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Migrant Strength-Based Protocol (MSBP): A Strength-Based Approach Tool to Guide Migrant School Liaisons in Their Family Development Interaction

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Migrant Strength-Based Protocol (MSBP):
A Strength-Based Approach Tool to Guide Migrant School Liaisons
in Their Family Development Interaction

By
Gerry Lopez

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:
Professor Patricia Baquedano-Lopez, Chair
Professor Heinrich Mintrop
Professor Julian Chow

Fall 2016
Migrant Strength-Based Protocol (MSBP):
A Strength-Based Approach Tool to Guide Migrant School Liaisons in Their Family Development Interaction

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By
Gerry Lopez
ABSTRACT

Migrant Strength-Based Protocol (MSBP):
A Strength-Based Approach Tool to Guide Migrant School Liaisons in Their Family Development Interaction

by

Gerry Lopez

Doctor of Education

University of California, Berkeley

Patricia Baquedano-Lopez, Ph.D., Chair

Many Latino students continue to experience low academic achievement across educational contexts. Despite programmatic efforts, few academic or school-based interventions in the recent past have demonstrated a reliable way to increase their student outcomes. While parent involvement has been considered as an intervention to improve Latino student behavioral and academic outcomes, there are still significant gaps in the ways schools relate to these parents. In the last fifty years we have learned that the most impactful form of parent involvement is not when they come to the school site for meetings or workshops to ameliorate perceived deficits, deficiencies in their parenting or home environment. But rather, when they establish home behaviors that set academic supports and expectations for their children and which match the expectations of the school.

To introduce or strengthen such academic home behaviors and support some studies have suggested that the targeted use of school liaisons at home has led parents to become aware of the skills, assets and resources they possess and whose utilization have led to measurable positive results in schools. In these cases, school liaisons were used as an extension of the school or district academic program. They visited targeted students’ homes and utilized a strength-based approach which involved them guiding parents to identify available strengths and assets inherent in their family. The strengths and assets that the family possessed were then combined with the resources that the liaisons provided or identified. They were then combined to improve student outcomes.

However, in Migrant Region X, the current training that migrant liaisons receive do not prepare them for the specific purpose of working with parents. This lack of training does not allow them to develop and empower the family’s capacity to activate and use their existing social and human capital (inherent family strengths and assets) to address their children’s’ academic needs. Even if migrant liaisons were aware of the valuable assets and strengths that families possess they have no established formal protocol in which to consistently approach their interaction with migrant families. A tool is needed to guide them upon engaging parents in a strength-based process. Without proper training and access to a strength-based protocol these strengths and assets remained untapped.

My intent in this design study was to format a sequence of workshops and development activities to guide a team of migrant liaisons in their problem resolution interactions with parents to a higher degree of sophistication. Migrant liaisons would be led to expand their level of knowledge about factors that affect parent involvement. In particular, they would come to understand the need for employing a strength-based approach with families. Another change expected was that interaction with parents would be standardized and accorded by co-developing a Migrant Strength-Based Protocol (MSBP). A final expected study outcome would be that having benefitted from the
study’s content and protocol, migrant liaisons would report an increase in their perceived sense of efficacy in regards to working with parents. I found that the study produced data that showed liaisons moved decidedly towards favoring a strength-based approach with parents. However, the afforded study timeframe was not sufficient to fully develop the intended protocol. Liaisons also showed an increase in their perceived efficacy in working with parents.
DEDICATION

On the afternoon of Friday, March 8th, 2013, as I settled in my dorm room in preparation for the weekend’s array of courses that lay ahead, I received notice that my father, Medardo Lopez Azevedo, had succumbed to the effects of Parkinson’s disease and cancer. My mother, Juanita Ramirez de Lopez, was by his side and had dutifully and disinterestedly, for over a decade, tended to the needs demanded by his ailments. This dissertation is dedicated to this incredible man and woman who were essential in building my life, character and capacity. He with only a sixth-grade education and she attending only up to the third grade in a Mexican, rural school. But he always had a historical or philosophical tome in hand and mom looked odd without a Bible in hers. It was he that introduced me to many great historical men and women, and awakened my desire to find out what had made them great. And my mother guided me on a path to Christianity, that still affects my every decision and reaction. When I first heard my mother utter the biblical, parental admonition “raise up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it,” I immediately connected the two thoughts. What is the role of parents in creating great men and women? In essence, the topic for this dissertation was settled when I was a child and saw my parents being themselves. An equal measure of dedication I award my beautiful wife, Maria del Carmen, and children, Pablo Ariel and Diego Juan. If my parents provided the nexus for my theories regarding the effect of parents upon their children, then my wife provided the capable and conscious, equal research partner to experiment in raising our children. And it is because of her loving and dedicated childrearing practices that we have two amazing and accomplished sons; Pablo, my mathematician and musician, and Diego my builder and treasure hunter. I have often thought, it is as if God had blessed me with two sons, and had created them by making one out of my brain and the out of my heart; I cannot live without either. My dear sons you have been my most important experiment, my perfect design study.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Migrant Strength-Based Protocol (MSBP): A Strength-Based Approach Tool to Guide Migrant School Liaisons in Their Family Development Interaction

Abstract ................................................................................................................................. 1  
Dedication ............................................................................................................................... i  
Table of Contents .................................................................................................................. ii  
List of Figures ......................................................................................................................... vi  
List of Tables ........................................................................................................................ vii  
Acknowledgments ................................................................................................................... ix  

Chapter One: Problem of Practice and the Professional Knowledge Base ......................... 1  
Introduction ........................................................................................................................... 1  
Problem of Practice and Design Challenge ........................................................................... 1  
Knowledge Base .................................................................................................................. 3  
  *Social and Human Capital* ................................................................................................. 4  
  *Deficit Thinking in Educational Settings* ......................................................................... 5  
  *School Liaisons* ............................................................................................................... 6  
  *Strength-Based Approach* ............................................................................................... 7  
Context .................................................................................................................................. 9  
Desired Behavior .................................................................................................................. 9  
Justification ........................................................................................................................... 11  
Conclusion ............................................................................................................................ 12  

Chapter Two: Theory of Action .......................................................................................... 13  
Theory of Action .................................................................................................................. 13  
Theory of Intervention ......................................................................................................... 16  
Conditions ............................................................................................................................. 17  
Intervention Design ............................................................................................................. 18  
Main Activities ..................................................................................................................... 18
Sequence of Activities........................................................................................................19

Conclusion: Expected Outcomes..........................................................................................21

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology.........................................................23

Research Design..................................................................................................................23

  Design Development Methodology..................................................................................23

  Action Research Methodology.......................................................................................24

Elements of Research Design............................................................................................25

  Unit of Analysis and Study Participants........................................................................25

  Data Collection Strategies and Techniques....................................................................25

  Data Analysis Procedures...............................................................................................26

  Reliability.........................................................................................................................26

  Validity..............................................................................................................................26

  Transferability ...............................................................................................................27

  Rigor and Threats to Rigor.............................................................................................27

  Bias...................................................................................................................................28

Conclusion..........................................................................................................................28

Chapter Four: Findings.......................................................................................................29

Introduction.........................................................................................................................49

Organization of Data Analysis............................................................................................49

Impact Data Analysis..........................................................................................................30

  Vignette Findings............................................................................................................30

Awareness of Strengths and Assets....................................................................................40

Summary of Impact Data.....................................................................................................40

Process Data Analysis........................................................................................................41

  Session 1 Migrant Liaison Interaction with Parents Overview and Introduction.............45
### Chapter Five: Discussion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting the Design Challenge and Deriving Design Principles</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further Iterations</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-Examining the Theory of Action</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Research</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Limitations</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>References</strong></td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appendices</strong></td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A – Pre/Post Liaison Interview Protocol</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B – Pre/Post Vignette Scenario</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C – Vignette Pre/Post Response Questions and Probing Questions</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix D – Content-Based Evaluation #1– Deficit Thinking</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix E – Content-Based Evaluation #3– Social and Human Capital</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix F – Family Development Plan Sample</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix G – Action Research Reflection Tool for Critical Consultative Colleague</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix H – Vignette Observation and Feedback Protocol</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 – Current State of Migrant Liaisons.................................................................13

Figure 2.2 – State of Migrant Liaisons After Desired Behaviors Are Adopted......................15
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1 – Problem of Practice ................................................................. 2
Table 1.2 – Evidence in the Knowledge Base ............................................. 3
Table 1.3 – Desired Behaviors for Migrant Liaisons ................................. 10
Table 2.1 – Theory of Action ................................................................. 15
Table 2.2 – Theory of Intervention .......................................................... 17
Table 2.3 – Strength-Based Family Development Topics .......................... 18
Table 2.4 – Sequence of Events .............................................................. 19
Table 2.5 – Proximal and Distal Outcomes ............................................. 22
Table 4.1 – Indicators of Migrant Liaisons’ Awareness to Identify Strengths and Assets ........................................ 31
Table 4.2 – Migrant Liaison Jimenez ....................................................... 32
Table 4.3 – Migrant Liaison Diaz ............................................................ 33
Table 4.4 – Migrant Liaison Lopez .......................................................... 35
Table 4.5 – Migrant Liaison Ramirez ...................................................... 36
Table 4.6 – Migrant Liaison Azevedo ...................................................... 38
Table 4.7 – Migrant Liaison Salee ............................................................ 39
Table 4.8 – Impact Rubric Data Including Baseline, Outcomes, and Impact Difference ........................................ 41
Table 4.9 – Intervention Design/Sequence of Activities .......................... 42
Table 4.10 – Parent Involvement Research Review Debrief ...................... 47
Table 4.11 – Participant Responses to Home Scenario Exercise ............... 49
Table 4.12 – Item Identified and its Negative or Positive Interpretation ....... 50
Table 4.13 – Comparison and Contrast of Cornell Protocol’s Characteristics and Desired Characteristics of MSBP ........................................ 58
Table 4.14 – List of Concepts and Processes to be Included in a Migrant Strength-Based Protocol ............................................. 59
Table 4.15 – Matrix of Responses Regarding Elements of a Problem Solving Process ............................................. 69
Table 4.16 – Protocol Elements Matrix

Table 4.17 – Efficacy Score
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I was the proverbial teenager that though I knew it all. And I predictably, grew into an educator and school leader that thought in the same manner. The LEEP program has helped me on my way to recovery. I don’t know it all. We don’t know it all. Public education is a noble idea and aim but it is an experiment that has still not found a perfect formula to operate to full fruition. And that is why I enjoyed this program so much. It does not portend to give you all the answers or even one answer. It sets you on a quest rather than a destination; it gives you tool making skills rather than provide for you a weapon. It challenges you, until you fight back, push off, shout at, cajole or threaten the teaching staff and fellow students. And then, it asks you to challenge yourself. I thank Patricia Baquedano-Lopez. I greatly admire this professor and enjoyed her courses, comments and direction. From day one she supported my work with migrant liaisons and provided invaluable direction. I thank Rick Mintrop for his guerilla-teaching style. Iron does indeed sharpen iron. Much like a clam, I was prodded and irritated to the point of learning how to produce something of great value. I appreciate and admire you greatly. Julian Chow provided me with a great measure of encouragement and direction. I very much appreciate his suggestion to turn this dissertation into a training manual to bring parent liaisons to a professional level of training that may help them gain the proper status they merit, as co-educators in our school systems. Additionally, I want to express my gratitude to instructors Tina Trujillo, Cynthia Coburn, Erin Murphy-Graham, Xiaoxia Newton, Matt Wayne, Page Tompkins, John Hall, Arturo Cortez, Seenae Chong and Liz Zumpe. You all greatly amplified my learning and made the course work for this program a delightful experience. Also, many thanks to Mahua Baral, Annie Johnston and Grace Morizawa for your help in trying to turn my written voice from a narrative historical one into an analytical researcher's tone. I am getting better at this. Old habits die hard. I left two very special people for the end. To Liz Baham a very special “thank you.” Liz, it was you that most helped me wrestle with the elements of this dissertation. Your guidance and almost year-long collaboration with me made this dissertation possible. I will forever be in your debt. And right along with Liz were the able and supportive effort carried out by Reba Gray. Reba you are the glue that keeps the program together and the energetic smile that keeps it moving.

And I would be entirely remiss if I did not mention an often overlooked group of educators. I am talking about the very subjects of my study, migrant liaisons. Not just the eight magnificent ladies with whom I had the pleasure of working with during the workshops, but the entire corps of migrant liaison in Region X, and by extension all migrant liaison in the State and National program. I have witnessed seeing you “literally,” save lives. I do not exaggerate in this claim. You have harbored the oppressed, the exploited, the ignored the invisible. You have given succor and guidance to countless families, parents and children. And you have done so while being given insufficient training, resources and not at all the attention and merit you deserve. I will never cease to proclaim your value and effect. Indeed, you have trained up many children, parents and school staff members in the way they should go, and when they are old, they shall not depart from it. And I will never forget you.
CHAPTER ONE
PROBLEM OF PRACTICE AND KNOWLEDGE BASE

Introduction

Many Latino students continue to experience low academic achievement across educational contexts (Barron-McKeagney et al., 2001; Barron-McKeagney et al., 2002; Ford & Grantham, 2003). Despite programmatic efforts, few academic or school-based interventions in the recent past have demonstrated a reliable way to increase their student outcomes (Cerna et al., 2009; Ford & Grantham, 2003; Osterling, 2001; Ream, 2003). While parent involvement has been considered an important form of intervention since the 1960s for its correlation to student behavioral and academic outcomes (Coleman, 1966), there are still significant gaps in the ways schools relate to parents to improve the academic experiences of Latino students. We have learned that the most impactful form of parent involvement is not when they come to the school site for meetings or workshops to ameliorate perceived deficits, deficiencies in their parenting or home environment. But rather, when they establish home behaviors that set academic supports and expectations for their children (Valdes, 1996) and which match the expectations of the school. To the eyes of school administrators and teachers, many Latino parents do not exhibit school-based expectations of home behaviors or academic expectations for their children.

Studies have suggested that the targeted use of school liaisons at home has led parents to become aware of the skills, assets and resources they possess and whose utilization have led to measurable positive results in schools (Domina, 2005 and Chan & Koo, 2011; Hill & Taylor, 2004). In these cases, school liaisons, who are generally classified employees, were used as an extension of the school or district program. They visited targeted students’ homes and utilized a strength-based approach which involved them guiding parents to identify available strengths and assets inherent in their family. The strengths and assets that the family contained were then combined with the resources that the liaisons possessed or identified and all were used towards improving student outcomes. Lopez et al. (2001) found this to be the case as well. In this study, migrant liaison worked within districts with migrant student populations in Texas. In this study Lopez and his fellow researchers suggested that a strengths-based approach by study participants was in part related to the improvement of migrant students’ GPAs.

Problem of Practice

The problematic behavior is that migrant liaisons working with migrant student populations current training do not prepare them for the specific purpose of working with parents towards an end of developing and empowering their capacity to activate and use their existing social and human capital (inherent family strengths and assets) to address their families’ needs. Additionally, even if migrant liaisons were aware of the valuable assets and strengths that families possess they have no established formal protocol in which to approach their interaction with migrant families. A tool is needed to guide them upon engaging parents in a strength-based process (Table 1). Without proper training and access to a strength-based protocol, migrant liaisons may have difficulty consistently identifying valuable capital in families and may not fully use all available strengths and resources available in the home setting to guide families in addressing their academic needs.

Causes that may contribute to this effect appear to be that the role and duties of migrant liaisons may be confused with that of instructional assistants, clerks, or translators. Their role incorporates some aspects of these other classified school staff but their primary role is to work directly with families. However, I propose that we provide them with tools; professional development in identifying and utilizing social and human capital and a strength-based protocol give
structure to their interactions with families. This will help them better engage the population they serve to identify and resolve or minimize the problems they face in school.

Another cause may be that there is a lack of training and direction that has not guided them to organize their work duties in ways best suited to develop parents to use all their available assets and skills in support of their children. As stated above there is no formal training afforded to these migrant staff members when they are hired, to prepare them for the purpose of engaging parents. And finally, the social and human capital that they bring as part of their life experience is not being highlighted and utilized to allow them to enter into a strength-based relationship with parents that consider all the strengths, skills and assets that the family itself brings to the table.

Table 1.1: Problem of Practice: Underlying Causes as to why Migrant Liaisons are not Used to their Maximum Parent Empowerment Potential

| Problem of Practice | Migrant liaisons would greatly benefit from professional development that prepares them for their current duty expectations of working with parents towards the end of developing and empowering their capacity to activate and use their existing social and human capital to solve the problems that their children face in school. The elaboration of a strength-based tool is needed to establish migrant liaison and parent interaction upon a strength-based process and guide them in a more established formal manner. |
| Underlying causes contributing to the problem | ● The role and duties of migrant liaisons (at times also known as advocates) may be confused with that of IAs, clerks or translators. Their role incorporates some aspects of these other classified staff but their primary role is to work directly with families.  
● A lack of training and guidance that has not allowed migrant liaisons to organize their work duties in ways best suited to work with parents to guide them to use all their available assets and skills in support of their children.  
● The social and human capital that migrant liaisons bring as part of their life experience is not being highlighted and utilized to allow them to enter into a strength-based relationship with parents that consider all the strengths, skills, and assets that a family brings to confront their problems.  
● A lack of an accorded upon practices that helps migrant liaisons and parents interact upon a strength-based approach which seeks to identify and utilize existing social and human capital inherent in the home environment. |

Design Challenge

The principal challenge in this design project is that I will be attempting to produce a change in the migrant liaison’s attitudes, beliefs, knowledge and skills; specifically, to identify elements of social and human capital in their own live. We will then co-develop a strength-based protocol to guide their interaction with the parents they service. This challenge will be accomplished only if they are guided to an introspective point where they will not only identify the social and human capital...
they possess but believe that they can interact in such a way with parents that will lead them to help
them identify the social and human capital inherent in their family and present situation.

An additional design challenge of this theory of change lies in that although there is some
evidence in the educational area that strength-based parent development has worked in a number of
cases, a larger body of evidence supporting a strength-based approach is found in non-academic
setting such as mental health and social work. This approach has been used to substantial benefit in
non-academic fields in bringing about identification and activation of social and human capital in
study participants. While it will be a challenge to attempt to produce similar positive results with
migrant liaisons as they interact with migrant parents, the possible gains are worth the effort.

Knowledge Base

Studies (Table 3) have suggested that liaisons trained to develop parents in a strength-based
process have had moderate to substantial success in achieving their goals (Ziomek-Daigle, 2010;
Lopez et al, 2001). Another set of studies of social and human capital has revealed that while both
migrant parents and teachers possess these valuable elements they are substantially different in each
group. However, parent capital is often not “converted” easily into an acceptable form or even
considered as useful by school personnel (Cerna et al, 2009; Hancock, 2005; Osterling, 2001; Park et
al, 2011; Ream, 2003; Ream & Rumberger, 2008; Ren & Hu, 2013; Riegle-Crumb & Grodsky, 2010;

This is oftentimes due to deficit-thinking frames maintained by school workers. Liaisons in
a number of studies have achieved moderate to substantial results in activating parents’ social and
human capital to guide parents to support their children’s behavioral and academic outcomes.
However, they were only able to reach such results by benefiting from professional development
that allowed them to target, learn and then transmit specific, home, academic behaviors to the
families with whom they worked. In order to achieve a level where liaisons acted as agents of change
a certain level of sophistication needed to be attained. They needed to see their role as being pivotal
being able to attain parent engagement. This engagement with parents would lead to an extended
process in which parents and liaisons would work collaboratively to identify a problem to be solved
and identify possible solutions. They would then marshal all available resources; those of the family,
liaison, school and community, and attempt a solution. All of the above steps are missing in the
current manner in which migrant liaisons interact with migrant populations. I believe that my study
will fill the knowledge gap in how to reach this desired state.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Studies of social and human capital have revealed that while both migrant parents and teachers possess these valuable traits and behaviors they are substantially different in each group. Additionally, migrant parent capital is often not “converted” easily or even considered as useful by school personnel. This is often due to deficit-thinking frames maintained by school workers. Liaisons in the above studies have achieved moderate to strong results in activating parents’ social and human capital to guide parents to resolution of their children’s behavioral and academic outcomes. However, liaisons were only able to reach such results by using their own social and human capital to act as a bridge between parents and the school setting.</td>
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</table>
Deficit thinking and its possible effects on Latino student achievement have been noted in a substantial number of studies. This pejorative practice has been identified in numerous staff components of the educational system including teachers, administrators, counselors and liaisons. There appears to be a connection between deficit thinking and the inability to convert existing social and human capital found in the Latino family into a form that is understood and usable in present school settings.

Migrant liaisons must envision themselves as effective agents of change in leading parents to empowerment. Several studies document that the use of liaisons has achieved a range of modest to substantial results in helping guide parents to change their behaviors at home to improve their children’s behaviors through an empowerment process. Results also suggest that targeting mothers is most effective.

Studies have suggested that liaisons trained to develop parents in a strength-based process that incorporates the elements which are also propitious for teacher PD (collective participation, active learning, time span, content focus, and coherence) have had moderate to substantial success in achieving their studies’ goals.

Social and Human Capital

Bourdieu, along with Passeron, two French sociologists, have written on the term “cultural capital” to refer to the tools, mechanisms, and training that students need, to be successful in school. They postulated that the transmission of cultural capital was essential for the constitution and maintenance of classes in society, culture and education (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). Along with other researchers, they theorized that cultural capital traits are primarily engendered and transmitted by the students’ family (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977, DiMaggio, 1982; Lareau 2003; Lee & Bowen, 2006).

Bourdieu (1986) expanded on his initial concept of cultural capital into three distinct areas; economic capital, social capital and cultural capital. The concept of human capital was later added to this framework by Ihlen (2005). Economic capital is the possession of resources such as cash or other monetary assets. Social capital is composed of resources based on group membership, relationships, networks of influence and support. Cultural capital continues to be defined as the skills, education, knowledge and advantage that a person has, which can afford them higher status in society. Symbolic capital was also proposed in an earlier work by Bourdieu but will not be addressed at this time, as it has little application in the dynamic of parent involvement. Human capital is added to the above forms of capital and it refers to more technical knowledge gained from education and training such as mathematical knowledge or how to access financial aid which aids one in operating within a certain social class (Ihlen, 2005).

Bourdieu (1986) proposed that social capital seems to facilitate the acquisition of the other three capital sets. This theorist, who carried out his studies on French students attending catholic schools, states that an example of this would be when a parent sends his child to private school (exposing the child to the social capital of his teacher and the religious institution). In private school and in cultural forays that the parent and school supplies the child becomes well-versed in the arts and humanities. This causes the student to ingratiate himself with his teachers who share this same
capital. As this cultural capital expanded and shared, the child finds favor in his teachers’ eyes. As opposed to other students who do not share these cultural capital similarities. The child’s educational trajectory and home and school experiences provide the child the needed knowledge of processes and routines that will lead him to access and succeed in a university course of study (this human capital creates the knowledge path necessary to replicate the path that the students’ parents traveled to arrive at their present social status). The child then grows up to experience career and financial success (the economic capital achieved by a student is usually similar to that experienced by their parents).

In this above progression the social capital which was afforded by the child’s parent seemed to be the influential force in acquiring or developing the three other forms of capital. The child will take this acquired social capital and pass it on to its progeny thereby perpetuating their social status from one generation to the next. Bourdieu and researchers that followed (DiMaggio, 1982; Lareau 2003; Lee & Bowen, 2006) were of the belief that the social and cultural capital that were provided by the home environment determined the student’s own eventual social and human capital, DiMaggio and Lareau would go on to propose that the school environment had little if any effect in affecting a child’s social and cultural capital. Most recently Harvard economist Chetty (2014) found evidence in his study of mega data that seemed to support the above researchers’ proposition. Chetty looked at thirty years’ worth of census data and followed ten-thousand Americans from birth until their adulthood. He was attempting to quantify the various influences upon an individual’s life that may impact their movement between social classes. He found that the number one determinant of whether a child moved from one class to another was parental influence. The study found that what most often determined to which social class a child would belong was the social class to which the parent had belonged. Chetty also related that a combination of parental influence compounded along with an educational influence allowed for a certain level class ascension.

However, for a number of reasons some Latino parents are not able to utilize the social and human capital they possess. One reason may be that the capital elements inherent in some Latino households do not match up to those expected or accepted by the school setting. Another reason may be that the families themselves may not be aware that they possess valuable relationships and associations. A school’s failure to maximize upon a family’s social capital and the knowledge and information (human capital) that they possess, may actually be hindering academic progress.

