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#### **Publication Date**

2014

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
SANTA CRUZ

**HELPING WITHOUT BEING ASKED AS A CULTURAL PRACTICE**

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

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

PSYCHOLOGY

with an emphasis in LATIN AMERICAN AND LATINA/O STUDIES

by

**Angélica López**

March 2014

The Dissertation of *Angélica López* is approved:

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Professor Barbara Rogoff

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Professor Nameera Akhtar

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Professor Maureen Callanan

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Tyrus Miller  
Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies

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2014

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## Helping Without Being Asked as a Cultural Practice

by *Angélica López*

### Abstract

This study examined cultural differences in helping without being asked in an instructional setting, in participating in household work, and in family cultural values regarding helping without being asked. Participants included 38 sibling pairs of 6-10 year-old children of Mexican-heritage background from communities likely to have familiarity with Indigenous practices (whose families have limited experience with Western schooling; “Mexican Indigenous-heritage”) and of European-American background from highly schooled families. An exploratory part of the analyses also included 19 sibling pairs of Mexican-heritage children whose families have an extensive experience with Western schooling (“Mexican-heritage Hi Schooling”). Home visits were conducted where an unfamiliar instructor guided the sibling pairs through a science craft activity that presented them with 15 different opportunities to help without being asked. After the activity, the mothers of the children participated in an informal interview about their children’s helping with household work and cultural values related to helping without being asked. Results showed more observed helpfulness to the instructor guiding the children through the activity and more initiative in helping without being asked at home by Mexican Indigenous-heritage children than European-heritage children. There was also a positive relationship between children’s helping the instructor and their reported initiative in helping at home. Mexican-heritage Hi Schooling children resembled the European-heritage

children in the instructional setting and resembled the Mexican Indigenous-heritage children in initiative in helping at home. There was also more importance placed on cultural values of helping without being asked by Mexican-heritage mothers (of both backgrounds) than European-heritage mothers. Findings may help understand how home practices and cultural values related to helping contribute to children's initiative in helping in many situations, including school where it may be unexpected or not allowed.



## Dedication and Acknowledgement

My sincerest gratitude for this collective effort goes to:

Mentors: Dr. Barbara Rogoff, Dr. Catherine Cooper, Dr. Nameera Akhtar, Dr. Maureen Callanan, Dr. Maricela Correa-Chávez, Dr. Eduardo Mosqueda, Dr. Luis Urrieta, Dr. Olga Nájera-Ramírez

Lab mates, friends and colleagues: Lucía Alcalá, Omar Ruvalcaba , Andrew Coppens, Andy Dayton, Amy Dexter, Katie Silva, Elizabeth González, Graciela Solis

Research Assistants: Kenia López & Magali Campos

The schools and community centers that helped us recruit participants and to the wonderful families who allowed us in their homes and participated in this study

Sociedad Estudiantil de Psicólog@s Avanzando, UC Mexus, Chicana Latina Foundation, Education Opportunities Program, Educational Partnership Center, Chicano Latino Research Center, El Centro, Presidential Workshop on Intent Community Participation, Cabrillo Advancement Program, Center for Informal Learning and Schools, Dept. of Psychology, Dept. of Latin American and Latin@ Studies

Dearest friends and UCSC family: Karina Cervantez, Paulina Moreno, Jessica Roa, Carla Zamarripa, Dr. Patricia López, Juanita Correa, Gerardo Ipac, Christian Portillo, Luis Alejo, Tony Madrigal, Saúl Maldonado

Por último, un millón de gracias a mi queridísima familia por su amor, apoyo y bendiciones durante cada paso del camino. ¡Se les quiere muchísimo!

## Helping Without Being Asked as a Cultural Practice

This study explores the extent to which US Mexican-heritage and European-American children spontaneously help an instructor during a science craft activity. This study also relates children's help in this instructional situation to their initiative in helping in the work of their household and cultural values related to helping without being asked. Helping without being asked is an important attribute in many Mexican and Mexican heritage families, called being *acomodida/o* (López, Najafi, Rogoff, & Mejía-Arauz, 2012; López, Ruvalcaba, & Rogoff, in press). Being *acomodida/o* is inculcated early in childhood; it differs from simply helping in that it is spontaneous and attentive, based on observing what others need, and is done without expecting anything in exchange.

Altruism and helping is common among very young children of several backgrounds (Warneken, Hare, Melis, Hanus & Tomasello, 2007; Warneken & Tomasello, 2006). However, within the field of psychology, helpfulness is often seen as a maturational or stage-like individual characteristic. This approach makes it difficult to account for helping that is done to benefit others. Helpfulness is also viewed as prosocial behavior which develops linearly and in its true sense not until adolescence. Eisenberg and Fabes (1998) explain that as children grow older, they become more likely to engage in prosocial behaviors as they are able to detect subtle cues if someone needs help.

However, such studies have mostly involved children of European-American background and have not distinguished helping without being asked from helping

when requested to help. The current study explores the notion that as children become part of a cultural community, they may develop different values regarding attentive helping — helping without being asked. For example, children in some communities may be more prepared to recognize cues at earlier ages because of access to everyday mature activities and because of a community expectation to become involved, as will be seen in later examples. Also, studies have shown that children show more prosocial behavior in contexts where such behavior is encouraged and required or expected (Kartner, Keller, & Chaudhary, 2010; Nsamenang, 1992).

The present study builds on literature involving cultural variation in helpfulness; community practices and values of helping that are involved in Learning by Observing and Pitching-In (LOPI); and the cultural value of being *acomodida/o*.

### **Cultural variation in helpfulness**

Children of Mexican, Mexican-heritage, Indigenous, and Indigenous-heritage communities have been found to help out with initiative — without being asked — in the home as a way to contribute to the family. Often, such helpfulness stems from community values and ideologies where responsibilities are shared by the group (Alcalá, Rogoff, Mejía-Arauz, Coppens, & Roberts, in press; Coppens, Alcalá, Mejía-Arauz, & Rogoff, in press; Ericks-Brophy & Crago, 2003; Gaskins, 2000; Goodnow, 2000; Ramirez Sanchez, 2007; Rogoff, Moore, Najafi, Dexter, Correa-Chávez, & Solís, 2007).

Mexican children whose parents have little experience with Western schooling (and who a generation ago considered themselves Indigenous) take

initiative in household work as a way to contribute to the family by cooking, helping with younger siblings, and running errands (Alcalá et al., in press; Correa-Chávez, Keyser Ohrt, & Mejía-Arauz, 2014). They are often regarded by their mothers as dependable and capable members of their family. These children emphasized their collaboration with other family members, whereas children from a Mexican middle-class community more often highlighted their personal, individual contributions (Coppens et al., in press).

Mexican children from a middle-class community showed less initiative with household work, focused more exclusively on self-care chores that are not for the benefit of the whole family, and were more involved in child-focused activities organized by adults such as out-of-school classes and organized sports (Alcalá et al., in press; Correa-Chávez, et al., 2014). Similarly, European-American middle-class children contribute to the household at later ages, in middle or late childhood, and their chores usually are primarily for self care, e.g. picking up their own toys and cleaning their own room (Bowes & Goodnow, 1996; Goodnow & Delaney, 1989; Ochs & Izquierdo, 2009). Adults usually oversee their chores, assigning them to children, and children are sometimes paid to do chores in an attempt to teach responsibility and work life (Furnham & Kirkcaldy, 2000).

