

A Longitudinal Examination of Parenting Behaviors and Perceived Discrimination Predicting Latino Adolescents' Ethnic Identity

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Characteristics of the familial and societal context were examined as predictors of Latino adolescents' ($N = 323$; 49.5% female) ethnic identity. Consistent with previous work, familial ethnic socialization significantly predicted future levels of ethnic identity exploration, resolution, and affirmation for both male adolescents and female adolescents, although the association was significantly stronger for female adolescents than male adolescents for exploration and resolution. Furthermore, for male adolescents, higher levels of familial ethnic socialization were significantly associated with a faster rate of growth for ethnic identity resolution. In addition, paternal warmth–support emerged as a significant longitudinal predictor of male adolescents', but not female adolescents', ethnic identity exploration. Finally, perceived discrimination was significantly associated with male adolescents', but not female adolescents', ethnic identity exploration and affirmation. Significant gender differences in the relations of interest highlight the need to consider variability in the process of ethnic identity formation by gender.

Keywords: Latinos, adolescents, ethnic identity, parenting behaviors, discrimination

Identity formation is a central task of adolescence, and for many ethnic minority adolescents it involves feelings and conceptions about their ethnic group membership. Ethnic identity is critically important for ethnic minority youth because ethnicity is a salient construct in their lives that has the potential to significantly impact various aspects of their development, such as their social relationships and their identities (García Coll et al., 1996; Quintana, 1998). For instance, U.S. society tends to adhere to a social hierarchy in which social position variables such as ethnicity heavily influence the resources, experiences, and privileges of individuals, which in turn inform the development and outcomes of ethnic minority youth (García Coll et al., 1996). In the current study, we focus specifically on ethnic minority youth from Latino backgrounds who comprise the largest and fastest growing segment of the U.S. population (Ramirez, 2004). Because Latino youth are at an increased risk for negative behavioral and mental health outcomes when compared to youth from other U.S. ethnic groups (Joiner, Perez, Wagner, Berenson, & Marquina, 2001; Romero, Martinez, & Carvajal, 2007) and ethnic identity has been recognized as a significant protective resource for Latinos (Romero & Roberts, 2003; Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007), it is important to understand the factors that predict ethnic identity formation among Latinos. Our exclusive focus on Latino youth, rather than ethnic minority youth in general, is consistent with García Coll and colleagues' (1996) recommendations to understand how cultural processes vary within cultural groups. Thus, drawing from eco-

logical theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1989) and the integrative conceptual model of child development (García Coll et al., 1996), we examined proximal contextual factors such as parenting behaviors (familial ethnic socialization, parental warmth–support) and perceived discrimination as predictors of Latino adolescents' ethnic identity exploration, affirmation, and resolution. Because gender differences have emerged in trajectories of Latino adolescents' ethnic identity (Umaña-Taylor, Gonzales-Backen, & Guimond, 2009), we also examined variability by gender.

Finally, it is important to recognize that the Latino population in the United States is diverse with respect to various demographic characteristics (e.g., national origin, socioeconomic status; Ramirez, 2004) as well as with respect to the psychological meaning that individuals attach to their ethnic background (Umaña-Taylor, 2004). Although in the current study we focused on a panethnic Latino population (i.e., multiple Latino national origin groups are included in the current study), we acknowledged the diversity within this large panethnic group by examining variability with respect to individuals' ethnic identity development. In the review that follows, we use the term *Latino* when reviewing literature that reflects findings from studies that represented multiple national origin groups, and refer to a specific national origin group (e.g., *Mexican origin*) when the sample was homogenous with respect to national origin.