**Deficit Thinking in Educational Settings**

A considerable number of researchers have found that deficit thinking permeates the mindset and practices of teachers and educational institutions in terms of how they view the Latino family and its present condition. Deficit thinking is defined as considering an individual or group, in this case the Latino family, as lacking or missing the necessary components to have success in the current educational situation (Solorzano, 1997). The resulting reasoning is that these families are viewed as having to be fixed. It has been postulated that this persistent deficit view is due to a failure to address it in teacher and administrator education programs (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991; Solorzano, 1997); while others think it is as a result of entrenched structural racism and pervasive stereotypes about families from different cultural backgrounds from the teachers’ backgrounds (Villenas et al, 1999; Zambranza & Zoppi, 2002); and others add teacher disdain for low social-economic students to this prejudicial mix (Sui-Chu & Willms, 1996).

Deficit thinking displayed in school settings has been linked to lower expectations for Latino students. These students tend to be assigned to remedial programs and lower tracked courses than are their counterpart in other demographic groups. Researchers found that these practices had much to do with the lowered expectations towards these “raced” students then with actual low achievement (Garcia & Guerra, 2004; Valencia, 2002; Villenas & Deyhle, 1999).
This mentality has been proposed as the main reason why so many reform efforts routinely fail (Garcia & Guerra, 2004); as the cause of why so many myths surrounding Latino under achievement tenaciously persist (Valencia, 2002); and even as the root of why students of color are kept out of gifted and talented programs (Ford et al, 2001). Ream (2003) identified deficit thinking as a factor in teachers who use what he terms “counterfeit social capital.” He defined counterfeit social capital as the relationships that teachers extend to their Latino students seemingly to support them in their progress to academic improvement. In reality, this researcher maintains that their true intention is to “rescue” these students from inadequate life experiences, which are causing their academic underachievement. López et al (2001) also identified a form of this counterfeit practice in a number of the migrant liaisons he encountered in his study.

Trent et al (1998) along with Osterling (2001) also note that deficit thinking prevents teachers from arriving at a proper valuation of the existing social capital found in Latino families. Even when it comes to counseling, it was found that deficit thinking plays a mediating part between counselor and student of color interactions (Ford & Grantham, 2003). These two researchers suggested that this might be because since most counselors are White and they tend to identify more with those families that share their ethnic background and less with students of color. Additionally, two studies focusing on the correlates associated with math outcomes found that teachers interacted and responded more positively to white math students than students of color (Riegle-Crumb & Grodsky, 2010 and Villalba, 2007). In these two studies, the writers stated a deficit thinking view of the students of color may have been a factor in the teachers’ responses.

School Liaisons

After looking at the literature and learning of the above theories and progressions in the development of social and human capital, I propose that migrant liaisons are well positioned to address and alleviate the barriers that parents may face in identifying and utilizing social and human capital in the school setting. The most complete definition of the distinct role that a liaison that works with categorical populations is offered by Shea et al. (2010). Their duties are described as, in relation to their targeted categorical student populations: identifying and recruiting students who fit the categorical profile, advocating for educational services, facilitating the transition of school records, informing their parents about educational opportunities, facilitating their access to (among many other needs) transportation, credit accrual and mental health care. Shea et al. go on to complete the definition by stating that many times these liaisons attend school meetings with students and their caregivers to act as advocates for the family. Clerical and reporting duties form the obligatory complement of assignments.

A number of successful models have used liaisons as agents of change in the lives of the families they target. Lopez et al (2001) researched high achieving migrant students, their families and the contribution afforded by migrant liaisons to identify the needed social and human capital that these families needed to adapt to a new educational school system. This study highlighted that migrant liaisons were needed to address the important need for collaboration among schools, social service agencies, and other community or grassroots organizations. This collaboration was necessary so that migrant families could face and surmount the increasingly complex and multiple barriers they experience in their continuously changing lifestyle.

Ziomek-Daigle (2010) also used liaisons in a study of dropout prevention. In this study, a team consistent of the parent and a liaison worked with the student considering dropping out and identified areas of concern or need in the student’s situation. Much like Ziomek-Daigle, Lopez et al (2001), and Martinez (1988) call for grounding parental education programs in more informal approaches, such as experiential learning guided by a liaison, rather than in the more traditional classroom approach. This experiential model could only be carried out by having the liaison support
the parent elaborate certain home practices that would discourage the student from dropping out. Martinez also proposes that parent involvement practices be intrusively developed in the students’ own home by way of liaisons conducting home visits. Several other studies pointed out the benefits of home visits by liaisons or other school personnel as a powerful way to increase the positive parenting practices of these parents (Becher, 1985; Becker & Epstein, 1982; Osterling, 2001).

Howland (2006) found that additional benefits that liaisons afford families are the introduction of conflict resolution skills which arise in and outside of the family unit; cultural brokering that must be addressed for the family to benefit from school and community services; direct support in the form of navigation of the school and community systems; and referral and advocacy to needed services. Bryan (2005) also found that the support liaisons afford contribute to the fostering of student achievement and resiliency. Liaisons varied in qualifications and were usually case-specific; Lopez et al (2001) study focused on migrant liaison that were Spanish speaking and some of them then had lived the migrant lifestyle themselves; Howland (2006) focused on English-speaking liaisons that had been trained to purvey conflict resolution workshops; and in Osterling (2001) case Spanish-speaking liaisons were the focus of how best to capitalize on the socio-cultural strengths of the Latino community. In these studies, all liaisons were classified staff members. The readings I undertook consistently displayed the benefit of using liaisons as part of an overall plan for parent involvement. Several of the studies also mentioned that use of liaisons is guided by written district policies that address the macro purposes for the parent involvement focus. This means to me that even if parent liaisons are employed in any given district they will not necessarily be used in a manner which the research I explored found to be the most profitable to change at-home parent behaviors. Lopez et al (2001) found in his study that one possible use of liaisons is to improve the living conditions at home, through linkage to community services, and parent employment opportunities that will then lead to distal positive student outcomes. This is what I define as a profitable use of parent liaisons. They actively highlight existing and improve the social, human and economic capital sets of a household. Since these cultural sets are associated with student outcomes possible, distal student improvements may follow.

Strength-Based Approach

Strength-based practice began in the field of social work and it was a way of viewing clients (the individual with whom a social worker was interacting) from a particular perspective. This perspective encompassed that the client held not just the truest definition of the issues they were confronting but, to a great extent, also the strengths and assets needed to reach a resolution of the issues being faced (Powell et al, 2004). Additionally, when employing the client’s family unit as a reference for diagnosis and using the resources that they afforded combined with available community resources there is a better chance of finding a solution the dilemma being addressed (Bryan & Henry, 2008). These last two researchers conducted their study of the effect of a strength-based approach in changing family home practices with Title 1 populations, very similar to the population with whom migrant liaisons interact. Jimerson (2004) recommended this approach to school counselors in working with California’s student population as a way of “increasing awareness and emphasis on the connections between strength-based assessment, youth development, and school success.”

This approach has found a profitable application in working with justice engaged youth (Clark, 1997; working with at-risk you in general (Clark, 1998; Smith, 2006); promoting awareness of and adoption of best practices in health in underrepresented populations (Brough et al, 2004); and as a vehicle to help vulnerable families develop resiliency practices (Walsh, 2002). Also, in the area of school-home connection, Steiner (2011) noted the positive effect of liaisons who carried out parent education workshops with the families of autistic children to augment their home behaviors and
improve the effectiveness of site-based interventions. The above studies all found positive results as a strength-based approach was used by social worker or school liaison and the client and their family. As Laursen (2000) suggested, a strength-based approach is better at arriving a solution to a problem being faced by a family than starting by casting a pathological frame of the family confronting the issue.

However, overreliance on a deficit approach by the educational establishment prevents some Latino Families’ strengths and assets from being considered. Thus these assets cannot be brought forth to be utilized in the effort to bring about positive results in their children. Researchers have noted that parent involvement that seeks to collaborate with families existing array of strengths and assets demonstrates a correlation to decreased suspensions (Behnke et al, 2008; Cerna et al, 2009; Drewry et al, 2010; Ream & Rumberger, 2008; Ziomek-Daigle, 2010); in general helps students adjust better to school demands (Osterling, 2001; Villenas et al, 1999; Zambranza & Zoppi, 2002); and it may be used as an indicator of future student success (Dufur et al, 2008).

However, another persistent pattern indicates that the parents of students of color are less likely to employ positive home engagement behaviors than their White counterparts (Chan & Koo, 2011 and Riegle-Crumb & Grodsky, 2010). Gronlick (1997) as well as Choy (2000) found that the benefit of parent involvement is mediated by the parents’ educational level. They found that it is more evident in those parents that had a high school or post-secondary education. According to these authors a lack of education diminishes the parents’ knowledge or ability to know why and how to become involved in their children’s education. Their findings highlight the tension between identifying viable patterns of behavior which may be actionable by the educational establishment and viewing these parents solely from a deficit perspective.

Even though evidence may show that Latino parents, especially recent immigrants, display a lower than average educational level, these families are not entirely devoid of capital sets. Latino families can be guided to develop a voice, that heralds that they possess valuable culturally specific capital sets. These can be used as is or retooled to best fit into a consumable and employable fashion by the existing educational setting. Often teachers display deficit thinking which leads them to disregard or ignore the cultural benefits of the Latino family (Ford & Grantham, 2003 and Villenas et al, 1999); this leads to Latino families not being able to use their cultural assets in a way that can benefit their children due to limitations of convertibility of their cultural and social capital into a form accepted by the teacher or school (Cerna et al, 2009; Hancock, 2005; Osterling, 2001; Park et al, 2011; Ream, 2003; Ream & Rumberger, 2008; Ren & Hu, 2013; Riegle-Crumb & Grodsky, 2010; Villalba, 2007; Villenas et al, 1999; Zambranza & Zoppi, 2002).

The proposal that parents can learn more productive practices (just like teachers and other professionals are expected to do) to adopt new parent involvement practices at school and home, has extensive support in the knowledge base. Several researchers have concluded that providing parent development workshops has proven to be beneficial. Improvement has been noted in having parents be influential in improving their children’s negative habits such as truancy, lack of attendance and dropping out of school (Barnard, 2004; Becher, 1985; Greenwood & Hickman, 1991; Hill & Taylor, 2004; McNeal, 2002; Ream, 2003; Ziomek-Daigle, 2010). Programs that intend to augment the existing repertoire of skills utilized by parents in at home practices range from encouraging reading at home with children, fomenting math skills, preventing truancy, improving attendance, discouraging dropouts, to helping children deal with stressful situations at school. All of these study aims were best effected when the school initiated efforts were undertaken in collaboration with parent existing strengths and assets at home and guided by a school liaison.
Context

The Migrant Education Program in Region X is a federally funded categorical compensatory program. This region’s service area encompasses six counties; Alameda, San Benito, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara and Santa Cruz. The program was instituted in 1965 to provide compensatory services and assistance to the children of agricultural migrant families, as part of the Elementary and Secondary Educational Act. I have worked for over fifteen years in the Migrant Region X area of service. This region includes over thirty districts where migrant students have been identified. In each of these districts one or more liaisons work with students and their families to support them with supplemental services to meet their academic, health and other family needs. These migrant staff members are employed by the regional office or the various districts in which they operate. There are a total of forty-one liaisons working in the region, of which 13 work with districts that are serviced by regional personnel. None of these staff members are under my direct supervision. My role as program manager places me in a role of consultant with the districts that employ them. The liaisons that work out of the Santa Clara County Office, my employer, fall under the direct supervision of the Migrant Director (who is also my supervisor) and the Manager or Identification and Recruitment.

All the liaisons currently working for Region X are female and they range in longevity with the program from the most recent who was hired less than six months ago to the oldest that has worked for the migrant education program for more than twenty years. Their educational background is similarly widespread. One has a master degree and a few have four-year bachelor’s degrees, on one extreme, while others have completed one to two semesters of college units. Many seem to have a predilection for working with preschool populations. They are all Hispanic, mostly Mexican-American, with a few of Central and South-American origin. Most liaisons present indigenous case studies themselves, as they mirror the population they serve (i.e. they are Latino, immigrants and several of them were formerly identified as migrant).

Currently liaisons working for the migrant program carry out most of their work out of central district offices. Migrant families in a given district usually go to the office to be recruited through a formal identification and recruitment process. This office is also usually where they provides most of their service for the families. If a family expresses a need or concern for their children or themselves the liaison sets about to find a district or community resource to fill the need. A "give-and-take" type of relationship is currently practiced between migrant liaisons and the families they serve. On average, each liaison supports a population of about a hundred and fifty students in about fifty to sixty family units. Because not all migrant families have children with academic problems each liaison typically work with only about a quarter to a third of the enrolled families. They tend to work with the neediest of families in their district programs, which amounts to anywhere from twenty to twenty-five families.

Part of a migrant liaison’s job is to contact every family unit once a year and document whether the family had any medical, academic or other needs. As stated above not all migrant families are in need of service. Many of the students are doing well academically or their families have learned to be informed consumers of their environment. These migrant families do not seek support for any particular need. This migrant staff provides service to these families over the twelve months that they are employed. Some families may need one or two points of contact during the year, while the needs and concerns faced by some families may end up consuming more of the liaisons time and resources.

Desired Behavior

It is desired that migrant liaisons believe that they can have a positive influence in improving families’ lives. It would be preferable that they appreciate the value of actively engaging families in
their own empowerment. It is desired that this change in mindset will result in them identifying possible deficit thinking practices that they may carry out in their contact with parents. An additional desired behavior is that they would consistently pursue a strength-based approach in their interaction with parents. In this manner their will not be to solely meet parent’s needs but identify and develop the families’ inherent social and human capital. By doing this, they will guide the family development toward meeting their own needs and becoming better consumers of their environment. After a professional development series, they should be able to identify valuable social and human capital in families, which may result in an increased sense of empowerment and capacity in the family (Table 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1.3: Desired Behaviors for Migrant Liaisons</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What are the desired behaviors that migrant liaisons should display?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Migrant liaisons should be able to define what “deficit thinking” and “strength-based approach” are and be able to identify when they are viewing a family situation from either perspective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Migrant liaisons should understand the concept of social and human capital and how it is generationally transmitted and how it is usually inherited within social classes. Participants should be able to operationalize the concept of “capital” into real life examples of family strengths and assets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Migrant liaisons should contribute to the co-development of a strength-based protocol that they can consistently use to guide parents solve their challenges, by utilizing their existing strengths and assets along with the resources that the Liaison can provide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Migrant liaison should be able to express a sense of greater efficacy in working with the families in their caseload as they become proficient at using the Migrant Family Protocol.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once the desired behaviors are adopted, when a family is engaged by the migrant liaison, and a problem is identified, then all available assets and resources are mobilized by all parties. As an example, for a child who is consistently tardy, a migrant liaison may provide transportation vouchers and may even acquaint the family with a transportation agency’s website and schedules. The assumption is that the reasons for the child’s tardiness must be due to lack of transportation. This may constitute a deficit-thinking practice; assuming that the child is tardy because the family is missing something (the school’s bus schedule, bus tokens or general lack of interest in getting the child to school in time). The migrant liaison’s intent may be benevolent but the solution was arrived upon by deficit-thinking.

However, utilizing a strength-based approach the migrant liaison would first assess the situation and try and identify all influences that cause the student to be habitually tardy. Then they would proceed to identify all available resources and assets available in the family unit, to help solve the problem. They may then suggest that the family would be expected to make use of its existing transportation assets, such as those available from family, friends and neighbors. Additionally, they may identify and address other needs the child may experience, that contribute to the habitual
tardiness. These may include not having an early enough bedtime, overall lack of home scheduling, resulting in child staying up too late watching television or not arising at a consistent time. For this purpose, specific scheduling templates may be introduced by the liaison to the family. Suggestions may include technical advice on how to use alarms on clocks or cellphones alerts, guiding them to establish home routines, or engaging the entire family (siblings or other parent figures in the home) in maintaining behavior expectations for the student.

As one can see the migrant liaison may lead the family into activating existing relationships and networks as well as adopting new mindset regarding routines and schedules at home. But these efforts stem from a strength-based approach. The migrant liaison approaches the family interaction to add resources but does not discount existing assets. The relationships and networks already existed in the family, the migrant liaison simply identified them. And the new knowledge proposed for the family was not done so from a deficit-thinking point of view.

This can only be accomplished if the migrant liaison employs techniques, tools and practices that will better prepare parents to use their skills, assets and strengths. This would be facilitated by building these practices into a tool that will be used as a protocol to guide and standardize interaction with migrant parents. For the example of a student with excessive tardiness used above, the exact combination of who does what and which tool is used depends on what the interaction between migrant liaison, family and student determine as they use the protocol. As the migrant liaison progresses through the protocol, the process may uncover that there is a role to play by some or all members of the household, to get the student to school on time. It may also be uncovered that family unit has plenty of assets and strengths to find a resolution to its own problem. The voucher that was provided to “solve” the tardiness issue may in actuality be superfluous and unnecessary.

Justification

Currently, Migrant Region X does not provide any specific training to its liaisons to prepare them to engage and interact with parents in a sophisticated strength-based manner, that seeks to identify and use the families social and human capital. If a strength-based approach is not utilized some of these migrant families, due to issues of convertibility, may not utilize all of their existing strengths and assets to deal with their problems and concerns. Unfortunately, a considerable number of researchers have found that deficit thinking permeates the mentality of teachers and educational institutions in terms of how it views the Latino family and its present condition. Due to the persistent evidence of deficit thinking by some in the educational settings many strengths and assets found in Latino families are left untapped. Unfortunately, it has been my experience that some migrant liaisons default to this toxic practice as they approach the families they serve.

The above noted deficit thinking approach to Latino families by some in the educational establishment follows a historic pattern of disenfranchisement and oppression towards them (Garcia & Guerra, 2004; Valencia, 2002; Villenas & Deyhle, 1999). These researchers posit that this systematic oppression creates the conditions that prevent families from reaching middle class mainstream norms and status. It may also act as a barrier for the proper valuation of students and families’ resources and assets (Trent et al, 1998 & Osterling, 2001). A strength-based approach begins to address and ameliorate these historic barriers faced by Latinos by realistically valuing strengths and assets found in the family. In the interest of being exhaustive in finding possible intervention to improve student outcomes, we must try and test the possibility that migrant liaisons may offer an additional and viable manner by which to confront student underachievement.

Migrant liaisons need to learn that marshalling all social and human capital available to them and the parents with whom they interact is a much more productive manner in which to address issues and concerns that arise in migrant families. They also need to be aware that a strengths-based
approach must be understood within the limitations, that have been placed upon parents, through years of systemic disenfranchisement. No amount of strength-based efforts will result in long lasting change until we address the underlying inequities that allow some students to experience success and others not. This use of a strength-based approach by migrant liaison will only occur, if they grow in sophistication in the way they interact with migrant families. They need to also go in awareness that parents are embedded in a system of relations of power, that prevents them, no matter how well-intentioned they are, from providing the best available support for their children. This level of sophistication would include using a parent development protocol that they have co-developed and which they can use to consistently address the concerns facing migrant families. Once a problem is defined, the migrant liaisons can offer an assessment of what available social and human capital the family already possess, to deal with the issue being faced. If the necessary capital to confront the issue is lacking, then they can identify it and present it to the family, to add it to its existing capital array.

Conclusion
While parent involvement, as a standalone reform, may have only modest effects on academic performance, I have highlighted a significant body of literature in this paper suggesting that it may be a promising part of the solution. Garcia & Guerra (2004) state that studies of comprehensive school reform suggest that such efforts often fail because of educators’ unwillingness to examine the root causes of underachievement. They follow this by stating that a deficit view of students’ economic level, ethnic background had the current educational establishment blame students, parents and their communities for their lack of academic achievement. We cannot minimize much less ignore this pattern.

Nevertheless, I have argued that in conjunction with systemic academic reforms and intervention to help in creating a better academic outlook for Latino students in schools, parental involvement at home must also be seriously considered. If indeed Latino underachievement has to do in part with the need for teachers to reframe their view of them and their families, as Garcia & Guerra (2004) suggest, then we should also strive for such a reframing of the Latino family as an agent for academic change in their children’s lives. I argue that we should begin by having migrant liaisons who tend to work more close with Latino parents and families reframe their own pivotal role.
CHAPTER TWO
THEORY OF ACTION

Theory of Action

Above I stated that social capital is defined as composed of resources based on group membership, relationships, networks of influence and support (Bourdieu, 1986), and human capital refers to more technical knowledge gained from education and training (Ihlen, 2005). In simple terms social capital are the relationships and support networks in our life and human capital is the knowledge that we can use to help find success in the prevalent social system. Using these definitions social and human capitals can be identified as discrete and identifiable components and practices. I propose that migrant liaisons can be led to identify the distinct components and practices that constitute their own social and human capital. Having done this, they can then be engaged as co-developers of a strength-based protocol to guide parents to access their own capital and available resources and employ them to find resolution to their families and children’s concerns. They will be able to do this only if they are aware that they possess social and human capital and that all migrant families possess social and human capital as well. However, due to issues of convertibility this capital at times is not accepted by the school setting and this is a situation that reminds us that parents are embedded in economic and social systems in which they may not reap the benefits afforded to other parents who are financially and socially able to match school expectations.

Figure 1 shows a graphic representation of the barrier that lack of convertibility presents in having some students fully benefit from their school settings, achieving in academically and gaining access to college and career opportunities. The illustration shows that these students, and their families, possess social and human capital that unfortunately is not in a form easily accepted by their educational settings. Students displaying the correct capital set accepted by the school setting can fully avail themselves of all its educational benefits and those to be found after graduation. Migrant Liaisons are not currently trained to act as agents of change to ameliorate this situation.

Figure 2.1 – Current state of Migrant Liaisons

As an example, to further explain the concept of convertibility, I will use a monetary metaphor. Let us represent the social (existing relationships) and human (knowledge about systems and processes) capital of an academically successful Latino family in terms of being valued in dollars. This first family has achieved a certain level of skills, practices and connections that allow for them to be effective consumers of their community and school services. For the sake of illustration let’s
say that this family’s capital is valued in dollars. On the other hand, a recently arrived family from Mexico also possesses valuable social and human capital; however, because this family has not become imbedded in American society’s perspectives, values or mores, their capital is valued in pesos. When a student from each of these families shows up at school with their capital, teachers will more readily accept that which is presented in a currency known to them. Sadly, a family may have a fortune amassed in these forms of capital but if it is not exchanged, or “converted,” this wealth goes untapped.

This lack of conversion perpetuates the state of underachievement that at times is evident in the Latino student population. If migrant liaisons could learn to identify the social and human capital that they possess then they can guide migrant families to identify their own capital. Using a parent/family development protocol which they co-developed they would be able to guide parents to access their own capital and available resources and employ them to find resolution to their families and children’s concerns. As a problem or issue is addressed, if a discrete and identifiable social or human capital element is missing, they can use the protocol to encourage and guide the family to augment their capital with the specific component. For example, if while dealing with a student’s lack of academic discipline at home the liaison uncovers that the parent uses negative reinforcement, the suggestion may be made that a positive discipline chart be used instead. Parents may have been using a positive discipline approach in a number of other areas but perhaps not in association with the student’s academic progress. By introducing a positive discipline plan to the parents, and using it in relation to the child’s academic behaviors the migrant liaison is augmenting their human capital (knowledge of how to instill discipline that may produce positive academic outcomes).

Figure 2, displays the desired state of migrant liaisons after participating in the study’s interventions. The migrant liaison, who possess both capital sets (those of the family and student as well as the school setting), is able to convert the existing capital (strengths and assets) found in the family. If the family still needs additional resources, the migrant liaison introduces them in the way of community services opportunities or parent development programs; social networks or needed information and knowledge to augment the family’s capital sets. These would be agreed upon, by identifying gaps in an asset map created by the family and migrant liaison. The student is then able to gain full access to the school settings benefits, has the possibility of achieving positive academic outcomes and may pursue college and career opportunities after graduating from high school. Using a strength-based protocol, the migrant liaison has the possibility of increasing their efficacy in becoming an agent of change in these situations.
To reach this level of efficacy, this study will seek to engage migrant liaisons as co-developers in the production of a tool that will guide their interaction with migrant parents. The purpose of the tool is to identify valuable strengths and assets inherent in each family with whom the migrant liaison works. These strengths and assets include the social and human capital that families could utilize when working with their students. Migrant liaisons are used because they are the school staff members that are best situated to interact with the neediest of families in such a manner that would facilitate the identification of the social and human capital inherent in migrant families. Table 1 below describes the theory of action and the accompanying theory of change.