A few studies indicate that helping is also common in classroom settings among Indigenous-heritage and Mexican-heritage children (Gaskins, 2000; López et al., 2012). For example, Inuit children of Canada have been found to share information in order to help their peers (Eriks-Brophy & Crago, 2003). Though such

behavior can often be punished, this method may be a primary form of classroom interaction for some students (Mercado, 2001; Trueba & Delgado-Gaitán, 1985). Although it contrasted with many teachers' expectations, Mexican- and Central American- heritage children in Los Angeles often volunteered in the classroom when on vacation, offering and sometimes pleading to help, and they also volunteered extensively in helping at home (Orellana, 2001; Orellana, Dorner, & Pulido, 2003).

The extent of helpfulness may be related to work on collaboration which has found a similar pattern of cultural variation. For example, several studies have found a more cooperative orientation in playing games among Mexican-heritage children when compared to European-heritage children (Knight & Kagan, 1977; Nelson, Kagan & Gumbiner, 1982; Widaman & Kagan, 1987).

Indigenous-heritage children of Mexico were also found to collaborate together more often while watching an origami folding demonstration than their European American counterparts (Mejía-Arauz, Rogoff, Dexter, & Najafi, 2007). While constructing a three dimensional puzzle, US Mexican-heritage sibling pairs whose families likely had more experience with Indigenous practices of the Americas jointly engaged in the construction more than did US Mexican-heritage sibling pairs whose families have extensive experience with Western schooling. The latter group tended to engage more in solo activity (Correa-Chávez, 2011). Cultural differences in the extent of helping with initiative and collaboration fit into a broader picture of how cultural communities are organized.

The present study goes beyond previous work in comparing cultural differences in children's helping without being asked in both an instructional situation with a stranger and in family household work. There has been only one comparative cultural study of children's spontaneous helping under controlled conditions, to my knowledge. This study found that Mexican-heritage children whose families do not have extensive experience with Western schooling and likely have more experience with Indigenous practices, spontaneously helped each other more in folding origami figures than European and US Mexican-heritage children whose mothers had extensive experience with Western schooling (Najafi, Mejía-Arauz, & Rogoff, 2008).

The present study goes beyond Najafi et al. (2008) by comparing helping an adult without being asked, among Mexican-heritage US children and European American middle-class children, in a scripted instructional situation with carefully designed opportunities to help. Scripting equal opportunities to help for all participants provides a more careful cultural comparison than in Najafi et al.'s study, where the opportunities to help were not scripted. The present study also differs from Najafi's study in focusing on children helping adults rather than peers; this is more closely related to helping parents at home.

### **Community practices and values – Learning by Observing and Pitching-In**

Helpfulness is an important aspect of a cultural learning tradition called Learning by Observing and Pitching-In (LOPI), which Rogoff and collaborators have defined as a form of organizing learning in which children are included in the wide range of activities of the community and are encouraged and expected to learn by

observing and helping with ongoing collaborative endeavors. LOPI appears to be particularly prevalent in Indigenous-heritage and Mexican-heritage communities where formal schooling has not been historically common. Children in middle-class communities have more limited exposure to mature activities of their community and therefore have fewer opportunities to observe and to pitch-in (Rogoff, Alcalá, Coppens, López, Ruvalcaba, & Silva, in press).

In communities where LOPI is common, the organization of family and community endeavors appears to involve wide-ranging multi-way collaborations (Lamphere, 1977; Pelletier, 1970; Sindell, 1997). For example, Pelletier (1970) described a form of horizontal collaboration with Indigenous children in Canada where everyone learns from those around them and contributes as they are needed. He described learning not through “teaching” but through “observing and feeling” (p. 21).

Another definitional aspect of Learning by Observing and Pitching-In involves the learner pitching-in with initiative and learning the demeanor and skills necessary to contribute and be part of the community (Rogoff et al., in press). This involves cultural values that are expected to be learned early in childhood. Most relevant to the present study is the Mexican cultural value of being *acomodida/o*, helping without being asked, which may relate to the extent of helpfulness found in Mexican and Mexican-heritage communities (López et al., in press).

The current study does not examine a causal relationship between cultural values and helpfulness. Rather, it attempts to find a link between children’s

helpfulness with an unfamiliar instructor and being *acomodada/o* in helping with household work, to further understand a cultural constellation and relate cultural values with cultural practices. If such an association is found, it will support the contention that both cultural values and helpfulness are part of a larger whole that relate to other features of Indigenous heritage that are reflective of Learning by Observing and Pitching-In (Rogoff et al., in press).

**A specific community value – Being *acomodada/o***

The cultural value of being *acomodada/o* connects having human quality, humility, and *educación* in which one helps spontaneously without expecting to get anything in return. It differs from simply helping in that helping can imply doing something because one feels obliged or because one has been asked; being *acomodada/o* implies helping without being asked because the desire to help comes from within (López et al., in press). Among interviewees in Guadalajara Mexico and in California, López et al. reported that many respondents stressed that being *acomodada/o* is inculcated early in childhood. One participant explained,

*“Mi madre me enseñó a saber ayudar. Eso fue el primer conocimiento que yo tuve. Me dió responsabilidad desde temprana edad.”*

“My mother taught me to know when to pitch in. That was one of the first things I learned. She gave me responsibilities at a young age.”  
(54 year-old male taxi driver)



Being *acomodida/o* is also tied to the idea of *respeto*<sup>1</sup>, being *educada/o*<sup>2</sup> and being *buena gente* which is a “sense of interdependence” (Pimentel, 2009, p. 175).

Ramirez Sánchez (2007) describes childhood in a system of reciprocity and exchange among the *Nahuas* of Tlaxcala, Mexico where everyone helps members of their family, especially those in the same household. The *Nahua* children in Tlaxcala claim not to be working even when heavily involved in family work. It is described as just “helping” as a matter of being part of the family. “Working” in the community is regarded as paid work.

In this community the transmission of values includes *icnoliz* (the Nahuatl word for respect), which is instilled to maintain good relationships between siblings as they work together with their parents for the benefit of the family. Ramirez Sanchez describes work and respect as going hand in hand where one of the rewards of work is respect. This resonates with the connection to *respeto* that comes with being *acomodida/o* (Ruvalcaba, Rogoff, López, Correa-Chávez, & Gutiérrez, 2014). Similarly, Coppens et al. (in press) found that Mexican children who lived in an Indigenous-heritage community more often emphasized mutual coordination with other family members than Mexican children from a middle-class community.

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<sup>1</sup>*Respeto* refers to a cultural value that guides interactions and focuses on a mutual, reciprocal kind of responsibility (Garcia, 1996; Ruvalcaba, Rogoff, Lopez, Correa-Chavez, & Gutierrez, 2014; Valdes, 1996).

<sup>2</sup>Being *educada/o* refers to having *educación* which in this context refers to a cultural construct which serves as a guide on how to live life. It emphasizes integrity, respect, responsibility and sociality (Burciaga, 2006; Valenzuela, 1999).

