

Preschool feeding practices and beliefs among low-income Hispanic WIC parents



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Purpose



- To examine preschooler feeding practices and beliefs among low-income Hispanic parents in Texas
- To compare practices and beliefs between Spanish-speaking and English-speaking Hispanics



Background

- Prevalence of child overweight is especially high among Hispanic children in the U.S.
- Some parental feeding practices are associated with children's food intake and weight status
- Cultural context
 - Feeding child associated with being a good mother
 - Perception of “chubby” kids as healthy
- Level of acculturation is related to dietary practices – to feeding practices as well?

Sources: Hoelscher et al. 2004; Faith et al.; Hodges 2003, Baughcum et al. 2001; Satter 1996; Kaiser et al. 1998; Gonzalez et al. 2006; Brewis 2003; Crawford 2001; Reifsnider et al. 2006; Romero-Gwynn & Gwynn 1997)



Methods

- Convenience sample of parents (of children ages 1-5) recruited from 7 WIC clinics in Texas
- Participants were asked to complete several instruments including:
 - The Preschooler Feeding Questionnaire
 - Short demographic survey
 - Respondent's age
 - Monthly income
 - Main language spoken at home



Preschooler Feeding Questionnaire (PFQ)

- Developed by Baughcum, et al (2001)
- 32-items measuring parental practices and beliefs
 - 8 subscales:
 - Difficulty in child feeding
 - Concern about child overeating or being overweight
 - Pushing child to eat more
 - Using food to calm child
 - Concern about child being underweight
 - Child's control of feeding interactions
 - Structure during feeding interactions
 - Age inappropriate feeding



Preschooler Feeding Questionnaire (PFQ)

- Translated into Spanish and back-translated
- Field tested in Texas WIC clinics for readability and comprehension
- Appropriate for low-literacy populations



Analysis

- Exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation
 - Loadings above .40 considered
 - 2 items deleted
 - 8-factor structure emerged
- Cronbach's alpha / Pearson correlation coefficients calculated to determine internal reliability



Analysis

- Means and standard deviations calculated for subscales
 - Non-Hispanics
 - All Hispanics
 - English-speaking Hispanics
 - Spanish-speaking Hispanics
- ANOVA with post hoc analyses, controlling for education
- Significance level set at $p < 0.05$



Characteristics of participants

- 265 participants – 30 deleted because of ineligibility
- **177 Hispanics** - 111 reported Spanish as main language spoken at home
- Mostly women (98%)
- 40% had monthly household income < \$1000

Results for PFQ

Factor	Sample Mean	SD	Internal Consistency Coefficient
1-Parental worry about weight status	2.89	1.20	.87
2-Difficulty in child feeding	2.30	.75	.80
3-Concern about child overeating	1.62	.77	.72
4-Using food to calm child	1.98	.80	.68
5-Pushing child to eat more	2.39	.90	.64
6-Use of Rewards	3.12	.80	.51
7-Child's control of feeding	2.69	.86	.40*
8-Unstructured mealtimes	2.84	.93	.20*



Comparisons between English and Spanish-Speaking Hispanics

	English Speakers	Spanish Speakers	F and p values
1-Parental worry about weight status	2.05 (.89)	3.38 (1.08)	70.32**
2-Difficulty in child feeding	2.13 (.78)	2.39 (.72)	4.81*
3-Concern about child overeating	1.43 (.67)	1.72 (.81)	5.76*
4-Using food to calm child	1.83 (.72)	2.06 (.83)	3.63
5-Pushing child to eat more	2.18 (.92)	2.51 (.87)	5.57*



Conclusions and Implications

- Acculturation is an important variable to consider
 - Less acculturated parents engaged in obesity promoting behaviors more often
 - They were also more concerned
 - Do these results conflict with other data?
- Implications for interventions

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