The purpose of this presentation is to evaluate the psychometric validity of a Spanish translated version of a family involvement questionnaire (FELP). Quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted. Preliminary findings indicate the FELP is a reliable and valid measure for assessing family early literacy practices for Spanish-speaking families. Session attendees will learn about the validation of a self-report questionnaire. The benefits of analyzing item functioning will be discussed.

INTRODUCTION

- Research supports that family involvement in literacy activities is strongly related to child achievement (Evans et al., 2000).
- Researchers have determined that indicators of a rich home environment include parent and guardians’ responsiveness to their children’s early literacy abilities, involvement with their children in language and literacy-based activities and routines, and the provision of literacy materials (Hart & Risley, 1995; Roberts et al., 2005; Sénéchal et al., 1998).
- Much of the research on parent involvement and literacy focus on English speaking and middle class families (see reviews: Fan & Chen, 2001; Manz et al., 2010, Mattingly et al., 2002) despite that the Spanish-speaking population is the fastest growing student population in United States schools (NCES, 2004).
- Although this population is growing rapidly, there are few studies investigating the relationship between Spanish-speaking parents and their young children’s emergent literacy skills (see reviews: Fan & Chen, 2001; Manz et al., 2010, Mattingly et al., 2002).
- The present study utilizes a mixed-methods design to evaluate the psychometric properties of this translated version of the FELP questionnaire in order to assess whether this is an appropriate measure of family practices and beliefs for a Hispanic and Spanish-speaking population. The aim of the study is to answer the following questions:
  1. Does the original factor structure of the FELP remain consistent for a Spanish-speaking sample of parents of preschool and kindergarten age children?
  2. Are the FELP factors/items relevant for a Spanish-speaking sample?
  3. Does item functioning differ among diverse subgroups?

METHOD

FELP Questionnaire

Participants
- 81 parents of preschool and kindergarten age children from preschool and kindergarten class in Orlando, Florida.
- Education: 51% Bachelors or higher, 30% HS or some College, 19% No HS Diploma.
- Income: 68% under the poverty level, 32% above the poverty level.
- Ethnicity: 100% Hispanic (61% from Puerto Rico, 14% from Mexico, 14% from countries in the Caribbean Sea, and 11% from South American countries).
- Language: 56% Spanish, 42% Spanish and English, and 2% English.
- Parents complete the FELP questionnaire.

Instrumentation
- The FELP is a research-developed questionnaire (Likert Scale).
- There are 5 factors: Skill Building, Interactive Reading / Enjoyment, Modeling and Monitoring, Expectations, and Child Skill.
- Parental Behaviors: Skill Building, Interactive Reading / Enjoyment, and Modeling and Monitoring.
- Parental Beliefs: Expectations and Child Skill.

Exploratory Factor Analysis
- Analysis of item contents of the FELP revealed the FELP had 5 robust factors with adequate alpha coefficients ranging from .77 to .87.

Data Analysis
- Exploratory factor analysis
  - Examines the factor structure of the FELP.
  - Internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach’s α) and item-total correlations of the total scale and subscales of the FELP.

Rasch Analysis
- Examines the construct of the FELP.
- The Rating Scale Model (RSM), used to test the unidimensionality of each hypothesized factor.

DISCUSSION

1. Results indicate the FELP has good reliability and validity for Spanish-speaking parents of preschool age children.
2. Confirmatory factor analysis of the FELP yielded support for a four-factor model, which did not align with the original theoretical construct of the FELP.
3. Internal consistency of the FELP was excellent. Cronbach’s α between .93 to .94.
4. This study also provides support for the construct validity of the FELP for parents of preschool age children. Rasch analysis revealed that the threshold for all four factors was in the appropriate order. This means the thresholds increased in a positive direction as the category label increased.
5. The means of the FELP were compared to the means of the Rasch analysis. The results of the means for the Rasch analysis are similar to the means for the FELP.
6. Rasch analysis supports the reliability findings from the factor analysis.
7. Rasch analysis demonstrates that response patterns did not vary significantly (with the exception of one item) by primary language spoken in the home for the four factors.

Limitations:
- Small sample size.
- All students recruited from preschool settings.
- Ratings can be subjective when using a Likert-scale.

Future Research:
- Conduct evaluation again with a larger sample size.
- Include preschool age children who may not be attending a formal preschool setting in an effort to include a diverse sample in future studies.
- Evaluate differences between subgroups (e.g., income, ethnicity).
- Compare the family measures to child outcomes with a diverse data population.

References: