices in the education system harm Latina immigrant mothers. Using a qualitative research approach, the Auerbach interviewed six Mexican and Central American immigrant mothers, five Mexican and Central American immigrant fathers, two Chicana mothers, and three Black mothers. The data were not disaggregated based on race or gender. At the time of the study, the participants' children were enrolled in a high school in California. The author relied on cultural capital, social capital, and social network to guide the data analysis. Key findings demonstrated that parents provided emotional and moral support, stressed hard work, and discussed college and careers with their children. Immigrant parents discussed their insecurity due to their lack of knowledge of the education system, which resulted in difficulties supporting and guiding their children. Parents relied on their own lived experiences as a cautionary tale designed to steer children to pursue higher education. Participants discussed their own educational experiences in deficit ways, highlighting feelings of shame and anger due to their missed educational opportunities; despite this, parents were active in encouraging their children's educational aspirations.

Thomas-Duckwitz et al. (2013) built on Auerbach's (2007) study, demonstrating Latina immigrant mothers' self-perception about their children's schooling. Thomas-Duckwitz et al. conducted a qualitative study that examined the parent involvement perspective among seven immigrant mothers from Mexico. All participants came from limited educational and socioeconomic backgrounds. At the time of the study, the participants' children were enrolled throughout the K-12 education pipeline. Thomas-Duckwitz et al. did not provide insight into their theoretical approach. Primary findings revealed three themes: giving our children something

better, parental purpose, and the messages the schools send to parents. Participants described making academics their children's primary responsibility. They highlighted conversations with their children and were vocal in expressing not wanting their children to be "stuck" in low-income jobs. Participants expressed self-deprecation and belittled themselves to encourage their children. They stated that their primary role as mothers was to provide emotional support, motivation, and advice as a form of encouragement for their children. Most of the participants felt welcomed by school staff and administrators, stating that having Spanish-speaking school figures assisted in feeling included in their children's schools. This article contributes to the literature on Latina immigrant mothers by providing further insight into how institutional harm and ideologies are being upheld despite feeling welcomed and affirmed in the school setting. It demonstrates the complex and contradictory messaging Latina immigrant mothers confront. Further, this study sheds light on the emotional labor of women of color to encourage their children to pursue higher education despite not fully feeling part of their children's educational journey.

Institutional Affirmation of Latina Immigrant Mothers' Self-Perception

One article in the literature demonstrated how culturally responsive and inclusive approaches in the education system could result in institutional affirmation of Latina immigrant mothers' self-perception. Vidal de Haymes et al. (2019) expanded on the previous articles using a quantitative research approach. Relying on ecological systems theory, Vidal de Haymes et al. surveyed 469 participants, including Latina immigrant mothers, U.S.-born Latina mothers, and Black mothers in Chicago; 72.8% of participants reported being immigrants from Mexico, 81.8% identified as Latinx (this included the Mexican immigrant population), and 53.7% reported being primarily Spanish speaking. Participants had children enrolled in pre-K through eighth grade, and the survey was distributed in 64 public schools in low-income communities. The Parent Engagement Institute developed the survey.

Findings revealed that participants who engaged in school settings that incorporated strong family, school, and community engagement had more robust levels of efficacy in supporting their children's educational journey. Participants with strong social networks reported increased engagement in a school setting, community organizations, and resource seeking. All of these resulted in having a positive impact on Latina immigrant mothers' self-perception and ability to support their children in their educational journey. This study provides important insight into how Latina immigrant mothers internalize their engagement in their children's schooling and how that influences their self-worth. This study expanded on the previous literature by highlighting how school practices can impact the self-perception of Latina immigrant mothers and position them as key figures in their children's educational journey.

The articles in this section bring forth important insight into institutional harm and notions of self-worth perpetuated in the education system, broadening the literature on Latina immigrant mothers that considers the internalization of messages and practices presented throughout the K-12 pipeline (Ramirez, 2003; Thomas-Duckwitz et al., 2013). Latina immigrant mothers demonstrated an internalization of deficit narratives that ignored the impact of institutional inequalities and perpetuated a negative self-perception (Auerbach, 2007; Ramirez, 2003). Data determined that hegemonic cultural practices in the education system harm Latina immigrant mothers, and participants described feelings of shame and anger over their lack of educational opportunities and knowledge (Auerbach, 2007; Thomas-Duckwitz et al., 2013). Significantly, schools that incorporated strong family, school, and community engagement influenced positive

levels of efficacy on Latina immigrant mothers' self-perception and ability to support their children (Vidal de Haymes et al., 2019). The findings in this section bring forth essential perspectives on the institutional impact on individual self-perception that can reproduce institutional harm and exclusion or produce institutional inclusion between Latina immigrant mothers and the K-12 education system.