## **The present study**

The present study examined cultural differences in helping without being asked in an instructional situation and in household work, and cultural values regarding helping without being asked. The primary analyses compared the helpfulness of Mexican-heritage children from communities likely to have familiarity with Indigenous practices (whose families have limited experience with Western schooling) with European-American children from highly schooled families.

Limited family experience with Western schooling has been used as an index of likely familiarity with Indigenous practices among Mexican families from rural regions. Not much information is available among immigrant US Mexican-heritage families regarding involvement with Indigenous practices because most do not live in communities that recognize themselves or are recognized as Indigenous-heritage (Urrieta, 2003). However, many recent migrants from Mexico emanate from rural villages that were once considered Indigenous and are likely to maintain some Indigenous practices, and where formal schooling has not been historically prevalent (Bonfil Batalla, 1987, 1988; Stavengagen, 1988; Frye, 1996; Lorente Fernandez, 2010; Vigil, 1998). Instead of viewing limited schooling as a deficit, basic experience with Western schooling in Mexico may be an index of familiarity with Indigenous practices (Correa-Chávez, Rogoff, & Mejía-Arauz, 2005; López, Correa-Chávez, Rogoff & Gutiérrez, 2010; Silva, Correa-Chávez, & Rogoff, 2010).

Families with extensive schooling are likely to have experience with a different constellation of related practices that include cosmopolitan living

arrangements, smaller family size, salaried occupations, and so on, that are often characteristic of ‘middle class’ cultural traditions (López et al., 2010; Rogoff & Angelillo, 2002). Maternal participation in formal schooling is associated with organizing learning interactions with their children in ways that resemble lessons in school (Laosa, 1980; Mejía-Arauz, Rogoff, & Paradise, 2005; Rogoff et al., 1993).

Cultural variation in the extent of helpfulness was examined as an unfamiliar adult instructor led sibling pairs through a science craft activity. In addition, the relation of helpfulness to the instructor and mothers’ reports on the children’s helpfulness in household work was examined. I expected Mexican-heritage children from more traditional immigrant backgrounds from rural, Indigenous regions of Mexico to more often help the instructor, to report helping their family more with initiative, and to be expected to help out without being asked compared to European-heritage children.

On an exploratory basis, the helpfulness of a third group — Mexican-heritage children from highly schooled families — was compared with that of the children from the other two backgrounds. Prior studies have found the performance of these children often resembles that of European-heritage children from highly schooled families (e.g., in collaboration among peers and third party attention; Correa-Chávez, 2009; López, et al., 2010; Najafi et al., 2008; Silva et al., 2010), but a few studies have found their performance to be similar to that of Mexican-heritage children whose families are likely to have more experience with Indigenous practices (Ruvalcaba et al., 2014; Silva & Rogoff, 2014).

## **Method**

The procedure was designed to put sibling pairs in a situation that suggests being helpful if they are oriented to a cultural value of helping without being asked. Sibling pairs participated in a 25-30 min science craft project involving solar printing designed to provide 15 different opportunities to pitch in and help (Part 1 of the study). Their mothers were also asked about their children's helpfulness at home and how the mothers encourage help without being asked (Part 2 of the study). Following Part 1 and Part 2, I describe the participants and results regarding the pattern for the Mexican-heritage children whose families have extensive school experience (Part 3), and then the mothers' responses to questions regarding the value of helping without being asked (cultural values, Part 4).

### **Participants in Part 1 and 2 (Mexican Indigenous-heritage and European American middle class)**

Participants included 6-10 year-old sibling pairs from two cultural backgrounds:

- 1) 19 pairs of U.S. Mexican-heritage siblings whose families likely have some experience with Indigenous practices and have less than 12 years of schooling ("Mexican Indigenous- heritage"); schooling mean: 7.7 yrs; older child mean age: 9.6 years; younger child mean age: 7.0 years. Sibling pairs included: 8 pairs of sisters, 6 pairs of a brother and a sister, and 5 pairs of brothers.
- 2) 19 pairs of European American children whose mothers have extensive experience with Western schooling ("European-heritage Hi Schooling"), 12 or more grades,  $M =$

16.6; older child mean age: 9.8; younger child mean age: 7.5 years). Siblings included 7 pairs of sisters, 10 pairs of a brother and sister, and 2 pairs of brothers.

All families were recruited from schools, after-school programs and community centers in the Central Coast area of California. Several participants were referred by previous participants. Background demographic information was documented via a questionnaire and the parent interview.

Mexican Indigenous - heritage families had occupations that included homemaker, housecleaning, restaurant worker, and agricultural work in the fields for mothers. Some mothers who were homemakers also worked part-time in restaurants or baby-sitting. Fathers' occupations included painter, cook, carpenter, maintenance, gardener, construction, security officer, agricultural work in the fields, supervisor, and machine operator.

Mothers' occupation among European-heritage families included homemaker, marketing, teacher, marketing business owner, doctor, social worker, accountant, online designer, registered nurse and marine scientist. Fathers' occupations included city planner, registered nurse, engineer, accountant, doctor, professor, engineer, mortgage worker, gym owner/personal trainer, contractor, forester, marine scientist and intelligence analyst.

### **Part 1: Procedure for Scripted Helping Opportunities**

A bilingual adult research assistant ("the Solar Lady," who was blind to the hypotheses of the study) facilitated the activity, following a script. The sessions were conducted in the participants' language(s) of choice.

Each session took place in the children's home and was video recorded.

Figure 1 below shows the set-up in the children's home. The research assistant carried out the activity with the children and the parent(s), using a small table that we brought along, while the author was behind the camera or off to the side observing the activity. The children sat on one side of the table and the Solar Lady sat across from them. A UV light box was placed on the floor at one end of the table.



Figure 1. The Solar Lady and sibling pair during the science craft activity

The Solar Lady explained to each sibling pair that they would be making solar prints (like the examples available to them) by placing flat objects on UV light-sensitive paper (see Figure 2). They were told that once the light sensitive paper is placed in the sun or exposed to UV light, the objects block the light in those areas and leave a print of the object. The children were invited to arrange small objects on their paper. Then, the Solar Lady put their projects under the UV lamp for 3 minutes after which the prints were put in a tray with water to make the image permanent.

The next few pages describe the opportunities to help that were scripted into the different phases of the solar craft activity: the Solar Lady set up the activity, the children designed their prints; the Solar Lady clipped the prints to a board, the Solar Lady exposed the prints to light; and they set the prints to make them permanent. A list summarizing the 15 opportunities to help follows this description.

First, a warm-up snack with the children took place to establish rapport. In order to override any uncertainty the children might feel for helping without being asked, the research assistant asked for the children's help one time (opening the snack packaging) during the warm up snack to show them that help was welcome. (All children helped in response to this request.) Subsequently, no requests or hints to help were made by the Solar Lady.



Figure 2: Example of completed solar print

*Scripted opportunities to help*

*Getting set up.* As the children finished their snack, the Solar Lady stated that they would get started with the activity but that she needed to get out the materials first. As she went to get the project materials, she first began to gather or throw away used plates, snack bags and juice boxes in a trash bag. The first opportunity to help involved the children helping clear the table as the Solar Lady got her materials out (Helping #1).