Table 2.1: Theory of Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory of Action</th>
<th>Theory of Change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If migrant liaisons can be led to increase their level of sophistication in identifying and tapping into the social and human capital that they possess and if they can help develop a strength-based tool then they can use this protocol to guide parents to identify access their own capital and available resources and employ them to find resolution to their families and children’s concerns.</td>
<td>Migrant liaisons need to learn that…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regarding the identification of social and human capital in the families with whom they work migrant liaisons:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
  - Will grow in their understanding that all families possess social (relationships and group memberships) and human (knowledge from education and training) capital. However, some migrant families are not aware of the capital that they possess or it is in a form that is not accepted by the current school setting. |
• Will practice upon scenarios that deal with identifying issues being faced by parents, identifying the capital that they may already possess to address the issue and then identifying social and human capital components that they may still need to add to their repertoire.

• Can guide parents towards empowerment, resulting in parents accessing their social and human capital and available family resources to find resolution to problems confronting the family.

Regarding using a strength-based approach, migrant liaisons should develop and use a protocol tool that:

• Frames parents from a point of view that they possess skills and assets which they can use to be agents of change in their own lives and their children’s lives. This tool would reinforce an interaction pattern that reminds migrant liaisons that parents are not broken and can be engaged in such a manner as to have them act as their own agents of change.

• Allows migrant liaisons to identify and be able to utilize the social and human capital that parents possess to better collaborate in pursuing positive student outcomes. Resulting in migrant liaisons advocating for their parents at the school level to ensure that they are not viewed from a strength-based frame.

Theory of Intervention

To address the identified problem of practice, a targeted professional development series would be developed for migrant liaisons, which stresses the need to identify and utilize their own social and human capital to then guide migrant parents to in identify and use their own capital (Table 1). As a result, migrant liaisons would develop a new sophisticated level of viewing social and human capital as elements that can contribute to the resolution of migrant families’ needs. They would then co-develop along with me a Migrant Strength-Based Protocol to guide their future interaction with families. The purpose of this protocol would be to lead parents to activate their own skills, assets and resources to seek resolution to their problems. Migrant liaisons would participate in an eight session, twenty-hour professional development workshop series.

A strength-based protocol will be developed in order to identify a problem, posit possible solutions, and document the process and progress in combating the targeted issue. My expectation is that as the migrant liaisons progress through the initial presentation of content (using a strength-based approach, identifying deficit-thinking, the existence of social and human capital and the concept and prohibitive nature of convertibility in using a family’s existing capital, among others) they will realize that their present interaction with parents may not take these important family dynamics into consideration. At about midpoint through the workshops, the participants will be prompted to combine their prior knowledge in working with migrant families and the highlighted concepts and processes to craft a protocol. This document will guide their interaction with the family in a more sophisticated than a simple “give and take” approach to solving a family’s concerns.

Using the template that the protocol provides, the migrant liaison and parent will use a strength-based approach to solving the problem. The purpose is to be able to document progress
toward a resolution, as the contributions of each party are detailed. In this manner we can see if the migrant liaison is helping the parent identify their own strengths, and use them to solve their problem. Or, perhaps, if in reality the migrant liaison is simply identifying the problem and solving it for the parent.

This protocol would track migrant liaison and parent interaction until the issues are resolved or abandoned. This protocol will act as a diagnostic tool to clearly identify, to all, the problem being addressed. It will also serve as a prescriptive tool to account for all assets and strengths and determine which ones will be marshalled, and which ones need to be adopted to confront the problem identified. And lastly, it will act a process accountability implement to ascertain if all parties are carrying out their agreed upon duties and activities or if someone failed to so.

**Table 2.2: Theory of Intervention**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What activities will lead to the design elements being carried out?</th>
<th>Migrant Liaisons will participate in a four session, 20 hours, <em>Migrant Strength-Based Protocol</em> Workshop which will lead them to…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Migrant Liaisons:** | • Believe that they can have a positive influence in improving families’ lives.  
• See the value of actively engaging families in empowerment. |
| **Migrant Liaison Development/Training:** | • Be aware of deficit-thinking practices faced by parents in the school setting and their possible negative and limiting impact on parent empowerment.  
• Employ techniques, tools and practices that will better prepare parents to use their skills, assets and strengths. |
| **Strength-Based Approach:** | • Develop and employ a Migrant Strength-Based Protocol (MSBP) to initiate a strength-based approach to seeking problems’ resolution  
• Identify valuable social and human capital in families which will lead them to a sense of empowerment. |

**Conditions**

This theory of intervention will work if the regional migrant director agrees to carry out this study. Once approved, participating regional migrant liaisons will be invited to participate. They will then be engaged in an eight-session workshop series that will inform them of the importance of using a strength-based approach, identifying and avoiding deficit thinking and identifying and fomenting social and human capital. Their willingness and ability to engage in the workshop content and respond to it will also have a bearing in the success of this study. The workshops will take place during the migrant liaisons’ work day.
Intervention Design

Main Activities

I plan a targeted array of professional development workshops (Table 3) to lead migrant liaisons to adopt this new approach to providing services to migrant families. Six distinct topics and one session devoted to identifying them in a series of vignettes will be incorporated into the twenty hours of workshops.

Table 2.3: Strength-Based Family Development Topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Migrant liaisons will learn…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1) History of parent involvement,         | • The progression of the study of parent involvement will be covered from the Civil Rights Movement period up to the present.  
• Special emphasis will be placed upon research by Epstein and meta-analyses of the effectiveness of parent involvement | -That parent involvement has a long history and meta-analytical data has demonstrated that it can be focused upon as a complimentary intervention to other academic treatments seeking improved student outcomes |
| 2) Strength-based approach                 | • This approach which focuses on identifying existing strengths and assets in a family will be displayed and it will be posited as a much more productive alternative to simple resource provision for families. | - Migrant liaisons will learn to approach student and family issues and concerns with all available assets and strengths |
| 3) Deficit-thinking                        | • The documentation of deficit-thinking in research will be discussed. The over harmful effects of using this approach will be highlighted as well as exercises to help liaison detect it in scenarios. | - They will comprehend the negative and counterproductive effects of this widely evidenced practice. To identify and avoid this practice as they advocate for families. |
| 4 and 5) Social and human capital          | • The well-researched subject of “capital” will be studied. Migrant liaisons will become well acquainted with its generational relay, issues of “convertibility” and the documented effect of social class blocking its transference from school personnel to students and families. | -That migrant parents have a wealth of social and human capital but because of a deficit-frame approach, teachers, migrant liaisons and parents themselves may not be aware of this capital, much less utilize it |
| 6) Migrant Strength-Based Protocol – goal setting | • Migrant liaisons will help develop and become familiar with the Migrant Strength-Based Protocol | -To help in the design and adopt a protocol that will standardized their approach and interaction with parents |
They will understand its logic and components as they work together to address student or family issues or concerns

7) Vignettes and case studies

- Case-studies will be used to illustrate the effectiveness of using liaisons to bring about changes in parent behaviors in special education situations, drop-out prevention and reducing truancy. Vignettes and scenarios will be used to gauge the readiness of migrant liaison to confront family issues with a strength-based approach.

-To what extent they have understood, and draw upon their new knowledge and the MSBP to frame a strength-based approach to addressing student and family issues and concerns. This session will serve as a culminating reflection on the process and measure the desired outcomes.

The topics were selected to lead migrant liaisons through some of the best practices, as identified in a review of the literature, regarding school liaison interaction with students and families. Migrant liaisons will be provided with well-founded and accepted theories as well as empirical evidence that highlight the benefit of parental involvement in student academic progress. They will be taught about the benefit of using a strength-based approach in identifying a family’s social and human capital, and their role in unleashing and augmenting these existing family assets. Response from the migrant liaisons to vignettes would be utilized, both as a teaching tool during the staff development series, and as a way to monitor their thinking process evolution as they respond to scenarios of a family’s particular academic need. Because most migrant liaisons present indigenous case studies themselves (i.e. they are Latino, immigrants and several of them were former migrant), I will create opportunities for self-analysis and reflection about how they came to acquire and implement their own social and human capital. Migrant liaison will also practice the use of a Migrant Strength-Based Protocol to engage the family in problem solving and to document the overall interaction.

**Sequence of Activities**

The process (Table 4) will start by inviting eight migrant liaisons to participate in the workshops. Before the intervention begins, I will carry out a needs assessment to gauge their experience and training in the area of liaising and advocating for parents. All eight will receive the eight sessions of workshops. The eight session will include the following: 1) history of parent involvement, 2) deficit framing, 3) strength-based approach, 4 and 5) social and human capital, 6 and 7) Family Development Protocol – goal setting and 8) Vignettes and case studies practices.

**Table 2.4: Sequence of Events**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Events</th>
<th>Data Collected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Activity #1 Select Regional and District Migrant Liaisons (a group of eight will undertake the workshops. All will be pre-surveyed for general content knowledge about the subject addressed in the workshops. Their previous experience and training in working with parents will also be assessed. | Impact Data:  
- Needs assessment of content knowledge of topics to be addressed  
Process Data: |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity #2</th>
<th>Week # 2</th>
<th>Migrant liaisons that have not previously undertaken strength-based training will be selected to participate in this professional development series</th>
<th>Gleanings from interaction with migrant liaisons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Activity #2** | **Week # 2** | Pre interview Migrant Liaisons from whom I will collect pre/post interview (Appendix A) and pre/post vignette response data (Appendix B and C) | Impact Data:  
  - Pre interview  
  - Pre responses to vignettes of family needs scenarios  
  Process Data:  
  - Gleanings from interviews and vignette responses |
| Activity #3 | Week # 3-6 | Provide 20 hour (8 sessions of 2 hours and 30 minutes each) of professional development  
  - Cover 6 topics  
  - Test the following topics by the use of content-based exams, scenarios and vignettes  
    1a) History of parent involvement  
    2a) Strength-based approach  
    2b) Deficit Thinking (Appendix D)  
    3a) Social and human capital (Appendix E)  
    3b) Social and human capital (continued)  
    4a) Migrant Strength-Based Protocol (MSBP) (Appendix G)  
    4b) Practice of vignettes and scenarios (Appendix H) | Impact Data:  
  - End of the day content based exam (3 days)  
  - End of the workshops final content exam (1 day)  
  Process Data:  
  - Observations of group role play addressing family needs scenarios  
  - End of session process reflection  
  - Group reflections and suggestions regarding elaboration of MSBP  
  - Critical friend memo |
| Activity #4 | Week # 7 | Post interview of Migrant Liaisons from whom I will collect pre/post interview and vignette response data | Impact Data:  
  - Post interview  
  - Post responses to vignettes of family needs scenarios  
  Process Data:  
  - Critical friend memo  
  - Gleanings from interviews and vignette responses |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity #5</th>
<th>Transcribing and Coding of data</th>
<th>Impact Data:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week # 8-10</td>
<td>Review of pre content knowledge surveys</td>
<td>● Score pre and post responses against the developed rubric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review of pre/post Interviews responses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review of Critical Friend’s memos (Appendix F)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Development of rubrics for four learning dimensions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity #6</th>
<th>Calculation of pre and post interview and vignette response results</th>
<th>Impact Data:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week # 11-12</td>
<td>● Amassing of data, gauging of pre and post responses against the rubrics developed</td>
<td>● Results of intervention reflected from pre to post interview and vignette responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Process Data:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Gleanings gathered from review of interview pre/post results and responses to vignettes</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity #7</th>
<th>Coalescing and reporting of findings</th>
<th>Writing of findings chapter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week # 12+</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion: Expected Outcomes**

Migrant liaisons will undergo staff development that is expected to increase their perceived efficacy in working with parents. This improvement will be brought about as they gain capacity in leading parents to a higher sense of empowerment, through the elaboration and implementation of a Migrant Strength-Based Protocol. Migrant liaisons will learn to identify and use the social and human capital they possess, to guide parents to identify and utilize their own capital. As defined, human capital refers to technical knowledge gained from education and training such as mathematical knowledge or how to access financial aid (Ihlen, 2005). Bourdeau (1986) states that social capital is composed of resources based on group membership, relationships, networks of influence and support. It is expected that migrant liaisons will learn to translate these theoretic frameworks into operationalized and quantifiable assets. The Migrant Strength-Based Protocol will be used to identify these skills, habits and routines that can be identified or adopted by migrant families. If these quantifiable aspects of social and human capital are not present in the families, migrant liaisons will seek to augment them.
This process will help in addressing the issue of “convertibility” that previous studies suggest that these families’ capital may face. Migrant liaisons will help convert the existing social and human capital that families possess into a form that is useable in the school setting. Eventually, migrant liaisons’ strength-based interaction with parents will lead to parents identifying, and using their social and human capital to become agents of change in their children’s lives and their own lives (Table 5). It is expected that sufficient pre and post impact data, which is detailed above in Table 4, will be collected, as well as several layers of impact data will be gathered to measure the resulting content learned, practices initiated or eliminated and the iterative influences upon the process.

### Table 2.5: Proximal and Distal Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Proximal</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>●</td>
<td>Migrant liaisons will utilize a strength-based approach as they interact with families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>●</td>
<td>Migrant liaisons will collaborate to develop a Migrant Strength-Based Protocol to standardize and guide support to migrant parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>●</td>
<td>Migrant liaisons will feel capable of leading parents to a sense of empowerment through the elaboration and implementation of a Migrant Strength-Based Protocol.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>●</td>
<td>Migrant liaisons will learn about and be able to identify the social and human capital they (the liaisons) possess.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>●</td>
<td>Migrant liaisons will learn to identify and quantify operationalized aspects of social and human capital in practices and relationships in their lives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distal</td>
<td>● Migrant liaisons will use the Migrant Strength-Based Protocol in a standardized manner interact with migrant parents who are confronting issue or concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>●</td>
<td>Migrant liaison will make better use of their time by developing parents to a point where they identify social and human capital in their lives and learn to adopt missing capital in their live and their children’s lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>●</td>
<td>Migrant liaisons’ strength-based interaction with parents will lead to parents identifying and using operationalized forms of their social and human capital, they will then use these association, relationships and technical knowledge to become agents of change in their children’s lives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>●</td>
<td>Migrant liaisons will target their support to parents by supporting parents develop social and human capital, that they will then in turn use to help their children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>●</td>
<td>Parents will be better equipped to help their students succeed in school without relying on the support of migrant liaisons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>●</td>
<td>Students will perform better in school based on the better support and involvement of their parents.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Design Development Methodology

My study will seek to measure the capacity for and change in migrant liaisons’ use of a strength-based approach in their interactions with parents. As a program manager of the Migrant Education Program in Region X, for the past fifteen years, I have observed a consistent pattern of lack of training for migrant liaison as they are set about to interact with parents and liaise them to services and advocate for them. The standard operating procedure, with the over twenty districts which I have supported, is to have parents come to a central district migrant office and then to proceed to a brief needs assessment which the migrant liaison conducts. They then decide what the parents' or family’s need is and sets about to meet it with migrant, school or community resources. This is by no means a bad service, but this approach does not consistently take into consideration the families existing strengths and assets as they confront identified needs. In these situations, the family is not substantially engaged to see if the problem identified by the migrant liaison is in actually the real problem.

One example to illustrate this observation is as follows. A family approaches the migrant liaison seeking services for a child that is failing at math. The migrant liaison enrolls the child in a homework club at the child's school. In my experience with homework clubs or tutoring, the child has less than a fifty-fifty chance for improving or not, or even further declining in math. If the family had been engaged from a strength-based approach, then the migrant liaison would have found out the following about both the child's mother and father; though monolingual Spanish speakers, both finished “secundaria” or Mexican middle school; at all times at least one of them is supervising the child; the child has a PlayStation 3; and there is a computer with internet access at home. Aware of this knowledge, the migrant liaison suggests that the parents practice multiplication tables with the child. She also shows them how to find free online multiplication and tutoring sites on the internet. Additionally, she acquaints them with a positive discipline chart, that includes playing with the PS3 as a privilege to give or take away from the child. At least one of the parents will monitor the child daily and on weekends, to make sure he practices and gains proficiency in his multiplication charts. The child can still attend the school homework club but when taken together the school and home assets have the potential to produce a greater effect on the child’s math outcomes. The solution will be found by combining the strengths and assets presented by the child, family and school setting. The migrant liaison’s job is to bring all of these assets together for the benefit of the child’s academic improvement.

These unpredictable and complex relationships make my research settings a prime candidate for a design development study. First, a design development research format is the appropriate approach for this project because there is an identifiable problem of practice that I will need to study in its natural setting. The natural setting in my study will be the work space in which the migrant liaisons’ interact with parents. For the purposes of this study I will not venture into the home setting to observe migrant liaison and parent interactions.

Additionally, a data gathering and interpretation process will be elaborated to gauge the impact of the proposed intervention upon the problem to see if the desired effect is reached. Moreover, because of the uncontrolled nature of the subjects being studied, mainly that I do not know if they will engage in a process of self-analysis, the process is almost certain to develop into an iterative progression.

An iterative process is common in design development studies being that the human element and the many environmental and circumstantial influences upon it call for a continuous refinement and modification of practices to accommodate the circumstances. The three above characteristics
meet Plomp and Nieveen’s (2007) and Van den Akker’s (1999) criteria for using a design development study approach. The desired result is a reliable study process with a degree of transferability that can be carried out and tested in future iterations and in other contexts. For example, in this study I will be looking at the migrant liaisons’ capacity to undergo a professional development workshop series that will help them develop a strength-based focus and create a tool to guide both migrant liaison and family upon a strength-based path to find resolution to a problem. A future study may test the effectiveness of this tool. Another study may look at the capacity for families to be lead to augment their capital with previously untried forms of social capital or adopt new knowledge (human capital).

Other desired results are a study that stresses practicality and effectiveness of the intervention (Van den Akker, 1999) and one that incorporates a “systematic documentation, analysis and reflection of the design, development, evaluation and implementation process” that indicates the validity of the data and the instruments used to collect it. The process of impact and process data collection detailed above is meant to capture as many sides and angles of this process as possible. It is meant to be superfluous in its accumulation of data so that I can afford as much systematic analysis of the design.

**Action Research Methodology**

An action researcher methodology will also be utilized because of my two roles as researcher and agent of change. I will be an agent of change as I provide the professional development workshops to migrant liaison to bring them to a place of self-analysis regarding their employment of strength-based approach as they interact with parents. I will also play the role of researcher, as I collect data to gauge the effectiveness of the transfer of content knowledge to the participants, which I hope will lead to a change in their mindset and preference for a strength-based approach. Due to the structure of my study and the dual demands of my role, elements of action research must also be included in my methodology (Coghlan & Brannick, 2009; Plomp, 2007). This design structure creates a scene rife with the possibility of manifestations of bias and partiality. Although I do not directly supervise any of the possible study participants, I have known several of them for over a decade. As their regional migrant consultant I am consistently trying to set up their efforts for success.

To address this potential for bias, I will maintain a reflective memo diary at the end of each activity or significant period of my study’s evolution. I will also establish a critical consultative relationship with a colleague during the duration of the study. Both the reflective memos and the summaries of interactions from the critical colleague will be transcribed and included in the data analysis. After each critical event, I will immediately memo on the process of the intervention, and will meet with that critical friend to reassess my plans for the subsequent events in the intervention process.

Design development and action research components have some differences; however, both are applicable to my study because of the complementary contributions they provide. In this study, the design development approach is suitable because of my aim to contribute to the theoretical base regarding parent involvement and possible influences upon it. I maintain that involvement of migrant liaisons, through a strength-based approach, will lead to better use of the family’s capital. In conjunction with school and community assets, this will have a greater likelihood to produce positive outcomes. An action research methodology is also needed because of the need for the study of this phenomenon to take place in its natural setting; the workshop venue and the migrant liaisons’ office. Having me be a principal character in the intervention design and implementation, also necessitates this methodology.
Elements of Research Design

Unit of Analysis and Study Participants

The migrant liaison will be the unit of analysis in this study. It is they who are a pivotal part of migrant parent involvement programs as they are currently designed. Migrant liaisons identify and recruit families for program enrollment and then set about to meet as many of the family’s needs as possible. A group of eight migrant liaisons from an Alameda district will partake of the interventions activities. All participants have in their job descriptions the duty of working with parents to afford linkages, support and advocacy to facilitate their involvement in school and remove barriers to migrant students’ academic progress. Their reaction to the incorporation of the workshops content, their utilization of a strength-based practices and their identification and utilization of social and human capital as they work with parents, will be the focus of the analysis. Impact data will be collected to gauge how much of the content from the intervention and workshop series is learned by the migrant liaisons.

The main content covered in these workshops will be the understanding and adoption of a strength-based mindset, identifying and utilizing the social and human capital inherent in migrant families, and constructing and according upon a Migrant Strength-Based Protocol to guide migrant liaisons and parents in their future interactions. Comprehension of the content will be surveyed using a series of vignettes that will gauge their approach to guiding families to solve an identified issue, at first without the content knowledge and then after having been exposed to the workshops.

Data Collection Strategies and Techniques

I will utilize a mixed methods approach to gather data in this study, although a majority of the data collected will be of a qualitative nature. Quantitative data will be gathered initially from migrant liaisons using a content knowledge survey of the following areas: strength-based approach, deficit-thinking, social and human capital, and history of parent involvement. The data afforded by this metric will help me quantify the baseline measure of the desirable knowledge. I expect that this knowledge will lead them to modify their mindset and perspective in regards to how they approach and interact with parents. At the end of the intervention, I will carry out a post administration of the survey that I expect will show progress or lack of progress in adopting the desired content. This quantifiable data in conjunction with other process and qualitative data will inform me if the intervention was successful in its desired outcomes.

Qualitative methods, interviews, process and critical friend memos as well as observations and field notes, will be used to gauge the participants and my own perceptions of the process as it evolves. The process data produced by these methods will be the most influential in suggesting changes as the study progresses and subsequently design guidance for myself or future researchers replicating the study.

Ongoing quantitative process data metrics, qualitative survey results and interview findings will be shared with my critical friend to afford the maximum transparency possible and gain their most in-depth critique. I will analyze the impact data for six of the participants and consider the process data for all eight participants. It is my expectation that the impact data will show evidence that their attitudes or mindset is affected by the presentation of the workshops content as we progress from pre to post interview. Similarly, I expect that the various measurements and quantification of response imbedded into each workshop activity will demonstrate to what degree the content was grasped. Next, I will focus on how the analysis of this data will proceed. I will discuss reliability, validity, credibility, transferability, generalizability/ replicability and rigor, and how I will account for and address them in my study.
Data Analysis Procedures

The initial pre-survey (baseline) administered to the migrant liaison will be compared to its post administration (outcomes) results to identify any changes. The participant responses will be measured against a rubric, showing an increased comprehension and employment of the targeted learning dimension. This simple quantification will show how much of the desired content was understood and drawn upon, for the purpose of a context-based examination. What this data does not tell me is if the migrant liaisons’ mindset was affected to the point that it will actually change the manner in which they interact with the parent. For this purpose, we need to rely on the analysis of the qualitative data elicited from the vignette responses.

All vignette responses, filled out Migrant Strength-Based Protocols, interviews, process and critical friend memos, as well as observations and field notes gathered during the intervention will be transcribed and used to gather impact and process data. The impact data will be drawn from the pre and post interviews. And for the process data I will be looking for evidence, or lack of evidence, that the content knowledge imparted in the workshops is now a part of their understanding and vocabulary. More importantly, in the vignette responses, I hope to see that not only has the content knowledge been adopted but it has made an impact in their mindset, to the point that now they have a propensity to draw upon it in solving scenarios posed in the vignettes.

Patterns in the data will be graphed to see if there were any changes in the migrant liaisons’ approach to how they engage parent from the vignette pre-to-post responses. Field notes and observation notes will be used to help round off the explanations from detected patterns. The above metrics and procedures are appropriate to design development studies.

Reliability

In qualitative research, reliability refers to the extent to which the researcher’s approach is consistent so that the design may be repeated across different researchers and over time (Creswell, 2009). In this study, I will establish reliability assuring that all methods and procedures such as surveys, interviews and observation protocols as well as their coding and analysis, used for this study consistently adhere to accepted research practices and are clearly and consistently followed (Creswell, 2009). This reliability allows the design of the study to be repeated by other researchers and augmented upon in their own iterations. All interview and survey protocols will be vetted by a committee of advisors that will comment and make suggestions upon the format and content of these quantitative and qualitative tools. I will use a pre and post semi-structured, interview protocol in this study. The pre-interview is design to gauge if the migrant liaison uses a strength-based approach as they address a scenario posed in a vignette which depicts a family addressing an academic problem with one of their children. It is expected that their responses in the post-interview will have been affected by the workshop’s content and the Migrant Strength-Based Protocol. The content-based survey to gauge comprehension of the workshops subject matter and the observation protocols, used in conjunction with the vignettes responses, will also be reviewed by the committee.

As stated above I will meet with a critical consultative colleague after all of the workshops, to gather input about the study’s progression. During the entirety of my intervention I will use this measure to check against my own bias, and possible misrepresentation of the content to be learned, or a misinterpretation on my part of the findings. This person presently serves as the regional supervisor to the migrant liaisons that will be involved in the study. I will rely on this person for a critical review of each of my workshop deliveries and his impressions of my interactions with the group.
I will follow the widely accepted and utilized methodological criteria of Design Development Studies and Action Research. I will regularly consult with my advisors as to my proper alignment to the above methodologies.

