

AGAINST ALL ODDS: LESSONS FROM PARENTS OF MIGRANT HIGH-ACHIEVERS

What if you met a family that was low-income, migrant, non-English-speaking, undocumented, with little or no formal education ... what would you say the odds would be that someday one of their children would become an aerospace engineer for NASA? What would be the odds that one of their children would get a scholarship to Rice University or Harvard? What if this family had 18 children, and all 18 graduated from high school and went to college? What if you found *five* families like that? Would you want to find out what these parents did? That's what this paper is about. In the pages that follow, I will describe a case study I conducted involving five very remarkable Mexican-origin migrant/immigrant families. Against all odds, they reared 41 highly successful children, among them doctors, nurses, lawyers, aerospace engineers, teachers, scientists, and business entrepreneurs. Best of all, you will learn what they did to help their children, and how they did it.

The first section of the paper describes what some authors [certainly not this one] might consider a "problem." According to a number of scholars, migrant students are supposed to drop out of school and continue in the "culture of migrancy" -- the "problem" is these migrant families refute those studies. I continue by explaining how I conducted the study,

including the profiles of the initial sample of students. The second section describes how and why these parents involved themselves in their children's schooling. Finally, I conclude with some ideas on what educators can do to involve Mexican-origin migrant/immigrant parents more effectively in their children's education.

THE "PROBLEM" OF MIGRANT HIGH ACHIEVERS

Nationally, a major frustration for policymakers and migrant advocates has been that legislation and programs designed specifically to improve migrant student achievement have still not solved the problems associated with mobility (Prewitt-Díaz et al. 1990; Romo 1996; Schuler 1990; Trotter 1992). In Texas, where this study was conducted, one out of five migrant students is overage for grade; and of those migrants who persist through their senior year, nearly one in four will not graduate. It was alarming to discover that of the migrant students in Grades 10-12 taking the statewide exit-level examination, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), during the 1997-98 school year, nearly 6 out of 10 did not pass all three sections (reading, writing, and mathematics) needed to graduate (TEA 1999).

Nonetheless, each year the Texas Migrant Education Program (TMIP) recognizes exemplary migrant students who graduate as valedictorians, salutatorians, and honors graduates who are also student council presidents, and even all-state athletes. Annually, these students receive academic scholarships and appointments to institutions like Harvard, Rice, Stanford, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, West Point, the Air Force Academy, and other prestigious universities. Many of these students attribute their success to the strong work ethic and mental toughness developed from persevering through many kinds of hardships, as well as their first-hand experience of what life can be like without an education (TMIP 1998).

MIGRANT PARENTS

Many of these exemplary migrant scholars attributed their success to the support and influence of their families, particularly their parents, even though their parents are poor, undocumented, non-English-speaking, and with little or no formal education (TMIP 1998).

Researchers studying migrant students have approached their investigations of student success from two perspectives: (1) the effect of the schools and their support systems (Cranston-Gingras and Anderson 1990; Henning-Stout 1996; Hinojosa and Miller 1984; Prewitt-Díaz 1991; Reyes, Scribner and Paredes-Scribner 1999; Romo 1996; Salerno 1991); and (2) the effect of the socio-cultural factors surrounding the migrant lifestyle (Cárdenas 1976; Garza 1998; Manaster et al. 1992; Prewitt-Díaz et al. 1990; Rasmussen 1988; Schuler 1990; Wright 1995).

Research addressing the involvement behaviors of migrant parents with their children has been quite limited (Bressler 1996; Chavkin 1991, 1996; Siantz 1990; Siantz and Smith 1994). Many of the policy decisions that are being made in the design and implementation of parent involvement programs for migrant families are based mainly on the parent involvement literature for either traditional student populations or for non-migrant Mexican American populations. Considering that migrant students often attend many schools in many different communities, it would seem logical to study these highly mobile children from the one constant in their lives--their *families*.