*Children designing their prints.* Throughout the activity, ten containers with different categories of objects were available for the children to place on the paper. Each container was labeled based on its contents (i.e. foam letters, foam animals, objects from nature) and with a sticker example of the contents on the lid. As the Solar Lady began to take off the lids, the children had the opportunity to help her by removing some lids as well (Helping #2).

Once the Solar Lady laid out the materials, she handed each sibling their solar paper and let them know that they could take objects from the containers and start setting them up on their paper. She then looked surprised and motioned to the containers of objects and said, “Uh oh, some of the kids that did this before did not finish putting everything back in the right boxes, see how they have labels?” and began to organize one of the boxes. Here the children had the opportunity to help organize the objects (Helping #3).

She added, “Oh, and there’s also some dried out ones that we can’t use anymore like these leaves that are breaking” and began to remove them. This situation prompted some children to pitch in to this organization activity (Helping #4). The Solar Lady worked on her own print along with the children.

*Solar Lady clips the prints to a board.* When the children finish placing the objects that they chose onto their solar paper, the Solar Lady explained that they would place a piece of plastic over the prints and clip it to the board they were using as a support for the solar paper. However, the Solar Lady looked for a “missing” clip which was hidden behind one of the containers, away from her view, giving the children an opportunity to point it out or help her look for it (Helping #5).

Once in possession of all clips needed, the Solar Lady placed the plastic over her board to demonstrate and then moved the plastic over to a child’s print, allowing an opportunity for them to help with the clipping. The Solar Lady had difficulty holding it, prompting two more opportunities to help



hold the board so that the solar lady could do the clipping for Child A and right after for Child B (Helping #6).

*Exposing prints to light.* The Solar Lady explained and demonstrated that the prints would be placed under the UV exposure box. The Solar Lady took the younger child's print first, placed it under the box and walked over to fetch the older child's print, giving him/her the opportunity to hand her their print (Helping #7).

Because the prints were under the light for 3 minutes, the Solar Lady stated, "we have this hour glass that's exactly 3 minutes and it will help us keep time." She placed the hour glass on the table, giving the children an opportunity to flip it (Helping #8). Once one of the children or the Solar Lady flipped it, she stated, "Let's remember to keep an eye on it."

During the 3 minute wait, the Solar Lady began to slowly put her objects and the objects left on the table back in their respective containers, giving the children an opportunity to pitch in (Helping #9).

As she continued to tidy things up, she "accidentally" knocked over a container, spilling its contents and giving the opportunity for children to help pick up the objects (Helping #10).

During this time, the 3 minute hour glass ran out, giving the children an opportunity to announce that time was up (Helping #11).

The Solar Lady got up to remove the prints from under the box. She unclipped the younger child's print and dumped their object off, handing them their print with the shadows showing. She then unclipped the older child's print and handed it to them. The Solar Lady then began to get things ready for the next step, allowing the children to put the objects just removed from their prints back in their respective containers (Helping #12).

Once all the objects were put back, the Solar Lady stated, "I'm going to put these lids back on before I make any more messes," giving the children the opportunity to help put the lids back on (Helping #13).

*Setting the prints to make them permanent.* The Solar Lady explained that the next step would be wetting the prints to make the image permanent. She took out a tray that would be filled with water and a board to set the prints to dry. She brought out a roll of paper towels and explained that they would need four of them as she tore them off the roll. She placed three of them on the board and then stated, “Oh and I forgot the cloths.” She took out cloths that would be used for drying, allowing the children to put the fourth paper towel on the board (Helping #14).

The Solar Lady put each print in the water one at a time and as she took out each one, she “accidentally” spilled a few drops of water on the table, giving the children the opportunity to wipe the table with the cloths that were placed near them (Helping #15).

### **Summary of opportunities to help**

1. Do the children help clear trash from the warm up snack?
2. Do the children help remove the lids from the containers?
3. Do the children help organize the misplaced objects in the containers?
4. Do the children help pick out the unusable objects from the containers?
5. Do the children point out that the missing clip is behind the UV box (not visible to the Solar Lady)?
6. Do the children help with clipping their board?
7. Do the children hand over their board to be put under the light?
8. Do the children flip the hour glass?
9. Do the children put the unused objects back in their containers?
10. Do the children pick up the contents of the spilled container?
11. Do the children announce that time is up?
12. Do the children put the dumped objects back in their containers?
13. Do the children help put the lids back on their containers?
14. Do the children put the fourth paper towel on the board?
15. Do the children help dry the table?

### **Coding the children’s helping without being asked**

The children’s helping of the Solar Lady primarily involved a scale incorporating two levels of help for each of the 15 helping opportunities described above:

Full Initiative = 2 points – the child spontaneously helped with the Solar Lady as soon as the opportunity first presented itself

Partial Initiative = 1 point – the child helped once their sibling did so or once the Solar Lady began to do so.

No Helping without being asked = 0 points – the child did not help without being asked.

The primary code consisted of a score from 0 to 2 for each opportunity, yielding a maximum score of 30 points for each child. We also explored the number of instances in which each child showed Full Initiative (max number of opportunities = 15) or No helping without being asked (max number of opportunities = 15).

A combined score for both siblings was used for all analyses, to avoid non-independence of data points. In addition, a couple of the opportunities only lent themselves to one person to pitch in and in others, once one sibling pitched in (2 points), the other could only show partial initiative (yielding a maximum score for that child in that opportunity of 1 point). Thus, scores for both younger and older siblings were added together for a total family score. The maximum score reached by any family was 44.<sup>3</sup>

*Two types of helping.* In the process of examining and graphing the individual scores for each opportunity, I noticed two different types of help that seemed to differ in their pattern: Helping the Solar Lady in ways that allowed the child to move their

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<sup>3</sup> Combining the older and younger sibling into one family group also removed the possibility that age differences might influence the pattern of results. When considered separately, the older sibling helped more than the younger sibling (14.5 vs. 11.9) across the three backgrounds combined  $r(114) = .21, p = .03; F(1, 112) = 8.4, p = .005$ . Within the 3 cultural backgrounds, the older sibling helped more than the younger sibling within only the Mexican-Indigenous heritage group (17.2 vs. 13.7;  $r[36] = .53, p = .001; F[1,36] = 6.8, p = .0$ ) and did not significantly differ within the Mexican-heritage HI schooling or European-heritage backgrounds.

own project forward (7 *Own Project Help* opportunities) and helping the Solar Lady organize and manage the overall activity (8 *Whole Project Help* opportunities). For example Own Project Help included taking lids off containers to use materials needed for the project (which consists of opportunities 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, and 14). Whole Project Help included putting lids back on the containers to help manage the activity (which consists of opportunities 1, 3, 4, 9, 10, 12, 13, & 15). Our analysis explores the children's performance on these two types of helping in addition to their overall helping.

I expected that because prior research has found that Mexican Indigenous-heritage children show more initiative on household work benefiting the group than Mexican children from families with extensive schooling, that the cultural differences would be especially notable in the children's help to the instructor in running the Whole Project compared to just helping her help them with their Own Project.

*Reliability.* A bilingual trained research assistant unaware of the hypotheses of the study coded one-third of the data for reliability purposes and the primary coding was done by the first author. Reliability was adequate for helping the Solar Lady ( $k = .62$ ,  $r = .99$ ).