Ethnic Identity Development During Adolescence

Conceptualizations of ethnic identity vary widely, from a focus simply on ethnic labels with which individuals self-identify (e.g., Mexican American) to a psychological process that involves exploration, resolution, and affirmation regarding one's ethnic group membership (Phinney, 1989; Umaña-Taylor, Yazedjian, & Bámaca-Gomez, 2004). Given our focus on adolescence, and the developmental salience of identity formation during this time, the

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current study espouses a developmental conceptualization of ethnic identity that is based on Erikson's (1968) ego identity theory and Phinney's (1989, 1992) and Umaña-Taylor and colleagues' (2004) application of this theory to ethnic identity. Based on this conceptualization, ethnic identity development involves individuals' exploration of their ethnic background and resolution of the personal meaning of their ethnicity (Phinney, 1992; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2004). In addition, Umaña-Taylor and her colleagues (2004) have emphasized the need to consider an affective component of ethnic identity (i.e., ethnic identity affirmation), which involves the degree to which individuals feel positively or negatively about their ethnicity. Together, the three components are posited to inform the psychological process of ethnic identity formation.

Recent work focused exclusively on Latinos (i.e., Umaña-Taylor, Gonzales-Backen, & Guimond, 2009) or that included a Latino subsample (i.e., French, Seidman, Allen, & Aber, 2006; Pahl & Way, 2006) indicates that the three ethnic identity components show different growth patterns. In addition, studies of Latinos have found the ethnic identity components to be differentially associated with predictors (Supple, Ghazarian, Frabutt, Plunkett, & Sands, 2006) and outcomes (Umaña-Taylor, Gonzales-Backen, & Guimond, 2009; Umaña-Taylor, Vargas-Chanes, García, & Gonzales-Backen, 2008). As a result, scholars recommend examining each component as a unique aspect of ethnic identity. Furthermore, consistent with an Eriksonian (1968) framework, we do not contend that the development of one aspect of ethnic identity is contingent upon the development of another. For example, although individuals' exploration of their ethnicity can inform the resolution they feel regarding their ethnic identity, it is possible for someone to report high levels of ethnic identity resolution without having explored his or her ethnicity.

Because certain ethnic identity components have been longitudinally associated with adolescents' psychosocial functioning and, thus, may present opportunities for intervention, it is important to understand the antecedents of each ethnic identity component. For instance, one study of Latino adolescents found that growth in ethnic identity exploration was a significant predictor of growth in adolescents' self-esteem over a 4-year period (Umaña-Taylor, Gonzales-Backen, & Guimond, 2009). Thus, understanding factors that facilitate growth in exploration would inform the development of programs designed to increase exploration and, in turn, potentially increase adolescents' self-esteem. As such, grounded in an ecological framework described below, the current study was designed to examine multiple contextual factors and their potential longitudinal association with ethnic identity exploration, resolution, and affirmation.

An Ecological Model of Ethnic Identity

Scholars have emphasized the value of espousing an ecological approach for understanding developmental processes and outcomes among ethnic minority youth (García Coll et al., 1996; McLoyd, 1998) and, specifically, ethnic identity formation among Latino youth (Knight, Bernal, Garza, Cota, & Ocampo, 1993; Supple et al., 2006; Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004). Ecological theory posits that proximal and distal contextual factors interact with one another and with adolescents' individual characteristics to inform developmental processes (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). Because the family is a critical context in children's development

(Maccoby, 1992), parenting behaviors and experiences likely have a significant impact on adolescents' ethnic identity formation. In fact, Parke and Buriel (1998) suggested that an important role of families is to help children learn values and behaviors that allow them to adapt to the environments in which they live. Furthermore, among ethnic minority families, parents' attempts to teach their children about their ethnicity (i.e., ethnic socialization) are considered essential for ensuring their children's optimal adaptation (Marshall, 1995). Among Latino families, specifically, the influence of parents may be particularly salient given the cultural emphasis on obedience to parents and respect for authority (Cauce & Domenech-Rodríguez, 2002). Although there is much diversity within Latino families, scholars suggest that values emphasizing familism, or a strong orientation and connection to family, are one of the key values transmitted across generations (Parke & Buriel, 1998; Sabogal, Marín, Otero-Sabogal, Marín, & Perez-Stable, 1987).

