

Variables involved in personal, social and school adjustment in a sample of preschool-aged children from different cultural backgrounds

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Abstract The continuing incorporation of immigrant populations into the Spanish educational system poses an important challenge in that all participants must cooperate toward creating the best possible adaptation process at the academic level as well as on the personal and social levels. A number of different factors appear to influence children's adjustment during the preschool stage, and these factors are especially relevant since many studies have shown that this is a key period for the prevention of future difficulties. The present study examines the variables involved in the adaptation of a group of preschool-aged children from different cultural backgrounds in Spain. The results indicate that preschoolers, regardless of their background, have similar performance and learning potential, with language proficiency being the factor that most clearly affects the other variables investigated. It was also found that children's attitudes toward learning were related to the presence of behavioral difficulties and with the quality and type of parental child-rearing practices. These practices appear to be related to a number of difficulties immigrant children may experience on personal and social levels.

Keywords Preschool-aged children · Immigration · Academic performance ·
Language proficiency · Child-rearing practices

Introduction

In the last 10 years, Spain has become one of the major destinations for international migration. The arrival of foreign families that opt to stay in the country has led to increasing concerns over how well new generations of immigrant children will adapt to the

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Spanish educational system. During the 2007–2008 school year, the number of foreign children under the age of 18 years came to 895,984, a number representing 9.4% of all non-university students. Of these foreign minors, 124,211 were preschoolers (Instituto Nacional de Estadística 2008).

School attendance of immigrant students initiates a process of adaptation that is not without difficulties. The main problem these children experience is lack of knowledge of the Spanish language (Pérez-Díaz et al. 2004), as in the case of non-Spanish-speaking immigrants from Morocco and Romania. Other school difficulties arise from the difference in educational level between the Spanish system and the school system in the children's country of origin, differences in child-rearing practices, differences in religious and cultural ideas, and inequalities faced by some immigrant populations in their socioeconomic context. In this regard, it is necessary to determine the personal, social and family-related variables that are characteristic of the immigrant child population at the educational, social and psychological levels, as studies in other countries have set out to do (Hulei et al. 2006; Huntsinger et al. 1998; Kelley and Tseng 1992).

In the educational process of immigrant children, the preschool stage is especially relevant because it lays the groundwork for primary education, and measures can be taken to prevent the appearance of problems in the child's future adjustment and adaptation to the educational system (Keller and Otto 2009). In fact, efforts to improve school performance during the preschool period have long-term effects that help to reduce school dropout rates (Alexander et al. 2001). However, little research has focused on preschool education, whereas many studies have examined the problems immigrant children experience during adolescence, after problems have appeared and when prevention is no longer an option (Turney and Kao 2009).

One of the variables that influence the process of integration in immigrant children in their country of destination is their progress through the school system. Earlier research showed that immigrant children underperformed academically compared to indigenous children (Resing et al. 2009; Tzuril and Kaufman 1999). In addition, experiences in other countries such as the USA, the Netherlands and England showed that immigrant children had learning deficits and achieved worse school performance (Jeynes 2004; Josman et al. 2010; Lahaie 2008; Peña et al. 2001; Turney and Kao 2009). However, as a result of the so-called "immigrant paradox", first- and second-generation immigrant children (i.e. those born in a foreign country and those born in the country of destination to foreign parents) show better educational performance and fewer emotional and behavioral problems than third-generation children (Beiser et al. 2002; Fuligni 1997; Palacios et al. 2008).

One of the first educational obstacles encountered when children of different cultural backgrounds enter the Spanish school system, especially for children from non-Spanish-speaking backgrounds, is the need to communicate in a language they are unfamiliar with. This difficulty impairs their academic performance (Taylor and Whittaker 2003). For example, Franzé-Mundano (2008) investigated the factors teachers identified as contributing to academic success and found significant differences between Spanish and immigrant students in written and spoken language proficiency. This factor was identified as one that led to immigrant children's poor school performance. Olmos-Gómez (2009) analyzed the variables that affect school progress, specifically, auditory and visual comprehension, visual-motor sequential memory, auditory and visual association, visual integration and expression, grammatical integration and auditory integration in two groups of children attending school in Spain: immigrant non-Spanish-speaking Moroccan children and native Spanish-speaking children, and found that the group of native Spanish-speaking classmates obtained higher scores than the group of Moroccan children on all variables they analyzed.

Moreover, when performance on verbal tasks (auditory association, grammatical integration and auditory integration) was compared, Moroccan children's difficulties increased. In another study, Peña (2000) investigated 55 children in the USA; 42 were Latin American and 13 were African American, with different levels of English language proficiency (31 were monolingual English speakers, 18 spoke both English and Spanish, and six were monolingual Spanish speakers). Peña showed that preschoolers with poor language skills had more difficulties in attention, planning and their capacity to transfer what they had learned. These results confirmed research that found that students with adequate proficiency in the language used in the country of destination performed better academically than their peers with language difficulties (Bullejos de la Higuera 2002; Franzé Mundano 2008; Taylor and Whittaker 2003). In addition to the immigrant child's own language proficiency, the parents' language skills also need to be considered. A number of studies showed that parents with limited language skills are less involved in their children's school progress, and that this in turn is related to their children's poorer adaptation to the school environment (Crosnoe 2007; Lahaie 2008; Peña 2000; Turney and Kao 2009).

To respond to the educational needs of immigrant preschoolers, appropriate systems of assessment are needed to test their learning skills and identify their strengths and possible weaknesses (Alcock et al. 2008). The results of these assessments can be used to design interventions adapted to the characteristics of immigrant schoolchildren with the aim of preventing subsequent educational problems. Among the researchers who have sought effective approaches to assessment are Tzuriel and Kaufman (1999) and Resing et al. (2009), who studied preschool children from ethnic minorities. These researchers used dynamic testing methods, involving a pretest–training–posttest design. The training provided as part of this procedure involved the use of cues, reinforcement, feedback on results and several types of mediation that helped children to perform the task. In this way, the resultant tasks were more sensitive in the identification of skills, capacity for learning, and non-intellectual characteristics that influence the performance of children from ethnic minorities than are standardized instruments (Hessels 2000; Lidz and Macrine 2001; Peña 2000; Sternberg and Grigorenko 2002). Their work showed that on initial assessment or pretesting, the group of immigrant children performed more poorly on the tasks than the group of indigenous children. However, after a brief intervention, both groups showed the same learning potential. According to these results, immigrant children had the same learning capacity as their indigenous peers, so their weaker performance was due not to learning problems but rather to the lack of prior training in the areas that were tested (Resing et al. 2009; Tzuriel and Kaufman 1999).