### **Results for Helping the Instructor**

#### **(Mexican Indigenous-heritage and European-heritage Children)**

Because Mexican Indigenous-heritage children were expected to show more spontaneous help to the Solar Lady than European American children, analyses were all one-tailed in this section.

Mexican Indigenous-heritage children helped the instructor more overall than European-heritage children across the 15 helping opportunities (average helpfulness scores were 31.1 vs. 25.2, See Table 1),  $F(1, 36) = 7.0, p = .01$ . An interaction approaching significance between cultural background and type of help was found,  $F(1,36) = 2.5, p = .06$ . Mexican Indigenous-heritage children helped the instructor significantly more than European-heritage children in the 8 opportunities that involved the Whole Project (18.1 vs. 14.1),  $t(36) = 3.3, p = .001$ , and showed the same trend (but not significantly) in their helping of the instructor in the 7 opportunities that more directly benefitted their Own Project (13.0 vs. 11.1),  $t(36) = 1.4, p = .095$ . (See Table 1).

Mexican-Indigenous heritage children helped more with Full Initiative — helping without being asked and before anyone else helped (Level 2 in the scoring system) — than European-heritage children (in an average of 10.0 vs. 7.7 of the 15 opportunities;  $F[1, 36] = 9.3, p = .00$ ). (See Table 2.) This difference was significant for both types of helping: Whole Project Help (in an average of 5.4 vs. 4.0 of the 8 opportunities;  $t[36] = 3.3, p = .001$  and Own Project Help (in an average of 4.6 vs. 3.8 of the 7 opportunities;  $t[36] = 1.7, p < .04$ ).

Mexican Indigenous - heritage children also were less likely to provide No Help without being asked than European-heritage children (in an average of 3.4 vs. 5.1 of the 15 opportunities)  $F(1, 36), = 5.8, p = .01$ . This pattern was significant in the opportunities that involved helping the instructor organize the Whole Project (not

helping in an average of 1.3 vs. 2.3 of the 8 opportunities;  $t [36] = 2.5, p < .01$ ) and the same trend was present (but not significant) in the opportunities that involved advancing their Own Project (average of 2.1 vs. 2.8 of the 7 opportunities,  $t [36] = 1.6, p = .06$ ).

## **Part 2: Helping at home: Child Initiative vs. Adult Control**

### **Participants**

Because of missing interview data from 3 families from the European-heritage background, the number of participants is less than in part 1 of the study and now includes: 19 Mexican Indigenous-heritage and 16 European-heritage sibling pairs (N=35).

### **Procedure and Coding**

While the children's prints dried, the Solar Lady invited the mother back into the room for her interview. The children were present for some of the interviews, but for the most part, they went on to do other activities and it was only the mother present with the Solar Lady and myself. The interviews with the mothers regarding helping at home were adapted from previous work related to initiative in children's household work (Alcalá et al., in press; Coppens et al., in press) and cultural values related to helping (López, Ruvalcaba, & Rogoff, in press).

Parent interview questions were presented in a casual, conversational way, regarding each child (older and younger). As background we asked:

- What do your children do to help around the house? How?

[After they responded, the interviewer asked about specific household tasks that the mother did not spontaneously mention from a list of common tasks used by Alcalá et al. and Coppens et al.]

The focus of this part of the study was the extent to which children help without being asked (= “Child Initiative”), or only help when compelled to do so by adults (= “Adult Control”). To determine the level of Child Initiative and Adult Control involved in the children’s contributions to household work, the following questions were asked:

- [Regarding the most complex task that was reported] Does the child independently take responsibility for doing this task?
- Do you sometimes have to persuade or convince them to do it? Do they receive a reward for doing it? Are they punished if they don’t do it?

The coding scheme for parent views on initiative in children’s contributions to household work was developed in conjunction with Lucía Alcalá, adapted from Alcalá et al. (in press) and Coppens et al. (in press). The reports for the two siblings’ initiative or adult control were very similar, and so they were combined to result in a family judgment of either Child Initiative or Adult Control of the siblings’ contributions to household work.

#### *Child Initiative*

-Regularly takes initiative: The child regularly expects to help and contribute to the family. It’s a role the child has taken on, like being the caregiver of a toddler or making preparations for dinner. There is no prearranged contract, the child simply knows what is expected.

*Adult Control* could involve any of the 4 following approaches, which involve adult assignment, contingent rewards or punishment, or struggle/negotiation:

-Adult Assignment: There is a specified assignment under which the child regularly does the household work. For example, a parent might have assigned folding the laundry to the child as “their” regular chore, or two siblings might be assigned to alternate clearing the table at night. Both would be types of contracts, and violating them would be a breach of responsibility.

-Contingent Reward: The child is offered articles or money (including pay) contingent on completing the work/activity assigned. The offer is made in advance or is part of a recognized “contract” or “deal.” The child is rewarded every time the activity is done or on a regular basis, when it is not they are not rewarded.

-Punishment: Punishment is contingent if work is not done (e.g., taking away TV time, being given time-outs, etc.).

-Struggle/negotiation: The mother and child argue about the activities and responsibilities of the child and the child often does not complete the tasks. Or the parent states that they have to nag, scold, or struggle with the child to get the child to do chores.

All the sibling pairs were reported to participate in some household work, and all but one of the pairs were reported to do so either with Initiative or Adult Control, or both. This one sibling pair (from a European-heritage family) was reported to get involved in household work in ways that were neither through child initiative or adult control; this sibling pair was not included in our analysis of Child Initiative/Adult Control. The mother reported that these children helped on occasions when the parent makes a specific request for the child to do something (e.g., “Can you help me do this?”) or the child sporadically offered to help but was not required or expected to help or participate.

To create a score for Child Initiative/Adult Control, the *sibling pair* was assigned a score between -2 and +2 on the following scale:

+2 Both siblings’ work only or mostly involved the code of “Regularly takes initiative”



+1 The work tended to involve the children “Regularly Taking Initiative” but with some Adult Control reported for one or both siblings

-1 The work tended to involve Adult Control but with some “Regularly Takes Initiative” reported for one or both siblings

-2 Both siblings’ work only or mostly involved Adult Control for both siblings

*Reliability.* The same bilingual research assistant from Part 1 of the study coded one-third of the data for Part 2 for reliability purposes. The primary coding was done by the first author and by the collaborator, Lucía Alcalá. Reliability between the blind coder and the other two researchers was high for ratings of Child Initiative/Adult Control ( $k = .80, r = .93$ ).

### **Results — Child Initiative and Adult Control in Helping at Home**

*Cultural differences in Child Initiative/Adult Control.* Mexican Indigenous-heritage sibling pairs were most likely to be reported to help without being asked, pitching-in with initiative, in household work. They received a higher average score on the Child Initiative / Adult Control 4-point scale compared to the European-heritage sibling pairs (means = 1.0 vs. -1.1),  $t(32) = 4.7, p = .00$ . (See Table 3). Table 4 summarizes the distribution of sibling pairs in these two cultural backgrounds within each level of the 4-point Child Initiative/Adult Control score. Of the 19 Mexican Indigenous-heritage sibling pairs, 8 were reported to regularly use Initiative in helping with household work, with *no* Adult Control. Of the 15 European-heritage sibling pairs, 9 were reported to help with household work based on Adult Control with *no* report of Child Initiative.