A second important ecological context involves adolescents' discrimination experiences because this context provides adolescents with an impression of how others perceive their ethnic group and, importantly, can set the backdrop for how adolescents perceive themselves with respect to their ethnic group membership. Indeed, existing theoretical models emphasize that experiences with discrimination play a significant role in shaping youth's ecological realities and, ultimately, their developmental outcomes (e.g., García Coll et al., 1996). Furthermore, existing empirical work with multiple Latino groups (e.g., Puerto Rican, Mexican origin) has highlighted the salience of and significant impact that discrimination has on Latino youth (e.g., Romero & Roberts, 2003; Szalacha et al., 2003). Below we discuss existing support for the impact of parenting behaviors and perceived discrimination on adolescents' ethnic identity formation.

Parenting Behaviors

Studies that have examined parenting behaviors in relation to ethnic identity formation have typically focused on behaviors specific to ethnic and racial socialization, such as parents' efforts to teach their children about their ethnic heritage (e.g., Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004). Findings have demonstrated a robust and positive association between parents' ethnic socialization practices and youth's ethnic identity among Latinos (e.g., Umaña-Taylor, Alfaro, Bámaca, & Guimond, 2009; Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004), as well as among samples of multiple ethnic minority groups that include Latinos (Umaña-Taylor, Bhanot, & Shin, 2006; see Hughes et al., 2006, for a review). Though few studies have examined how global parenting behaviors and the quality of the parent-child relationship (e.g., monitoring, warmth, support) are associated with Latino adolescents' ethnic identity formation (see Supple et al., 2006, for an exception), a number of studies have examined how characteristics of the parent-child relationship are associated with global identity formation. For instance, Cooper, Grotevant, and Condon (1983) found that both fathers' and mothers' expressions of sensitivity to or respect for the ideas of others were positively correlated with adolescents' identity exploration. It also has been suggested that warmth in the parent-child relationship may communicate to youth that they are valued and accepted (Peterson, Rollins, & Thomas, 1985), and this facilitates adolescents' ability to explore their environment and feel confident

about the commitments they are making in their lives (Brendgen, Vitaro, Temblay, & Lavoie, 2001). A parental context in which adolescents perceive having a secure base from which to explore their environment is believed to promote identity development (Marcia, 1983).

Consistent with this previous work but specific to ethnic identity, one study found that harsh parenting (i.e., defined by punitiveness, negative control, and coercive parenting behaviors) was negatively associated with ethnic identity affirmation among Latino adolescents (Supple et al., 2006). It is possible that positive parenting behaviors such as support and warmth promote ethnic identity development by facilitating exploration and resolution of commitment, whereas negative parenting behaviors may inhibit ethnic identity development by promoting more negative feelings about ethnic group membership. Perhaps adolescents who experience negative parenting behaviors are more inclined to rebel against or devalue identities or opinions that they believe are held by their parents. Given existing literature, in the current study it was expected that parenting behaviors specific to ethnicity (i.e., familial ethnic socialization) and positive parenting behaviors (i.e., parental warmth–support) would be positively associated with adolescents' ethnic identity. Furthermore, the current study examined the potential longitudinal link among these variables and expected that higher, compared to lower, initial levels of familial ethnic socialization and more positive parenting behaviors would predict faster growth of ethnic identity exploration and resolution over a 3-year period. As previously introduced, the influence of parenting behaviors on adolescents' ethnic identity formation may be particularly pronounced in Latino families given the endorsement of values that emphasize obligation to the family and authority to parents (Cauce & Domenech-Rodríguez, 2002).