Could it be that migrant parents, being a *non*-traditional parent population, might have *non*-traditional ways in which they involve themselves in their children's education? Moreover, if the assumption were true that parent involvement has a positive influence on student achievement, would it not make sense to examine how the parents of high-achieving

migrant students involve themselves in their children's education? Thus, the principal research question of this study became: *Why and how do parents of high-achieving migrant students get involved in their children's education?*

METHODOLOGY

The subjects of the study were five Texas-homebased, Mexican-origin migrant parents--that is, mothers and/or fathers--from five very different geographic regions of the state: (1) Pharr, Texas, in the Rio Grande Valley; (2) Hereford in the Texas Panhandle; (3) Baytown, 30 miles outside of Houston, in East Texas; (4) Loraine, a small town of 700 people, in West Texas; and (5) San Antonio, a city of 1.1 million with a Hispanic population of well over a half million. Clearly, the schools and communities had to be different in order to determine whether the parents involved themselves differently in schools and communities where the Mexican-origin population was the majority as opposed to those where they were the distinct minority.

Although all students in the initial sample were males, their role was merely to identify *the parents*. During the interviews, the parents described their involvement behaviors relative to *all* their children--males and females. The findings described later do not make distinctions as to gender, but these are clearly areas for further research, both relative to parent involvement as well as student achievement.

Three types of data were used: (1) semi-structured individual interviews employing a protocol of open-ended questions and probes, (2) field observations, and (3) field notes. Data were gathered in the Fall of 1999 from well over one hundred hours of personal audiotaped interviews, telephone interviews, and home visits. Participants were able to express themselves in either English or Spanish, and all customs of *respeto*, *cortesía*, and *hospitalidad*

that are common to Mexican-origin families were observed [Carrillo explains these concepts in more detail in Chapter 13.]. At the families' request, all interviews were conducted in Spanish.

STUDENT PROFILES

Abel Juárez. [The names of all students and family members have been changed to protect their privacy.] Abel has one older brother and two younger sisters. His parents are both natives of the Mexican state of Tamaulipas and immigrated to the U.S. illegally. They settled in Baytown, a coastal city of approximately 70,000, located 30 miles east of Downtown Houston (USBC 1991). Baytown is served by Goose Creek Independent School District (ISD), which has an enrollment of approximately 18,000 students, of which 37 percent are Hispanic, 17 percent are Black, and 45 percent are White (TEA 1998). Abel graduated from high school in three years, and then graduated from Rice University in Houston in three years, majoring in mechanical engineering.

Carlos Ojeda. Carlos graduated as salutatorian of his class of nearly 500 seniors, finishing with a 99.5 GPA in the Advanced Honors Program. He has five older sisters and one younger sister. His father, a native of Nuevo León, and his mother, from San Luis Potosí, both immigrated to the U.S. illegally and settled in Hidalgo County in the Rio Grande Valley. Hidalgo County has a population of over 380,000, of which more than 315,000 are of Mexican origin (USBC 1991). Carlos's school district has an enrollment of over 20,000 students, of whom 98 percent are Hispanic (TEA 1998). Carlos is currently majoring in Engineering at the University of Texas-Pan American in Edinburg, Texas.

Antonio Ortega. Antonio graduated as valedictorian of his class, finishing with a 108.9 GPA in the Advanced Honors Program. He has one older brother and a younger sister.

His mother, the only single parent in the sample, is a native of Chihuahua and immigrated to the U.S. illegally in the mid-1970s. After migrating to Kansas, Carlos's family settled in Hereford in the Texas Panhandle. Hereford ISD has an enrollment of just over 4,400 students, of whom 73 percent are Hispanic and 25 percent are White (TEA 1998). Antonio, a National Merit Scholar, is currently attending Harvard University, majoring in Engineering.

Martín Cantú. Martín graduated fourth in his class of over 300 seniors, with a GPA of 100.2. He is the second youngest of 11 children, having six brothers and four sisters. His parents, both natives of Zacatecas, immigrated to the U.S. illegally and settled in San Antonio. The San Antonio metropolitan area has a population of over 1.2 million, of which 543,000 are of Mexican origin (USBC 1991). The San Antonio ISD is one of the largest school districts in Texas, with an enrollment of more than 61,000 students, of whom 84 percent are Hispanic. The enrollment at Martín's high school is over 88 percent Hispanic, with 85 percent of the students listed as economically disadvantaged (TEA 1998). Elected three times to *Who's Who Among American High School Students*, Martín is majoring in Mechanical Engineering at Texas A & M University in College Station, Texas.