*Relationship between Child Initiative / Adult Control in helping with household work and helping the Solar Lady.* Because we found that the Mexican Indigenous-heritage children more often helped the Solar Lady without being asked than the European-heritage children in part 1 of the study, we were interested in whether this pattern related to parent reports of the children's helping without being asked (initiative) with household work.

No relationship was found between Child Initiative / Adult Control in household work and children's scores for helping the instructor (Solar Lady) without being asked,  $r(34) = .22, p = .1$ . There were also no significant correlations within cultural backgrounds.

To further explore the possibility of a relationship between helping the Solar Lady and helping with household work with initiative, we also examined the relationship by making the 4-point scale into two categories:

-*Child Initiative* mostly or primarily involved child initiative (a score of either 2 or 1 on the 4-point scale)

-*Adult Control* mostly or primarily involved adult control (a score of either -2 or -1 on the 4-point scale)

Children who were reported to help without being asked at home (Child Initiative in helping with household work) had higher overall scores of helping the Solar Lady without being asked (mean score = 30.8) than children who were reported to rely on Adult Control in helping with household work (mean score = 26.5),  $F(1, 32) = 3.5, p = .04$  (see Table 5). The two types of help (facilitating the Whole Project

and their Own Project) showed the same pattern, but marginally: Pairs who regularly helped with household work without being asked had higher scores on helping the Solar Lady without being asked, compared with pairs who relied on Adult Control for household work (Whole Project average helping scores =17.4 vs. 15.2),  $F(1, 32) = 2.7, p = .056$ ; Own Project average helping scores = 13.2 vs. 11.3),  $F(1, 32) = 1.7, p = .10$ .

In a trend (though not significant), sibling pairs who were reported to use Child Initiative in helping with household work more often showed Full Initiative in helping the Solar Lady than sibling pairs who were reported to rely on Adult Control in helping with household work (averaging 9.8 versus 8.2 of the 15 opportunities),  $F(1, 32) = 2.6, p = .057$ . This pattern was not significant for opportunities involving organization of the Whole Project,  $F[1, 32] = 2.2, p = .08$ , but it was significant for opportunities involving advancing their Own Project,  $F[1, 32] = 3.2, p = .04$ .

When the relationships were examined within each cultural background, links between Child Initiative and Adult Control categories and helping the Solar Lady were not found. However, there was minimal variation and ceiling or floor effects appeared within each group. Almost all of Mexican Indigenous-heritage children showed Initiative in household work (84%) and almost all of the European-heritage children helped with household work based on Adult Control (80%) (Also see Table 3.)

In sum, Mexican Indigenous-heritage children were reported to show more initiative in helping with household work than European-heritage children. More initiative in helping with household work was related to more helpfulness to the Solar Lady across these 2 groups.

### **Part 3. Exploring Helping Without Being Asked Among**

#### **Mexican-heritage Hi schooling Children**

Secondary analyses explore whether Mexican-heritage children from highly schooled families show a pattern more like Mexican-heritage children from families who presumably have more experience with Indigenous American practices or more like European American children from highly schooled families. Prior research suggests that the results could go in either direction, hence 2-tailed tests were used to compare with the other 2 cultural backgrounds.

#### **Participants**

As an exploratory part of the study we collected data from 19 pairs of U.S. Mexican-heritage siblings whose families have extensive experience with Western schooling (“Mexican-heritage Hi Schooling”), 12 or more grades,  $M = 14.7$  years; older child mean age: 9.5 years; younger child mean age: 6.8 years). Siblings included: 2 pairs of sisters, 12 pairs of a brother and a sisters, and 5 pairs of brothers.

Among the Mexican-heritage Hi Schooling families, mothers’ occupations included college enrollment specialist, health educator, writer, teacher’s aide, social

worker, homemaker, teacher, waitress, hairstylist, store clerk, cook, housecleaning, restaurant worker, and workshop facilitator. Fathers' occupations included self-employed landscaping, dispatcher, videographer, curator for an arboretum, social work, construction worker, day laborer, electrical engineer, intelligence analyst, cook, glass shop receiving, tree worker, warehouse worker, and facility manger.

### **Results: Helping the Instructor by Mexican-heritage Hi Schooling Children**

Across all analyses of helping the instructor without being asked, on average, the Mexican-heritage Hi Schooling children followed the same pattern as the European-heritage children.

Mexican-heritage Hi schooling children helped the instructor significantly less overall than Mexican Indigenous-heritage children (average helpfulness scores of 23.0 vs. 31.1;  $F [1, 36] = 9.3, p = .00$ ). (See Table 1.) No significant interaction was found between cultural background and type of help ( $F [1,36] = .8, p = .20$ ). The Mexican-heritage Hi Schooling children scored lower in helping without being asked than the Mexican Indigenous-heritage children for both the 8 opportunities that involved organizing the Whole Project (mean score of 13.6 vs. 18.1;  $t [36] = 3.2, p = .003$ ) and the 7 opportunities that benefitted their Own Project (mean score of 9.7 vs. 13.0;  $t [36] = 2.2, p = .04$ ).

Mexican-heritage Hi Schooling children also helped significantly less with Full Initiative (Level 2 in the scoring system) than Mexican Indigenous-heritage children (helping without being asked in an average of 7.7 vs. 10.0 of the 15

opportunities;  $F [1, 36] = 8.1, p = .004$ ). (See Table 2.) This difference was significant for both helping opportunities that involved the Whole Project (in an average of 4.2 vs. 5.4 of the 8 opportunities;  $t [36] = 2.6, p = .013$ ) and opportunities that advanced their Own Project (in an average of 3.5 vs. 4.6 of the 7 opportunities;  $t [36] = 2.1, p = .04$ ).

Mexican- heritage Hi Schooling children also were more likely to not provide any help at all than the Mexican Indigenous-heritage children (in an average of 6.1 vs. 3.4 of the 15 opportunities;  $F [1,36] = 9.4, p = .00$ ). This difference was significant for both the opportunities involving organizing of their Whole Project (2.8 vs. 1.3 of 8 opportunities;  $t [36] = 3.1, p = .004$ ), and opportunities involving advancing their Own Project (3.3 vs. 2.1 of 7 opportunities;  $t [36] = 2.4, p = .020$ ).

Mexican-heritage Hi Schooling children did not differ from European-heritage children in overall helpfulness score (means of 23.3 vs. 25.2;  $F [1, 36] = .44, p = .26$ ), in use of Full initiative (7.7 vs. 7.7 of the 15 opportunities;  $F [1,36] = .00, p = 1.0$ ) and in giving no help (6.1 vs. 5.1 of the 15 opportunities;  $F [1,36] = 4.8, p = .16$ ), nor in any of the comparisons of helpfulness in organizing the Whole Project or in facilitating their Own Project.