Perceived Discrimination

Consistent with Supple and colleagues' (2006) recommendation to expand beyond familial ethnic socialization and consider how other contextual factors may inform the process of ethnic identity formation, as well as with Phinney and Ong's (2007) suggestion to examine how environmental risk factors may inform differential patterns of ethnic identity development, in the current study we also considered the role of perceived discrimination in adolescents' ethnic identity development. In line with these ideas, Cross's (1995) seminal work on racial identity formation indicates that experiences such as discrimination can prompt processes of exploration regarding one's identity, which ultimately inform one's identity. Because existing empirical work with Latino youth (i.e., Puerto Rican, Dominican, Caribbean, Central American, and South American) has established that discrimination is a significant reality for Latino youth (Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000; Martinez, DeGarmo, & Eddy, 2004; Rosenbloom & Way, 2004), examining its potential influence on ethnic identity formation is critical. To our knowledge, one study that included a subsample of predominately Puerto Rican and Dominican Latino adolescents (i.e., Pahl & Way, 2006) has examined the longitudinal association between perceived discrimination and ethnic identity. Pahl and Way (2006) found that growth in perceived discrimination predicted growth in exploration but not affirmation. The questions tested in the current study, however, differ slightly in that the current study focuses on whether initial levels of discrimination

predict the rate of growth in three ethnic identity components over time.

Guided by developmental theory (Erikson, 1968) and existing work on racial identity formation (e.g., Cross, 1995), we expected that perceived discrimination might initiate a crisis that would prompt adolescents into greater exploration of their ethnicity and also perhaps a stronger resolution regarding the personal meaning of their ethnicity. Cross and colleagues' work on racial identity (e.g., Cross, 1995; Worrell, Vandiver, Schaefer, Cross, & Fhagen-Smith, 2006), for example, emphasizes that encounters that call into question one's identity or perceptions of one's social group (such as a discriminatory experience) are likely to induce an identity metamorphosis. In addition, social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) posits that when individuals encounter negative information about their group, they will seek to reconcile these negative messages and, thus, maintain a positive social identity by emphasizing the positive aspects of their group. Furthermore, antagonistic intergroup relations, such as experiences with discrimination, can also heighten identification with and positive attachment to one's group (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). With respect to ethnic identity, perhaps increased perceived discrimination would be linked to more positive feelings about one's ethnicity (i.e., higher ethnic identity affirmation). Thus, it was expected that higher levels of discrimination would predict faster growth in ethnic identity exploration, resolution, and affirmation. The longitudinal design of the current study allowed us to test whether levels of discrimination at the onset of the study would predict steeper growth in ethnic identity over a 3-year period that followed.

Current Study

The current study was designed to examine whether characteristics of the parent–child relationship (i.e., familial ethnic socialization, warmth–support) and adolescents' perceptions of discriminatory experiences during middle adolescence predicted growth in Latino adolescents' ethnic identity over a 3-year period through late adolescence. This study moves beyond examining cross-sectional links among contextual factors and ethnic identity to further understand the predictive validity of these variables on change in ethnic identity during adolescence. Furthermore, gender was tested as a potential moderator of all relations of interest in the current study for a number of reasons. First, existing work suggests that Latino families generally espouse more traditional gender role socialization patterns (Azmitia & Brown, 2000; Baca Zinn & Wells, 2000; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994; Valenzuela, 1999) and that women are typically viewed as the carriers of culture and expected to pass on ethnic traditions to future generations (Phinney, 1990). Although Baca Zinn and Wells (2000) encouraged acknowledging the diversity that exists within Latinos as a result of sociohistorical circumstances and social forces that construct family members' experiences and introduce variability into cultural processes and norms such as gender role expectations, empirical studies provide support for the notion that Latino cultures are marked by strong gender role expectations, particularly with respect to expectations for female adolescents to remain close to the family and male adolescents to have more freedom to explore extrafamilial contexts (e.g., Raffaelli & Ontai, 2004). These gendered experiences may result in female adolescents being more cognizant of culture than male adolescents. In addition, existing work with Mexican-origin

adults suggests that men's and women's experiences with discrimination differ (Finch, Kolody, & Vega, 2000), and a second study with Latino adolescents found that experiences with discrimination were more strongly associated with outcomes for male adolescents than for female adolescents (Alfaro, Umaña-Taylor, Gonzales-Backen, Bámaca, & Zeiders, 2009). Thus, theoretical work suggests that gender may moderate the associations of interest in the current study; however, due to the lack of empirical work examining gender differences in the predictors of ethnic identity, we do not make specific predictions and, rather, explore gender as a potential moderator in the current study.

