

Moderating Role of Neighbourhood Factors on the Associations between Parenting Practices and Children's Early Language Skills in Trinidad and Tobago

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Abstract

The moderating role of availability of neighbourhood infrastructure and collective efficacy on the associations between parenting practices and children's early language skills was examined among 1,177 families from diverse ethnic backgrounds in the Caribbean nation of Trinidad and Tobago. Mothers/caregivers provided assessments of parenting practices and availability of neighbourhood infrastructure and neighbourhood collective efficacy and children were tested in their homes. Family economic disadvantage was associated with children's vocabulary, receptive language, and expressive language skills. In addition to family economic disadvantage, preschool attendance, positive parenting, neighbourhood collective efficacy, and availability of neighbourhood infrastructure were all variously associated with children's early language skills. Neighbourhood characteristics moderated the associations between positive parenting and children's early language skills. In the context of good neighbourhood quality positive parenting has a favourable influence on children's early language skills. Data are discussed in terms of the confluence of factors that influence preschoolers' early language skills in challenging ecological niches.

Key words: Parenting, Neighbourhood, Early Language Skills

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