Other variables are also involved in school, personal and social adjustment in immigrant children. One of the most important is parental child-rearing practices, specifically, how parents behave toward their children in terms of child care, upbringing, guidance, providing new experiences and correcting inappropriate behaviors (Solís-Cámara et al. 2002). Child-rearing practices have received much research attention in recent years (Alcock et al. 2008; Capaldi et al. 2007; Jones and Prinz 2004; Solís-Cámara and Díaz 2007). The main reason for the proliferation of these studies is the realization that child-rearing practices may be a risk factor or a protective factor in the appearance and continuance of a variety of childhood problems (Ato et al. 2007).

In general, all families regardless of their ethnic background wish to provide their children with an appropriate affective and educational environment, although the expression of these behaviors and the emphasis placed on different behaviors often differ between cultures (Catay et al. 2008; Fuligni and Fuligni 2007; Tam and Lee 2010; Lahaie 2008; Yazedjian et al. 2009; Zwirs et al. 2006). The family and sociocultural context is one

dimension that accounts for a substantial proportion of children's school outcomes, as well as for the appearance and continuance of behavioral and social problems (Magnuson et al. 2009; Reese and Goldenberg 2008; Senechal and Young 2008).

Most current studies show that parents influence their child's adjustment through several factors, such as the type and quality of parent-child interactions (Gregory and Rimm-Kaufman 2008; Simpkins et al. 2006), child-rearing practices (Brown and Iyengar 2009) and parents' involvement in their child's education (Arnold et al. 2008; Downer et al. 2008). The type and quality of parents' child-rearing practices have been related to multiple problems during childhood, such as difficulties in establishing appropriate psychosocial relationships with their peers, low academic performance and behavioral problems, particularly disruptive and aggressive behaviors (Aunola and Nurmi 2006; Karreman et al. 2009).

Some studies have attempted to establish a relationship between the type of practices parents use to correct and control inappropriate behaviors in their children (disciplinary practices) and their repercussions on the child's social and emotional adjustment (Capaldi et al. 2007; Del Vecchio and O'Leary 2008; Giles-Sims and Lockhart 2005). These studies suggest that disciplinary practices vary depending on sociodemographic factors such as ethnicity, social class and gender (Catay et al. 2008; Tajima and Harachi 2010). In addition, this body of research shows that disciplinary practices characterized by a higher frequency of physical punishment can have negative emotional and behavioral consequences (Larzelere and Kuhn 2005). There have also been attempts to identify cognitive variables as possible determinants of disciplinary practices by parents of different ethnic backgrounds, including parents' expectations for their children (Durgel et al. 2009; Neuenschwander et al. 2007; Rutchick et al. 2009; Tajima and Harachi 2010) and child-rearing beliefs (Borke et al. 2007; Catay et al. 2008; Solís-Cámara and Díaz 2007). Findings indicate that it may not be appropriate to generalize results directly from one culture to another. For example, a study by Dwairy et al. (2006) on child-rearing practices in Arab societies found significant differences between countries. Thus, the physical conditions, social and economic organization, or beliefs and values held by a particular cultural group appear to determine the manner in which parental child-rearing practices are manifested (Jambunathan et al. 2000; Lalueza and Crespo 2005).

Some studies found that the influence of parents' behavior on their children's behavior should not be considered unidirectional (Rescorla et al. 2007). The child's behavior itself may modulate both the type of parenting practices and the academic and social context in which these practices occur (Aunola and Nurmi 2006; Goldstein et al. 2007; Ho et al. 2008; Thomas et al. 2008; Rutchick et al. 2009). Other non-intellectual variables related to the child's behaviors and attitudes in learning situations, such as self-regulation, frustration tolerance, motivation and cognitive flexibility, have been considered in recent years as factors strongly associated with the subsequent development of disruptive behaviors, the type and quality of child-rearing practices and school performance (Diamond et al. 2007; Gonzalez-DeHass, et al. 2005; Kochanska et al. 2008).

Other studies indicate that there is a negative relationship between self-control and the subsequent appearance of externalizing problems, even as early as the end of the first year of life and becoming more evident after the age of 3 years (Eisenberg et al. 2005; Gartstein and Fagot 2003; Kochanska and Knaack 2003; Rubin et al. 2003; Zhou et al. 2007). Recent research detected an interactive effect between inadequate self-control and child-rearing patterns, and some authors have concluded that negative child-rearing practices may be related to the appearance of conduct problems only in children with a low capacity for self-control (Bradley and Corwyn 2008; Rubin et al. 2003).

We designed the present study with the overall aim of analyzing the variables involved in school, social and personal adjustment in a sample of preschool-aged children from different cultural backgrounds in Spain. The specific objectives of this study were to:

1. Determine whether there are differences in performance, academic achievement, parent-reported behavioral problems and attitudes toward learning between indigenous Spanish and immigrant children who come from Spanish-speaking and non-Spanish-speaking backgrounds.
2. Investigate the relationship between parent-reported and teacher-reported behavioral problems and preschoolers' behaviors in learning situations, for the entire sample of children.
3. Examine the relationship between parents' child-rearing practices, behavior-related problems, children's behaviors in learning situations, performance on tasks related to the school curriculum and language proficiency.

Methods

Participants

The participants in this research were 176 Spanish-speaking preschoolers between 4 and 5 years old (48–60 months; $M=55.25$ months, $SD=3.92$) who were attending their second year of preschool education at public schools in the city of Granada and its metropolitan area, and their mothers and fathers. The mothers ranged in age from 19 to 47 years ($M=32.43$ years, $SD=6.35$) and the fathers from 20 to 59 years ($M=35.88$ years, $SD=6.06$). The sample was divided into three groups based on the parent's background. The group of indigenous Spanish participants consisted of 85 preschoolers whose parents were Spaniards (52 girls, 33 boys; mean age 55.14 months, $SD=3.76$). The group of immigrants of Spanish-speaking origin consisted of 45 preschoolers whose parents were from Bolivia, Argentina or Ecuador (22 girls, 23 boys; mean age, 55.98 months; $SD=3.87$). The group of immigrants of non-Spanish-speaking origin consisted of 46 children whose parents were from Morocco, Russia or Romania (24 girls, 22 boys; mean age, 54.74 months; $SD=4.24$). The three groups were balanced to rule out differences in age, gender or school attended. Before the study began, we verified that none of the children had behavioral problems or specific diseases or disorders that might affect the results.