In sum, we hypothesized that familial ethnic socialization and maternal and paternal warmth–support would each be positively associated with adolescents' future reports of ethnic identity exploration, resolution, and affirmation. We also expected that higher initial levels of familial ethnic socialization, maternal warmth–support, and paternal warmth–support would be associated with a faster rate growth in each of the ethnic identity components. With respect to perceived discrimination, we expected that higher initial levels of perceived discrimination would predict a faster rate of growth in each ethnic identity component. Finally, gender was tested as a moderator of these associations.

Method

Participants

Data were from a 4-year longitudinal study of 323 Latino adolescents (50.5% male) attending one of five high schools in the midwestern United States (see Umaña-Taylor, Gonzales-Backen, & Guimond, 2009). The larger study was designed to examine changes in Latino adolescents' ethnic identity during the high school years. At each school, Latinos comprised between 8% and 18% of the student body, whereas White students were the numerical ethnic majority in all schools (i.e., 75%–91% of the student body). Less than 20% of the general student body at each school was eligible for free or reduced-priced lunch. Study participants at Wave 1 (W1) were 15.31 years old, on average ($SD = 0.75$), and were in either 9th (53.6%) or 10th grade (46.4%). By W4, 13.3% of those who were in 9th grade at W1 and 74% of those who were in 10th grade at W1 had graduated from high school or obtained a GED; overall, this was 41.5% of the sample. Those who had participated in W4 and had graduated by this time reported that their future plans for education–career were as follows: enroll in a 4-year college or in a combination of a 4-year college and community college (45%); attend a community college or a technical–professional training program (42%); enter the military (3%); do a combination of military, employment, and college (6%); or work and seek no further schooling (4%).

Most adolescent participants were born in the United States (71.8%) and self-identified as being of Mexican origin (77.1%). The remainder indicated they identified with Hispanic–Latino (15%), Puerto Rican (5.9%), and other (<1%) origins (e.g., Guatemalan, Salvadoran, Colombian, Ecuadorian, Dominican, Spanish, Cuban). Most participants' parents were born outside of the United States (61.9% of mothers and 68.1% of fathers).

Adolescent reports of parental education ranged from no formal schooling to graduate–professional degree, with a majority of mothers (57%) and fathers (54%) having achieved at least a high

school degree. There was approximately 15%, 17%, and 20% attrition from W1 to W2, W3, and W4, respectively. Those who contributed data at each wave were more likely to be younger at W1 ($M = 15.21$, $SD = 0.73$) than those who only participated in W1 of the study ($M = 15.58$, $SD = 0.86$), $t(260) = -2.41$, $p < .05$. The groups did not differ significantly in terms of adolescent gender, generational status, or mothers' level of education.

Procedure

All 9th- and 10th-grade students who were identified as Latino by school records were invited to a brief informational meeting held at their school and were provided with information about the study as well as parental consent and youth assent forms. Of 407 adolescents who attended the informational meetings, 80% returned their consent forms and participated in data collection at W1. Data were gathered yearly from 2003 to 2006 during the spring of each year. Adolescents completed a self-administered survey each year, in their language of preference (i.e., English or Spanish), which took approximately 45 min to complete. At all schools, participating students were assembled in a large room (e.g., cafeteria, auditorium) and research assistants proctored the administration of surveys to ensure that participants were focused on the task and not talking with other classmates. Research assistants reviewed surveys as they were handed in to verify that all questions were answered or purposefully skipped. The survey was completed in English by 97.1% of participants at W1. Students received \$10, \$15, \$20, and \$25 for their participation in W1–W4, respectively. Adolescents were encouraged to return to their original schools on the day of data collection each year, but if they were not present (e.g., absent, lived out of town), they were able to complete the survey via mail.