Discussion and Conclusion

Through the employment of a Chicana feminist epistemology (Delgado Bernal, 1998), this systematic literature review attempted to gain insight into the institutional experiences of Latina immigrant mothers when navigating the education system and the institutional impact on Latina immigrant mothers. The scholarly literature presented in this article highlighted two themes: (a) Voices from the Margins: Latina Immigrant Mothers Experiencing Systemic Barriers in the K-12 Education System and (b) Institutional Impact on Latina Immigrant Mother Self-Perception.

The study's findings reveal that Latina immigrant mothers face various institutional barriers and sociopolitical contexts that shape their experiences in the K-12 education pipeline. The forms of institutional barriers highlighted in these articles included school administrators as gatekeepers, language discrimination, racist nativism (immigration policy), and hegemonic cultural practices in the education system (Auerbach, 2002; Fernandez & Paredes Scribner, 2018; Plata-Potter & de Guzman, 2012; Sanchez-Suzuki Colegrove, 2019). Embedded in the articles is insight into the discrimination Latina immigrant mothers confront due to their racialized identities as Latina immigrants in the United States. The participants' racialization in the K-12 education system reflects the dominant perception held against Latinx immigrants in the United States, which is highlighted through anti-Mexican/Latinx immigrant rhetoric, immigration policy, state policies, and Mexican/U.S. border enforcement, and widespread deficit depiction of the Latinx community in the media (Gonzales, 2012; Sui & Paul, 2017).

Fernandez and Paredes Scribner (2018) illustrated the role of Latina immigrant mothers as key figures in the home, school, and community; the emotional labor placed on them due to their gender and role as mothers; and further shed light on their struggles and resiliency. Apart from Fernandez and Paredes Scribner, the articles highlighted the voices of Latina immigrant mothers; still, the authors did not provide a rich and in-depth analysis that incorporated the participants' gender. The role of gender matters because it can speak to how the experiences of Latina immigrant mothers are being shaped by their intersectional identities and the opportunities that they are able to access or are being denied further speaking to their inability to have power within the education system, a power that has historically been granted to White mothers (Velez, 2008). The scholars' arguments primarily centered on race/ethnicity and immigration, taking the participants' gender for granted. The inability to contextualize the impact of gender continues to erase the complex reality that Latina immigrant mothers confront in and out of the education system and their identity as women of color attempting to navigate historically exclusionary institutions. The limited number of empirical studies presented highlights the need to continue expanding the literature on Latina immigrant mothers that account for sociopolitical and sociohistorical contexts and studies that bring forth the social injustice Latina immigrant mothers experience in the K-12 education system.

Further, the studies demonstrated how Latina immigrant mothers position themselves in their children's educational trajectory and provide insight into how their self-perception is informed by the education system's culture, practices, and power dynamics. Auerbach (2007)

demonstrated the insecurity Latina immigrant mothers and parents of color carry due to a lack of knowledge about the K-12 education system. The types of cultural knowledge, social capital, and ways of knowing carried by Latina immigrant mothers are not affirmed or validated in the U.S. education system. The education system is a microcosm of the larger society both of which affirm meritocratic ideologies that the participants in this study internalize. This is depicted in the ways participants position themselves as counterexamples for their children; educational attainment is presented as a choice. In addition, Ramirez (2003) provided insight into how school practices create barriers that further perpetuate a deficit narrative of Latina immigrant mothers and position them as uninvolved in their children's trajectory. Participants felt unfit to support their children. Thomas-Duckwitz et al.'s (2013) study demonstrated the education system's contradictions that can empower and reproduce harm to Latina immigrant mothers. Lastly, Vidal de Haymes et al. (2019) highlighted how culturally responsive practices can affirm and positively impact parents of color self-perception. These studies are important to the scholarship on Latina immigrant mothers because they provide a critical layer to better understand their journey as key figures in their children's educational trajectory.