Validity
In this study, external validity is high in that the problem we are addressing is a real world issue; how to improve the interaction of migrant liaisons and the parents they serve. The role of the migrant staff members is many times confused with that of other classified school staff. In reality they are poised to have a measurable impact on the families with which they interact. This intervention seeks to amass and present what the literature has to say about adopting a strength-based approach to families in need by avoiding deficit-thinking and focusing on the positive aspects of identifying and using a family’s social and human capital. This intervention could very possibly address a number of issues facing schools; how to encourage parent involvement, how to better maximize home and school efforts, how to have school personnel impact the home environment, to name a few.

Internal validity will be established if the outcomes (as reflected by the impact data) of the intervention are correlated in a reliable manner to the intervention itself. I will establish construct validity by creating low inference checklist and inventories that measure perceivable changes in their knowledge and their response to vignettes presenting situations of families in need. My intervention seeks to provide content knowledge and practices that can be learned and employed by the migrant liaison. Surveys and workshop imbedded assessments will ascertain that the workshop participants can correctly define and apply the content. The intent is that this new knowledge will affect the way that they will approach a family in need as presented in a series of vignettes.

I expect that migrant liaisons that had previously not known about social and human capital, or a strength-based approach in their parent interactions, will now use this language regularly and naturally in their responses. There will be a pre and post administration of the vignette assessment given to them. If a change is perceived in how they now approach the family need (from the pre vignette assessment to the post administration), there will be high internal validity that the intervention was related to how the migrant liaison’s new approach.

Transferability
Because I am conducting a designed development study I do not expect generalizability, due to any results and findings associated with this intervention being context specific to participants and observation sites. Because so much is expected of migrant liaisons (recruiters, data gatherers, report writers, parent involvement coordinators, and meeting the various needs of students and their families, to name some of their duties), it is not expected that the findings of this study can be generalized to just any other group of school liaisons; however, some level of transferability is expected. Many other migrant regions and federal programs do not use their corps of liaison in the same manner in which Region X does. These regions and similar federal and state funded programs such as Head Start, McKinley-Bento Homeless programs or foster youth programs that operate with a clearly defined client base, may find benefit from this study’s level of transferability.

Rigor and Threats to Rigor
The major threat to maintaining rigor will be that I may take advantage of the iterative nature of design development studies and steer its development in such a way as to ensure results desired by me. I, like anyone else am subject to confirmation bias. My most defined guards against this effect will be to strictly adhere to the methodology established for this study. Additionally, I will
secure the analysis and critique of a critical consultative relationship at the end of all workshop sessions and significant events.

A safeguard against possible threats to the rigor of my study will be to standardize as rigidly as possible the training materials, questionnaires and surveys protocols used in the study. Content knowledge surveys, interview protocols and vignette scenarios will all be formatted and approved by my main advisor, other advisors, program readers and my critical friend. The only document not fully formatted at the beginning of the intervention will be the Migrant Strength-Based Protocol. This document will be co-developed during the intervention with the help of the participating migrant liaisons. This is planned in this manner so that the process will benefit from the discovery of their own social and human capital in creating a tool that will be of maximum help in guiding their interaction with parents. This set up assures that any threat to rigor presented by my preference in developing this tool will be checked by the active involvement of practitioners.

Bias

A significant measure to check for bias will be to engage in a critical relationship with the person that is in charge of supervising regional migrant liaisons in Region X. This person is well-versed and experienced in their role, as well as work expectations and limitations, and has a clear perspective of how best they should interact with parents. This critical friend will have regular access to the migrant liaisons in the study and will be engaged as my eyes and ears to inform me of any salient comments from them regarding the workshops.

Conclusion

This study proposes that perhaps the role of migrant liaisons in guiding parents to marshal all available social and human capital available at home may contribute significantly to increasing student academic outcomes. There is evidence in the knowledge base regarding this postulation. Above I have referenced a set of studies that document that liaisons have been effective in guiding parents, through a strength-based process, to modify their behavior at home to produce positive student outcomes. Such is my expectation with the liaisons that work for the Migrant Education Program in Region X. However, before we can consider possible distal results in modifying student outcomes we must first measure more immediate possible modification of their mindset. This study proposes that they can learn content knowledge that will prepare them approach parents in a strength-based manner. Additionally, they can be taught to identify and control or possibly eradicate the employment of deficit-thinking that may be being experienced by parents in their interaction with the school setting. Finally, they will co-develop a Migrant Strength-Based Protocol, to identify and utilize social and human capital inherent in the families with whom they work.

What if migrant liaisons are unaware that they possess valuable social and human capital? With if they are unaware that they possess valuable experience on how to convert previously unconverted capital elements into those accepted by the school setting? Could migrant liaisons play a significant role in bringing about a change in at-home parent behaviors with possible distal student outcomes? Can they be convinced to utilize a strength-based approach in their interactions with migrant parents? This design development study modified by an action research component seeks to identify the possible validity of these propositions.
CHAPTER FOUR
FINDINGS

Introduction

My intent in this study was to format a sequence of workshops and development activities to guide a team of migrant liaisons in their problem resolution interactions with parents with a higher degree of sophistication. A needs assessment given before the study suggested that these migrant staff members lacked sufficient training and tools to carry out their assigned task working with parents to improve student outcomes. The study sought to increase their level of sophistication by expanding their level of knowledge about factors that affect parent involvement. Another change expected after the study was that liaisons would standardize their interaction with parents by using a strength-based protocol, co-designed along with the researcher.

To measure the impact of the study, I employed vignette assessments which sought to identify evidence of change in the way migrant liaisons interacted with parents before and after the intervention (Appendix A). Growth was expected to reflect; a) a better informed migrant liaisons employing a more sophisticated approach to engaging parents as full collaborative partners in fomenting positive outcomes for their children, b) employment of a set process to predictably engage with these parents in a strength based manner and c) a higher sense of efficacy being reported by the liaisons as they worked with migrant families. The process data collected narrates the progress as each design element was elaborated during the course of the workshops. This data shows how the series of individual and group activities in the intervention design lead them, or failed to lead them, to construct new meaning, understanding, and practices leading to an awareness of the need to increase their awareness of duties and the manner in how they carry out their roles.

This study began with a focus on the benefits of parent involvement. To establish a foundational need for the study of parent involvement, it was first necessary to lead the migrant liaisons to understand the intended role of their position, as determined in the Federal Migrant Non-Regulatory Guidance. Once they understand the intended role of their position, they can then more purposefully engage families in affecting their students’ academic progress in a process of interaction that seeks to fully engage parents as collaborative partners.

In the last portion of this chapter, I arrived at my impression of the overall impact of participants by combining an analysis of the process data produced in learning activities and their responses to a post-study interview. This holistic view of participant responses depicts the reactions and growth, by the migrant liaisons’ upon the study’s learning dimensions.

The following chapter depicts the progression of how participants in my study reacted to the intervention. I have synthesized and analyzed the impact and process data in order to give context to this study’s results.

Organization of Data Analysis

I chose a design study methodology to analyze the evolution (process) and effect (impact of my study). As stated above, I utilized two types of data, impact and process, to gauge the effect of my study. Below, I present the baseline and outcome from participant vignette responses pertinent to the first dimension: Identifying Strengths and Assets in the family. The change I observed from baseline to outcome results indicates a movement in their perception. Study members were selected on the basis of their longevity with the Migrant program. I include responses for six of eight participants in the study. The two participants with the most longevity and the two with the lowest were selected. From the remaining four, which shared a similar amount of longevity, an additional
two were selected at random. Evidence of low-inference indicators are identified in both the pre and post vignette responses.

After the study’s intervention activities are undertaken, I expect that indications of targeted behaviors would increase in the post vignette replies. I gauge the vignette responses using a five-point rubric that I have calibrated to reflect desired behavior indicators for the first dimension.

**Impact Data Analysis**

This study was designed to guide migrant liaisons in utilizing a more sophisticated process than simply offering a referral or “handouts” when a parent informs them of an issue or problem related to their children’s academic progress. At baseline, most of them, as reflected in the initial needs assessment, had not received sufficient, if any, training to undertake their work. Neither did they employ a uniform process to guide their parent interventions. Furthermore, migrant liaisons responded with various levels of satisfaction regarding their perceived efficacy in guiding parents to find solutions to the issues they confronted.

**Vignette Findings**

I used a structured vignette protocol to collect baseline and outcome data to determine the study’s impact. Following a pre and post design, the vignette was administered before the intervention and then once again after the workshops were carried out. The vignette presented them with a familiar scenario; for example, a family comes to them seeking advice on how to guide their children to improve their academic behavior and outcomes. The liaison was then asked a series of eight questions in response to how they would interact with the parent that had approached them. The vignette questions intended to elicit replies that would give indications of the three learning dimensions. These questions sought to gauge their ability to identify a migrant family’s strengths and assets; looked for evidence that they displayed a specific process as they engaged the family; and lastly sought details that indicated the migrant liaisons’ self-perception as to how effective they saw themselves in carrying out their duties.

The impact data is organized in the following manner: first, a five-point rubric was created that established an expected progression of low-inference indicators that was to measure the migrant liaisons pre and post vignette responses. The progression started from a score of zero, which determined that they engaged the parent from a level of being distracted by a deficit view of the family. Incrementally, responses were graduated to a high score of four. At this level they produced evidence that they engaged the family from a strength based point of view. Additionally, the study member would display evidence that they utilized a standardized manner or protocol with the parents to identify existing resources in and relationships to support their efforts. Following this, a narrative analysis for each of the six participants’ pre to post responses is then provided. And lastly a conceptual summary of data is undertaken to identify overall impact patterns.

The impact data analysis will then be followed by an analysis of process data associated with each of the five major learning activities, grouped by dimensions. I will summarize the participants’ commentaries to determine whether the learning goal for the first identified learning dimension were arrived upon. This holistic, two-pronged approach to combining impact and process data will help determine the effectiveness of the study as well as offer a better view of the progression of participant learning.
Table 4.1: Indicators of Migrant Liaisons’ Awareness to Identify Strengths and Assets:

*Migrant liaison employs a strength-based approach to engaging the family in finding resolution to their issues and concerns, including:*

- Not being distracted by viewing family from a deficit point of view
- Engaging families as partners in finding resolution to their issues.
- Identifying existing relationships and networks that can help resolve the issue(s) being confronted.
- Leveraging in a systematic manner the families’ existing knowledge base to utilize it as part of a solution to the issue being confronted.

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<th>(2)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The migrant liaison’s response indicates that she avoids being distracted by a deficit view of the family as she approaches the interaction. The family is engaged as partners in the process. An attempt is carried out to identify existing resources and relationships available to the family. These resources are utilized in a systematic manner to contribute to establishing a solution.</td>
<td>The migrant liaison’s response indicates that she avoids being distracted by a deficit view of the family as she approaches the interaction. She engages the family as partners AND attempts to identify existing resources and relationships that may contribute to establishing a solution.</td>
<td>The migrant liaison’s response indicates that she avoids being distracted by a deficit view of the family as she approaches the interaction. She either engages the family as partners OR attempts to identify existing resources and relationships that may contribute to establishing a solution.</td>
<td>The migrant liaison’s response indicates that she is distracted by a deficit view of the family as she approaches the interaction.</td>
<td>The migrant liaison’s response indicates that she is distracted by a deficit view of the family as she approaches the interaction.</td>
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Table 4.2 – Migrant Liaison Jimenez’ Ability to Identify Rubric Scores

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<tr>
<th>Jimenez</th>
<th>Rubric Score – Pre-Vignette</th>
<th>Rubric Score – Post-Vignette</th>
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<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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Migrant liaison Jimenez’ response to the vignette included that she would attempt to engage the family by “spending some time to see what the problems is.” She mentioned that she would ask them what they did with the student at home, such as “did they read to him.” However, the eventual involvement of the parents was curtailed to determining and informing them of the available services through the school or migrant program. She did state that she would ask some additional probing questions about the student’s behavior at home, although she did not produce any examples. The eventual solution she proposed “I would refer them to the afterschool tutoring program,” did not include a plan to actively employ the information the parents would provide.

By the second set of responses she stated that she would initiate the conversation with the family by completing a “resource map” (an exercise we practiced during the workshops designed to identify family resources). Jimenez added that she would recommend to the parents that “they spend some quality time alone” with their son to see if they would identify why he was having such a hard time in school. She also suggested a reward system where by the son would be allowed to use his cell phone on his overall effort exerted. She stated that the parents needed to see that “each of their children are different and have different needs” and each of their sons in particular needs to feel “special, loved and not compared.”

In the first vignette Jimenez’ initial impulse, as she started her interaction with the parents, was to elicit information from them to frame the situation and propose a solution. She then proposed that she would tell them the following:

- They need to limit the time he spends on his phone and playing games. They should do activities with him to improve their relationship with him… the son needs to understand that his parents love him and they are doing these things for his own good… (and) they need to spend some quality time together.

Even though Jimenez stated that she would first canvass the parents to better understand the issue, she did not mention for what purpose she would seek the information. The suggestions she provides come across as prescriptive rather than trying to analyze the probable causes for the student’s behavior. Though Jimenez suggested to the parents that they engage the son in order to improve the relationship and understand him better, she did not expand upon how she would use the information to arrive at a solution.

I accorded Jimenez a 2 on her set of pre vignette responses because even though she did not truly employ them as partners in carrying out a solution she began by casting the parents as partners...
in the endeavor. However, she mainly used the parents as a source of background information. She did not progress to the next level because she did not attempt to secure resources to attempt to solve the problem and although she did list some suggestions for the parents and student to carry out, these suggestions sounded more like a litany of mandates (should and should nots).

By the second set of replies Jimenez was more aware that the parents brought more than background information to contribute to the resolution of the son’s lack of academic progress. She suggested that the son’s outcomes may have something to do with the need to improve their relationship. She stated that she would use a “resource map” to identify family resources that could be used to find a possible solution to the problem:

I would meet with them (student and family) and do the resource map and find out what we have (resources) that can help us in this case. So, like, the cell phone, time with his friends, playing the video games he likes. I think we can talk to his teacher also and see if he has anything that we can use to reward the boy or… (support him with) tutoring; maybe a classroom buddy to help keep him moving forward in his studies.

Jimenez also suggested that parents should strive to not compare their children because “each of their children are different and have different needs.” She recommended that the parents should try to make their son feel “special, loved and not compared,” to his other high achieving siblings.

Jimenez’s response is near a 3 point on the 0-4-point rubric. By the second set of responses this liaison approached the parents from a strength based point of view, identified a number of resources at home and school to incentivize the progress of the student, and involved the teacher in a collaborative effort with the student and his parents. However, although she mentioned the use of a resource map, which is a part of the migrant parent interaction protocol, she did not mention the use of the protocol with the family.

Table 4.3 – Migrant Liaison Diaz’ Ability to Identify Rubric Scores

| Diaz |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Rubric Score – Pre-Vignette | Rubric Score – Post-Vignette |
| 0 | 2 |

Migrant Liaison Diaz’ responses showed almost no reference to parents and exclusively reflected suggestions and commentary related to students and staff. When asked what would be the best way to determine a possible intervention for the student she replied “I would ask the teacher.” When I followed up by asking if the scenario gave her any clues as to who else could play a role in finding a solution Diaz did not venture any other possible person.
with agency to intervene. Instead, she stated that she would “wait to see what the teachers suggested.”

between the parents and son and if they would stop making him feel “isolated and criticized” he would “come around and open up to them” as to why he was doing poorly in school.

Initially, Migrant Liaison Díaz’ responses dealt almost exclusively with students and others school staff. She did not include parents in any manner that may exert influence upon student outcomes. When asked about the apparent issues that the migrant families assigned to her manifested, she stated:

Most of them (students) just need to settle down. They don’t have any motivation or discipline at home. So what I do is like meet with them and then I talk to the teacher and we come up with a plan for how they can get better in class.

Díaz’ replies indicated that she solely relied upon the teacher’s suggestion to proceed upon a plan for improvement for the student. However, it was clear in the scenario that the parents had provided Díaz a set of references and clues that pointed to the student’s lack of academic progress as having a nexus in the home. Díaz appeared to be distracted by a deficit view that did not allow her to appreciate the information that the family provided in the vignette and relied only on the teacher to suggest a “fix” to the problem of the student’s underachievement.

After the intervention, Díaz’ responses demonstrated awareness that finding a solution would necessitate an involvement of the parents along with the teacher. Although she showed evidence of using the existing family knowledge to find a solution (she planned to have the mother present in order to provide information to the teacher) she did not indicate that she planned to fully engage the parents as partners in setting a solution. Díaz did show some insight in one of her replies that suggested that student outcomes may be related to the student’s relationship with his parents:

It seems that he is feeling isolated and criticized by his family since they keep comparing him to his other bothers and he feels like he is in a competition with them. That’s why he probably spends so much time with his friends and playing games. He probably uses that for comfort.

Díaz did not expand upon this reflection to engage the parents in a more determined level of agency to influence the son’s behavior. Furthermore, she did not follow up her identification of the parents criticizing the son with any suggestion to avoid the practice or detail its possible correlation to the students’ behavior. Her ultimate stated intent in the post vignette response was to, after seeking a frame of reference from the family, continue on to approach the teacher asking for a referral to an intervention. This was evidence that she was no longer viewing the family from a deficit view. However, Díaz did not sufficiently develop a strength-based approach to working with the family. Therefore, her rubric score increased from a 0 to a 2. However, I sensed that she mentioned involving the parents just because that had been a major premise of the study. I did not fully sense that she knows how to find benefit by involving the parents.
Migrant liaison Lopez, when asked what she would do to solve the problems being confronted stated, “I would ask the parent what they have done already.” However, as I probed further, she eventually proposed talking to the teacher and placing the student in an intervention (tutoring) program. Lopez also mentioned that the observed problems likely had to do with “something wrong with the son” or that the parents “were doing something wrong.”

In the second response to the vignette, when Lopez was asked what she would recommend the parents do she replied that “I would put the student in tutoring but the parents have to do their part at home.” When I asked her how they could do this she answered “by reading, doing homework, supporting him (the student) and staying in touch with the student’s teacher.” Lopez followed this comment by stressing that all parties - student, parents, and teachers - needed to collaborate to find a solution to the student behavior. She also suggested that an older sibling could tutor the student in case that school tutoring was not available.

In the first set of responses, by asking the parents what they had done to improve the student’s academic outcomes, Lopez initially appears to not have been distracted by a deficit view. Although she seemed to initially approach the parents to gain insight into the situation being confronted, her last comment cast that family as doing “something wrong.” Neither did she state that she would take the parents comments into consideration to craft a possible solution. Instead, Lopez contributed a list of suggestions for the parents to carry out:

- I would tell the mother that she needed to better communicate with her son about some new limits for how much he uses his phone. The mom needs to understand that this happens because of a lack of rules and consequences… if the son does not respect the rules then the phone has to be taken away… I would take it away.

Lopez’ initial entreaty to the parents to identify the roots of the student’s behavior was ignored and instead she enumerated a set of her suggestions. A deficit view was once again evident when she assumed that the issue had to do with lack of rules and consequences. Later responses revealed that Lopez’ suggestions were a product of her own experience rather than a reflection she could have drawn from the parents. When I asked her why she was so adamant that the phone was the cause of the student performance she stated:
The same thing happened with my daughter and when I took her phone away everything went back to normal. She knew that if she brought home bad grades we would take away her phone, time with friends and her time spent at church group. She knows the rules.

Though Lopez drew upon her own experience to venture a possible solution to the parents, she assumed that her situation with her daughter was the same as that of the parents in the vignette. She expected that what worked for her would work for them. Lopez seemed so distracted by this point of view that she did not posit any other possible explanation for the lack of student outcomes. She concluded that sending the student to after school tutoring along with new phone usage rules would solve the issue.

By her second set of responses, Lopez was engaging the parents in collaboration to improve the lack of achievement. The actions she proposed were all activities that the parents could carry out on their own and did not depend on someone else doing it for them. In her response she once again mentioned the need for rules and consequences and balanced them with a need to address the academic underachievement with school interventions. The liaison also took into consideration possible inherent assets within the family to contribute to the solution:

I would still put him in tutoring so he can catch up. But the story (vignette) said that he had two older siblings that were in honors classes in high school, right? So I would ask them to tutor their brother at home too. Just in case there is no room in tutoring.

Lopez finished her response by stating: “the parents need to know that their kid can learn at school and home.” This response showed evidence of partnering with the family to find a solution. Additionally, this solution included identifying both family and school resources to face the issue. Therefore, Lopez increased from a starting score of 0 to a 3 on the vignette rubric.

Table 4.5 – Migrant Liaison Ramirez’ Ability to Identify Rubric Scores

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<th>Ramirez</th>
<th>Rubric Score – Pre-Vignette</th>
<th>Rubric Score – Post-Vignette</th>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
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</table>

Migrant liaison Ramirez suggested that the issues that the underachieving son was facing may have something to do with the parents’ critical approach to him. She added that she would “remind the parents that not all children are the same and some need more help than others.” She placed a high level of agency on the parents as far as improving their child’s academic situation by improving upon aspects of their behavior toward him; she suggested that they “talk and sit with him...understand

This liaison improved upon her set of pre vignette responses by stating that she would propose that “everybody start communicating better” and elaborated steps beyond this initial group effort. When I asked her how she proposed to do this she stated that she would “do the protocol (the family development protocol draft elaborated in class) with them.” She also added that she would stress “high expectations for the child... (not) labeling the son as an underachiever... (celebrating
Ramirez’ response in the pre vignette inquiry indicated that she saw the parents’ actions as having an influence on the son’s own behavior:

What I would recommend to do first is ask if they have talked to their son about this new behavior (the academic underachievement) and the other behavior that the student is expressing. I want them to understand that their son is also going through a period of change (adolescence) and sometimes it is hard for students to adapt especially moving from middle to high school. I would ask the parents to sit and talk to him or if they would like me to sit with them about being on the phone so much and his grades dropping.

In the above quote, Ramirez suggested that the issues being confronted may be linked to expected developmental stages in the son’s life. She had also included in one of her responses that the son’s behavior may have been a reaction to the parents’ critical approach. Although she mentioned shortcomings in the parents’ approach, she was not viewing them from a deficit view (you are broken so I will fix you). Instead, she was identifying actions and mechanisms in the relationship in which the parents had a level of agency. The responses Ramirez provided included that the parents could communicate with their son or strive to understand his development. Even when Ramirez interjected herself into the mix she did so to mediate between the parents, the son, and the issue being addressed. Therefore, Ramirez earned a 2 for her first set of responses.

Although Ramirez’s second set of responses were very similar to the first set she added several details that helped refine the guidance she would provide to the family. She indicated to the parents that they could be influential in finding a resolution to their son’s low grades and that success could be achieved by considering some of the actions they were undertaking and either curbing them or eliminating them. Additionally, Ramirez suggested to the parents that they should have:

- high expectations for the child… (not) labeling the son as an underachiever… (celebrating the student’s) accomplishments and giving praise… (and possibly) have(ing) and SST to see if there are other needs.

Ramirez was also clear that several interested parties had a role to play in “seating at the table” and agreeing upon a course of action. These include the parents, the son, the teacher, (she also suggested) possibly an SST team, and herself. Ramirez also stated that she would utilize the drafted protocol to guide her interaction with this family as they strove toward a solution. She was the only liaison to actually plan in her response to use the protocol even in its draft stage. Therefore, Ramirez earned a 4 for meeting all four criterions listed on the rubric.
Table 4.6 – Migrant Liaison Azevedo’ Ability to Identify Rubric Scores

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<th>Azevedo</th>
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<th>Rubric Score – Post-Vignette</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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Migrant liaison Azevedo’s stated that she would start by “asking the parents questions to determine the type of relationship they have with their son.” She also mentioned that “it appears that the parents have low expectations of the child.” She went on to say that the parents should increase their expectations towards him so that the son “should feel better about himself.” However, she did not expand on how she would employ the parents as partners to bring this change about.

Azevedo stated that she would first meet with the parents for the purpose of establishing a level of “understanding” between the parents and the son. She ventured that the student’s recent academic decline probably had to do with him entering his adolescent period. She would suggest to the parents and son that they attend one of the migrant parent development programs that covered the stages of development. She would do this so “they can see that this is all normal and we can get him back on track (academically and behaviorally).” She added that she would work on the parents’ perspective and guide them to develop “trust (in their son) … (not to be so) judgmental… (and) be more patient with him.”