### **Child Initiative and Adult Control in Helping at Home by Mexican-heritage Hi Schooling Children**

Because of missing interview data from 3 families from this group, participants for the household work part of the study only included 16 Mexican-

heritage Hi Schooling families. One other Mexican-heritage Hi Schooling sibling pair was not included in the analysis of Child Initiative/Adult Control because neither sibling was reported to regularly take initiative nor was adult control used. This sibling pair, like all other sibling pairs in the study, contributed to family household work but they were reported to contribute by other means of inducement (such as specific requests or sporadic volunteering).

The Mexican- heritage Hi Schooling sibling pairs did not differ significantly from the Mexican Indigenous-heritage sibling pairs in helping with household work without being asked (.53 vs. 1.0,  $t [32] = .97, p = .34$ ) and showed significantly more initiative than the European-heritage sibling pairs (.53 vs. -1.1,  $t [28] = 3.2, p = .004$ ). Of the 15 Mexican-heritage Hi Schooling sibling pairs, the most common approach was the 7 pairs who tended to regularly use Initiative in helping with household work, with a little Adult Control. (See Table 4.)

These cultural differences contrast with the pattern of cultural differences in helping the instructor. The Mexican-heritage Hi Schooling children resembled the European-heritage children in helping the instructor without being asked less than did the Mexican Indigenous-heritage children. But they resembled the Mexican Indigenous-heritage children in reports of helping at home without being asked, more than the European-heritage children, who usually were reported to rely on adult control to get them to help at home. There was also not a significant correlation between helping the Solar Lady and helping at home when the Mexican-heritage HI

schooling children were included with the other two cultural backgrounds nor was there a correlation with the cultural background.

#### **Part 4. Mothers Valuing Helping without being Asked**

##### **Procedure and Coding**

In an exploratory part of the interview, parents were asked about the importance of helping without being asked:

-Is it important for your children to help without being asked?

The mothers' responses regarding the value of helping without being asked was coded in the following categories:

- It is important or expected
- It is not important
- It would be ideal but does not seem possible

##### **Results – Importance of Helping without being Asked**

Almost all of the families felt that helping without being asked was important. However, the Mexican-heritage mothers (from both backgrounds combined) more often stated that it was important than did the European-heritage mothers ( $\chi^2 [1, N=51] = 7.3, p < .01$ ): 100% of Mexican Indigenous-heritage families; 100% of Mexican-Hi Schooling families; and 81% of European-heritage families said that helping without being asked was important. The remaining 19% of European-heritage mothers (and none of the Mexican-heritage mothers) regarded helping without being asked to be unimportant and one mother felt it was just ideal, but not realistic. One mother said:



“I like that (laughing). It's nice when it happens and yet I try to remind myself that when you're 8 years old or 11 years old, you're in your own world and not thinking, "oh, mommy needs help right now." So yeah, I try to be realistic about the age and expectations.”

In a pilot interview, another European-heritage mother also reported helping without being asked to be unrealistic:

“I can't even fathom like kids just doing chores without being asked. That sounds very strange to me”.

Because in Mexican culture, a word exists to describe helping without being asked, the interview included an exploratory question to the Mexican-heritage families about being *acomodada/o*: “Do you encourage your children to be *acomodados*?” Fully 21.1% of Mexican-Indigenous heritage families and 38% of the Mexican-heritage Hi schooling families reported that it was simply expected that children not need to be told to help. (This information was often given in the context of the *acomodada/o* question, but was also offered elsewhere in the interview.) For example one Mexican-heritage Hi schooling mother explained:

“I hope they don't have to be asked. Part of what I tell them is that you should be looking for the job to do and not just wait for somebody to tell you to do it so it's very important for me that they help and that they look for what needs to be done without me having to tell them.”

Similarly, a Mexican Indigenous-heritage mother explained:

*“Para mí es bien importante porque imagínese, vamos a una parte y que ellos solitos se levanten y levanten su plato.... ve en México estamos acostumbrados que a uno lo invitan a comer y pos a recoger su plato o algo...Ayudar, acomodarse a hacer algo. Y hay niños que no lo hacen. Y a mí me da gusto cuando vamos a Mexico, que mi hija allí está.”*

“For me it’s very important because imagine, we go somewhere and they by themselves get up and clear their plate...you see in Mexico, we’re accustomed

to, if you're invited to eat and then you clear your plate or something...To help, spontaneously help with something. There are kids that don't do it. I am very pleased that when we go to Mexico, that my daughter pitches in."

## **Discussion**

*Cultural differences in helping an unfamiliar instructor.* During the science craft activity, Mexican Indigenous- heritage sibling pairs helped the instructor more than sibling pairs from both European-heritage and Mexican-heritage sibling pairs from families with extensive Western schooling backgrounds. These differences were present for helping opportunities that involved helping with organization and management of the Whole Project and help with advancement of children's Own Project. Mexican Indigenous-heritage sibling pairs also more often helped the instructor before anyone began to take care of what was needed in a particular opportunity and had less instances where no help was given than their counterparts from the other two cultural backgrounds. Mexican-heritage sibling pairs from families with extensive Western schooling did not differ from the European-heritage children in overall extent of helping the instructor without being asked, or across the different types of helping opportunities.

These results parallel findings of the single study (to my knowledge) that has made cultural comparisons in regards to helping in a controlled situation: Mexican Indigenous- heritage children spontaneously helped more in an instructional situation than European-heritage and Mexican-heritage children from backgrounds with extensive Western schooling experience (Najafi et al., 2008). The current study's

results also resonate with ethnographic work finding extensive helpfulness at home among children of Indigenous-heritage and Mexican-heritage (Eriks-Brophy & Crago, 2003; Gaskins, 2000; Trueba & Delgado-Gaitán, 1985; Orellana, 2001; Orellana et al., 2003).

*Child Initiative or Adult Control in helping with household work.* Based on parents' reports of children's helpfulness with household chores, Mexican Indigenous- heritage children more often participated in household work with Child Initiative while European-heritage more often participated under Adult Control. Mexican-heritage children whose families have extensive experience with Indigenous practices were similar to the Mexican Indigenous-heritage children and more often participated in household work with Child Initiative than under Adult Control.

Among Mexican Indigenous-heritage and European-heritage sibling pairs, children who were reported to show Initiative in helping at home had higher scores of helping the Solar Lady and helped more through Full Initiative than children whose household work was reported to be based mainly on Adult Control.

Parent responses to their children's household work are consonant with previous work on the motivation for participating in household work. Mexican Indigenous- heritage children have been found to often take initiative in the home (and out) to contribute to the larger group and are regarded as dependable and skilled members of their family (Alcalá, et al., in press; Coppens, et al., in press, Correa-

Chávez et al., 2014) while household work among European-heritage families has included more adult monitoring through chore lists and often includes contingent rewards for doing household work (Furnham & Kirkcaldy, 2000).

Household work among European-heritage children has more often included tasks that are for self-care, like cleaning their room, and getting things ready for school (Bowes & Goodnow, 1996; Goodnow & Delaney, 1989; Ochs & Izquierdo, 2009). This also parallels the idea that the individual is not responsible for messes that others create (Goodnow, 1998; Warton & Woodnow), making initiative in overall household work less important as it would not be expected.