Measures

The Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test (K-BIT; Kaufman and Kaufman 1994) This screening test, consisting of two subtests of vocabulary and matrices, provides a rapid assessment of the child's general intelligence. The vocabulary subtest assesses verbal skills related to school learning and the matrices subtest assesses the ability to solve problems that involve reasoning. Results are in the form of direct verbal, nonverbal and total scores, which are converted to a verbal intelligence quotient (IQ), a nonverbal IQ and a composite IQ that summarizes the overall performance on the test. Validity and reliability studies showed its reliability coefficient to be 0.76 or higher, although the figure may vary depending on age range. The composite IQ yields a correlation of 0.63 with the sum of the mental processing scores of the Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children test, and -0.75 with the K-BIT Verbal Knowledge subtest. Correlation is 0.80 with overall IQ on the WISC-R and 0.75 with the WAIS-R IQ (Kaufman and Kaufman 1994).

The Application of Cognitive Functions Scale (Lidz and Jepsen 2000, 2003; Spanish version adapted by Calero et al. 2009) This test, used for children between 3 and 6 years of age, is a dynamic assessment instrument that measures the use of learning strategies and cognitive processes for tasks that are typical in preschool curricula. It consists of six subtests—classification, auditory memory, visual memory, pattern sequences, perspective taking and verbal planning—and is administered as a pretest followed by mediation and then posttesting. In other words, between the pretest and posttest, there is a training step (termed “mediation”) that focuses on problem solving, with the child’s mediator providing verbal cues and feedback. The test provides an estimate of learning potential measured as the difference in performance between the posttest and the pretest. In addition, the Application of Cognitive Functions Scale (ACFS) includes the Behavior Observation Rating Scale (BORS), which assesses seven behaviors of children in learning situations: self-regulation, persistence, frustration tolerance, flexibility, motivation, interactivity and receptivity. The scores for the ACFS are quantitative rather than normative and indicate the level of task achievement on the pretest and posttest. These scores are used to calculate learning potential (posttest minus pretest) after mediation. Several studies have analyzed the reliability and validity of ACFS scores (interjudge reliability of 0.72–0.83 for subtests in Shurin’s (1999) study of the ACFS, and 0.70–0.82 for subscales of the BORS, according to Levy (1999). Important data on construct and discriminant validity have also been obtained through different studies, with a sample of 30 children with disabilities (Lidz 1996), with preschool children with normal development (Bensoussan 2002; Lidz 2000; Malowitsky 2001), with deaf children (Lidz 2004) and with children with developmental problems (Shurin 1999). The Spanish version of the scale has shown similar discriminant validity with regard to the differential diagnosis of children with Down syndrome, children with learning disabilities and healthy children (Calero et al. 2009). The present study also contributes significant data on the criterion validity of the different subtests (correlations of 0.60–0.74 between the ACFS subtests and tests that assess the skills involved). Similarly, validation studies have been carried out in different countries, demonstrating the effectiveness of the ACFS in different cultures—for example, with 89 children with normal development in the Netherlands (Lidz and Van der Aalsvoort 2005), or with 50 preschoolers with and without developmental problems in Australia (MacDonald 2006 cited in Haywood and Lidz 2007).

La Escala Breve de Comportamientos para Madres y Padres de Niños Pequeños (Brief Behavioral Scale for Mothers and Fathers of Young Children; Solís-Cámara et al. 2002) This scale investigates parents’ practices, i.e. their specific goal-directed behaviors through which they perform their maternal and paternal duties. The *Escala Breve de Comportamientos para Madres y Padres de Niños Pequeños* (ECMP) consists of three empirically derived subscales: expectations (the parents’ expectations regarding the moment when they feel that their children should acquire the skills typical of their age), discipline (verbal and physical punishment) and child-rearing practices (parents’ positive child-rearing activities). The brief version used in the present study consists of 32 items, of which 11 deal with expectations, 10 with disciplinary practices and 11 with child-rearing practices. The parents rate their own expectations for their child’s behavior on a four-point Likert scale in which higher scores indicate increasingly inappropriate behaviors on all three subscales. As for reliability of the ECMP, a study of the psychometric properties of the test showed internal consistency ranging from 0.80 to 0.95, and high test–retest reliability (r between 0.75 and 0.93), as well as demonstrating that the questionnaire responses were not related to socially desirable answers (Solís-Cámara 2007). Regarding test validity, an analysis of the correlations between scores for the long and

brief versions showed significant correlations for expectations ($r=0.84$), discipline ($r=0.79$) and child-rearing practices ($r=0.86$; Solís-Cámara et al. 2005).

The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (Goodman 1997) This brief screening questionnaire was designed according to the nosological criteria of the CIE-10, which scores the child's behavior for 25 attributes divided into five scales (conduct problems, hyperactivity/inattention, emotional symptoms, peer relationship problems and prosocial behavior) of five items each. For the present study, we used the parent's version (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ-P) and teacher's version (SDQ-T). Internal consistency of this questionnaire was shown to be acceptable (Cronbach's alpha from 0.73 to 0.80) across different scores and informants. Its validity is similar to that of the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL; Goodman and Scott 1999). Another test validity study was performed by Goodman and Scott (1999) and demonstrated that the SDQ was significantly correlated with the CBCL on all scales (range from 0.59 to 0.87), and was equally discriminant between children with low and high risk for presenting psychological problems. The study also showed that, in comparison to the CBCL, the SDQ was a better detector of hyperactivity/inattention symptoms (0.43 versus 0.15; Goodman and Scott 1999; Klasen et al. 2000). Other studies show that its nature as a brief assessment instrument does not reduce criterion validity as compared to other tests such as the CBCL or the Parental Account of Child Symptoms (Taylor et al. 1986).

Procedure

Permission was obtained from the principals and teachers of all participating pre-schools, and informed consent was obtained from all parents. The preschoolers were then given the different tests, and information was obtained from their parents and teachers.

Preschoolers were assessed individually in a room separate from their regular classroom in two sessions lasting 20–30 min. The tests were administered in the same order for all children. In the first session, the K-BIT and the ACFS auditory memory and pattern sequences subtests were administered with the BORS. In the second session, the ACFS classification, visual memory, verbal planning, and perspective taking subtests were administered with the BORS. The two sessions were separated by a period of 2 or 3 days.

Researchers scored the children's Spanish language proficiency on a five-point Likert scale (1=very poor or no knowledge, 5=high proficiency) based on their observations during interactions with the children during the assessment sessions.

The children's regular teacher provided information about their school performance in six areas: mathematics, oral and written expression, personal identity and autonomy, physical and social environment, psychomotor education and artistic expression. Each area was scored as 1=poor performance, 2=fair performance or 3=high performance; the lowest possible score was 6 and the highest possible score was 18.

Information was obtained from the parents in the course of face-to-face meetings during which the parents completed the appropriate assessment instruments. Because of the linguistic diversity of the sample of parents and the possibility that some informants might have difficulty understanding all the items, a psychologist with knowledge of both Spanish and the parent's first language was present to help when necessary.