Ricardo Castillo. Ricardo graduated as president of his senior class and was an All-District athlete. He is the youngest of 18 children, all of whom have graduated from high school and attended college. Ricardo's 17 brothers and sisters include 12 who have university degrees and four who have community-college degrees. His parents, both first-generation *tejanos*, picked cotton with their families throughout South and West Texas, finally settling in the small town of Loraine. Loraine, population 731, is in Mitchell County, in West Texas. Sixty-seven percent of the residents in Mitchell County are White and 28 percent are of Mexican origin (USBC 1991). The school district is the smallest of the sample, having an

enrollment of 199, of whom 59 percent are Hispanic and 35 percent are White. More than 75 percent of the students in Loraine ISD are listed as economically disadvantaged (TEA 1998).

Ricardo recently became the thirteenth college graduate in the family, graduating from Angelo State University in San Angelo, Texas.

FINDINGS

The findings that follow were generated by an initial list of 18 open-ended questions that aimed at permitting the parents to provide as much information as possible. The data from the audiotapes were then transcribed, translated, and analyzed for common themes that emerged among the five families. Not surprisingly, when I asked them *why* they involved themselves in certain activities, they explained that it had to do with their personal and family belief systems. To minimize researcher bias, each family was given the opportunity to review the findings and conclusions for accuracy and correctness, and appropriate changes were made to reflect their voices.

WHAT THESE MIGRANT PARENTS BELIEVE

It all starts with a vision. At least one parent, with strong support from the other, had the vision of superior achievement for the children. These parents had remarkably high academic expectations as well as performance standards. They expected all the children to be successful in some profession of their own choosing.

Parents are the first teachers. These parents considered themselves partners with teachers in their children's education. They saw themselves as their children's first teachers and recognized their responsibility to provide as much academic support as possible when the children were out of school and in the parents' care.

Graduating from high school (college) is not negotiable. These families expected all their children--girls and boys--to graduate, preferably with honors. Getting a college degree was not part of the original vision, but these parents expanded their expectations to include college when educators informed them that their children had the achievement profile to succeed in college. As the older children began college, the graduation goal changed from high school to college and obtaining a professional degree.

Keep the main thing the main thing. In word and action, the parents in this study made it clear that education was the top priority for the whole family. Farm work or any other type of work was secondary for the children, and parents did not allow it to interfere with school. One family gave each of their 18 children \$300 in seed money when they went off to college--a considerable commitment, given their limited resources. Another father sold encyclopedias door-to-door after working all day at a slaughterhouse; although he could not speak English, he did this to win free sets of the reference books for his children.

In school, these families did not expect the children to waste time but to focus on the lesson and to be academically engaged. Except for music, school organizations, sports, and other extra-curricular activities were considered secondary to academic achievement. Such activities were allowed as long as the children maintained high grades. Their motto was "No 'A,' No Play." There was little or no money for luxuries, thus they chose to provide adequate food, medical attention, clothing, books, reference materials (e.g., encyclopedias and dictionaries), computers, and school supplies for the children. This also served to provide fewer distractions such as video games, cars, music entertainment systems, etc.--the children's lives revolved around school, chores, homework, church, and family fellowship.

No one's going to give you anything on a silver platter. In their own words, these parents were self-sufficient, proactive *luchistas* (i.e., strivers), and expected their children to be the same. They did not expect anything to be given to them in a *platón de plata* (i.e., silver platter). On the contrary, these families were very sensitive to the anti-immigrant stereotype of the illegal immigrant coming to the U.S. and sponging off the government, and took pride in not soliciting help from health and social services. Moreover, they encouraged a mindset in their children that they were just as bright as their mainstream classmates, and could outwork and outthink their way to success in this country.

Respeto. Similar to Valdez (1996), I found that these families expected the children to respect themselves and their teachers, as well as other students. Children understood that teachers and school administrators were to be considered *segundos padres*, i.e., second parents. These parents expected their children to be respectful and cooperative, but also competitive high achievers.

Be proud of who you are. As their children began to experience more success in school, these families took pride in all their children's accomplishments, pointing out to their children the assets that helped them achieve so well: their individual gifts, their older siblings who were there to help, the superiority of being bilingual and bicultural, and the mental and physical toughness they had developed from persevering through the various family hardships and struggles.

Religious Faith. [This topic was not solicited by the researcher.] Adhering to strong religious beliefs, three of the five families professed to be devout practicing Christians and followed a strict moral code, giving much credit to their faith in God as helping them overcome the numerous hardships confronted by the family.

You don't need to spank your children. These parents did not consider corporal punishment an effective form of discipline. They expected their children to be self-disciplined and very conscious that their behavior, good or bad, reflected on the entire family. These families used extra chores, work details, and revocation of school privileges as forms of discipline.