In her first set of vignette responses Azevedo replied in a manner that indicated that she was engaging the parents as partners as they worked to improve their son’s academic progress. She stated that she would start by inquiring of the parents what kind of relationship they had. When she followed up this comment with “it appears that the parents have low expectations of the child,” she added that the purpose to her inquest was to find clues in the parents’ responses to determine a possible solution.

However, Azevedo she did not propose any possible follow up actions once she identified the information she sought. For example, she stated “the mother should remember what it was like to be a teenager, how hard it was.” But she did not follow this up with a suggestion such as to sit and talk with the son, nor did she engage the father in the conversation to add his perspective. In fact, Azevedo did not present any concrete suggestions as to how to go about solving the issue. She was very diagnostic in her approach with the family, though not in a deficit manner but she did not reach the point of using the information gathered to propose a solution. Therefore, Azevedo earned
a 2 as she gave evidence that she engaged the parents as partners in her endeavor to resolve the student behavior.

In her second set of answers, Azevedo was still intent on developing the parents’ understanding of their son’s developmental stage as well as in involving them in finding an appropriate solution:

The parents have expectation of the son but they may not be his expectations. They (the parents) are forgetting that each of their kids are different and have different strengths and difficulties. Before they can help him (the son) they (the parents) need to change the way they look at him.

This time, Azevedo stated that she would meet with the family and work with them to help the parents develop a better understanding of what their son may be going through. Her purpose in doing this was so that “they can see that this is all normal and we can get him back on track (academically and behaviorally).” Additionally, Azevedo added that the purpose of the parents gaining perspective of their son was to develop “trust (in their son) … (not to be so) judgmental… (and) be more patient with him.”

She mentioned that she would invite them to a series about understanding teen development hosted by the Migrant Program. This suggestion indicated that Azevedo was looking to utilize both family and community resources to improve the son’s academic level. Moreover, Azevedo gave evidence that she was now using the information that the parents provided along with other outside resources in order to work towards improving the student’s outcomes. She had not responded in this manner during the first vignette administration. However, because she did not provide a systemic, detailed plan as to how she would accomplish the improvement, Azevedo only increased to a level of 3.

In her responses to the pre-administration of the vignette migrant liaison Salce proposed “I don’t think he (son) is getting the support he needs at home.” She ultimately suggested that the student talk to the teacher and possibly enroll in an after school tutoring program. When I asked her if there was a role for the parents she proposed that the parents enroll him in an afterschool program. She appeared to be distracted by a deficit view of the parents’

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<th>Table 4.7 – Migrant Liaison Salce’ Ability to Identify Rubric Scores</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Salce</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rubric Score – Pre-Vignette</td>
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<td>0</td>
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Salce’s comments in her post vignette response demonstrated awareness that parents needed to be involved beyond an ancillary role to improve their son’s academic performance. This time, in addition to placing the student in tutoring, she proposed to meet with the parents and discuss with them “why they show preferential treatment with their kids.” She offered herself as a mediator to guide them to inquire if perhaps “the way they compare their children’s intelligence has something to do with why the
Migrant liaison Salce’s replies to the pre vignette questions were curt and mainly focused on her observations about the shortcomings of the parents:

The first thing I would tell her is to stop comparing her son to her siblings because they (children) are all different from one another and this one is obviously having problems with school work… maybe the problem is the mom because she doesn’t have any communication with the son… the Mom is focusing more on the children that are more intelligent and she needs to pay more attention to her younger son.

Salce focused almost exclusively on the mother as the problem and did not take into consideration any of the other clues as possibly contributing to the son’s recent academic downturn. Her comments provided evidence that she was distracted by a deficit view as she approached the family scenario.

Salce’s responses presented a conundrum in that she provided evidence that could possibly place her at two spots on the rubric. On the one hand, she appeared to approach the parents from a deficit thinking point of view and highlighted several of their shortcomings in dealing with their son. This action would normally result in a score of level 0 on the scale. On the other hand, Salce did eventually suggest that the student go to tutoring, a suggestion that demonstrates that she is looking for outside resources which would have her meeting partial criteria to have her placed at a level 3. However, level three stipulates that first she must avoid a deficit-thinking approach and then either view parents as partners and utilize resources. Therefore, Salce’s responses appear consistent with the initial level 0 because she did not avoid a deficit-thinking approach and seemed more intent on criticizing the mother than viewing her as a partner.

Salce’s later responses stepped beyond her initial poor assessment of the mother’s actions when she stated that she would meet with the mother to “ask her why she thinks she treats her children differently.” Salce ventured that her aim was to bring to the mother’s awareness that she has been “comparing her children and her son is seeing himself as less intelligent than his older brothers.” She also replied that this treatment was getting in the way of the son developing trust with his parents and increasing in confidence that would possibly lead to the academic growth they sought. Ultimately, Salce improved to a rubric score of 3 because she progressed from her first responses into partnering with the parents, specifically the mother, as they sought an answer to explain the son’s downturn in academic underachievement. She did not include that she would identify programs, school, or community resources to accomplish this goal, but in essence Salce presented herself as a Migrant Program resource that the parents could use.

**Summary of Impact Data**

The following chart reflects a summary of the impact data collected from the pre and post vignette responses with six of the participants. All six sets of impact data showed positive results in their awareness to identify strengths and assets. On average the impact data reflects a growth of two rubric points. Two of the participants showed a growth of one point and another had a three-point increase. Half of the participant’s pre-vignette responses placed them at a level zero, meaning that
they were initially distracted by a deficit view. The other half started the study displaying an inclination towards seeing the family as partners or attempting to identify existing resources or relationships in the household (level two).

Table 4.8 – Impact Rubric Data Summary Including Baseline, Outcome, and Impact Difference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Baseline (Pre Vignette)</th>
<th>Outcome (Post Vignette)</th>
<th>Impact Difference</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rubric Scores</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Liaison Salce</td>
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<td>+3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The highest growth upon the rubric was experienced by one of the least experienced and a mid-point longevity participant. While the two liaisons showing the least growth were the longest serving and a mid-point longevity member. By the end of the study, all but one of the six had achieved a level three. This means that in their post responses five out of six liaisons stated that they would approach the family as partners and identify resources in the family and community. At the beginning of the study none of pre-vignette response reflected a level three on the rubric. The only study participant to fail to reach this level was the most recently hired. The one study member to reach a level four was a mid-point longevity member who stated that she would utilize the drafted protocol.

The above results suggest that this study and its array of interventions displayed a level efficacy in achieving the expected increase in sophistication; increase of knowledge and behaviors to improve migrant liaison efficacy in working with parents. One could clearly define an operationalized behavior or statement in their post response that that gave evidence that the level had been achieved or not. Although I believe the rubrics were adequate to detect the desired progression from one level to another I believe that a finer grained rubric can be developed to capture additional nuances in the progression. I would have liked to be able to identify whether the increase in levels was due to a newly adopted perspective of the family by the migrant liaison, or a new procedural behavior, such as utilization of a strength-based protocol. Although positive and promising, the study's relatively low number of participants do not allow for generalizability of findings. There are still too many questions and data to be collected on whether this intervention will reap the same result consistently in in other setting.

For example, the rubric did not clearly capture why the migrant liaisons progressed from a deficit view to a strength-based approach as they went from a level zero to a level two; was the one participant truly knowledgeable in how to use the partially developed protocol as she increased to a level four; what role, if any, does longevity pose in achieving the study’s goal; or are there some migrant liaisons, new to their position, that are predisposed or better prepared to employ a strength based approach with families. These questions may be partially answered by taking a holistic view of this impact and the process data described below.
Process Data Analysis

I will now present the process data and results for this study’s progression of activities. The data will be grouped in three main areas related to each of the learning dimensions: a) migrant liaisons’ ability to identify strengths and assets in the family, b) migrant liaisons’ utilization of process driven family engagement and c) the migrant liaisons’ perceived efficacy. Growth in these dimensions is expected to result in them being better informed about the benefits of parent involvement. Additionally, I also expect to see improvement in their abilities to increase their sense of efficacy as they work collaboratively with families in a strength-based manner.

In this section, I present an overview of the study’s intervention design and activity sequence. Each session activity is grouped according to the dimension in which it was designed to affect, along with the correlating learning objective (See Table 4). I then specify the low inference accounting and quantification of the critical incidents and responses aligned with participants’ progress, culminating in a high inference analysis of each session.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.9 - Intervention Design/Sequence of Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Migrant Liaisons and Family Development Interaction</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.5 Hour/Session</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Expected Outcomes)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant Liaisons will understand the structure and purpose of the design study. They will learn about a portion of the research base associated with parent involvement and they will agree upon a set of expected outcomes for the Migrant Program. Additionally, the Migrant Liaisons will understand how their own role contributes to expected outcomes. As a result, the Migrant Liaisons will be motivated to participate in the study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identification of Family Strengths and Assets</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants will define “deficit thinking” and be able to identify when they are viewing a family situation from this perspective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 3 and 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>c.</strong> Migrant Liaisons will quantify the number of items they identified as being “deficits” in the initial “home situation” exercise.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 4</th>
<th>Attitudes – Identifying Parents’ Social and Human Capital</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>a.</strong> Watch video on “Habitus and the Capitals.” Participants will come to an understanding that social and human capital is transmitted generationally.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>b.</strong> Read portions of Social Capital and the Creation of Human Capital (Coleman, 1988). Discussion and PD of interaction among Social, Human and Cultural Capital.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>c.</strong> Group exercise: Migrant liaisons will create lists of evidence from their own life that demonstrate examples of human (knowledge and skills) and social (networks and relationships).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>d.</strong> Discussion reflecting upon how many of the elements of human and social capital are displayed by the migrant families with whom they interact.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>e.</strong> Discussion equating the concept of “capital relationships and knowledge” to a family’s strengths and assets. Resource Map exercise.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement of Family in a Problem Solving Process</th>
<th>Knowledge – Strength-Based Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 5 and 6</strong></td>
<td><strong>Skill Building – Co-developing Migrant Family Protocol (MFP)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants will acquire the necessary background and information to co-develop a protocol that they can regularly use to guide parents solve their challenges by utilizing their existing strengths and assets along with the resources that the Migrant Liaison can provide.</td>
<td><strong>a.</strong> Migrant Liaisons review and critique the Cornell (2003) developed Family Development Plan. They then come together to co-develop along with the student researcher a strength-based document that includes the components of avoidance of deficit-thinking, strength-based approach, social and human capital.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
b. Read *Waking the Sleeping Giant: Engaging and Capitalizing on the Sociocultural Strengths of the Latino Community* (Osterling, 2001) and discuss the benefits of pursuing a family development model with migrant families

| a. | Migrant Liaisons are presented with a video clip of a family unit that has suffered several levels of trauma. |
| b. | Discussion of family mentalities, attitudes and mechanisms allowed the family to teach the child to read. |
| c. | Read: *Why does parents’ involvement enhance children’s achievement?* (Sinn-Sze, C., & Pometantz, E. M., 2012). Migrant liaisons look for and create a list of indicators in the video clip and article that demonstrate the family’s inherent strengths and assets that lead to positive student outcomes. |

### Perceived Efficacy as a Liaison

#### Sessions 7 and 8

Participants will express a sense of greater efficacy as they become proficient at using the Migrant Family Protocol.

| a. | Migrant Liaisons practice in pairs using the Migrant Family Protocol (MFP) by applying it to video clips of a Latino single-father. Migrant Liaisons use the evidence on the video clips to fill out the MFP and identify strengths inherent in the father and son’s life in order to deal with their challenges. |
| b. | The same process is applied to a vignette of a migrant family determining whether or not to enroll their daughter in preschool. Protocol responses are gauged by peers using a 5 point rubric. |
| c. | Discussion follows on the variety or approaches that each of the pairs pursued in their MFP. |
Migrant Liaisons will reflect on the process and outcomes of the design study. Review and reflect upon the learned content and comment on any perceived improvements they can identify as a result of having participated in the study.

At the end of the workshop each Migrant Liaison participated in a post-study interview. I used a semi-structured interview to detect how successful the intervention was in achieving the learning objectives identified below. Additionally, I have included participant comments in the form of a summative analysis after each of the five objectives in order to demonstrate that the content from the sessions is now reflected in the Migrant Liaisons’ replies.

Session 1: Migrant Liaisons Interaction with Parents Overview and Introduction

Learning Objectives – Session 1

The first session had three distinct purposes. First, the migrant Liaisons would understand the structure and purpose of the design study. Next, they would learn about a sample of the research base associated with the benefits of using school liaisons for the purpose of fomenting parent involvement. Furthermore, this understanding would allow the Migrant Liaisons a broader understanding of the importance of a strength-based protocol. As a result, I expected that they would become engaged and motivated in the study’s development as they gained a deeper understanding of parent involvement and its benefits. Lastly, I wanted them to agree upon a set of expected outcomes for the program. These outcomes were drawn directly from the federal documents outlining the purpose and process of their roles.

Low-Inference Observation of Critical Incidents in Session 1

The first session with the Migrant Liaisons began with an overview of the topics they would engage in over the eight sessions. At this time, I also shared the three learning dimensions, the structure of the design study, and my role as both researcher and participant. When asked if they were interested in participating in the study, all eight participants voiced their approval. They responded enthusiastically with comments like “it’s about time” and “we really need this.”

Once I was satisfied that the first session objective of motivating them to participate in the study had been met, I moved to the next objective, dealing with their awareness of their role in fomenting program objectives. In particular, I wanted to make sure that they understood the “parent involvement” objective as described in the Federal Migrant Program.

In a needs assessment I undertook while recruiting participants, I noticed some common characteristics among the Migrant Liaisons. Unlike other school staff members, they did not share any prequalifying experiences or standard training for their roles. The survey included the following questions:

- How long have you worked in a capacity which has you in contact with parents of school aged children?
- Can you tell me what your job description says your duties are?
- Do you know what Migrant Regulatory Guidance states is the purpose of migrant liaisons?
- How much training have you received to prepare you for this job?
The amount of time that each Migrant Liaison had worked with the program varied from several months to 15 years. Only one of the eight participants recalled reading the job description for their position. Furthermore, all of the participants gave a different response to what they thought their job description was. A typical response was given by Jimenez, who knew that her role had something to do with parents but had arrived at this determination though her 15 years of experience rather than any professional development afforded to her. When asked what her job description was she answered: “Well, I’m supposed to work with parents. It says so on my title.” When pressed about what the actual job descriptions said, she stated:

Oooooh, I haven’t seen that since I got hired. I don’t think I even read it then! I just do what I know the parents need. And I’ve been doing that for a long, long time.

Not a single Migrant Liaison had read the Migrant Regulatory Guidance document and most did not know its purpose. Only two stated that it had something to do with how the Migrant Education Program operates. Moreover, none of the participants recalled receiving professional development in any area.

With their attention firmly focused on seeking some definition for their work duties I referred them to the Education of Migratory Children under Title I, Part C of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 regulatory guidance document. The group then carried out a jigsaw exercise where they looked at a selected section of the document that focused on carrying out the objectives. To guide the exercise, I included an excerpt below from the regulatory guidance which depicts the purpose of the migrant education program. Attention was drawn to specific functions or expectations (bolded) of the program to guide participant discussions:

Support high-quality and comprehensive educational programs for migratory children in order to reduce the educational disruption and other problems that result from repeated moves; Ensure that migratory children who move among the States are not penalized in any manner by disparities among the States in curriculum, graduation requirements, and State academic content and student academic achievement standards; Ensure that migratory children are provided with appropriate educational services (including supportive services) that address their special needs in a coordinated and efficient manner; Ensure that migratory children receive full and appropriate opportunities to meet the same challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards that all children are expected to meet; Design programs to help migratory children overcome educational disruption, cultural and language barriers, social isolation, various health-related problems, and other factors that inhibit their ability to do well in school, and to prepare them to make a successful transition to postsecondary education or employment; and Ensure that migratory children benefit from State and local systemic reforms. (Education of Migratory Children under Title I, Part C, 2010)

Liaisons were then given the following questions:

- Which of the highlighted components of the objectives specifically need the involvement of parents or at least their knowledge and consent to carry out the stated purpose?
- Who is positioned in a better place to carry out these program objectives (classroom teacher, regional personnel, managers or liaisons?)
There was a clear consensus among the group that the majority of the bolded section would be able to be carried out only with the involvement of a parent, or at the very least, with their consent. The only exception the group noted that was outside of the parents’ control was “disparities among the States in curriculum.” Lopez contributed that in her opinion everything that was highlighted was supposed to be carried out by the parent. Jimenez chimed in and said that she agreed but that for whatever reason, migrant parents did not. Therefore, Jimenez, said, it was “our” job to take these opportunities to “our” parents and let them know what was needed and expected. Díaz and Garcia did not contribute much but nodded and generally showed their tacit approval.

Similarly, when the group considered who was best poised to enact the expected outcomes expressed in the federal language, all agreed that it was the liaisons who could best carry them out. They discussed how the other positions (directors, principals, or teachers) either did not have the capacity or the knowledge to deal with migrant students and their families. For example, Díaz commented that her principal did not know “anything” about migrants and that this was probably the reason she was being asked to do so many other things that had nothing to do with what she had just learned were her real duties.

The above activity was not meant to define the job duties for the Migrant Liaisons. Rather, the purpose was to understand the Migrant Program as defined by the Non-Regulatory Guidance. After an energetic discussion, they were able to appreciate that many of the stated purposes required the involvement of parents. The majority of them agreed that a part of their job duties should include them guiding, preparing, and supporting parents in reaching the stated aims in the federal guidance document.

I devoted the last 45-minute block in the session to acquainting them with research on parent involvement. The articles I selected focused on the evolution of parent involvement over the last 40 years, the operationalized aspects of parent involvement, a meta-analysis of parent involvement research, as well as a case study of Migrant Liaisons in Texas. Each participant was placed in a pair and assigned an article. The pairs then created a presentation poster of the article’s content.

The group then did a modified jigsaw activity to present information from the readings. After presenting on salient information from each of the articles, the participants shared what they considered to be the most important aspects of what they had learned. The study members produced the following:

Table 4.10 – Parent Involvement Research Review Debrief

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements identified by participants from articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Parent involvement has been studied for over 50 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Lopez et al (2001)</strong> said that migrant liaisons in Texas involved parents and their students got better GPAs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There are over 700 ways to do (operationalize) parent involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Parent involvement at home is related to outcomes (more so than the at-school variety)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Most research in parent involvement have to do with school-based parent involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Jen and Chan say that parent expectations for kids have the highest impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Meta-analysis (two studies) show that it is just as effective as school interventions to improve students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There was much conversation associated with the development of the chart above. They were very much impressed with the Lopez et al (2001) study that indicated that Migrant Liaison support of migrant families in Texas correlated with higher GPAs than families who did not receive
support. The participants were also impressed with the two meta-analysis studies that showed that parent involvement was as effective as almost any other school-based intervention at producing positive outcomes for students. Salce reflected much of the group’s conversation when she stated, it surprises me that people think that they have a good parent involvement program when they have a meeting (at school) and ten parents show up. This stuff (the knowledge gleaned from the review of research) should be taught to all parents.”

To which Azevedo added, “that would be a really good parent involvement program.”

Analysis of Session 1
As I described the structure and purpose of this study, I noticed that the Migrant Liaisons were quite enthusiastic about engaging in this content; several of them commented “it’s about time,” or “that’s what we have been needing.” The majority of participants, except for Diaz and Lopez, who were the newest members to join the group, had complained that most regional workshops dealt with “compliance stuff” and “identification and recruitment criteria.” In fact, just reviewing the outline of proposed topics for the eight sessions took longer than anticipated because of so many comments and suggestions they proposed.

After the initial needs assessment, I realized that the group did not adhere to a specific definition of their duties. As mentioned above, with the exception of one of the participants, none had read or heard of the federal document that established the purpose of the Migrant Education Program. Additionally, the Migrant Liaisons did not have a common view of the components that encompass their program such as meeting compliance criteria, identification and recruitment, service to students from preschool-through 12th grade, out of school youth, and parent involvement.

I found that presenting the Non-Regulatory Guidance exercise to the participants allowed then to gain a perspective of just how much was expected from their position. As we identified expected program outcomes, the participants responded by expressing an exasperated awareness. Lopez uttered “We’re supposed to do all that?” to which Azevedo responded “See, people don’t know, it’s not easy being a liaison.” During the exercise I heard many participants say “I don’t know how to do that,” followed by supportive comments such as “I will show you what I do in my district.” They distinguished their role as one with great capacity for agency as compared with other school, district, and regional staff. Although it was almost overwhelming for the participants to see the expected outcomes associated with their positions, they soon started supporting each other in preparing to meet them. Therefore, I believe the established outcomes of this session were met.

Summative Analysis of Interview Responses - Interaction with Parents Overview and Introduction
After the workshops sessions concluded, I interviewed them using a semi-structured set of questions. The intent was to see if the content of the session would enter into their terminology and to determine whether the content would impact the way they undertook their work duties. Seven of the eight participants made direct comments about the research associated with parent involvement and its application in home practices. Only Lopez did not offer a statement about what she specifically she had learned about parent involvement in the sessions.

When asked what impressed her most about the topic of parent involvement, Jimenez stated: “I was surprised to see that so many studies having to do with parent involvement only focus on their involvement at school and not on what they do with their students at home.” She added that she recalled from the workshop presentation that although parental involvement was beneficial, the at-home variety had been linked with more positive student outcomes. She went on to ask: “Why haven’t we heard about the met-analysis stuff before? That parent involvement works.” Similarly, Azevedo was happy that the research had confirmed one of her long-held hunches:
I have always thought that the involvement of parents (at home) was so important in
determining if a child was going to have success in school. And I was glad to see all the
research that shows that I was on the right track all along.”

Awareness that parental involvement at home was beneficial seemed to have left quite an
impression on the remaining study members, as well.

One Migrant Liaison, Garcia, reflected how this type of parent involvement had been
experienced in her formative period: “Everything we talked about parent involvement was true. I
saw it in my own life. My parents were so involved in our lives and that made all the difference in
what we have become.” Similarly, De la Cruz was able to see this type of parent involvement for its
deterministic value: “To me, if you are interested in having a bright future for your children you
have to get involved (at home) as a parent.” De la Cruz and Salce both made comments that
indicated that encouraging this type of parental involvement would be an integral part of how they
carried out their parent workshops. When I asked how she would employ her new knowledge Salce
stated: “I never knew that parent involvement at home was so important. All I kept telling my
(migrant) parents was to keep coming to the workshops. I need to start working with them like we
talked about.” With the comment “like we talked,” Salce was referring to an exchange during the
first session when the participants suggested ways in which to incorporate the knowledge base they
were learning into their six yearly parent meetings.

Both Ramirez and Diaz made a connection between parent involvement at home and school
as well. Ramirez realized that the practice at home was important, but that a double application
(home and school) was preferred: “I can see how parent involvement at home is different than
parent involvement at school. At home is more important, I think, but you really need both.” For
Diaz, studying this topic afforded her a clearer diagnostic lens:

It (the section on PI research) helped me realize just how important parent involvement at
home is to determine how well a student will do at school. I always tended to blame
teachers if a student was behind in school.”

Sessions 2 - 4: Identification of Family Strengths and Assets/Deficit Thinking

Learning Objectives – Sessions 2

The purpose of session 2 was to develop the migrant liaisons’ awareness and ability to
identify the practice of deficit-thinking, which may act as a barrier in the identification of family
resources. Once they had this skill, they would be better able to identify the strengths and assets of
the families they interact with.

Low-inference Observations of Critical Incidents in Sessions 2

At the beginning of session 2, I had the group view an image of a “home scenario” scene
that showed a mother sitting on a sofa watching television, a toddler on the floor, and a man coming
in the door, apparently from a day’s work. The scene depicted a living room section as well as a
kitchen and dining area. They were given the following directions:

Without speaking or conferring with your table partners please look at the following image
and write on your journal as many things, events or happenings taking place in the scene.
You will have 2 minutes.

After 2 minutes, I then asked the migrant liaisons to look at their list and determine which
the observations they had written down had negative aspects associated with them. The percentage
of negatively associated observations is shown in the table below.
Table 4.11 – Participants Responses to Home Scenario Exercise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Migrant Liaison</th>
<th>Total Items Identified</th>
<th>Identified as Negative</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jimenez</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diaz</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lopez</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramirez</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azevedo</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salce</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dela Cruz</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garcia</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results were surprising for all participants. Many of the migrant liaisons were also visibly disappointed, including Jimenez, who had found the most positive aspects about the family scene. Jimenez commented that she was surprised about getting a 17% because she had actually taken a class in avoiding deficit-thinking. The participant with the next lowest score, Salce, was equally disappointed. “I'm not usually this negative,” she said. Diaz De la Cruz and Lopez also commented that they did not think that they were such negative people. I immediately redirected their observation and conveyed that this exercise did not mean that they were negative people. All the exercise uncovered, I stated, was that in this particular scene the group accrued these particular results. However, these results did indicate that the migrant liaisons had viewed this scene with a perspective that caused the resulting scores. I then stated that this session could help the group identify what was causing their particular perspective, with an aim to alter it.

I then focused on Jimenez and Salce and asked them to enumerate some of the positive aspect of the scene which had escaped the other group members. As they enumerated their lists, several of the others noted that they had the same items listed as a negative. The group then set about a discussion were we analyzed some of the aspects that they had initially scored as negative. After the discussion, many of them recognized that there was a duality about some of the elements that could be seen as either negative or positive. I included a sampling of them in the following chart:

Table 4.12 – Item Identified and its Negative or Positive Interpretation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Negative interpretation</th>
<th>Positive Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dirty dishes in sink</td>
<td>Hygiene problem</td>
<td>Dishes in the sink are a sign that the family enjoys home cooked meals. There are no fast food wrappers evident in the scene.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small game pieces within reach of child</td>
<td>Safety issue. Child can swallow pieces</td>
<td>Game pieces and other games and manipulatives in the scene reflect that the family takes time to interact and play games with the toddler. Great indication that language and cognitive development is taking place</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I then shared with the group a definition of deficit-thinking in education as gathered from the literature.

Educational deficit thinking is a form of blaming the victim that views the alleged deficiencies of poor and minority group students and their families as predominantly responsible for these students’ school problems and academic failure, while frequently holding structural inequality blameless... blame(s) the lower intellectual performance of minority groups on genetic deficits, cultural deficits, and accumulated environmental deficits. (García & Guerra, 2004)

Although the scene the group analyzed did not take place in an educational setting, the initial response on the part of the group was to locate what was perceived as negative with the family (environmental deficit). Despite this initial response, many of these items could also be construed as positive, or in part negative, but mostly positive (a family strength or asset). I then asked the group whether they might be applying the same perspective to the migrant families to the migrant families with whom they work.

Most of them agreed and some of them shared examples of how in the past they had approached the families they serve with intent to “fix” them. Ramirez suggested: “we actually hurt the family when we try to fix them. We don’t let them solve the problem themselves.” Drawing from her preschool background, Garcia offered a comparison: “it’s like when I work with my preschoolers, if I do everything for them they will never learn to do it themselves.” The conversation then shifted to what had predisposed them to default to a deficit perspective. They then shared occasions which they had experienced deficit-thinking modeled towards them. Most of them reflected upon experiences from their youth. Garcia shared a typical memory:

That’s what I grew up with (being viewed form a deficit point of view). My parents were never happy with what I did, it was never enough... (they) never gave me credit for anything... they were always criticizing me and everyone else.

The migrant liaisons also created a list of factors that had influenced them to adopt a negative perspective. These factors included: influence of their Latino culture (self-deprecating at times – we are not as good as White people); influence of their parents (not being able to please them); and the determination that lower social classes were “less than” the middle or upper class. Finally, they stated that they have learned to look for what is negative with a situation because this is what the teachers and principals they work with do.
I explained to them that one workshop activity could not determine if they consistently used a deficit-thinking approach. Rather, this determination would only come after considerable self-contemplation. I also explained that deficit-thinking in education had a specific definition pertinent to the school setting and system but that this exercise highlights two of its aspects that could be distinguished in their own thinking process: negative assumptions and stereotypes, as well as the negation of failure to see strengths and assets in a family because of these deficit-framed assumptions.

**Analysis of Session 2**

I implemented the exercise in deficit thinking in conjunction with a reading of *Deconstructing deficit thinking: Working with educators to create more equitable learning environments* (Garcia & Guerra, 2004). After completing these sessions, my sense was that the migrant liaisons understood the concept of deficit thinking. At the beginning of the session, I had introduced the concept of deficit-thinking but did not define it in order to avoid influencing participant responses. Additionally, by introducing the topic in a neutral manner, I was able to elicit their most natural responses.

Of the migrant liaisons I analyzed, Salce and Jimenez seemed to easily make the connection between their deficit-thinking and its possible detrimental effects. Salce commented “We don’t fix anyone; the families need to do it themselves. Thinking like this actually gets in the way.” Similarly, the rest of them also appeared to progress in their comprehension of deficit thinking. Some made comments that reflected that they would be more conscious of the manner in which they approached students and families. Salce and Jimenez stated that they would try to look for positive aspects in a family and keep in mind that they had a propensity to default to a deficit view.

As I reflected back on my study notes, I realized that I may have erred in my study by focusing on deficit thinking as a central notion. Though this concept has a place in the study, most of the examples they shared of a deficit view placed upon them focused on a family dynamic as opposed to a school setting. Because the examples they shared were more aligned with a cultural deficit model, it is possible that I should have framed the topic under a general view of deficit, incorporating all its forms, both educational and cultural.

One exercise during a two-hour workshop is not enough to change a detrimental habit. However, this exercise was beneficial in a number of ways. First, they experienced a real-life example that demonstrated that they were viewing these families from a deficit perspective. Second, the exercise was successful in meeting the stated learning objective because they had a chance to naturally discover their implicit bias towards practicing deficit-thinking. Had I first described the practice and then asked the migrant liaisons if they utilized it, my impression is that they would have given sanitized versions of its practice. Instead, I gave them the chance to trace back to formative family and life situations that had possibly led to their practice of being overly critical and possibly deficit-minded. After completing the exercise, they became aware that the practice of deficit thinking had been solidified over a lifetime. However, while awareness of deficit thinking is important, unlearning it would take a concerted effort of continuing to identify it in their practice. By having them determine where they may have learned the practice, I began the process of allowing them to replace the practice with a strength-based approach that starts out by mapping a family’s existing resources.

**Summative Analysis of Interview Responses – Deficit-Thinking**

In the post-interview, three of the study members made comments about the negative effects of deficit ideology upon families. Salce acknowledged that she did not do well in an exercise formulated to detect the ideology’s influence on a situation involving parents. She went on to state that the rest of the participants had also shown evidence of the ideology’s effect on their way of
thinking. Additionally, De la Cruz and Lopez noted that they saw evidence that parents had internalized this mode of rationalization against their own family. Lopez commented that this perspective could have an effect on their children’s outcomes.

Five participants’ replies suggested that the study made them contemplate their use of deficit ideology and its effects. For example, both Diaz and Ramirez commented that they would seek to be more strength-based in future parent interactions. Only Garcia did not elaborate a definition or application of knowledge of deficit ideology.

During the Home Scenario activity, Diaz stated: “I was very surprised that in the deficit-thinking exercise I saw way more negative aspect in the family than positive things. I want to be more strength focused.” Salce echoed Diaz’s reflection, but also detected another trend: “I didn’t do too good on the deficit thinking activity. I was actually pretty negative when I first looked at the family in the picture. And the rest of the group (liaisons) was actually pretty negative also.” Salce noticed that even though she had been less strength-focused, she had performed in a similar manner as her study partners. During this session and in the post-interview, I did notice that Diaz’ desire “to be more strength-focused” was a common aim among the other members of the group.

Several of the migrant liaisons progressed from recognizing their practice of deficit thinking and ventured into how their new knowledge would affect their future practices. Ramirez proposed that upon her realization that she employed deficit thinking, she would now do the following: “Before I try to help someone you have to start by looking at their strengths and not get caught up on what’s wrong with them.” However, controlling one’s own use of deficit thinking was only a step in eradicating the practice. Lopez stated, “I see now that parents have deficit views of their kids…for whatever reasons. But they are just setting them up for underachievement. They need to start by raising their expectations for them.” Jimenez proposed a solution to those victimized by deficit-thinking: “I think it’s more important to know your own strengths and set realistic attainable goals instead of letting someone else dictate what they see as your deficits.” The solution may have been simplistic, but it did posit that this detrimental point of view could be counteracted.

The last two responses helped define and operationalize deficit-thinking. To Azevedo, the practice was defined in the following manner: “It’s interesting that having a deficit view of someone is not really NOT having expectations about someone. It’s actually having negative expectations about them; they will fail! They will not amount to anything! They CAN’T!” To Azevedo, deficit-thinking was holding negative expectations of migrant families, not necessarily the absence of them. De la Cruz attributed the internalization of the mentality by migrant families to reasons inherent to their migrant lifestyle: “I think that some of our migrant families have in them a sense of deficit when we get to this country; due to fear, loneliness or just ignorance of how to progress. But I think our culture is our greatest strength.” However, even as De la Cruz defined the problem, she also identified a solution: migrant families own culture.

**Learning Objectives – Sessions 3 – 4**

After defining deficit thinking, they saw the possibility that use of this practice may become evident in their interaction with migrant families. In sessions 3 and 4, the migrant liaisons moved on to the purpose of identifying strengths and assets in the families they worked with. The mechanism I used to teach them how to determine strengths or assets in a family was to make sure they understood Bourdieu’s concept of social and human capital. The group learned how capital (strengths and assets) are generationally transmitted and usually inherited within social classes. Migrant families’ strengths and assets need to be fully identified in order for the families to be able to use their resources to confront issues that arise when guiding their children towards positive academic and personal outcomes. In essence, without the parents’ contributions and collaboration, migrant liaisons become the only agents capable of fomenting change towards a resolution of the
issues presented to them by migrant families. This created or perpetuated a dependency model of the families upon the migrant liaisons.

*Low-inference Observations of Critical Incidents in Sessions 3-4*

The models of social and human capital are highly conceptual notions. However, I had determined that Bourdieu’s theory of social reproduction was pivotal to framing the migrant liaisons’ role in helping parents identify the causes that keep their children from progressing academically. For example, migrant families possess inherent strengths and assets that are often underutilized or ignored. In order for them to understand the tenets of social reproduction, that class characteristics and social knowledge are passed on generationally (Dimaggio, 1982), I had them think about influences in their life that led them to their present social station. At the beginning of the session I asked them the following:

As a child this of a person that was an influence in your life that helped guide you onto a positive path?
What kind of advice did this person give you or what things did they teach you?
As an adult who was an influence in your life that helped guide you onto a positive path?
What kind of advice did this person give you or what things did they teach you?

Salce and Jimenez stated that their parents had been models of “what I did not want to become.” Diaz stated that her grandmother had the major influence in her upbringing and Ramirez mentioned an aunt that raised her most of her life as a role model. Lopez, De la Cruz, Garcia, and Azevedo mentioned their mother, father, or both as the major influences that led them onto positive paths. I detected a clear pattern as study participants elaborated on their responses. Parents were commonly identified as holding an influential role in their childhood stage as contributing modeling (or model to avoid), guidance, or information to lead them on a path to success.

Salce voiced that she had not had a nurturing relationship with her parents. Furthermore, she stated that this experience of not having a nurturing relationship had influenced her path. Because she had experienced what she considered to be an abusive upbringing, this inspired her to decide to be different from her parents. She shared with the group that she had raised her daughter in a manner very different from her own experience.

While Lopez’s childhood experience was almost the opposite to that of Jimenez’, the end result was similar in nature. Lopez also commented that what she was trying to do was raise her children in the best way possible.

This exercise helped the study members acquaint themselves with the abstract concepts of social and human capital by drawing examples of these dynamic structures from their own lives. The group revealed several patterns in their responses. A number of influential relationships (family, friends, and social circles) have contributed to them being in the social space and level which they now occupy. They arrived in this social sphere in part by the information, guidance, and knowledge that these relationships and social circles provided. I informed them that these were the definitions of social (relationships and social benefits and obligations) and human (information and knowledge pertinent to a social level) capital. In combination, these concepts provided the mechanisms for social reproduction. I explained that in other words, a social class reproduces itself. They had been like their parents, and in turn, they would produce offspring like themselves.

Evidence was mixed as to how the migrant participants grasped the concepts of social and human capital. Garcia, Lopez, and Jimenez energetically engaged in the conversation following the exercise. In fact, they almost monopolized the entire exchange. Garcia summarized the common impression of these three migrant liaisons by stating: “That makes sense, that’s why I’m like my Mom in so many ways and my girls are turning out just like me.” Several of the members of the
group commented only briefly during the conversation as if they were still processing the new information. And two of them, Diaz and De la Cruz commented: ‘I don’t get it,” and “I’m confused about the terms,” respectively.

I created this exercise to try and operationalize what a term like human capital would look like in practice. The group identified behaviors, practices, and structures that they had followed to guide their children towards academic success. The group then came to the understanding that the fact that each of them were quite like their own parents demonstrated the importance of social capital in the lives of their own children. To conclude the exercise, the group “pop-corned” a list of best practices that used with their children (or that their parents had practiced with them) to help attain academic or personal success. I asked the group to create a resource map that consisted of four concentric circles titled in the following manner: 1) student, 2) parent, 3) school, and 4) community. I instructed each individual to write as many suggestions as they could think of and place them in the appropriate circle. The group then wrote their responses on a poster board. In total, the group produced a list of about 35 varied elements ranging from “reading daily” to “taking them to church.” This activity took about 10 minutes from beginning to end and I highlighted how fast and easy it would be to do this resource mapping with a student or parent.

I then asked if them if the migrant families they knew practiced these elements. Ramirez stated: “many of them do but a lot of them don’t.” Salce added: “I don’t think many of my students in my school get this (from their parents).” Lopez said: “I think even if they don’t they are ready to hear this and do it. They love their kids and whenever I give a suggestion about what to do with their kids my parents do it.” Jimenez concluded that her experience was similar and that due to the relationship she had with her migrant parents they “believe in me... have faith in me.”

I then suggested to the seven study members that had children, that each of them were a significant part of their offspring’s array of social capital. In fact, the relationship they had with their children was highly influential in determining how much human capital (knowledge and information) they would accrue. I then asked: “what does this suggest about your relationship with migrant parents?” Several of them sated that that their role could be as social capital element in the lives of the migrant parents that they work with. Azevedo stated: “We can be valuable just by letting them know that we came from where they are coming from. We can be their model.” Salce mentioned that her children had experienced a high level of academic success: “We can let them know how we did it.” At the end of the session, it appeared that the study members realized that they represented a possibly significant social capital element as well as a valuable human capital asset in the lives of migrant parents.

We concluded the session with a clarification that the point was not to necessarily understand the terms social and human capital. This was necessary due to comments I had heard that some of them were still confused by the terms. I then enumerated for them a trajectory that I hoped would help them better understand: 1) all social classes have capital, 2) capital can be operationalized as strengths and assets within a family, 3) capital in migrant families is often left dormant or unused by the school setting and 4) migrant liaisons have a role in activating social and human capital. The best way to activate this capital was to operationalize it into practices, that made use of the information and knowledge, within the family and related social circles.

Analysis of Sessions 3-4

At the conclusions of sessions 2, 3, and 4, I felt that the group had met the stated outcomes of learning the definitions and real life manifestations of deficit thinking. By their responses to the home scenario and the subsequent discussion, I could tell that they had a grasp of the concept of deficit-thinking and could identify it when they saw it. Additionally, a useful exercise to reiterate this practice was when they considered experiences within their own life that placed them as recipients.
of deficit thinking. The conversation that ensued lasted than I had anticipated because the participants had so much to share about their experiences. However, the results were mixed on how well each of them understood the concepts of social and human capital and their relationship to defining family strengths or assets.

Although I believe they understood the concept of capital, they seemed to use the term social and human interchangeably. When I brought this to their attention, Diaz and De la Cruz replied that she kept confusing the terms because in her mind both “social” and “human” had to do with people. From that point on, we agreed to avoid the terms and instead utilize “relationships/support groups” for social capital and “information/knowledge of processes” for human capital. I reiterated that the underlying definition of capital remained in that both elements inherently contained a certain value or worth. Part of this failing was that I included too much information into these two sessions and allowed the group discussions to go on for too long. Because I did not want to abbreviate these discussions, some of the corollary activities did not materialize while others were rushed.

As stated above, I presented the concepts of social and human capital to the migrant liaisons so that they would see that regardless of social class, all families have some sort of inherent capital. I then defined capital as an element that contains a level of value such as a beneficial relationship or knowledge of a previously unknown process that may lead to life enhancement. Even though some of them confused the conceptual terms, their comments demonstrated that they understood that families with whom they work possessed strengths and assets. This could also be linked to the home scenario exercise where they learned that even aspects that initially appear negative may actually harbor a positive use or manifestation. If I could do it again I would not focus so much on the conceptual nature of the definitions and would instead reinforce the operationalized aspects of the concepts.

**Summative Analysis of Interview Responses – Identifying Strengths and Assets**

During the post-interview, all eight migrant liaisons demonstrated that the intervention’s activities had made a detectable impact on their thinking process. All eight sets of responses showed indications that they had contemplated their view of parents’ inherent strengths and assets as well as the benefits of their identification and employment. De la Cruz and Jimenez both stated: “I had never made the connection,” in reference to the deterministic effect of relationships and the knowledge that social circles impart. Diaz stated that guiding the parents that she worked with to activate these inherent assets would make her job easier. Salce similarly noted that she would prefer this approach to rushing in with a resource suggestion. Four of the respondents indicated that they believed parents had inherent strengths, with Ramirez and Garcia noting that the Latino culture and community itself had inherent strengths and assets.

Several of them commented that they had made the connection that migrant families possessed inherent strength. Lopez pointed out: “These families have most of what they need to work themselves out of many of the problems they face. We just need to remind them about these strengths and how smart they are.” She also commented that rather than provide a “fix” for their problems she now saw her role as helping the families identify their available strengths. Ramirez saw Latino culture as containing inherent strengths that could be employed to confront issues. She stated, “as Latinos there is so much good in our culture that we could all use to help our kids progress. We are hard workers and united and love our families we can use all that to move our kids forward and all of us, our culture.” Much like Lopez, Ramirez also saw her new role as awakening migrant families to the strength and assets available to them, whether in their family or culture.

Diaz also saw a new purpose in her duties. After commenting, “if you have a family that has deficit views of themselves – were not good enough, we don’t do good in school – we can help
them focus more on their strengths.” She then added that even if you could provide every service to a family with deficit views, nothing could be solved because the real problem was “how they saw themselves (as victims or helpless).” Salce saw an upside to guiding families to lead with their strengths: “I think I need to start with the high expectation that the family can actually help themselves and I don’t have to rush in with a solution for them.” Underutilization of existing strengths was also part of the problem according to Garcia: “I think a big part of the problem is that we do not see all the strengths that we have in our homes as families and we do not fully use all the strengths and resources available at school and our communities.” Garcia also stated that it was important to have families identify their strengths as well as to get the families to utilize them.

The remaining three migrant liaisons were able to connect social groups and the capital they engender, even alluding to social reproduction. Jimenez realized the value of her own social group:

It’s so interesting to me that so much of what we are and can become has to do with the social groups to which we belong. And that group will tell us what has value.” Then she extrapolated “I had never before made the connection that my social status and the people I socialize with actually determine what I know, expect and even my economy. Although I had doubted the appropriateness of some of the concepts we discussed, Jimenez gave me a sense that some of the more convoluted concepts had been at least partly understood.

Azevedo discussed social reproduction and its relationship to the strengths that each family possesses:

you have to become aware of your own strengths and then you make your kids aware of their own. You kind of inherit them to your kids. I now see that why I am so much like my father in character and drive.

De la Cruz came to a similar realization about social and human capital (though not mentioned specifically) and their relation to eventual success,

I never made the connection that who we know and what we know actually has a big part of determining what we will become, what we will have to share with the world and our success. And in our children’s lives we as parents determine so much of what they will become.

When I asked her what she meant my “success” she responded: “all kinds; academic, economic, personal.”

Sessions 5 and 6: Engagement of Family in a Problem Solving Process

Learning Objectives – Sessions 5 and 6

The culmination of the knowledge and theories discussed above lead to the group developing a method that they could employ in their interactions with parents. During sessions 5 and 6, the migrant liaisons co-developed a strength-based protocol for guiding families in confronting issues by identifying their strengths and assets (social and human capital) in a standardized manner. Study participants would see that the families they interact with possess valuable strengths and assets that can be marshalled to confront challenges. Participants would incorporate as many of the concepts identified in the preceding sessions into this protocol.

Low-inference Observations of Critical Incidents in Sessions 5 and 6

To link the previous sessions’ content to the co-development of a migrant strength-based protocol the participants first noted on a charting exercise the various concepts, notions, and dynamics that we had learned in sessions 1 through 4. I gave them the following directions:
Work with your elbow partner and write down as many things as you have learned from the workshops, readings, journaling, discussions or your original ideas that you think should be included in a MFP to be used when you work with migrant parents or families.

They then produced a list of elements that they had learned during the previous workshops. I then presented each study member with a copy of Family Development Protocol For Family Workers, an iteration of a strength-based protocol. This protocol was developed for social workers as they interact with families to find resolution to identified problems. I directed them to review the document and note its salient characteristics. As a group, we charted the items that they identified for the Cornell protocol, juxtaposing previously identified characteristics on a Venn diagram. At the end of an extended discussion they produced the following chart comparing and contrasting the two lists:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics particular to Cornell Protocol</th>
<th>Characteristics shared by both lists</th>
<th>Characteristics particular to MFP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suggestion that parent or student should write protocol</td>
<td>Focus on strengths</td>
<td>Section that says what strengths they have at home: Resources (money, computer, books, stuff like that)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Record of multiple visits</td>
<td>Detailed expectations (by person family and family worker)</td>
<td>Can we include something about social reproduction?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes brainstorming section for possible solution</td>
<td>Focus on student/family expectations (they need to be held accountable)</td>
<td>Importance of parent involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What they need to do (liaison should not do everything)</td>
<td>Teachers role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationships (extended family)-resource/asset mapping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community; library, counselors, clubs (sports, church, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Migrant liaison role</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Write it so it avoids deficit thinking (focus on positive aspects)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants observed similarities between the two documents. Additionally, they had become sophisticated enough to detect nuanced differences between the documents. The result lead to the formulation of a two hybrid document that could be used with parents.

Two table teams of four participants each undertook the drafting process. Almost immediately, I noted that this arrangement was counterproductive. My intention was to have four participants in each group so that each member participated in the development of the protocols. However, in my rush to divide the groups I did not notice that I had placed three of the more engaged, attentive, and responsive study members in one group. The other group consisted mostly of members who tended to be quieter and less engaged.
The result was that my time was split between a group that needed a considerable amount of my time in clarifying meanings and another that was held back in their progress because I could not give them enough attention. As I went from one group to the other, I noted that often the participants, even in the more advanced group, were digressing into sharing personal stories.

The teams did produce two separate drafts of a protocol; as expected one was much more elaborate than the other. My intention was then to unite the two protocols. However, I realized that this was over-reaching the capacity of the groups. Instead, I had each group use their protocol and apply it to a case study. I wanted to assess whether the protocols could be used for their intended purpose. Subsequently, both protocols were used by each group with some level of success, though neither one was sufficiently perfected. This exercise met with some level of success, but overall did not have adequate time to be developed to its full fruition.

Analysis of Sessions 5 and 6

I was successful in formatting a process that brought the migrant liaisons to an awareness that a protocol could be developed that would standardize the manner in which they interacted with parents. In particular, the Venn diagram exercise demonstrated that a protocol should incorporate certain components and functions. However, equally as important was the fact that they produced a table that demonstrated the material they had learned that a protocol should include. The activity members produced the following list from the content they grasped in their previous workshops:

Table 4.14 - List of Concepts and Process to be Included in a Migrant Strength-Based Protocol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question posed to group: What do we need to include in a MFP?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Focus on strengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Detail expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focus on student expectations (they need to be held accountable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What they need to do (liaison should not do everything)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Section that says what strengths they have at home:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships (extended family)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources (money, computer, books, stuff like that)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community; library, counselors, clubs (sports, church, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Can we include something about social reproduction?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Migrant liaison role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Write it so it avoids deficit thinking (focus on positive aspects)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Importance of parent involvement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above list indicates that by this point in the workshops they had developed a level of sophistication in being able to contribute to the design of a protocol that would guide their interactions with migrant parents. The fact that so many of the elements they identified were aligned to the already established Cornell University developed protocol was further evidence that they now possessed an expanded perspective.

However, capturing the essential components of such a protocol proved to be easier than formatting a document. I had thought that devoting two sessions to this endeavor would be sufficient, but I had underestimated the amount of time needed to properly tease out such a
protocol. In retrospect, the length of this study lent itself more to meeting the first two goals: developing awareness for a protocol, and determining the necessary components for such a document.

A separate study would be needed to design, practice, and troubleshoot the protocol with a variety of test-case scenarios and vignettes. As study focusing specifically on the protocol would afford not just the time needed for development but to undertake my original plan of having to groups simultaneously produce a draft that then could be melded into one. Additionally, a separate study with more time would allow for harnessing the thinking, experience, and ingenuity of more participants.