Design

A quasi-experimental pretest–posttest design was used with three groups: native Spanish children, immigrants whose parents were from a Spanish-speaking country and immigrants whose parents were from a non-Spanish-speaking country. The data were analyzed with analysis of variance (ANOVA) and analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) for between-group comparisons and Pearson’s correlation coefficient. All statistical analyses were done with SPSS version 15.0 software.

Results

Regarding the first aim of this research, ANCOVA with language proficiency as a covariate was used to analyze the differences in performance and academic achievement between the groups of native Spanish children, immigrant children whose parents were from a Spanish-speaking country and immigrants whose parents were from a non-Spanish-speaking country. The results, shown in Table 1, indicate that analysis of the variable “academic achievement” showed no significant differences between groups although the differences approached significance.

With regard to overall intelligence, the results on the K-BIT (see Table 1) showed significant differences between groups. The differences were seen in both the overall direct score ($F(2/175)=13.51, p<0.05$) and overall IQ score ($F(2/175)=13.363, p<0.05$),

Table 1 Differences between groups in school achievement, intelligence, cognitive performance and learning potential with Spanish-language proficiency as a covariate

| | Groups | | | | | | $F(2/175)$ | p | Eta squared |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------|--|-------|--|-------|------------|--------|-------------|
| | Spanish children | | Immigrants with Spanish-speaking parents | | Immigrants with non-Spanish-speaking parents | | | | |
| | M | SD | M | SD | M | SD | | | |
| Academic achievement | 13.47 | 4.23 | 12.67 | 3.85 | 11.70 | 2.79 | 0.359 | 0.69 | 0.004 |
| K-Bit verbal PT | 101.13 | 14.29 | 89.00 | 11.75 | 78.00 | 13.07 | 20.81 | 0.0001 | 0.195 |
| K-Bit verbal PD | 19.53 | 5.44 | 15.13 | 4.85 | 10.74 | 5.38 | 17.89 | 0.0001 | 0.172 |
| K-Bit non-verbal PT | 108.13 | 12.39 | 103.42 | 11.62 | 102.41 | 13.52 | 2.081 | 0.133 | 0.023 |
| K-Bit non-verbal PD | 12.78 | 3.36 | 12.27 | 2.87 | 11.78 | 3.74 | 0.199 | 0.82 | 0.002 |
| K-Bit total PT | 103.00 | 11.76 | 93.31 | 10.75 | 86.52 | 12.67 | 13.363 | 0.0001 | 0.134 |
| K-Bit total PD | 209.26 | 20.51 | 180.48 | 21.99 | 192.42 | 18.73 | 13.51 | 0.0001 | 0.136 |
| ACFS classification | 4.69 | 2.38 | 4.31 | 3.05 | 4.70 | 2.69 | 0.394 | 0.67 | 0.005 |
| ACFS auditory memory | 5.09 | 3.56 | 4.80 | 2.54 | 3.96 | 3.41 | 0.368 | 0.69 | 0.004 |
| ACFS visual memory | 5.91 | 1.97 | 5.89 | 1.85 | 5.80 | 1.92 | 0.522 | 0.59 | 0.006 |
| ACFS Pattern sequences | 9.55 | 4.37 | 8.49 | 4.66 | 8.13 | 4.86 | 0.019 | 0.98 | 0.000 |
| ACFS perspective-taking | 8.99 | 3.56 | 9.11 | 3.17 | 8.39 | 3.66 | 0.461 | 0.63 | 0.005 |
| ACFS verbal planning | 4.92 | 3.59 | 3.07 | 3.59 | 1.96 | 2.18 | 4.475 | 0.01 | 0.049 |
| ACFS post-pre difference | 11.91 | 6.51 | 13.22 | 7.07 | 11.83 | 6.16 | 0.781 | 0.46 | 0.009 |

K-Bit is the Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test (Kaufman and Kaufman 1994), Spanish version. ACFS is the Application of Cognitive Functions Scale (Lidz and Jepsen 2000, 2003; Spanish version Calero et al. 2009)

and in the verbal subtest direct ($F(2/175)=17.89$, $p<0.05$) and IQ scores ($F(2/175)=20.81$, $p<0.05$). However, no difference was seen in the nonverbal subtest scores. With regard to the total score on the K-BIT, post hoc analysis with the Bonferroni test confirmed that native Spanish children obtained significantly higher scores than both immigrant children whose parents were from a Spanish-speaking country ($p<0.013$) and immigrant children whose parents were from a non-Spanish-speaking country ($p<0.0001$). However, post hoc analysis did not confirm these differences between groups of immigrant preschoolers. In the verbal subtest, there were significant differences between the group of native-Spanish children and immigrant children whose parents were from Spanish-speaking countries ($p<0.046$ for direct scores, $p=0.009$ for IQ scores) and immigrant children whose parents were from non-Spanish-speaking countries ($p<0.0001$). Moreover, the two groups of immigrant children also differed significantly in their results for the verbal subtest ($p<0.002$), with moderate effect sizes for total and verbal scores.

With regard to performance as evaluated with the ACFS, there were no significant differences between the groups in pretest scores on any of the ACFS subtests except for verbal planning ($F(2/175)=4.475$, $p<0.05$). Post hoc analyses with the Bonferroni test detected significant differences only between native Spanish children and the group of immigrant children whose parents were from non-Spanish-speaking countries ($p=0.011$), with better performance in the former group. There were no significant differences between the groups in learning potential measured as the difference between pretest and posttest overall scores on the ACFS.

In order to investigate whether there are differences among the three groups in parent-reported behavioral problems and attitudes toward learning, statistical analysis was used to look for significant differences between groups in the scores for behavioral problems as reported by their parents with the SDQ and children's behaviors in learning situations assessed with the BORS. ANOVA results are summarized in Table 2. With regard to