WHAT THESE MIGRANT PARENTS DID

Made sure that the oldest children were high achievers. They spent more time working with the oldest children for two reasons: (1) older children were more academically challenged because of their limited English proficiency; and (2) given the parents' educational levels, it was easier to help the older children in the lower grades.

Preferred to involve themselves in school activities with an academic focus. They never missed one-to-one parent-teacher or parent-counselor conferences regarding their children's academic progress. If the teacher did not speak Spanish, they asked the school for an interpreter or, more commonly, they asked an older child to translate. None of the parents participated in Migrant Parent Advisory Councils or Site-Based Decision-Making Committees, however, they did occasionally attend PTA or large campus meetings. They attended few campus-wide meetings, mostly because they were conducted in English only, and they did not understand what was being discussed. On the other hand, they attended much more regularly when schools conducted the meetings bilingually or provided translators during meetings.

Attended all ceremonies in which their children were being recognized. They attended no matter how small the recognition and no matter how difficult it was for them to attend.

Even when the recognition meetings were conducted totally in English, these parents recognized that their presence was extremely important and meaningful to their children.

Ensured that at least one parent attended to the children after school. Even if it meant having to sacrifice much-needed income, they took jobs that allowed them the flexibility to be home for their children after school. The single mother, for example, chose to work as a house maid despite better job opportunities, all because the house maid job allowed her to finish her work in time for her to be home when her children got out of school. In other families, the fathers chose to work two or three jobs in order to allow the mothers to attend to school matters that might arise during the day, and to be there when the children got home from school.

Monitored free-time activity very closely. They allowed little or no time for TV, video games, or “hanging out” with friends. Often, it was the lack of resources that did not allow the children luxuries like video games, stereo systems, and personal automobiles. However, the parents saw this as an advantage rather than a deficit, because it allowed the children to stay focused on their studies. Indeed, they took great care to ensure that their children’s friends were also academically focused, and encouraged them to form self-help study groups, especially in high school. Homework, chores, family time, and academic engagement activities were top priorities after school.

One parent assumed the primary responsibility for school performance. In three of the families, mothers were responsible for school-related issues and academic performance; in the other two, fathers were responsible. In all cases, it was the parent with the highest educational level. Also in all cases, the second parent acted as alternate, usually equally informed and working side-by-side with the primary parent. This study suggests that

educational level -- not gender -- is what matters to parents in deciding who assumes the responsibility for school performance.

Encouraged higher-level thinking skills. They conversed with the children as intellectual equals, yet maintaining the aspect of *respeto*. They discussed complex, sometimes sensitive, family problems and decisions using advanced language forms in Spanish. Parents devoted much time to reading, story-telling, and physical play, especially during pre-school years, and made extensive use of oral language, vocabulary, fantasy, and critical thinking skills during bedtime stories in Spanish.

Provided whatever academic help they were able to give. Considering their education level, these parents tried their best to help with spelling, reading, science, and math, mostly in Spanish. In the process of helping their children, they learned English from their children.

Provided the most effective learning materials they could afford. These included library books, children's bible books, encyclopedias, dictionaries, and, in two cases, even personal computers. These parents used what limited resources they had to shop at garage sales, flea markets, and thrift stores to buy their children the educational resources they needed. They also visited local municipal libraries almost weekly, making sure the children had plenty of reading materials at home.

Advocated firmly for their children at school. Willing to endure possible embarrassment because of their limited English skills, modest dress, or unfamiliarity with school protocol, they were not intimidated by school staff and other authorities. They gave all due respect to teachers and administrators and accepted nothing less in return. These parents nipped small problems in the bud, making sure their children received the same fair treatment as their peers, especially regarding academic opportunities.

Minimized school interruptions. At all grades, but especially at the secondary level, these families made remarkable personal sacrifices to ensure that their children did not miss school. One family flew the son down from Indiana so that he could be home on the first day of school. Another father interrupted his work in the fields to drive his daughters from Washington State to San Luis Potosí and Monterrey, so that they would not miss school. He dropped off his daughters and immediately returned to Washington to finish the harvest.

Permitted children to participate in musical activities. They favored activities such as band, orchestra, and *mariachi*, but participation always depended on academic performance. Nonetheless, musical activities were favored above sports, clubs, and student government; hard contact sports were least favored because of the possible financial impact that injuries might have on the family.