Measures

Adolescents completed a self-administered questionnaire that included various measures. Details regarding the psychometric properties of all study measures are provided below. Given our focus on predicting growth over time, the current study used one wave of data for predictor variables (i.e., familial ethnic socialization, maternal and paternal support, and perceived discrimination) and multiple waves of data for dependent variables (i.e., ethnic identity exploration, resolution, and affirmation). Internal consistency of measures is provided in the form of Cronbach's alpha coefficients. Because data were gathered once per year, adolescents' responses reflect their experiences in the past year.

Familial ethnic socialization. The Familial Ethnic Socialization Measure (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2004) assessed the degree to which participants perceived that their families socialized them with respect to their native culture. Twelve items (e.g., "My family teaches me about our family's ethnic/cultural background") were scored on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*). Higher scores indicated higher levels of familial ethnic socialization. Cronbach's alpha coefficient at W1 was .94.

Parental warmth and support. The Parental Support subscale of the Parent Behavior Measure (Peterson, 1982) was used to assess adolescent reports of parents' warm and supportive behaviors. The Parent Behavior Measure uses a Likert-type scale with item response categories ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 4

(*strongly agree*). Parental support was measured by a four-item subscale (e.g., “My mother/father seems to approve of me and the things I do”) designed to assess behaviors that communicate to the adolescent feelings of warmth, affection, and a sense of being valued by his or her parent (Peterson, Bush, & Supple, 1999). Separate questions were asked in reference to mothers and fathers; thus, four items were asked in reference to each parent. Cronbach’s alphas were .80 and .88 for maternal and paternal support, respectively, at W1.

Perceived discrimination. Adolescent perceptions of discrimination were assessed using an adapted version of Whitbeck, Hoyt, McMorris, Chen, and Stubben’s (2001) measure of discrimination. The measure was originally developed for use with American Indian adolescents and was modified for the current study to be applicable to Latino adolescents by changing the group being referenced in each item (e.g., “How often have others said something bad or insulting to you because you are Hispanic/Latino?”). The 10 items were scored on a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*almost never*) to 4 (*very often*). Initial support for the construct validity of the revised measure has emerged in multiple samples of Latino adolescents such that discrimination (as measured by the current measure) was associated in a theoretically expected direction with Latino adolescents’ academic outcomes (Alfaro et al., 2009) and their reports of internalizing and externalizing behaviors (Umaña-Taylor, Updegraff, & Gonzales-Backen, in press). Furthermore, Cronbach’s alphas demonstrating adequate internal consistency with Latino samples have ranged from .80 to .91 (Alfaro et al., 2009; Umaña-Taylor et al., in press). In the current study, perceived discrimination was not assessed at W1; thus, the earliest available assessment of perceived discrimination in the current study was at W2. Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the measure at W2 was .89.

Ethnic identity. Adolescents’ self-reports of ethnic identity were measured using the 17-item Ethnic Identity Scale (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2004). The Ethnic Identity Scale consists of three subscales that are measured on a 4-point Likert scale with response categories ranging from 1 (*does not describe me at all*) to 4 (*describes me very well*). Sample items for each subscale include “I have attended events that have helped me learn more about my ethnicity” (Exploration; seven items), “I have a clear sense of what my ethnicity means to me” (Resolution; four items), and “My feelings about my ethnicity are mostly negative” (Affirmation; six items). Higher scores in each respective ethnic identity component reflect greater degrees of exploration, resolution, and affirmation. For the current study, Cronbach’s alphas ranged from .85 to .89 for Exploration, .83 to .88 for Resolution, and .66 to .71 for Affirmation across W2–W4.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Preliminary analyses involved the estimation of unconditional multiple-group (i.e., male adolescents vs. female adolescents) latent growth curve models to examine growth in ethnic identity over a 3-year period (W2–W4). A series of sequentially constrained models were then estimated to examine the underlying latent growth structure for male adolescents and female adolescents. Finally, conditional multiple-group models were estimated