Table 2 Differences between groups in parent-reported behavioral problems and attitudes toward learning

| | Groups | | | | | | $F(2/175)$ | Sig. | Eta squared |
|----------------------------------|------------------|------|--|------|--|------|------------|-------|-------------|
| | Spanish children | | Immigrants with Spanish-speaking parents | | Immigrants with non-Spanish-speaking parents | | | | |
| | M | DT | M | DT | M | DT | | | |
| SDQ-P emotional symptoms | 1.53 | 1.51 | 2.38 | 2.02 | 2.20 | 1.82 | 4.32 | 0.02 | 0.04 |
| SDQ-P conduct problems | 2.58 | 2.08 | 3.02 | 2.89 | 2.15 | 1.84 | 1.69 | 0.19 | 0.01 |
| SDQ-P hyperactivity/inattention | 3.99 | 2.52 | 4.24 | 2.25 | 4.85 | 2.62 | 1.80 | 0.17 | 0.02 |
| SDQ-P peer relationship problems | 1.42 | 1.50 | 2.33 | 1.91 | 2.00 | 1.65 | 4.90 | 0.009 | 0.05 |
| SDQ-P prosocial behavior | 8.08 | 1.63 | 7.98 | 1.94 | 7.67 | 1.98 | 0.77 | 0.46 | 0.009 |
| BORS self-regulation | 10.79 | 2.02 | 10.76 | 2.02 | 9.76 | 2.30 | 3.99 | 0.02 | 0.04 |
| BORS persistence | 11.33 | 1.69 | 11.22 | 1.44 | 10.72 | 1.52 | 2.30 | 0.10 | 0.02 |
| BORS frustration tolerance | 11.54 | 1.52 | 11.44 | 1.44 | 10.87 | 1.89 | 2.72 | 0.06 | 0.03 |
| BORS flexibility | 7.56 | 2.94 | 7.16 | 3.02 | 6.74 | 2.65 | 1.24 | 0.29 | 0.01 |
| BORS motivation | 8.59 | 2.62 | 8.51 | 2.22 | 8.89 | 2.12 | 0.33 | 0.71 | 0.004 |
| BORS interactivity | 7.27 | 4.03 | 7.20 | 3.71 | 7.98 | 4.07 | 0.58 | 0.55 | 0.007 |

SDQ-P is the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire-Parents (Goodman 1997). BORS is the Behavior Observation Rating Scale (Lidz and Jepsen 2000, 2003; Spanish version Calero et al. 2009)

behavioral problems reported by the parents, there were significant differences between groups in emotional symptoms and peer relationship problems, with the parents of indigenous Spanish children reporting fewer problems. For emotional symptoms, post hoc analysis with the Bonferroni test detected a significant difference only between indigenous and immigrant preschoolers with parents from Spanish-speaking countries ($p < 0.05$). These same groups also differed in the frequency of peer relationship problems ($p < 0.05$). For the rest of the parent-reported dimensions related to behavioral problems, no significant differences were found between the groups. As Table 2 shows, the effect sizes in this case were modest for all variables.

The results of the BORS that were used to compare behavior in learning situations showed that the groups differed significantly only in self-regulation ($F(2/175) = 3.99$, $p < 0.05$), for which post hoc analysis showed that indigenous Spanish preschoolers scored higher than immigrant preschoolers whose parents were from non-Spanish-speaking countries ($p < 0.05$).

With regard to the second aim of the study, Pearson correlational analysis was used to analyze the results for parent- and teacher-reported behavior and behavior in learning situations as evaluated with the BORS. Results based on the parents' reports (SDQ-P) indicated that emotional symptoms in preschoolers showed a significant negative relationship with motivation ($r = -0.200$, $p = 0.008$) and self-regulation ($r = -0.161$, $p = 0.033$). Hyperactive/inattentive behaviors was also found to have a significant negative relationship with self-regulation ($r = -0.210$, $p = 0.005$) and with persistence ($r = -0.213$, $p = 0.005$). These data indicate that in the preschoolers we studied, greater emotional problems and hyperactivity were related to lower self-regulation, motivation and persistence in coping with a structured task.

Regarding the relationship between SDQ-T and BORS, the results summarized in Table 3 indicate that most of the scales that assessed behavior in learning situations showed a significant negative correlation with the presence of behavioral problems during childhood. Only prosocial behavior showed a significant positive correlation with attitudes shown in learning situations.

It is noteworthy that the strongest correlation found was the negative correlation between hyperactivity/inattention and self-regulation ($r = -0.449$, $p = 0.0001$). In addition, hyperactivity/inattention also correlated negatively with persistence ($r = -0.341$, $p = 0.0001$), frustration tolerance ($r = -0.358$, $p = 0.0001$), flexibility ($r = -0.299$, $p = 0.0001$) and receptivity ($r = -0.216$, $p = 0.0001$). Another interesting finding was that emotional symptoms correlated negatively with all attitudes toward learning except interactivity. Moreover, one of the strongest correlations obtained in our analysis was the negative correlation between flexibility and peer relationship problems ($r = -0.339$, $p = 0.0001$).

With regard to the third and final objective of this study, we found that parenting practices were related to parent- and teacher-reported behavior. As shown in Table 4, significant correlations were found between child-rearing practices (ECMP) and parent-reported behavioral difficulties (SDQ-P), and also between parents' disciplinary practices to correct their child's behavior and all variables related to childhood difficulties. All these correlations were positive except for the negative correlation between disciplinary practices and the child's prosocial behavior ($r = -0.257$, $p = 0.001$).

With regard to the relationship between parenting (ECMP) and the child's behavior as reported by teachers (SDQ-T, see Table 4), parent's expectations regarding their child's abilities correlated negatively with hyperactivity/inattention in the preschool context ($r = -0.173$, $p = 0.021$), but correlated positively with prosocial behavior ($r = 0.153$, $p = 0.043$). In addition, discipline showed a significant positive correlation with conduct problems ($r = 0.176$, $p = 0.020$) and hyperactivity/inattention ($r = 0.205$, $p = 0.006$), and a negative

Table 3 Pearson correlation coefficients between parent-reported and teacher-reported behavioral problems and behaviors in learning situations

| BORS | SDQ-P | | | | | SDQ-T | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| | Emotional symptoms | Conduct problems | Hyperactivity/inattention | Peer relationship problems | Prosocial behavior | Emotional symptoms | Conduct problems | Hyperactivity/inattention | Peer relationship problems | Prosocial behavior |
| Self-regulation | -0.161* | -0.118 | -0.210** | -0.120 | 0.053 | -0.219** | -0.264** | -0.449** | -0.101 | 0.221** |
| Persistence | -0.146 | -0.095 | -0.213** | -0.115 | 0.038 | -0.179* | -0.158* | -0.341** | -0.095 | 0.218** |
| Frustration tolerance | -0.092 | -0.054 | -0.130 | -0.091 | 0.104 | -0.188* | -0.180* | -0.358** | -0.123 | 0.208** |
| Flexibility | -0.080 | -0.045 | -0.134 | -0.131 | 0.098 | -0.197** | -0.209** | -0.299** | -0.339** | 0.353** |
| Motivation | -0.200** | 0.001 | -0.042 | -0.105 | 0.033 | -0.167* | -0.004 | -0.115 | -0.115 | 0.255** |
| Interactivity | -0.047 | 0.021 | -0.109 | 0.046 | 0.061 | -0.077 | 0.026 | -0.005 | -0.160* | 0.228** |
| Receptivity | -0.032 | 0.001 | -0.071 | -0.049 | 0.099 | -0.269** | -0.172* | -0.216** | -0.227** | 0.321** |