Interestingly, in the current study, Mexican-heritage Hi Schooling children did not differ in Child Initiative in household work from the Mexican-Indigenous heritage children, though they did differ in the school-like task (part 1) and more resembled the European-heritage families. Perhaps these children, of Mexican heritage as well as highly schooled mothers, distinguish between the value system of home (and follow the Mexican value of being *acomodidas/os* at home) and the value system of schooling (and do not help as much in an instructional setting).

Similar findings were found by Delgado-Gaitán (1994) around the notion of respect. Because of the common disconnect between home and school values, Mexican immigrant parents were found to encourage their children to entertain questions when involved in school-like activities but also encouraged them to not raise questions and rather to act with respect during family-related activities.

*Values related to helping without being asked.* Mexican-heritage mothers (across both backgrounds) more often reported that helping without being asked was important or expected than the European-heritage mothers. This fits with the children of both Mexican groups being similar in being reported to usually help at home without being asked, which was very rare among the European-heritage children.

Such responses parallel previous work on being *acomodada/o* (López et al., in press). Work in Indigenous-heritage communities of the Americas has also found that children are often expected to take initiative and responsibility for participating in certain tasks without needing to be asked (Bolin, 2006; Urrieta, 2013).

The Indigenous practices of inclusion of children in most community events may be a source for the cultural value of being *acomodada/o*, even in the face of industrial and colonial pressures to individualize. This possibly-Indigenous practice may even have spread to the colonizing populations, yielding a cultural value that persists for many Mexican and Mexican emigrant populations beyond particular Indigenous communities.

Helping without being asked requires initiative. In order to be *acomodada/o*, it is also necessary to be aware of one's surroundings and know when and how to pitch in. Being considered to be *acomodada/o* can be considered a measure of success in many Latino immigrant communities and may go unrecognized by mainstream European American values, both in the home and in the classroom. Being useful to

one's community or family are intrinsic rewards that may be stronger incentives for learning than extrinsic rewards (Pimentel, 2009).

The high levels of Child Initiative in helping without being asked highlight the idea of autonomy with responsibility and, along with other studies, can be seen as a constructive feature of children's development and of the cultural practices of their community (Rogoff et al., in press).

### **Implications**

Findings may have implications for children's facility to participate in mature settings and in collaborative work among peers. However, the greater helping without being asked by Mexican- Indigenous heritage children may clash with teachers' expectations of children, leading to scolding. Helping without being asked contrasts with teachers taking charge of how children collaborate by subdividing tasks and by encouraging students to focus on their own work, both in the US and in Mexico (De Haan, 1999; 2001; Rogoff, Paradise, Mejía-Arauz, Correa-Chávez, & Angelillo, 2003; Rogoff et al., 2007).

In schooling, children's participation is often characterized by solo engagement, discouragement of collaboration, and little opportunity to help adults (Au & Mason, 1981; Mehan, 1979; Philips, 1983). If teachers recognize the cultural importance of helping without being asked, it could be seen a sign of maturity which would help with supporting the child's development rather than potentially being viewed as a lack of understanding or lack of ability to work on one's own. Such recognition could help to motivate children's academic achievement.

Initiative in helping is an overlooked *saber* (Urrieta, 2013) or way of knowing that children bring with them to the classroom, and these *saberes* are a part of a community's funds of knowledge (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005) and cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005). Developmental benefits of helping have also been found among adolescents of Asian, Latina/o and European background who reported more happiness and daily positivity and less psychological distress than adolescents who spend less time helping the family (Fuligni & Telzer, 2013). The inclusion of cultural values, in particular that of being *acomodida/o* will hopefully extend what is already known about cultural differences related to helping. Initiative, as an important aspect of Learning through Observing and Pitching-In, is a learning tool that many children often carry with them and by overlooking it, we may be wasting opportunities to expand children's array of known practices (Correa-Chávez et al., 2014; Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003).

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Table 1.

Means (and Standard Deviations) of Overall Score of Helpfulness to the Instructor in the Solar Printing Activity (distinguishing helping to organize the Whole Project and helping facilitate the children's Own Project)

	Mexican Indigenous heritage	Mexican-h Hi Schooling	European-h
Overall Score (Total)	31.1 (5.6)	23.3 (23.3)	25.2 (7.9)
Score (Whole Project)	18.1 (3.4)	13.6 (5.2)	14.1 (4.0)
Score (Own Project)	13.0 (3.4)	9.7 (5.5)	11.1 (5.0)

Table 2.

Means (and Standard Deviations) of Number of Helping Opportunities with Full Initiative and Number of Helping Opportunities where NO Help was given to the Instructor in the Solar Printing Activity (distinguishing helping to organize the Whole Project and helping facilitate the children's Own Project)

	Mexican Indigenous heritage	Mexican-heritage Hi Schooling	European-herit
Full Initiative (all 15 opportunities)	10.0 (1.6)	7.7 (3.1)	7.7 (2.8)
Full Initiative (Whole Project)	5.4 (1.1)	4.2 (1.6)	4.0 (1.5)
Full Initiative (Own Project)	4.6 (1.1)	3.5 (2.0)	3.8 (1.8)
No Helping (all 15 opportunities)	3.4 (1.7)	6.1 (3.4)	5.1 (2.5)
No Helping (Whole Project)	1.3 (1.1)	2.8 (1.8)	2.3 (1.2)
No Helping (Own Project)	2.1(1.1)	3.3 (1.9)	2.8 (1.7)

Table 3.

Mean Scores (and Standard Deviations) on 4-Point Scale of Child Initiative / Adult Control in Children's Help with Household Work  
 And Number (and percentage) of mothers reporting that their children's help with household work is primarily based on either Child Initiative or Adult Control (N = 49)

	Mexican Indigenous heritage	Mexican-heritage Hi Schooling	European-herit
Child Initiative/ Adult Control Score	1.00 (1.29)	.53 (1.51)	-1.13 (1.63)
Child Initiative category	16 (84.2%)	11 (73.3%)	3 (20%)
Adult Control category	3 (15.8%)	4 (26.7%)	12(80%)

Table 4.

Distribution of Sibling Pairs in each level of Child Initiative/Adult Control Score by Cultural Background (N = 49) One Mexican-HI schooling and one European-heritage pair was not included in this scoring system because their helping involved neither Child Initiative nor Adult Control

	Child Initiative/Adult Control Score			
	+2	+1	-1	2
Mexican Indigenous-heritage	8	8	1	2
Mexican-heritage HI schooling	4	7	1	3
European-heritage	1	2	3	9

Table 5.

Means (and Standard Deviations) of helping the Instructor without being asked, comparing sibling pairs reported to use Child Initiative or Adult Control (distinguishing helping with organizing the Whole Project and helping facilitate the children's Own Project), combining Mexican-Indigenous heritage and European-heritage sibling pairs (N = 34)

	Child Initiative	Adult Control
Helpfulness Score with Solar Lady (Overall)	30.8 (5.9)	26.5 (7.4)
Helpfulness Score (Whole Project)	17.4 (3.9)	15.2 (3.7)
Helpfulness Score (Own Project)	13.2 (3.6)	11.3 (4.7)
Full Initiative in Helping Solar Lady (Overall)	9.8 (1.8)	8.2 (2.8)
Full Initiative (Whole Project)	5.1 (1.3)	4.3 (1.5)
Full Initiative (Own Project)	4.7 (1.0)	3.9 (1.8)