While the data and the overall achievement of all 41 children suggest very strongly that the ways in which these migrant parents involved themselves in their children's education were both effective and commendable, there were key human and physical resources that contributed to their success.

KEY RESOURCES

Deliberately developed the older children as mentors and tutors. These parents realized that the older siblings comprised the academic learning capital of the family, and accorded them more respect by delegating certain *in loco parentis* responsibilities to them. As the older children became academically successful, they mentored and tutored the younger children, helping them with their homework, advising them on courses to take in high school, as well as college admissions and financial aid.

Made extensive use of learning resources in the community. These families visited the local branch library regularly and often, especially during the summer months. Each child checked out books to read at home. Library fines were no deterrent. These parents chauffeured children to school functions, study-group meetings, and school laboratories to complete science projects, etc., even late in the evenings and on weekends. As long as it had to do with school, parents responded quickly, willingly and with a positive attitude.

Valued counselors and teachers as critical resources. The scholarships that the Rice and Harvard students received would not have been possible without considerable help from their counselors. Educators were also responsible for expanding the parents' vision to include getting a college degree. Unfortunately, especially with some of the older children born in Mexico, there were instances where school counselors did not inform the parents about residency and citizenship requirements for admission to college and for receiving financial aid. As a result, some of the older children--in spite of equally high achievement--did not have the same college opportunities as some of their younger siblings.

CONCLUSIONS

As mentioned earlier, most of the literature on migrant students would suggest that the term "high-achieving migrant student" should be an oxymoron. The fact is that, compared to other student populations, little has been written about migrant students and much less about their parents' role in their education. Unfortunately, what *has* been written about migrant students has been based on disadvantaged, deficit, or at-risk theories of academic failure. That is, much ado has been made about the negative effects of Mexican-origin culture, the lack of adoption of "American" values, and the supposed lack of high aspirations (Coalson 1977; Heller 1968; Madsen 1966; Schwartz 1971).

Manaster et al. (1992), for example, concluded that migrant students who were born in México, and had parents who were born in México, tended to be low performers. Further, they attended smaller high schools in smaller towns and came from families that were larger, poorer, more rural, and more “foreign.” Even Prewitt-Díaz and his colleagues (1990), certainly the most frequently cited and perhaps the most comprehensive ethnography on the effects of migration on children, conclude their study by suggesting the existence of what they call “the culture of migrancy” (p. 117). By that, they suggest that migrant parents feel that the cycle of migration is too hard to break and that their children are likely to end up being migrants too. This study clearly contradicts the conclusions of these authors.

This study supports other scholars who propose that the parents of high-achieving migrant students do not involve themselves in their children education in the same way as more “traditional” parents do. It further suggests certain things educators can do to partner with migrant parents more effectively, and thereby enhance the academic achievement of migrant students.

WHAT EDUCATORS CAN DO

View the children’s migrant / immigrant experience as a positive attribute, not a deficit. In fact, the struggles and hardships directly experienced by the family have given the children strengths such as: perseverance, focus, motivation, discipline, attention to detail, team work, resiliency, initiative, setting priorities, resourcefulness, and being bilingual / bicultural.

Help migrant parents get involved in activities that meet their needs, not the school’s needs. If parents are primarily interested in the academic achievement of their children, then one-to-one parent-teacher or parent-counselor meetings may be more important than joining

the Migrant PAC or the PTA. Also, asking them to attend activities involving their children, especially awards recognitions, should prove especially effective. Sensitize school staff to understand that education is a very high priority for migrant parents. However, as a *non-traditional* parent sub-group, they may not readily participate in more traditional parent involvement activities like PTA or helping teachers in the classroom.

Encourage parents to establish a tradition of academic excellence. Beginning with the oldest children, urge them to expend maximum attention and energy as early as possible to enable the oldest children to be high achievers. This will pay huge dividends with the younger children later when the older siblings mentor and tutor the younger ones.

Help parents resolve their children's U.S. citizenship as soon as possible. If it is expected that children will attend a university in the U.S., parents should know that they must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents by at least their senior year in high school. Educators must explain to them that, in most states, even if migrant students graduate at the head of the class, they cannot receive scholarships and other types of federal financial aid unless they are legal residents. Because the legalization process is extremely complex and slow moving on both sides of the border, parents should know this information as early as Grades 5-6. This type of parent training can be done without directly asking parents about their personal citizenship status. Moreover, school-community liaison staff can put parents in contact with agencies and individuals who can help them negotiate the legal residency process.