SDQ-T is the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire-Teachers and SDQ-P is the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire-Parents (Goodman 1997). BORS is the Behavior Observation Rating Scale (Lidz and Jepsen 2000, 2003; Spanish version Calero et al. 2009)

** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Table 4 Pearson correlation coefficients between parental child-rearing practices, parent-reported and teacher-reported behavior, and behavior in learning situations

| SDQ | ECMP | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------|------------|-------------------------|
| | Expectations | Discipline | Child-rearing practices |
| SDQ-P emotional symptoms | -0.080 | 0.315** | -0.174* |
| SDQ-P conduct problems | -0.151* | 0.251** | -0.167* |
| SDQ-P hyperactivity/inattention | -0.187* | 0.382** | -0.228** |
| SDQ-P peer relationship problems | -0.060 | 0.228** | -0.105 |
| SDQ-P prosocial behavior | 0.150* | -0.257** | 0.152* |
| SDQ-T emotional symptoms | 0.017 | 0.126 | 0.016 |
| SDQ-T conduct problems | -0.061 | 0.176* | -0.063 |
| SDQ-T hyperactivity/inattention | -0.173* | 0.205** | -0.180* |
| SDQ-T peer relationship problems | -0.001 | 0.126 | -0.091 |
| SDQ-T prosocial behavior | 0.153* | -0.152* | 0.161* |
| BORS self-regulation | 0.158* | 0.021 | 0.046 |
| BORS persistence | 0.068 | 0.034 | 0.094 |
| BORS frustration tolerance | 0.076 | 0.008 | 0.043 |
| BORS flexibility | 0.058 | 0.018 | 0.206** |
| BORS motivation | 0.081 | 0.079 | 0.082 |
| BORS interactivity | 0.026 | 0.083 | 0.010 |
| BORS receptivity | 0.067 | 0.028 | 0.081 |

ECMP is the *Escala Breve de Comportamientos para Madres y Padres de Niños Pequeños* [Brief Behavioral Scale for Mothers and Fathers of Young Children] (Solís-Cámara et al. 2002). SDQ-P is the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire-Parents and SDQ-T is the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire-Teachers (Goodman 1997). BORS is the Behavior Observation Rating Scale (Lidz and Jepsen 2000, 2003; Spanish version Calero et al. 2009)

** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

correlation with teacher-reported prosocial behavior ($r = -0.152$, $p = 0.044$). Child-rearing practices showed a negative correlation with hyperactivity/inattention ($r = -0.180$, $p = 0.017$), but a positive correlation with prosocial behavior ($r = 0.161$, $p = 0.033$).

A significant positive correlation was found between child-rearing practices and cognitive flexibility in the preschoolers studied here ($r = 0.206$, $p = 0.006$). The results with the BORS also showed a significant positive correlation between self-regulation and expectations ($r = 0.158$, $p = 0.036$) and between child-rearing practices and cognitive flexibility in the preschoolers studied here ($r = 0.206$, $p = 0.006$).

Discussion

This study was guided by an interest in analyzing the variables that influence social, personal and school adjustment in a sample of preschoolers with different cultural backgrounds, with the ultimate objective of preventing school problems that can appear in subsequent stages of education. The first aim was to analyze differences in performance, academic achievement, parent-reported behavioral problems and attitudes toward learning between groups of indigenous Spanish children, immigrant children whose parents were from

Spanish-speaking countries and immigrant children whose parents were from non-Spanish-speaking countries.

With regard to school performance, our comparisons between groups showed that indigenous Spanish preschoolers did not differ significantly from immigrant children whose parents were from other Spanish-speaking or non-Spanish-speaking countries. These results appear to contradict some earlier research showing that academic performance in students with adequate proficiency in the language of the country of destination was better than in students with language problems (Bullejos de la Higuera 2002; Franzé-Mundano 2008; Olmos Gómez 2009; Resing et al. 2009; Taylor and Whittaker 2003). However, it should be considered that we are referring to second-generation immigrants who were fluent in Spanish, regardless of their parents' Spanish language proficiency.

Our analysis of the results on the K-BIT detected significant differences between groups in the verbal subtest and in the total score, but no differences in the non-verbal subtest. Again, poor language proficiency is likely to be the factor that explains why immigrant children whose parents were from a non-Spanish-speaking country scored below the mean on the verbal subtest. The non-verbal subtest, unlike the verbal subtest, lacks verbal content and so no differences between groups were seen. All three groups attained scores that were at or above the mean.

No significant differences were found initially among the three groups in performance on the ACFS assessment test. Preschoolers from the indigenous Spanish group obtained the best results, followed by immigrant children with Spanish-speaking parents; however, these differences were not, in general, statistically significant. All three groups obtained scores within the range of mean values or higher, except in the verbal planning subtest. In this subtest, the group of immigrant children whose parents were from non-Spanish-speaking countries scored below the mean, and the difference in comparison to the other two groups was significant. These findings are consistent with results reported by Olmos-Gómez (2009), who showed that language skills such as verbal planning are weak in children with poor language proficiency. This was indeed the case in the group of preschoolers in the present study from non-Spanish-speaking families.

As expected, the results reported here indicate that cultural background is not a determining factor in the performance of tasks similar to those used in the school curriculum, such as the tasks included in the ACFS for preschool children, nor does cultural background influence their learning potential as measured by this scale. These results are consistent with earlier studies by Hessels (2000), Lidz and Macrine (2001), Resing et al. (2009), Sternberg and Grigorenko (2002) and Tzuriel and Kaufman (1999), who found no differences in learning potential when children from ethnic minorities were compared with indigenous children in different European countries.

The group of native Spanish preschoolers was the one that differed most from their non-Spanish-speaking classmates in their performance and academic achievement on verbal tasks such as verbal planning, the verbal subtest on the K-BIT and school performance. These results can be explained by the statistically significant differences between groups in language proficiency, and are consistent with earlier research (Alcock et al. 2008). In summary, based on the data we collected, we can conclude that the variable with the greatest influence on school adjustment in the preschoolers we studied is language proficiency, rather than cultural background, a finding consistent with a number of earlier studies (Bullejos de la Higuera 2002; Franzé-Mundano 2008; Olmos-Gómez 2009; Taylor and Whittaker 2003).

Within this first objective, we wished to analyze whether preschoolers in the three groups differed in their behavioral profiles. The results of the ACFS Behavior Observation Rating

Scale showed significant differences only for the self-regulation variable: indigenous Spanish and immigrant children with Spanish-speaking parents scored higher than the group of immigrant children whose parents were from non-Spanish-speaking countries. These data corroborate the conclusions offered by Peña (2000), who also found differences in attention and self-regulation between indigenous, African and English preschoolers. It should be noted, however, that all three groups scored within the mean range on all variables we assessed, a result that could be interpreted to mean that Spanish and immigrant preschoolers in all three groups were adequately predisposed toward learning.