**Summative Analysis of Interview Responses – Engagement of Family in a Problem Solving Process**

In the post interview, I asked a series of questions to ascertain the grasp of the participants on the necessary elements for engaging the families they served in the problem solving process. The questions teased out various elements which I considered indispensable parts of such a process. I did not directly ask the participants “what did you think of the protocol?” or “what are the elements of a protocol?” Rather, in order to not influence their responses, I started with the question: “a parent comes to you with a problem regarding their child's poor behavior at school, how would you respond?” I then asked more questions regarding their response or lack thereof. Additionally, I created a matrix that captured (over the series of questions I posed) whether the respondent mentioned any one of the five elements of the problem solving process that I considered essential.

**Table 4.15 - Matrix of Responses Regarding Elements of Problem Solving Process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Jimenez</th>
<th>Diaz</th>
<th>Lopez</th>
<th>Ramirez</th>
<th>Azevedo</th>
<th>Salce</th>
<th>Dela Cruz</th>
<th>Garcia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue to define problem</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop family sense of agency</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brainstorm solutions</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource mapping</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carry out a solution</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By the post-interview, six out of eight reported seeking to engage the parent in a problem solving dialogue. Two of the them, Salce and De la Cruz, made no mention that they would use such a process with their parents. However, along with the other six participants, Salce and De la Cruz did indicate that they would foment a sense of agency in parents as they confronted the problem. However, Salce and De la Cruz did not indicate how they would engage parents in a dialogue to help define the problem, identify strengths and assets in that family, or engage the parents in brainstorming as many solutions as possible.

Six of the eight surveyed responded that they planned to initiate a dialogue with the family to frame the problem. Although all eight indicated that they would lead the family to attempt a solution, only three of them (Lopez, Azevedo, and Garcia) stated that they would lead the family to identify multiple possible solutions.

The least evidenced sub-criterion was the identification of strengths and assets. Only Jimenez and Ramirez stated that they planned to carry out a resource mapping exercise with the
family. This low number of responses was interesting since in the previous sessions, most of them had indicated that the content on strengths and assets had led them to serious contemplation about its benefits. Therefore, there was a marked disconnect from what the participants learned about discovering and utilizing a family’s inherent strengths and assets to how they planned to use this knowledge in engaging them in future problem solving.

Sessions 7 and 8: Perceived Efficacy as a Migrant Liaison

**Learning Objectives – Sessions 7 and 8**

For sessions 7-8, the objectives were for participants to express a sense of greater efficacy as they became proficient at using the Migrant Strength-Based Protocol. Another goal was for them to review and reflect on the content they had learned and to comment on any perceived improvements in their work as a result of having participated in the study.

**Low-inference Observations of Critical Incidents in Sessions 7 and 8**

Although the group did not fully complete the protocol development objective, two drafted documents were created that they could use for the sessions. After concluding the first interview with each participant, I provided a scenario of a situation that was familiar to them. I then asked the group to react to the scenario and provide a set of suggestions to the parents of the migrant student. During session 7 and half of session 8, they practiced, in table group arrangements, the use of their draft protocol on several written and video scenarios. The final scenario I presented them with was the same one I had shown them prior to the start of the study. My expectation was that they would respond by using the drafted protocol as they had been practicing.

The vignette presented to the study members was the following:

After presenting at one of your assigned districts’ Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings a migrant mother approaches you and asks you to talk to her husband about something. The mother tells you that after the last PAC meeting which was focused on the importance of early childhood education (ECE) for migrant children she decided that she would enroll her 4 year old in the migrant preschool program. She adds that upon seeking permission from her husband he said no. When she mildly insisted the father became upset and said “El mejor lugar para la mocosa es contigo! (the best place for the little snot-nose is by your side). He added, “Para eso no trabajas y te tengo en la casa, pa’ cuidarla” (That’s why you don’t have to work and I have you at home, so you can take care of her). The mother tells you that she brought up the idea that with preschool she will have a better academic and financial future, just like they said at the PAC meeting. His reply was, “Yo no fui a la escuela y me esta llendo bien” (I didn’t go to school and things are going alright for me). At that point the father walks up to the two of you and introduces himself. With her husband by her side the mother asks you, “Este es mi esposo, le puede hablar? (This is my husband; can you talk to him?).

Instructions: Approach this couple from a strength-based focus and use your protocol to arrive at a possible solution(s) to the issue being confronted by the parents.

The above scenario is a common one that frequently arises in migrant families. Handling it requires the careful navigation of existing gender roles and certain cultural expectations set upon them. The vignette included many common themes that they often encountered with parents.

I then further instructed them to pair up (a veteran with a novice to attempt to balance their experience) and asked each one of the four groups to produce a response. At the end of the exercise, the four responses were recorded on a matrix that showed how many of the desired
elements of the protocol had been captured in the protocol. The matrix was produced from the List of concepts and processes to be included in a Migrant Family Protocol. The four protocol responses and descriptions by the migrant liaisons of how they arrived upon them are below:

Table 4.16 - Protocol Elements Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Jimenez &amp; Ramirez</th>
<th>Diaz &amp; Garcia</th>
<th>Lopez &amp; Azevedo</th>
<th>Salce &amp; Dela Cruz</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus on strengths</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detail expectations</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on student expectations (they need to be held accountable)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What they need to do (liaison should not do everything)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section that says what strengths they have at home: -Relationships (extended family) -Resources (money, computer, books, stuff like that) -Community; library, counselors, clubs (sports, church, etc)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not enough detail</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can we include something about social reproduction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant liaison role</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers role</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write it so it avoids deficit thinking (focus on positive aspects)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of parent involvement</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Upon viewing the matrix, patterns began to emerge. The only element to be clearly reflected across all protocols was stressing that migrant liaison had an important role to play in brokering a resolution to the issue being confronted. Since early in the study (pre-interview), they had given evidence that they often saw themselves as the sole agent of change in these families’ lives. However, the main difference was that a role had now been specified for teachers in two of the protocols and for students in three of the protocols. Additionally, in three of the protocols it was stressed that they were not the only ones that should be involved in seeking a resolution to the problem.

In the section that detailed what strengths and assets could be found at home, all four pairs included some level of response. However, Diaz and Garcia made general references to identify these resources but did not offer any detail about what these strengths might be. The other pairs detailed resources ranging from “available free preschool services” to “loving parents.” Only two of the participant pairs explicitly stated that they would avoid deficit thinking. Though the other two study members did not mention deficit thinking in the protocol, other evidence shows that they would take steps to be strength-based in their approach. Three of the group members included in their protocol and explanation that they would take a strength-based approach to the interaction.

Though the teamed pairs successfully incorporated a number of the elements from the matrix, I did not see sufficient detail accompanying most of them. Only Lopez and Azevedo were
detailed in their responses including timelines and duties by party involved. Although Lopez and Azevedo had suggested that the protocol should include some allusion to the concept of social reproduction, neither mentioned it in their response to the vignette. Overall, however, with the exception of one of the pairs, the other three pairs did reference the importance of involving parents in a more than a perfunctory role of accepting services. These three pairs involved the family by seeking to identify strengths and assets they possessed and combining them with those provided by the migrant program, school, or teacher.

To arrive upon an quantification of the migrant liaisons’ perceived level of efficacy, I combined the 1 to 4 rubric score that the other pairs awarded each protocol. I then averaged the three scores to arrive at a score for each pair. In the last part of session 8, I met with each study participant and interviewed them about their experience in the study. I also asked them to award themselves a 1 to 4 score (using the same protocol rubric) of their perceived efficacy and ability to use the protocol in their work with parents. The scores are listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Migrant Liaison</th>
<th>Pairs Score</th>
<th>Self-Score</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jimenez</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diaz</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lopez</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramirez</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azevedo</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salce</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dela Cruz</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garcia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The scores showed little variation, with the exception of Garcia and Diaz. Scores ranged from a low of 2 points for Garcia to a high of 3.34 for Lopez and Azevedo. The remaining scores landed in the 3 to 3.17-point range. Scores awarded to pairs showed the widest range, ranging from a low of 2 points to a high of 3.67. When it came to the self-awarded scores, seven of the eight participants gave themselves a score of 3. Only Garcia differed from this norm and awarded herself a 2. Possible explanations for these scores will be detailed below in the analysis sections.

**Table 4.17 – Efficacy Score**

**Analysis of Sessions 7 and 8**

Migrant liaisons provided evidence that they had learned from the study’s content and that they were able to create a use a draft protocol to guide their interaction as they worked with parents to solve an issue (in a vignette scenario). The exercise carried out and documented on the Protocol Elements Matrix (Table 16) reflected that on average, the study participants were able to reflect or address 6.25 of the elements identified in the study. However, not all study members utilized the protocol to a similar extent. Lopez and Azevedo reflected eight of the 10 elements that were expected to be found in such a protocol. In this exercise, Lopez and Azevedo demonstrated the highest knowledge and awareness of how to use the protocol in response to the vignette.

Half of the eight participants reflected a score of 7 on the matrix. This also was encouraging because it indicated that six out of the eight participants showed a significant improvement in utilizing concepts and processes that they were not familiar with prior to the study. Additionally, these study members showed that, guided by a drafted protocol, they could put this new knowledge to use as they interacted with parents. The outliers were Garcia and Diaz, who only reflected three
of the 10 protocol elements. This score may reflect a mis-pairing on my part. Garcia was in the half of the group that that I considered “veteran.” However, she had been one of the liaisons that showed a predilection for working with high schoolers. Additionally, she tended to be less engaged than her fellow study members.

Diaz had been a migrant liaison for less than a year and was not very involved in the group discussions. She was the most junior of the group and the only participant with no children of her own. When I met with her and reflected on the low rubric score, I asked her if given another chance would she respond differently to the case in the vignette. Diaz stated: “I don’t think my answer will change much.” When I had posed the same question to Garcia, she had further elaborated on her initial responses. With different partners, both Diaz and Garcia may have had more positive results. However, in the case of Diaz, her overall lack of engagement during the eight sessions may have been an indication that she was not a suitable participant for the study.

I arrived at an overall sense of their efficacy by combining each pair’s scores with their individual self-awarded scores. As I predicted, Diaz, like six of her fellow participants, awarded herself a 3 out of 4. Garcia seemed to realize that her pair’s score evidenced that she had not effectively demonstrated any new knowledge she may have acquired, especially in relation to using it within the protocol. She awarded herself a 2 and ended up with the lowest perceived efficacy score for the group. A pattern was that seven of eight participants awarded themselves 3s. This result could be due to the fact that all seven participants reflected a similar level of efficacy in using the protocol and the processes and concepts within it. However, it is more likely that these similar scores mean that the rubric I crafted was not complex enough to capture nuances in the migrant liaisons’ knowledge acquisition and its display in the protocol.

**Summative Analysis of Interview Responses – Perceived Efficacy**

All eight participants reported an improved sense of efficacy in their post-interview responses. Additionally, all participants offered different viewpoints as they contemplated the benefits and applications of their new perspectives. Particularly, Diaz, Lopez, and Azevedo reflected upon how discovering their own sets of capitals would help them better engage and work with migrant families. The entire group of participants noted that they were now better prepared to affect the lives of migrant parents. Ramirez and Salce noted that due to this new perception and practices, the outcomes of migrant students may improve.

Diaz and Jimenez felt that they were now better prepared to work with migrant families. Diaz stated:

> I felt like I can really help a family in those situations (facing problems at school). It allows me to find out all the needed information and then sit with them and share my own information and even my opinions and advice.

In a similar manner Jimenez said: “(due to the study) I will now be able to provide sufficient time to the family and individually to the student to work with them to find a balance and agree on a solution to their problems.” Azevedo noted that she had not come the study devoid of knowledge: “I have added this new knowledge to what I brought with me and I can use it in my own life and migrant parents to develop our lives.” She also realized that the new information she had gathered was not just of possible benefit to her migrant families, but for herself as well.

A number of them rooted their sense of improved efficacy on a particular aspect of the workshops. For example, Garcia stated: “I feel better about turning something that may be seen as negative into something that is now positive (from deficit to strength).” Lopez saw herself as an element of social capital in the life of the parents she worked with: “Now that I know that I bring so much capital with me when I meet with these parents I feel like I can really help them,” she said. Lopez also stated that at the very least she would share with them with the parents what she had
learned with her own kids about navigating the school system, an outlook that now cast her as a valuable element of human capital (knowledge about processes) in the lives of migrant parents.

Salce considered that her new knowledge about parent involvement would increase her efficiency in working with parents, stating: “I feel more confident that I can work with students and parents and clear up for them how important it is to have them (parents) be involved at home.” She and Ramirez posited that their involvement could lead to improved student outcomes. When asked how the study had improved her efficacy, Ramirez stated: “We can show the students that they can achieve because they have the strong positive attributes, and the help of their parents.” Both of these migrant liaisons understood that success depended on the involvement of parents. And De la Cruz considered that perhaps the focus should not just stop at improving individual families but be expanded to seek cultural betterment: “I’m thinking that we need to start changing our way of thinking and our culture to use the social capital that we have and improve our perspectives and our expectations of us all.”

Summary of Findings

My eight-session series produced several findings that in part confirmed my postulations. I detected five findings as I surveyed the impact and process data.

According to the data amassed, migrant liaisons can be professionally developed to a higher level of sophistication. Both impact and process data identified measured growth as they progressed in understanding and incorporating key conceptual definitions. Similarly, individual and group data showed progress in the area of employing operationalized applications of these notions. This included detecting and avoiding deficit-thinking, approaching parents in a strength-based manner, and identifying strengths and assets inherent in these families. Furthermore, participants demonstrated that given the opportunity they could become adept at developing, formatting, and creating processes and protocols to guide their work with parents.

A second finding showed promise in terms of helping migrant liaisons progress from a point where they were distracted by deficit-thinking toward the employment of strength-based approach when interacting with families. All six sets of data considered in the impact data section reflected growth from their pre-assessment scores.

A look at the process data shows that the study members were able to assimilate the new concepts and knowledge to the point where they became adept at identifying and incorporating these notions into a desired protocol. This third finding also reflects that the majority of participants, working in pairs, were able to use the drafted protocol to respond to a vignette scenario using most of the desired elements. Only one of the two-person teams did not reach what I would consider a significant comprehension and employment of the protocol.

The next finding was in relation to the perceived efficacy of the participants. I captured participants’ perceptions during a pre-interview. At that time, the data indicated that most of them showed a high sense of perceived efficacy in getting their work done. This sense of efficacy was in spite of many of them reporting, in the needs assessment, that they did not have a grasp of their job duties or an across the board similar definition of their job description. They also reflected before the study that they lacked preparation to carry out their work, and did not possess the necessary skills to complete their responsibilities. When I carried out a post-workshop quantification of their perceived efficacy at utilizing their newly acquired knowledge to conduct protocol interactions with migrant parents, the results were positive but for different reasons. A first glance at the impact data suggests that there was a lack of movement in this dimension. I will explain this apparent lack of growth in the section below dealing with the interaction of impact and process data.

Lastly, a fifth finding was that as noted in the impact and process data analysis, the proposed dual purpose of the study (increasing liaison sophistication and co-developing a protocol) was too
broad for the time allotted to this study. A number of the activities accompanying the study objectives were not able to be carried out due to lack of time. And in several occasions, particularly in sessions 7 and 8, there was not enough time for content expansion and production of the protocol. In retrospect, the objective of developing their level of skill sophistication should have been my main focus. The remaining workshop time could have been devoted to developing some of the more difficult concepts, such as social and human capital, in a variety of ways and crafting learning activities to guide the migrant liaisons to define, detect, and utilize them.

Intersection of Impact and Process Data

The impact data collected from their responses to the vignettes posed, and the summative data produced during the session, showed that there was evident growth in the three dimensions addressed. This growth was clearly seen in the first two dimensions as they progressed from not carrying out a particular practice in the - a) migrant liaisons’ ability to identify strengths and assets in the family and the b) migrant liaisons’ utilization of process driven family engagement – to a point where they employed the desired behaviors in their responses. While in the third dimension - c) the migrant liaisons’ perceived efficacy- saw progress once it was clarified which practices should form the basis of their sense of efficacy.

An analysis of the vignette pre and post responses showed that by the end of the study the group of eight demonstrated that the intervention’s activities had made a detectable impact on their thinking process regarding their ability to identify strengths and assets in the family depicted in the vignette. All eight sets of responses indicated that they had been drawn to contemplate their view of parents’ inherent strengths and assets and the benefits of their identification and employment. Their progress from their pre to post response has a nexus in the very first session where there they were brought to a uniform understanding of the important role they had in meeting the Non-Regulatory Guidance (NRG) for the Migrant Education Program. Once the understood the focus on parent involvement that the federal guidance depicted they were able to determine the potentially pivotal role they played as liaisons between the school system and migrant parents.

Process data from sessions 2 through 4 reflected progress towards meeting the first dimensions. Pre-interview data captured that only one of the eight participants was aware that parents could be victimized by deficit-thinking in their interaction at school sites. In fact, several of the them viewed the parents in the pre-vignette response from a deficit-thinking point of view. But the Home Scenario exercise was quite effective at bringing individuals to a point of personal confrontation of their own deficit-thinking towards parents and how it affected the way they interacted with them. A follow up exercise in session 3 helped the group develop their capacity to transform apparent family weaknesses and turning them into strengths by changing their perspective. By the post interview seven out of eight migrant liaisons produced comments that demonstrated that they were not only aware of deficit-thinking and its effects. And all participants stated that they would actively utilize a strength-based approach in their future contacts with families.

A similar development was noticed in the second dimension: utilization of process driven family engagement. Noticeable growth was evident in the interview responses from pre to post administration. Pre-interview replies reflected that liaisons did not utilize any particular array of practices to guide their interaction with parents, much less a uniform one. When asked before the study how they regularly interacted with parents when they came to consult them, participant replies showed that only 1.5 elements of five identified desired components of a parent protocol were evident. Once again vignette and interview data showed that there was no real pattern to which
elements they used before the workshops. By the post interview the number of study members that reported seeking to engage the parent in a problem solving dialogue grew from none to six, however, all eight did indicate that they would foment a sense of agency in parents as they confronted the problem identified in the vignette. At this point responses denoted that on average they would use 3.5 of the five desired elements of a strength-based protocol. The one element least mentioned was the use of a resource map to identify family strengths and assets.

The last dimension dealing with the participants’ sense of self-perceived efficacy presented an interesting situation. Technically, there was no growth in this dimensions because the pre-interview data showed that they initiated the study with a high sense of perceived efficacy. At the conclusion of the study they reported a similar high level of self-perceive efficacy. However, what had changed was the sense of work purpose from which they derived their notion of whether they were effective of not. Before the study the group did not share a common understanding that according to the federal guidance they needed to play a pivotal role in fomenting parent involvement. They tended to focus on other duties such as recruiting and report writing. Since they did not receive any guidance other than “meet with parents six times a year,” participants dealt with parent involvement at varying degrees beyond the mandated six meeting. During the pre-interview they all expressed satisfaction at being effective at carrying out whatever definition of parent involvement they had crafted for themselves.

By the post-interview, and having benefited from a number of sessions from which process data shows liaison learned and grew, study participants drew their sense of efficacy from a different frame of purpose. By this time, they were aware that their role was pivotal in meeting program objectives. They also had acquired an ability to exchange prior deficit-thinking practices with a strength-based approach to interacting with migrant parents. And process data shows that they had become adept at utilizing a drafted parent protocol to guide their interactions. By the second interview all study members reported having a high sense of efficacy in their newly defined role. Several of them commented that this new manner of parent involvement would bear positive student outcomes.

In each learning dimension several effective design elements were identified that strongly contributed to the growth detected. These effective elements will be further considered in the design challenge section in the following chapter. Below, in chapter 5, I will carry out a discussion summarizing the study and detailing its design challenge, including concerns about this iteration. I will also reflect upon my role as both researcher and agent of change. Additionally, I will reexamine the theory of action and add implications of my research as well as include further possible iterations of this design study. I will conclude with study limitations.
CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION

Introduction

Parent involvement is not a novel idea. The practice has been carried out in various forms since it was first identified in the 60s as a potentially mitigating factor in student academic outcomes. There is broad interpretation of what is meant by parent involvement, and schools have subsequently implemented a range of strategies aimed at building school-home relationships and academic supports. Historically, these strategies have taken the form of in-school parent volunteer opportunities, fundraising drives, and parent-teacher conferences. These strategies, while somewhat effective in establishing relationships with some groups of parents, have done little to assist migrant parents in establishing home behaviors and academic support practices that are aligned to school efforts.

In the last decade, a number of studies have suggested that a more purposeful and productive manner to carry out parent involvement that produces positive student outcomes is to enact “at-home” strategies that assist families, including migrant families, in establishing the requisite supports. Several federal and state documents (including the Migrant Education Non Regulatory Guidance (NRG) have called for parent involvement that is “meaningful” in nature. The knowledge base produced in the last few decades suggests that when the school is an active partner in improving home behaviors of families, positive results may ensue. This call for more impactful involvement of parents should not be limited to compliance efforts or meeting a state or federal mandate. Rather, it should provide the impetus for an investigation of collaborative efforts between home and school that can truly produce improved student outcomes.

The Migrant Education NRG federal guidance document and the research literature, calls for an analysis of the most effective use of migrant liaisons to carry out meaningful parent involvement. Since its inception in the late 60s, the Region X Migrant Department has utilized migrant liaisons to carry out many of the activities and interventions outlined in the NRG. These activities and interventions are aimed at eliminating the many barriers to academic achievement that migrant students may experience. Many migrant families, a substantial number of which are recent immigrants, welcome the relationship with the Migrant Program, via the liaison, and find it highly beneficial. Due to this rapport, the Migrant Program excels at attracting parents and families at parent-centered events. Migrant liaisons serve a very important purpose in this educational program, but they are not being leveraged to the fullest potential. The rapport they have established with families can be built upon to engage them in a more substantial manner to address their children’s academic needs and progress.

This study proposed to develop a sequence of workshops that would offer professional development to these valuable school community assets. Professional development was particularly important and relevant, as none of the participants in my study reported having received formal training or preparation, for their role in working with parents. In fact, many of them were unclear about the purpose of their roles or had ever established a connection between their positions and the federally stated purpose of the Migrant Program, (as explicated in the Migrant Education NRG). Some of them even crafted their own working definition over the course of several years. A common thread in the way they carried out their role with parents was to approach families with handouts of services. These provisions may have temporarily alleviated an issue being confronted but did not attack the root cause of the problem. Another commonality in their approach was that they rarely identified and utilized the resources inherent within the family to confront the concern. They mainly relied on schools’ and the migrant program’s services and resources to answer any problem presented by the family.
Meeting the Design Challenge and Deriving Design Principles

The design challenge in this study was to increase their abilities to assist parents in addressing their children’s academic needs in a more targeted and strategic manner. The challenges involved include the fact that they did not clearly understand the role that the NRG outlined for them in relation to fomenting parent involvement. This was compounded by the fact that they had not received formal training in meaningful parent involvement strategies, nor had they been provided with the proper tools to carry it out consistently.

There were ten design principles that served as the foundation for this study. The first was to enhance their skill competencies with regard to the way they approach their duties, in order to extend beyond the mere provision of services or resources when interacting with parents regarding academic concerns about their children. This principle was addressed throughout the study sessions as the migrant liaisons’ skills and attitudes were developed. By the end of the project they demonstrated that they had been exposed to and practiced abilities to meet this principle’s expectations. In session 1, we also focused upon a second principle which, was to have them agree upon a clear definition of what their role within the program is, specific to parent involvement. This resulted in them agreeing upon a clear description of what their duties should entail in regards to the engagement of parents within the program. Study participants unanimously accepted their newly defined role which set the stage to incorporate the study’s content that followed. The next two principles were presented in the study’s second session. The third design principle involved presenting to them the historical evolution of parent involvement from “at-school” activities to the presently preferred “at-home” practices. And in the fourth design principle I had them delve into the meta-analytical research that demonstrates “at-home” parent involvement’s worth in improving student academic outcomes. These two principles were also well comprehended by the group and many commented that they saw their own life experiences, in parenting or being parented, reflected in the studies’ findings and discussion. The two initial workshops were designed to illustrate to the group that federal guidance document set a clear expectation that they should meaningfully work in the engagement of parents. The research we reviewed, suggested that school liaisons could be effective in introducing academic, home behaviors. By the end of the first day, group dialogue gave evidence that the participants had clearly pivoted towards incorporating these two notions into their work expectations.