Empower migrant parents to be advocates for their children. Help parents develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will help them communicate with teachers, counselors, and school administrators in *any* school, in any state, whether in México or the U.S. They need to know what questions to ask, and to whom they should ask them. Migrant

parents need to know who the power brokers and gatekeepers are. Train them on the various school programs available to meet the needs of their children, as well as state graduation and promotion requirements. They need to know their rights under the law, including the protocol--how to get things done legally and effectively, with due respect and consideration among all concerned.

Reach out to migrant families during evening hours and on weekends. For equity reasons, schools located in economically depressed areas should offer extended-day and weekend programs that allow students to access print and multi-media libraries, science laboratories, and computer banks to help with homework, class projects, distance-learning programs, or internet access. Evenings and weekends can also be used for PTA meetings, one-to-one parent-teacher or parent-counselor conferences, legal residency counseling, ESL classes, and training parents on home-teaching skills.

PARTING THOUGHTS

At the outset of this study, the only thing I knew for certain was that I had identified five migrant students who had defied the odds and had achieved remarkably well in school. Somehow, they had overcome the deficits of limited-English-proficiency, poverty, high mobility, and low social capital, and had succeeded academically beyond all expectations. I wondered if they had what I call, the *Rambo Gene* -- that is, the notion that some children are going to succeed no matter what adversity is thrown their way. To be sure, I knew nothing of their parents or whether they even had siblings.

Certainly, the 41 high-achieving migrant children represented in these five remarkable families challenge much of the literature mentioned above, as well as the *Rambo Gene* notion. Many of the students and their parents were born in México. Some of them attended small

schools in small towns with few facilities and special services. Further, some of them came from families that were poor and large. Most of the parents and many of the children would have been considered illegal aliens, just about as “foreign” as one can get. The fact is, that despite their extraordinary superior achievements, these migrant students were both bilingual and bicultural – they succeeded personally and academically without giving up their “Mexicanness.” Also, contrary to Prewitt-Diaz’s (1990) prediction, these five incredible families represent 41 children who were bound and determined to get out of the “culture of migrancy” no matter what.

As mentioned earlier, this study supports those scholars who propose that the parents of high-achieving minority students do not involve themselves in their children’s education in the same way as more “traditional” parents do. Indeed, given today’s concern with academic excellence *and* equity, it further suggests that perhaps educators should devote more energy and resources into more “non-traditional” ways of involving low-income language- or ethnic-minority parents, and thereby enhance the academic achievement of their children. Truly, it may be more about access than apathy ... more about barriers than brains.

REFERENCES

- Bressler, S. L. 1996. Voices of Latina migrant mothers in rural Pennsylvania. In *Children of la frontera: Binational efforts to serve Mexican migrant and immigrant students*, ed. J. L. Flores, 311-24. Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools.
- Cárdenas, J. A. 1976. *Education and the children of migrant farmworkers: An overview*. Cambridge, MA: Center for Law and Education, Harvard University.
- Chavkin, N. F. 1991. *Family lives and parental involvement in migrant students' education*. Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools (ED 335 174).
- , 1996. Involving migrant families in their children's education: Challenges and opportunities for schools. In *Children of la frontera: Binational efforts to serve Mexican migrant and immigrant students*, ed. J. L. Flores, 325-39. Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools.
- Coalson, G. O. 1977. *The development of the migratory farm labor system in Texas: 1900-1954*. San Francisco: R and E Research Associates.
- Cranston-Gingras, A., and D.J. Anderson, D. J. 1990. Reducing the migrant student dropout rate: The role of school counselors. *The School Counselor* 38(2): 95-104.
- Garza, Jr., E. 1998. Life histories of academically successful migrant students. Ph.D. diss., The University of Texas at Austin.
- Guba, E., and Y. Lincoln. 1994. Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In *The handbook of qualitative research*, eds. N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln, 105-17. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