to examine the prediction of growth in ethnic identity over a 3-year period (W2–W4) from familial ethnic socialization (W1), maternal and paternal support (W1), and discrimination (W2). Data for discrimination were not gathered at W1. Missing data were handled with multiple imputation procedures using NORM software (Schafer, 1999). With less than 20% missing data at the end of the study (Little & Rubin, 1987), five imputed data sets were created to maximize efficiency (Schafer & Graham, 2002). Imputations were conducted using information from all study variables as well as additional variables not included in analyses for the current study but that have been associated with study variables in previous work (i.e., age, parental education). All subsequent growth curve analyses were conducted using the five imputed data sets and the TYPE = Imputation feature of Mplus 5.1 (Muthén & Muthén, 2006).

Descriptive Analyses

Descriptive statistics and correlations among study variables are presented in Tables 1 and 2, respectively. Indices of ethnic identity affirmation had nonnormal distributions across waves (i.e., skewness and kurtosis values exceeded established cutoffs of 2 and 7, respectively; West, Finch, & Curran, 1995). Given the nonnormal distribution, and to provide estimates that are robust to nonnormal data (Satorra & Bentler, 1999), maximum likelihood model estimation and maximum likelihood model chi-square (i.e., Satorra-Bentler, 1999, chi-square) were used.

An examination of mean statistics and previous work using these data (Umaña-Taylor, Gonzales-Backen, & Guimond, 2009) suggested that there were differences between male adolescents and female adolescents in the development of ethnic identity. Zero-order correlation coefficients also demonstrated differences in the relations among study variables for male adolescents and female adolescents. For instance, whereas familial ethnic socialization was significantly and positively related to perceived discrimination for female adolescents, this association was not significant for male adolescents. In addition, perceptions of father support were significantly associated with multiple indices of ethnic identity among male adolescents, whereas only one out of nine possible correlations was significant among female adolescents. Mother support, however, was not significantly related to any indices of ethnic identity for male adolescents or female adolescents. The strength of the associations over time for exploration, resolution, and affirmation was moderate to large for both male adolescents and female adolescents.

Box’s M statistics (Winer, 1971) were calculated for all of the variables included in the final growth curve models to estimate group differences in the homogeneity of variance–covariance matrices between male and female adolescents, as well as between adolescents who reported they were of Mexican origin and those who reported they were of a different Latino national origin. Results for adolescent gender suggest that the relations among the variables were different for male adolescents and female adolescents (Box’s $M = 149.83, p = .0001$). This finding supported our analytic strategy of using multiple-group analyses to examine potential moderation by gender. The results for homogeneity in variance–covariance matrices for Mexican origin versus other national origin groups were not significant (Box’s $M = 120.86, p > .05$), suggesting that national origin did not moderate the relations among the model variables.

Table 1
Means and Standard Deviations for All Study Variables for the Full Sample and by Gender

Variable	Full sample (N = 323)				Male adolescents (n = 163)		Female adolescents (n = 160)	
	Skewness	Kurtosis	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Age W1	0.11	-0.33	15.31	0.76	15.39	0.74	15.23	0.77
Mother support W1	-0.99	0.96	3.34	0.60	3.36	0.56	3.32	0.65
Father support W1	-0.82	0.56	3.02	0.79	3.04	0.72	3.00	0.86
Familial ethnic socialization W1	-0.60	-0.54	3.70	0.97	3.64	0.98	3.76	0.97
Discrimination W2	1.04	0.82	1.68	0.62	1.79	0.62	1.58	0.60
Exploration								
W2	-0.05	-0.20	2.90	0.70	2.81	0.65	2.99	0.73
W3	-0.12	-0.35	2.90	0.74	2.80	0.67	3.00	0.79
W4	-0.29	0.12	3.01	0.84	2.81	0.85	3.21	0.78
Resolution								
W2	-0.68	0.14	3.28	0.68	3.19	0.65	3.37	0.69
W3	-0.67	0.50	3.26	0.74	3.16	0.75	3.37	0.71
W4	-1.05	1.49	3.37	0.77	3.22	0.86	3.51	0.63
Affirmation								
W2	-2.12	6.70	3.79	0.39	3.73	0.43	3.84	0.32
W3	-2.00	4.38	3.82	0.35	3.79	0.35	3.84	0.35
W4	-2.14	9.94	3.80	0.46	3.75	0.50	3.85	0.41

Note. Means and standard deviations were calculated using one randomly selected imputed data set. W = Wave.