Our results for parent-reported behavioral problems in the SDQ showed that indigenous Spanish preschoolers differed significantly from immigrant preschoolers with Spanish-speaking parents in the frequency of emotional symptoms and peer relationship problems. This difference suggests, as did earlier reports, that the groups we studied differed significantly in self-regulation, verbal planning, emotional symptoms and peer relationship problems (Aunola and Nurmi 2006; Ho et al. 2008; Karreman et al. 2009).

Our second aim was to analyze the relationships between parent- and teacher-reported behavior problems and preschoolers' attitudes toward learning. Emotional problems correlated negatively with motivation, as did hyperactivity/inattention with self-regulation. These findings are consistent with teachers' reports, which noted that prosocial behavior correlated positively and significantly with all measures of positive attitude toward learning, whereas emotional symptoms correlated negatively with positive attitudes toward learning.

Analyses of teachers' reports showed that hyperactivity/inattention correlated negatively with self-regulation, persistence, frustration tolerance, flexibility and receptivity when children were asked to perform structured tasks. Previous research also found a negative relationship between self-control and the subsequent appearance of externalizing problems (Eisenberg et al. 2005; Gartstein and Fagot 2003; Kochanska and Knaack 2003; Rothbart and Bates 1998; Rubin et al. 2003; Zhou et al. 2007). In addition, we found that higher scores on scales that measured emotional problems correlated with lower self-regulation, motivation and persistence when the children were faced with a structured task. A final noteworthy observation is that problems with peers correlated negatively with flexibility and receptivity, an important aspect to take into account when planning actions aimed at enhancing adaptation to the school setting.

According to teachers' reports, children who had fewer behavioral problems appeared to have better behaviors in learning situations. This conclusion is consistent with the results of earlier studies that found that aspects such as self-regulation, frustration tolerance and cognitive flexibility are factors associated with the subsequent development of disruptive behaviors or poor school achievement (Diamond et al. 2007; Gonzalez-DeHass et al. 2005).

In relation to our third aim, which was to analyze the relationships between child-rearing practices and behavior-related problems, parents' and teachers' reports both indicated that a higher number of positive child-rearing practices was related to a lower frequency of hyperactive/inattentive behaviors and with higher scores for prosocial behaviors. In addition, our findings show that parents' use of discipline correlated positively with hyperactive/inattentive behaviors and conduct problems, and correlated negatively with prosocial behaviors. In consonance with earlier publications on the negative consequences of punitive discipline on children's social and emotional development (Larzelere and Kuhn 2005), our results indicate that the frequency of parents' use of punishment to control their child's behavior is directly related to the presence of both internalizing and externalizing behavioral problems. We also found that high expectations for what their children are able to accomplish were related to a lower frequency of behavioral and hyperactivity/inattention problems, and a higher frequency of prosocial behaviors, as previously reported by Solís-Cámara and Díaz (2007).

The results of our study show that immigrant children whose parents were from Spanish-speaking and non-Spanish-speaking countries have performance levels in nonverbal tasks and learning potentials similar to those of their indigenous Spanish peers. In learning situations, preschoolers from immigrant families also showed similar behaviors to those of Spanish preschoolers, a generally favorable situation for immigrant children's adjustment to the educational setting. Performance was worse in preschoolers whose parents were from non-Spanish-speaking countries than in their Spanish-speaking peers only on tasks related to language.

Considering all preschoolers together, with no distinction according to cultural background, the results of our study also indicate that child-rearing practices, especially parents' expectations and the quantity of positive child-rearing practices, are related to behavioral and adaptive behavior problems in learning situations. In this connection, our conclusions are consonant with studies that identified parental child-rearing practices as a factor strongly associated with the child's adjustment on different levels (Capaldi et al. 2007; Magnuson et al. 2009; Reese and Goldenberg 2008; Senechal and Young 2008). This is an important aspect to consider in light of the cultural differences that have been documented in child-rearing practices (Tajima and Harachi 2010) and the relationship between changes in the child's cultural milieu and the acculturation process (Durgel et al. 2009).

In addition, our results show that the presence of prosocial behaviors is directly related to personal, social and school adjustment in the preschoolers who participated in this study, regardless of their cultural background. In contrast, other variables are found to have a negative effect on children's adjustment, namely: (1) emotional problems, (2) the presence of hyperactive behaviors and (3) the parents' use of disciplinary practices (Diamond et al. 2007; Gonzalez-DeHass et al. 2005; Kochanska et al. 2008; Larzelere and Kuhn 2005).

The main limitation of this study relates to our sample. The final sample size was limited by our inclusion criteria for immigrant preschoolers, such as age of the participants and their background, as well as the geographic area where the study was done (Granada and its metropolitan area). Increasing the sample size would have required enlarging the geographical setting. On the other hand, the study's main strengths are that multiple informants could be interviewed, preschoolers were assessed individually in face-to-face interviews, and more than one assessment method was used.

When we consider the fundamental role that parents play as agents of their children's socialization in the context of our increasingly multicultural society, it seems clear that family child-rearing practices should be aimed toward specific practices that favor the child's integration. Like others before us, we found that language proficiency rather than cultural background stood out as a factor that had a clear influence on school adjustment. These results point toward the need for interventions at as early an age as possible for the purpose of improving the language skills of immigrant children who do not yet share a common language with their classmates. Such interventions may help prevent more serious future difficulties in personal, social and school adaptation. We also think that additional experimental studies should be done to investigate the effect of interventions designed to test the effect of factors shown here to be relevant for personal, social and school adjustment.

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Current themes of research:

Learning potential related to different kind of populations such as children with disabilities, high IQ children or immigrants children.

Most relevant publications in the field of Psychology of Education:

Dolores Calero García, M., Auxiliadora Robles Bello, M., Belén García Martín, M. (2010). Habilidades cognitivas, conducta y potencial de aprendizaje en preescolares con síndrome Down. *Electronic Journal of Research in Educational Psychology*, 8 (1), 87–110.

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PhD. Antonio Fernández-Parra. University of Granada, Granada, Spain.

Current themes of research:

Psychological intervention with children.

Most relevant publications in the field of Psychology of Education:

Parenting practices and behavior problems in preschool immigrants.

Loneliness and social rejection in adolescents with internalizing and externalizing behavior problems.

Language disorders in school children with behavior problems and disruptive behaviors.

