

# **Socioemotional Development of Low-Income Children in the Public School Intervention Program**

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## **(ABSTRACT)**

The current study used data gathered as part of the Head Start/Public School Transition Project (Virginia Site), and included only data on the children who were part of Cohort II (i.e., enrolled in kindergarten in 1993). This database was examined to determine how select child and family characteristics uniquely contributed to parents' and teachers' ratings of the children's social skills and problem behaviors. A series of exploratory factor analyses (EFA), using principal components extraction and varimax rotation, were conducted to identify from the available database underlying constructs associated with the children's development of social skills and problem behaviors. Results of the EFA were used to construct predictor and dependent variables. Separate univariate models were established at four time points and hierarchical multiple regression was used to examine the unique contributions of the various predictors of parent and teacher ratings of children's social skills and problem behaviors. Of the demographic variables examined, the unique contribution of Hispanic ethnicity to parents' ratings of the children's social skills and problem behaviors was significant at all time points. Other predictors that were significant and uniquely contributed the most to parents' ratings of the children's social skills included the family's routine (beginning of kindergarten), parenting style (end of kindergarten), and attitudes about the neighborhood (end of first grade). Parents' attitudes about the behavior of children in the school was a significant predictor of parents' ratings of the children's problem behaviors. None of the predictors contributed significantly to the teacher's ratings of the children's social skills or problem behaviors.

## **DEDICATION**

This research is dedicated to my parents, Raymond and June Schultz, who unconditionally expressed their confidence in my abilities and persistently encouraged me in the pursuit of a higher education. This research also is dedicated to my daughter, Rayghan Schultz Larick, who inspires me – may you find as much happiness in life as you give me.

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