Session 3 and 4 dealt with the members’ awareness and comprehension of theoretical and practical social mechanisms, that either improved or hindered their interaction with parents. The aim of the fifth principle was to have them adopt and understand a theoretical frame that proposes that migrant families inherently possess strengths and assets. This latter principle could not be developed without its antithetical notion. So in the next design principle we took on the assignment of learning to address migrant families’ concerns while avoiding a deficit thinking approach. Class discussions and subsequent data denoted that principle six, in particular, had a marked impact on the workshops member’s thinking. This result, cemented the group’s need to develop the skills and tools to better and more productively, engage parents. This was followed by the group learning how to guide families to identify conceivable solutions to the problem they face, by practicing brainstorming skills, and then gather necessary resources to confront the issue, by learning and practicing with a resource mapping tool. In the fifth and sixth workshops we built upon our theoretical understanding of a strength-based approach by adopting practical skills and tools. They realized and commented that drawing out these family resources would enable a more meaningful engagement. By the end of the seventh meeting, migrant liaisons’ attitudes had been brought to the point where they had gained the understanding and confidence, that migrant families could be guided to a point where they saw themselves as their own agents of change. This was the eighth design principle. The previous design principles were then all brought together to inform the
designer/researcher and the other participants in the co-development of a protocol. This document would serve to consistently guide their interaction with the families in a strength-based approach. And lastly, an overall desired effect of the design was to increase the self-perceived efficacy of the study participants in carrying out their role in developing parent involvement with their newly developed perspective, skills and protocol tool. In these sessions, the eight study members displayed various degrees of understanding and adopting these two last practices. The main impediment, to the full development of a protocol and gaining efficacy in its use, was lack of time.

The design principles were organized in a manner that they would first lead the migrant liaisons to an awareness of their pivotal job duties; then on to a firm research basis supporting and defining their role in conducting parent involvement; followed by a theoretical frame that would set the course for how they should engage parents; the various aspects of the theoretical framework would then be operationalized into distinct components which they could identify and practice for future employment with migrant parents; which would culminate in the co-development of a protocol tool to guide this engagement; and ending with practice and their improvement in using such a tool to a high level of efficiency.

Although the study involved a small number of participant, there was much enthusiasm as they energetically engaged in the workshops and their associated activities. The group’s energy was uplifting and we developed a dynamic cadence as we progressed through the eight sessions. We met with success in meeting most of the design principles, however, several were met only partially. During the first session, the exercise of simply reading the Migrant Program Non-Regulatory Guidance was of great effect. The initial content undertaken was critical. Leading the migrant liaisons to understand that their program mandated them to develop parent involvement was to be used as an impetus to have them further define this role.

Participants responded, almost with a sense of vindication, and some replied that they knew all along that their job entailed more than just report writing and recruiting. A brief portion of this session was also devoted to studying a chronology of parent involvement over the last sixty years. The point of this element was to illustrate that the most effective parent involvement practices, as suggested by recent meta-analytical research, involves improving upon parent-child home behaviors and not having parents come to the school site for specific events. These exercises were well received, and the group discussion and class notes reflect that study participants were able to appreciate the role of the liaison as agents of change in each of the studies. I found that the content of session 1 was necessary to establish a common language and mental frame upon which to hang the upcoming theoretical knowledge and practical skill set to be addressed.

The next two design elements were to encourage the group to practice a strength-based approach in their interaction with families and to discourage using a deficit thinking approach. These two practices are polar opposites, so a challenge I had was to decide which one to present first. I chose to start with identifying and guiding them to avoid using deficit thinking with the migrant families. Through the activities elaborated the migrant liaisons realized that they had en masse responded overwhelmingly with a deficit thinking response. We used the results to highlight the need to continuously combat against this practice and then segued into developing a strength-based approach to interacting with parents.

In order to illustrate the concept that all families possess resources, relational strengths and assets, I briefly presented several of Bourdieu’s theories, which he developed over several decades, from his work on class distinction. This discussion was intended to show how a social class’ capital is maintained and transferred. Some of them were able to comprehend the theoretical societal mechanism that possibly influenced the migrant families with whom they worked. However, several participants noted that the subject matter and nomenclature confused them. So we streamlined and refocused the discussion by agreeing to define “capital” as strengths and assets in a family, social
class or culture. Understanding the later notion would give us a frame of reference, to understand just how convoluted and difficult it may be to align two social groups; the migrant household and the school site. Later workshop discussions reflected that the study members grasped enough of a Bourdieu’s theory and were able to paraphrase it and apply it in vignette exercises. There still remained a bit of confusion about the terminology expressed by about half of the participants. I will discuss this below.

With an understanding of the need to interact with parents with a strength-based approach, they responded positively to the activities intended to build their brainstorming and resource mapping capacities. These two common practices were not unknown to the participants but not “used at all” by them. With their newly defined work role to carry out meaningful parent involvement they quickly saw applications for these two skills. The group was then guided to agree upon a protocol document that would include all the identified processes and elements essential to carry out a strength-based interaction with migrant parents. I found it encouraging that the activity resulted in the crafting of a well-thought out and functional document. The protocol was almost identical to a widely used template, that I later presented to the group. This was heartening, because although the theoretical foundation I had sought to establish was tenuous, the migrant liaisons were nonetheless able to pull it into a solid and viable parent interaction document. My plan to split the team and have them produce two separate protocols hindered the elaboration of this design element.

At this point in the study, the remaining time was simply not enough to gain mastery in utilizing the protocol. However, the individual and group responses suggested that with a little more time to practice, the study members would have become adept at using the drafted document to guide their interactions with families. We concluded the study with a practice period of activities, meant to expand and quantify their perceived efficacy in using their new knowledge and protocol. This design principle was only partially met, as indicators reflected that participants did not apply their new knowledge uniformly in their responses. I also realized that this learning dimension and its accompanying design elements and rubrics were flawed from the beginning and were not capable of measuring the impact I had sought.

As noted, not all the design elements developed their desired effect. My first observation was that there were simply too many design elements in play. The ten elements were all interconnected but the eight sessions of the study were not sufficient to develop them to a satisfactory level. In discussions with my critical colleague, at the beginning of the study and after several workshops, he mentioned that the content seemed to be too much to develop in the two and a half hours allotted to each of the eight sessions. His observations proved to be correct. The discussions and topics, which I intended to use to set the conceptual foundation for the study, were not comprehended by all participants, to the same level. I still hold that focusing on Bourdieu’s conceptual frameworks for the definitions of capital and its transmission was the correct model to use. But I did observe that the early on they confused the terms social and human capital. To them, the words social and human appeared to mean the same thing. It was not until lesson four that we managed to clarify the confusion and decided to replace the term social with “relational capital” and the term human with “informational or procedural capital.” This small semantic change helped operationalize the conceptual definitions of Bourdieu’s theory.

One more error on my part was that pursuing the dimension of increasing their perceived efficacy was premature. Perhaps clarifying the purpose of their role definition, increasing their knowledge of parent involvement and identifying and developing a strength-based approach was sufficient scope for this study. Moreover, creating a draft protocol, (for which we ran out of time) and including these newly learned concepts exhausted the capacity of what could be accomplished during eight sessions. Upon reflection, measuring the migrant liaisons perceived efficacy should
have been reserved for another study in which the participants already possessed the desired knowledge base. Growth in their sense of efficacy would then be measured by their improvement in resolving issues in parental interactions by using the crafted protocol. And lastly, my impact data was greatly curtailed by not being able to use most of pre and post interview data I had collected. This was due to my failure in aligning the rubrics for the last two learning dimensions of my study with the low level indicators expected in the participants’ responses. Only the first learning dimension had a rubric which was viable.

Despite these errors and design flaws, I identified several impactful features of the of this study. One of the most impactful was the deficit thinking exercise in the second session. Although the focus of this study was never meant to be deficit thinking, or its employment by the migrant liaisons, the result encountered in this brief activity were powerful. Participant responses reflected that they overwhelmingly reacted with a deficit thinking modality in response to the home scenario image presented to them.

Most impactful was the conversation that followed. Several of them voiced that they were shocked that their first reaction was so negative when confronted with the image of the family’s home situation. However, this lesson served its purpose well. Due to this, a second impactful design feature was the development of a strength-based approach towards parents. They were able to see the need to venture into the development of strength-based practices to improve the manner in which they interacted with families. The operationalizing of the theoretical topics that were to come found a suitable frame in the need highlighted by these two exercise.

Further Iterations

Any future iteration of this study would need to address and correct the design flaws in the preceding section. One way to correct some of these flaws would be to extend the time allowed for study from the twenty hours, dedicated in this iteration, to twenty-five hours, or possibly more. In this manner, sufficient time could be accorded to carry out the development and clarification of the conceptual notions and development and full development of the protocol. Then, additional time could be set aside to practice with vignettes and calibrate the protocol to various possible scenarios. In fact, in this expanded version of the study I would suggest that as many possible vignette scenarios be developed by the participants to accrue a library, of sorts, of sketched out protocol responses to the possible situations.

Another possible structural iteration would be to, rather that expand the time to fully develop all ten design elements, split the design elements into two separate but complementary studies. These succeeding studies would possibly be conducted with the same group of participants. In this iteration the group would receive an intervention composed of the first four sessions of the present study and focus on the first four design elements. Participants would have more time to delve into the purpose of their position, better comprehend the chronology of parent involvement, and it operationalized best practices.

This study would conclude with a deep investigation of the definition and manifestation of both deficit thinking and strength-based approach. In the present study, treatment of these topics seemed rushed. The scholarly excerpts selected for these sessions, were not sufficiently drilled into. Focusing on just four elements would allow for a more leisurely and in-depth approach to study the content. Additional activities, research references and checking for understanding, through application, could be identified to solidify content understanding. This first study would then be followed by one where the learned content would be used to co-create a protocol, practice and gain efficacy in its use.

A further iteration I may suggest would be one where specific staff, meeting a particular profile is selected to participate. Participants would need to share similar demographic markers to be
invited. For the present study I deliberately chose senior, mid-range and novice experienced migrant liaisons. Early on, it became clear that the most novice study member did not possess sufficient experience to fully contribute to the discussion. So in such a study, participants might be selected based in longevity of employment in the program or grade level assignment. Other possible iteration, may be to invite other school staff members that provide services to or engage families. These school personnel usually work in special education, student services departments or those purveying services to homeless or foster youth.

Re-Examining the Theory of Action

My study’s theory of action focused on designing and conducting a set of workshops that would increase the sophistication level of migrant liaisons in carrying out their work with parents. This would result in developing a visible impact upon three learning dimensions: a) migrant liaisons’ ability to identify strengths and assets in the family, b) migrant liaisons’ utilization of process driven family engagement and c) the migrant liaisons’ perceived efficacy. I believe I was successful at developing the necessary perspective and skills for these migrant liaisons, to be able to demonstrate improvement upon the first dimension. Impact data reflect that they were able to approach and work with families in a strength-based approach. However, the last two dimensions produced limited results.

Partial success was achieved with regard to the second learning dimension in my theory of action. As mentioned, in both the process data and the examination of the design elements associated with this dimension, two drafts of a protocol were developed by study members. Time did not allow for the completion and calibration of these two protocols. Because of this, participants did not have sufficient time to practice with the protocol to gain comfort much less expertise and efficacy in its use. At the conclusion of the workshops, they demonstrated familiarity with the various elements of the protocol. In fact, in their post-interview responses, participants enumerated a varied number of these elements, however, only one respondent gave a reply that reflected that they would use the protocol as was intended.

In preparation for this study, I consulted the knowledge base in a number of related study areas. I decided upon three of them to support the design of this study. First, I reviewed the literature on parent involvement and was able to detect a clear path of development in this topic. Initially, from the 60s to about the 90s, most parent involvement was of a school site-based variety. That is to say that it was believed that it was sufficient to have parents come to the school site to attend events or volunteer and that would be sufficient to bring about academic outcomes in their children. Presently, parent involvement that is associated with the production of positive student outcomes has more to do with the development of certain home behaviors. The operationalized form of parent involvement with the highest correlation to student outcomes is the establishment of parental expectations for the child (Fan & Chen, 2001). This type of parent behaviors has been quantified, to have as positive an effect on student of color outcomes, as any other school-based interventions (Jeynes, 2003). This knowledge base established the foundation, for my study’s participants. Migrant liaisons saw a need to engage parents in such a way as to impact the adoption of these desired parent at home behaviors.

I then ventured into the limited knowledge base associated with school liaisons. I was able to identify only a handful of studies dealing with the benefits of using them to generate parent involvement. These few studies clearly depicted several successful episodes of liaisons interceding to bring about positive outcomes in at-risk students by augmenting parent home behaviors with their children. Three elements I chose to focus upon in my study was use of a strength-based approach, an extended interaction with the family guided by a protocol and a period of formal training and skills development for them. One of these studies was carried out in Texas (Lopez et al,
with a migrant population. This study postulated that migrant liaisons, and their work with parents, were quantifiably associated with the increase of students’ GPAs. In order to round off my knowledge of liaison practices to elaborate in such a study I also researched the related field of social welfare and its use of mental health caseworkers and social service advocates. The participants in my study fit the profile of the participants in the various studies in the associated fields we considered, in that they had had direct accesses to families and could establish a relationship with them, and most of them reflected the ethnic and demographic profile similar to their clients.

Lastly, I researched the complementary knowledge bases related to developing a strength-based approach and avoiding deficit thinking. The former was essential in developing the framework for the protocol that was to be developed during the last of the workshops. Once again this knowledge base was limited in the field of education. I found a few studies dealing mainly with special education populations, college level students and using this approach in teacher training. Most of the research I reviewed in this topic came from the field of mental health and work with justice-engaged youth. Research on deficit thinking, however, was easy to find in the educational knowledge base. It has long been documented that educational settings are prone to exemplify the harmful practice. And as noted on the process data, study members, were not immune from doing so themselves. The various knowledge bases accumulated proved to be an invaluable reference and frame upon which to build my study. Additionally, I believe that by including non-educational arenas in my research a certain level of strength and validation was added to my study and findings since they paralleled those across different fields.

Action Research

An action researcher methodology was utilized for this design study because of my two roles as researcher and agent of change. As designer and agent of change for these workshops, I constructed and provide the professional development workshops to the participating migrant liaisons. The workshops were designed to bring them to a place of self-analysis regarding their use of a strength-based approach, as they interacted with parents. I also played the role of researcher, as I collected data to gauge the effectiveness of the transfer of content knowledge and skills to them, as they displayed it upon three learning dimensions. As researcher, my hope was to gather data to assess if the design elements I formatted would lead to a change in their mindset and preference for a strength-based approach. Due to the structure of my study and the dual demands of my role, elements of action research also needed to be included in my methodology (Coghlan & Brannick, 2009; Plomp, 2007).

This design structure created a scene rife with the possibility of bias and partiality as I played the two roles. Although I was not the direct supervisor of any of the study participants, I have known several of them for over a decade, and at the time, as their regional migrant consultant, I was constantly trying to support their efforts for a successful outcome. So I needed to create safeguards against my own potential bias with regard to the findings or conclusions by succumbing to confirmation or advocacy bias.

To address this potential for bias, I maintained a reflective memo diary at the end of each activity or significant period of my study’s evolution. I also established a critical consultative relationship with a colleague during the duration of the study. Both the reflective memos (which included anecdotal notes taken during the workshops) and the summaries of post-workshop interactions from the critical colleague were included in the formulation of the impact and the process data section analysis. The memos I produced on the process of the intervention, as well as the perspective afforded by my critical consultative colleague, caused me to reassess my plans for the subsequent events in the intervention process on several occasions.
At the conclusion of the study I believe that I carried my dual role in a proper manner. As designer I created an array and chronology of design elements, that I genuinely believed would have an impact on informing and changing the study participants’ perspectives and skill-set. I measure my fidelity to the original design by both my failures and successes. The failures were easy to see. Some ensuing results of my design, such as two of the three rubrics being unusable, and the evident, classic overreaching of a desired impact upon the learning dimension, were clearly flawed. But the fact that I was able to gather the data and interpret the design elements as flawed, I take as a positive sign, that I was able to control my bias enough to detect a failure in my design. On the other hand, I consider it a success that I was surprised by some of the findings. This tells me that although I was as exhaustive as possible in planning my design, the data it produced and its interpretation was arrived upon relatively free from my bias. I truly was interested in both carrying out my design plan as accorded and seeing what, new and unexpected, data it would elicit from the participants.

I believe I was able to carry out my role as researcher in a manner that allowed me to control for bias and subjectivity. My plan to avoid confirmation or advocacy bias was to collect as much data as possible, and be able to disaggregate and view from several perspectives. Data was collected in the form of pre-study needs assessments, pre and post interviews, pre and post vignette responses, post-session memos, audio recordings and critical consultative colleague write-ups. I also produced copious amounts of process data for each set of activities associated with each of the three learning dimensions.

**Study Limitations**

In conclusion, we must include a caution about seeking to generalize any of the findings associated with this study. The study sample of participants (n=8), was-small, and generalizability is not appropriate for any of the findings identified. However, I believe that the design of this intervention is transferable to other studies seeking the improvement of migrant liaisons’ practices. Not all schools, district or other state or categorical educational programs necessarily use liaisons in quite the same manner. So this study may not be applicable to all school personnel holding this title. This study may not be of benefit to school district who are only interested in using their liaisons in a quasi-administrative support role. However, if an educational entity is interested in utilizing their parent liaisons to truly impact their parent populations, then this study may be of interest. Lastly, a strength-based approach to working with families can be pursued by any number of school staff members, both classified and certificated. However, a major limitation of this approach is that it requires an extended period of time, for the school staff member to meet, dialogue, troubleshoot and finally reach successful resolution of a problem in collaboration with the family. Migrant liaisons are hired with the expectation that they will devote a significant portion of their time and effort to this effort. Anyone else looking to take advantage of such a study, should also be willing to devote a significant amount of time and effort into this endeavor.
REFERENCES


Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital, (w:) Handbook of theory and research for the sociology and education, red. JG Richardson.


APPENDICES

Appendix A – Pre/Post Liaison Interview Protocol

Time of Interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer: Gerry Lopez

Interviewee:

Position of Interviewee: Regional Liaison/Advocate

1. Describe your typical duties as a migrant liaison or advocate?

2. How much of your time is spent working with students or their families?

3. In your interaction with parents of migrant students what are the most common issues that are identified in these families?

4. What do you see your role as being when you identify these issues?

5. What is it that you typically do to address these issues?

   a. Do you have a standard manner in which you approach your student/family interactions?
6. In your interaction with students and families what evidence have you seen that your involvement with them as been productive in a positive manner?

a. Have you made any connection between behaviors or practices on your part that may contribute to the outcomes you have observed?

7. If you could design a professional development series to better prepare you to work with students and families what topics would you like for it to include?

a. What best-practices have you identified that you think should be included in such a series?
Appendix B – Pre/Post Vignette Scenario

A mother that was recently recruited to the migrant program in your district comes to your office to bring up an issue that she is facing with her daughter, Yanetzy. She says that her daughter was doing well in middle school but that since entering high school she has started to do poorly in her grades. The mother also shares that all she does is be on her I-Phone and talks to her friends. She thinks that there may be a boy involved because lately she has been very secretive about her calls and goes outside to take phone some phone calls. The mom describes her daughter as walking around “toda enamorada” (love struck). She says that she is the “la problematica” (the troubled child) of the family and that her other three kids do fine in school. The oldest who is in high school is in honors classes. The twins (boy and girl) in 6th grade are in gate and all except for Yanetzy enjoy their church’s youth group. She says she doesn’t know what to do and she wants to know what you would recommend.

After reading the vignette respond to the following questions. All responses will be recorded and transcribed.
Appendix C – Vignette Pre/Post Response Questions and Probing Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignette Response Questions:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Identification of family strengths and assets</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| What would you do to solve the problem being confronted by this family? | Probing question:  
  - What do you see your role being in this situation? |
| What would you recommend for these parents to do? | Probing question:  
  - What do you think is needed to arrive at a solution for the issue being confronted? |
| **B. Engagement of family in a problem solving process** |
| What do you think is the real issue or issues that have been identified? | Probing questions:  
  - How do you find out what the real issue is?  
  - Who do you think can help you arrive at a better understanding of the problem? |
| What are the outcomes that you expect from the family after you intervene? | Probing question:  
  - What would you consider a proper resolution of the problem? |
| Are there any other outcomes you expect? | Probing question:  
  - How do you know when you have resolved the issue? |
| **C. Perceived efficacy as a liaison** |
| Have you experienced a case similar to this? | Probing questions:  
  - What was your contribution in that situation? |
| Can you describe how you interacted with the parents in that case? | Probing question:  
  - Did you experience positive, negative or no outcomes in that situation? |
| Do you think you are successful none, some or most of the time when helping families confront their issues? | Probing question:  
  - How did you make this determination? |
Look at the picture above and take without consulting with your table partners take one full minute to write down as many things as you are able to see in this room scene.

1. How many “bad” things did you see (clutter, garbage, sharp objects, etc.)?

2. How many “good” things did you see (family pictures, literature, affection and love, etc.)?
3. What was the proportion (percentage) of “bad” things to “good” things that you saw?

4. What does this percentage say about your propensity to view situations from a deficit-thinking frame?
Content-Based Evaluation #3—Social and Human Capital

A mother that was recently recruited to the migrant program in your district comes to your office to bring up an issue that she is facing with her daughter, Yanetzy. She says that her daughter was doing well in middle school but that since entering high school she has started to do poorly in her grades. The mother also shares that all she does is be on her I-Phone and talks to her friends. She thinks that there may be a boy involved because lately she has been very secretive about her calls and goes outside to take phone some phone calls. The mom describes her daughter as walking around “toda enamorada” (love struck). She says that she is the “la problematica” (the troubled child) of the family and that her other three kids do fine in school. The oldest who is in high school is in honors classes. The twins (boy and girl) in 6th grade are in gate and all except for Yanetzy enjoy their church’s youth group. She says she doesn’t know what to do and she wants to know what you would recommend.

************************************************************************************************

You may recall having read this account at the beginning of the workshop series and being asked what would you recommend for this mother to do about her concerns. Now that you have studied the theory and practice of Social and Human Capital answer the following:

**Social Capital**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What social capital resources do you see present in this situation that the mother can draw upon to address her concern?</th>
<th>What additional social capital resources would you recommend she access?</th>
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**Human Capital**

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<tr>
<th>What human capital resources do you see present in this situation that the mother can draw upon to address her concern?</th>
<th>What additional human capital would you recommend she access?</th>
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</table>
# FAMILY DEVELOPMENT PLAN – SAMPLE

**DIRECTIONS:**
- The plan should be written by a family member
- The Community Liaison can write it only if asked to do so
- The MAIN GOAL(S) must reflect the words and thoughts of the family
- The Community Liaison can offer opinions and suggestions in the following areas; 1) POSSIBLE STEPS TO REACH GOAL(S)-brainstorm, 2) PROGRESS/OBSTACLES, 3) RESOURCES/PERSONAL STRENGTHS AND 4) CONCERNS
- Initiate any subsequent meetings by reviewing notes and accords from previous meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF PRINCIPLE ACTOR</th>
<th>SCHOOL &amp; GRADES</th>
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| ADDRESS                |                 |
|                        |                 |

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<tr>
<th>TELEPHONE</th>
<th>RESPONDS TO TEXTING</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
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<tr>
<th>RECEIVES E-MAILS</th>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>OTHER PEOPLE INVOLVED IN PROCESS: (family members, friends, or other significant individuals present)</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TODAY’S DATE</th>
<th>COMMUNITY LAISON NAME</th>
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<tr>
<th>MAIN GOAL(S) (as expressed by the student)</th>
<th>POSSIBLE STEPS TO REACH GOAL(S)-brainstorm</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESCRIPTION &amp; DATES OF SPECIFIC STEPS TO REACH GOAL (S)</th>
<th>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE</th>
<th>PROGRESS/OBSTACLES (noted in follow up meetings)</th>
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<tr>
<th>RESOURCES/PERSONAL STRENGTHS (noted by student)</th>
<th>RESOURCES/PERSONAL STRENGTHS (noted by CL)</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>CONCERNS (noted by student)</th>
<th>CONCERNS (noted by community liaison)</th>
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<tr>
<th>AVAILABLE SERVICES TO MEET GOAL (S): (include names, addresses, telephones, schedules, etc.)</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>ADDITIONAL NOTES</th>
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<td>DATE</td>
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Appendix G – Action Research Reflection Tool for Critical Consultative Colleague

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<tr>
<th>APPENDIX Q: ACTION RESEARCH REFLECTION JOURNAL</th>
<th>MEETING WITH CRITICAL CONSULTATIVE COLLEAGUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To be recorded unto memo</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Key points from workshop interactions</td>
<td>My reflections from the interactions</td>
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</table>
Appendix H – Vignette Observation and Feedback Protocol

Time of Observation:

Date:

Place:

Observer: Gerry Lopez

Persons being observed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignette Observation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General notes on the liaisons interaction during the vignette exercise (to be referenced during feedback):</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback Session</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duration of Feedback:</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ Feedback sessions will be recorded and transcribed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ I will also take general notes during the session for reference and coding</td>
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</table>