- Heller, C. S. 1968. *Forgotten youth at the crossroads*. New York: Random House.
- Henning-Stout, M. 1996. ¿Qué podemos hacer?: Roles for school psychologists with Mexican and Latino migrant children and families. *School Psychology Review*, 25(2): 152-64.
- Hinojosa, D. and L. Miller. 1984. Grade level attainment among migrant farmworkers in south Texas. *Journal of Educational Research*, 77(6): 346-50.
- Madsen, W. 1966. *Mexican-Americans of South Texas*. New York: Holt, Rhinehart, & Winston.
- Manaster, G. J., J.C. Chan, and R. Safady. 1992. Mexican-American migrant students' academic success: Sociological and psychological acculturation. *Adolescence*, 27(105): 123-36.
- Mertens, D. M. 1998. *Research methods in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative and qualitative approaches*. Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Patton, M. Q. 1990. *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. 2d ed. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Prewitt-Díaz, J. O. 1991. The factors that affect the educational performance of migrant children. *Education*, 111(4): 483-86.
- Prewitt-Díaz, J. O., R.T. Trotter, II, and V.A. Rivera, Jr. 1990. *Effects of migration on children: An ethnographic study*. State College, PA: Pennsylvania Department of Education.
- Rasmussen, L. 1988. *Migrant students at the secondary level: Issues and opportunities for change*. Las Cruces, NM: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools (ED 296 814).

- Reyes, P., J.D. Scribner, and A. Paredes Scribner, eds. 1999. *Creating learning communities: Lessons from high performing Hispanic schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Romo, H. D. 1996. The newest “outsiders”: Educating Mexican migrant and immigrant youth. In *Children of la frontera: Binational efforts to serve Mexican migrant and immigrant students*, ed. J. L. Flores, 61-91. Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools.
- Salerno, A. 1991. *Migrant students who leave school early: Strategies for retrieval*. Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools (ED 335 179).
- Schuler, D. B. 1990. Effects of family mobility on student achievement. *ERS Spectrum*, 8(4): 17-24.
- Schwartz, A. J. 1971. A comparative study of values and achievement: Mexican-American and Anglo youth. *Sociology of Education*, 44: 438-62.
- Siantz, M. de Leon. 1990. Maternal acceptance/rejection of Mexican migrant mothers. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 14(2): 245-54.
- Siantz, M. de Leon, and M.S. Smith. 1994. Parental factors correlated with development outcome in the migrant head start child. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 9(3): 481-503.
- Texas Education Agency (TEA). 1998. *District snapshot report 1997-98*. Austin, TX: Texas Education Agency.
- , 1999. *1998-99 state performance report: Title I, part c, elementary and secondary education act, state agency program for migrant children*. Austin, TX: Texas Education Agency.

- Texas Migrant Interstate Program (TMIP). 1998. *Exemplary migrant students of Texas*. Pharr, TX: Texas Migrant Interstate Program.
- Trotter, A. 1992. Harvest of dreams. *The American School Board Journal*, 179(7): 14-19.
- U. S. Bureau of the Census (USBC). 1991. The Hispanic population in the United States: March 1990. *Current Population Reports*. (Series P-20, No. 449). Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Office.
- Valdés, G. 1996. *Con respeto: Bridging the distances between culturally diverse families and schools: An ethnographic portrait*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Wright, A. 1995. *Reauthorized migrant education program: Old themes and new*. Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools. (ED 380 267).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Roberto E. Treviño was born in Corpus Christi, Texas. His family immigrated to the U.S. from the Mexican states of Nuevo León and Coahuila, coming as undocumented farmworkers. Although he migrated with his parents as a child, he graduated as Salutatorian of his class and entered St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas, graduating *magna cum laude* with a B.A. in English in 1968. Upon graduation from St. Edward's, he served four years as an infantry officer in the U.S. Marine Corps, including combat service in the Republic of Vietnam.

Discharged as a captain in 1972, he entered the Graduate School of The University of Texas. He has an M.A. in Bilingual Education and Applied Linguistics, and a Ph.D. in Educational Administration from The University of Texas at Austin. He is also a Fellow in the Cooperative Superintendency Program of the UT College of Education.

For 13 years Dr. Treviño worked with the Texas Education Agency, most recently as Director of Programs in the Division of Migrant Education, where he had statewide oversight of parent involvement, identification and recruitment, and compliance monitoring of the state's 400-plus Migrant-funded school districts and 20 education service centers. He is currently on the graduate faculty of the College of Education at The University of North Texas in Denton, Texas, where he continues his research on migrant and immigrant students and their families.

Dr. Treviño and his wife, Mary, also a former migrant, have three grown children and two grandchildren.