Across the literature, the framing of Latina immigrant mothers centered on their identity as immigrants in the United States. As a result, the literature focused on racialized experiences rooted in racist nativism, which contributes to the literature of Latina immigrant mothers by recognizing the role of systemic barriers in U.S. society and the education system. This was directly seen through the exclusion of the Spanish language due to the education system's cultural practices and ideologies. An area that the literature needs to expand upon is the understanding of race and ethnicity. A key factor that shapes individuals' experiences within institutions is their perceived race; the literature on Latina immigrant mothers did not account for racial identifications or colorism. Understanding the history of colonization across Latin America, the implications of colorism have shaped the opportunities afforded to people in the United States and abroad. To gain better insight into how Latina immigrant mothers are engaging and experiencing the U.S. K-12 education system, further research is needed on the impact of colorism on the experiences of Latina immigrant mothers. Further, the literature on Latina immigrant mothers needs to account for intersectionality; while some of the literature was direct in speaking to the complexity of the identities of Latina immigrant women, the majority took these components for granted and did not address them directly.

The literature demonstrates that when researching the experiences of Latina immigrant mothers in relation to navigating the K-12 education system, it overwhelmingly continues to be within attempts to understand notions of parent participation, involvement, and engagement. An area of growth in the literature on Latina immigrant mothers is a focus on culturally specific ways that Latina immigrant mothers engage, motivate, and encouraged their children to continue to pursue their educational aspirations. More empirical studies are needed to gain further insight into the ways in which Latina immigrant mothers are framing education and how that aligns with or challenges western ways of thinking. Further, the empirical studies in this literature review demonstrated that Latina immigrant mothers navigate hostile institutional environments. There is much to expand upon in order to gain an understanding of systemic barriers that are being confronted by Latina immigrant mothers; developing research questions that seek to gain further insight into these experiences is necessary, and there should be a reliance on critical theories to help analyze findings to contextualize better what is occurring and the challenges that Latina immigrant mothers are confronting.

The growth of the Latinx student population in the public school system and low-academic attainment highlights the need to make systemic changes that better support students, their families, and communities across the K-12 education pipeline, which can increase students' ability to pursue a college degree. A key figure in the Latinx students' K-12 journey is Latina immigrant mothers. School administrators need to be intentional in recognizing the ways that school practices can lead to the exclusion of Latina immigrant mothers, which can ultimately remove parents from their children's educational journey. To best support Latina immigrant mothers, schools need to incorporate avenues for cocreation and partnership that authentically bridge the home, community, and school as well as recognize and incorporate Latina immigrant mothers as holders and producers of knowledge and assets to their children's educational journey.

Implication and Consideration for Educational Practices

Informed by this systematic literature review, the following are proposed considerations for practitioners who serve Latinx students and Latina immigrant mothers and are seeking to develop more equitable opportunities within the K-12 education system:

1. **Representation of Community:** Public schools need to be reflective of the communities they are serving. School administrators should be intentional in creating school practices and policies that are intended to support Latinx immigrant families; this is especially urgent within school districts that consist of majority Latinx students. This means having the students and their families' best interests in mind and making them feel welcome on school grounds. It is necessary for schools to hire key figures intended to work alongside Latina immigrant mothers (parents and caretakers), to reach out to the community, and be accessible on school grounds.
2. **Language:** School administrators must reconsider the significant role of language and language practices in the school setting and recognize the role of language as the primary avenue for collaboration. This calls for school administrators to be intentional in hiring Spanish-speaking individuals throughout the various segments within the school setting (i.e., teachers, counselors, principals, etc.) and providing insight into pedagogical practices in the classroom in a way that is language accessible to parents.
3. **Knowledge Production:** Moll et al. (1992) have provided a platform and avenue to incorporate community and family-based knowledge and ways of knowing within the school setting through in-class assignments, school projects, and homework as well as through the theorization and implementation of funds of knowledge. This is a call for schools and teachers to be intentional in disrupting hegemonic ideologies and creating space for the various forms of knowledge that Latinx students can bring forth from their homes, histories, identities, and ways of knowing.
4. **Recognizing Forms of Discrimination:** School administrators and school districts need to have a pathway to respond to discriminatory practices against Latinx communities and students. Discrimination in the form of microaggressions can be difficult to prove or identify, so it is important for schools to be attuned to what is occurring and create an avenue for forms of communication between school administrators and Latina immigrant mothers (parents and caretakers).

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