Bonete Roman, S., Vives Montero, M. C., Fernandez Parra, Calero Garcia, M. C. & Garcia Martín, M. B. (2010). Potencial de aprendizaje y habilidades sociales en escolares con el trastorno de Asperger. *Psicología Conductual: Revista Internacional de Psicología Clínica y de la Salud*, 18, 473–490.

López Rubio, S., Mendoza, E. & Fernández Parra, A. (2009). Habilidades lingüísticas y sociales en adolescentes con problemas de conducta. *Revista de Logopedia, Foniatria y Audiología*, 29, 237–248.

MSc. Sonia López-Rubio. University of Granada, Granada, Spain.

Current themes of research:

Parenting practices and behavior problems in preschool immigrants.

Most relevant publications in the field of Psychology of Education:

López-Rubio, S., Fernández-Parra, A., Mendoza, E y Ramos, C. (2010). Lenguaje y conducta:determinantes del fracaso académico y social. Una revisión de la literatura. *Revista de Logopedia, Foniatria y Audiología*, 30, 144–150.

López-Rubio, S., Mendoza, E. y Fernández-Parra, A. (2009). Habilidades lingüísticas y sociales en adolescentes con problemas de conducta. *Revista de Logopedia, Foniatria y Audiología*, 29, 237–248.

MSc. Rosario Carles. University of Granada, Granada, Spain.

Current themes of research:

Learning potential in preschoolers.

Most relevant publications in the field of Psychology of Education:

- Calero, M. Dolores; Carles, Rosario; Mata, Sara y Navarro, Elena. (2010). Diferencias en habilidades y conducta entre grupos de preescolares de alto y bajo rendimiento escolar. *Revista RELIEVE*. v. 16, 2.
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- López-Rubio, S., Carles, R., Mata, S., Fernández, A., Calero, D., Vives, C., Navarro, E., y Márquez J. (2010). *Variables Conductuales y Familiares Asociadas al Rendimiento Académico en Preescolares. Una Perspectiva Intercultural. Retos Internacionales ante la Interculturalidad*. Colección: Estudios. Editorial de la Universidad de Almería. ISBN: 978-84-693-0784-7 Depósito Legal: AL-915-2010.

MSc. Sara Mata Sierra. University of Granada, Granada, Spain.

Current themes of research:

The psychological assessment and treatment of preschoolers.

Most relevant publications in the field of Psychology of Education:

- “Potencial de aprendizaje y adaptación al contexto educativo”. (VII Congreso Iberoamericano de Psicología. 20–24 Julio 2010. Oviedo).
- “La utilidad de la ACFS en población preescolar inmigrante” (VII Congreso Iberoamericano de Psicología. 20–24 Julio 2010. Oviedo).
- “Valoración de un programa de intervención de funciones cognitivas en preescolares” (VII Congreso Iberoamericano de Psicología. 20–24 Julio 2010. Oviedo).
- Perfil de Aprendizaje y Potencial de Aprendizaje en Preescolares Inmigrantes y Españoles (Congreso Internacional de Educación Intercultural: Retos Internacionales ante la Interculturalidad. 5–7 Noviembre, 2009. Universidad de Almería).
- “Diferencias en habilidades y conducta entre grupos de preescolares de alto y bajo rendimiento escolar”. *RELIEVE*, v. 16 (2). http://www.uv.es/RELIEVE/v16n2/RELIEVEv16n2_5.htm.
- “The Usefulness of Cognitive Function Scale (ACFS) in the Identification of School Problems”.
- Importancia de las Habilidades Lingüísticas en el Rendimiento de Preescolares Inmigrantes. *Retos Internacionales ante la Interculturalidad*. Colección: Estudios. Editorial de la Universidad de Almería. ISBN: 978-84-693-0784-7 Depósito Legal: AL-915-2010.
- Perfil de Aprendizaje y Potencial de Aprendizaje en Preescolares Inmigrantes y Españoles. *Retos Internacionales ante la Interculturalidad*. Colección: Estudios. Editorial de la Universidad de Almería. ISBN: 978-84-693-0784-7 Depósito Legal: AL-915-2010.
- Variables Conductuales y familiares Asociadas al Rendimiento Académico en Preescolares. *Una Perspectiva Intercultural. Retos Internacionales ante la Interculturalidad*. Colección: Estudios. Editorial de la Universidad de Almería. ISBN: 978-84-693-0784-7 Depósito Legal: AL-915-2010.

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Current themes of research:

The prevention of children disorders through educational procedures.

Most relevant publications in the field of Psychology of Education:

- Bonete, S. Vives, M.C., Fernández Parra, A, Calero, M. D., y García, (2010). Potencial de aprendizaje y Habilidades sociales en escolares con el Trastorno de Asperger. *Psicología Conductua*, 18, 473–490.
- Vives M. C., Valero, L., Ascanio, L. (2011). Generalización en el manejo del dinero mediante un entrenamiento en relaciones de equivalencia. *Psicothema*, 23, 31–37.
- Ferro, R., Vives, M. C. y Ascanio L. (2010). Aplicación de la Terapia de Interacción Padres-hijos en un caso de Trastorno Negativista Desafiante. *Revista de Psicopatología y Psicología Clínica*, 15, 202–214.
- Ferro, R., Vives, M. C. y Ascanio L. (2009) Novedades en el Tratamiento Conductual de niños y adolescentes. *Clínica y Salud*, 20(2), 119–130.
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Current themes of research:

Learning potential and cognitive training programs in preschoolers.

Most relevant publications in the field of Psychology of Education:

VII Congreso Iberoamericano de Psicología. 20–24 Julio 2010. Oviedo. Spain:

“Potencial de aprendizaje y adaptación al contexto educativo”.

“La utilidad de la ACFS en población preescolar inmigrante”

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Calero, M.D., Fernández-Parra, A., Mata, S., Vives, MC, López, S, Navarro, E., y Marquez, J. (2010). *Variables Conductuales y familiares Asociadas al Rendimiento Académico en Preescolares. Una Perspectiva Intercultural. Retos Internacionales ante la Interculturalidad*. Colección: Estudios. Editorial de la Universidad de Almería. ISBN: 978-84-693-0784-7 Depósito Legal: AL-915-2010.

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Current themes of research:

Learning potential and education.

Most relevant publications in the field of Psychology of Education:

- Calero, M. D., Robles, M. A. Márquez, J. and de la Osa, P. (2010). *EHPAP: Evaluación de habilidades y Potencial de aprendizaje para preescolares*. Madrid: EOS.
- Calero, M. D. y Marquez, J. (1998). Psychometric Properties of a Learning Potential Test for Reading: The Picture Word Game. *European J. of Psychological Assessment*, 14(2) 124–133.
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