Growth Model Estimation

A combination of fit indices was used to determine the adequacy of model fit including the χ^2/df ratio (Wheaton, Muthén, Alwin, & Summers, 1977), the comparative fit index (CFI; Bentler, 1990), and the standardized root-mean-square residual (SRMR). Models resulting in a χ^2/df ratio less than 3 or 2 (Kline, 2005; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), a CFI at or above .90 or .95, and an SRMR at or below .08 or .05 were deemed an acceptable or excellent fit, respectively (Byrne, 1989; Hu & Bentler, 1995, 1999; Marsh, Hau, & Wen, 2004).

A number of model comparisons were conducted to develop our unconditional measurement models, as well as to determine whether there was variance in growth models by gender. Several change statistics were used to assess differences between

competing nested models including the scaled chi-square difference (Satorra & Bentler, 1999) and the change in CFI (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002). Scaling correction factors were used, according to the Satorra-Bentler (1999) equations, to calculate scaled chi-square difference tests for all nested model comparisons. A significant scaled chi-square difference test indicates that the less constrained model is a better fit and should be retained, whereas a nonsignificant difference test suggests that the model with imposed constraints should be retained because the imposed constraints make the model more parsimonious with a comparable fit. Changes in CFI statistics were calculated as an additional measure of model equivalence by subtracting the value of the constrained model from the value of the unconstrained model, where a critical value of

Table 2
Zero-Order Correlations for Study Variables by Gender

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Mother support W1	—	.44**	.17*	-.04	.08	.10	.00	.09	.08	.14	-.03	.04	.06
2. Father support W1	.27**	—	.27**	-.09	.25**	.16*	.10	.23**	.20*	.23**	.05	.16*	.04
3. FES W1	.20*	.22**	—	.03	.47**	.37**	.08	.45**	.55**	.21**	.46**	.52**	.10
4. Discrimination W2	.01	-.04	.29**	—	.20*	.05	-.14	.00	-.08	-.35**	.00	-.08	-.10
5. Exploration W2	.02	.05	.55**	.18*	—	.62**	.24**	.64**	.50**	.07	.42**	.33**	.00
6. Resolution W2	.08	.11	.45**	.19*	.57**	—	.27**	.49**	.55**	.09	.38**	.44**	-.05
7. Affirmation W2	-.02	.07	.03	-.09	.08	.11	—	.27**	.32**	.48**	.19*	.18*	.40**
8. Exploration W3	.01	.15	.40**	.12	.65**	.48**	.16*	—	.67**	.26**	.51**	.46**	.01
9. Resolution W3	-.02	.21**	.32**	.04	.39**	.48**	.25**	.61**	—	.23**	.43**	.50**	.05
10. Affirmation W3	.01	.12	.12	-.20*	.21**	.16*	.51**	.30**	.43**	—	.08	.23**	.31**
11. Exploration W4	-.02	.00	.46**	.07	.50**	.40**	.04	.57**	.37**	.06	—	.71**	-.04
12. Resolution W4	-.06	.09	.39**	.03	.27**	.38**	.19*	.37**	.39**	.16*	.57**	—	.05
13. Affirmation W4	-.04	.04	.04	-.06	.04	.00	.30**	.07	.07	.30**	.13	.31**	—

Note. Correlations were calculated using one randomly selected imputed data set. Data for male adolescents are presented above the diagonal. FES = Familial Ethnic Socialization; W = Wave.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Δ CFI less than or equal to -0.01 represents that the constrained model should not be rejected (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002).

Estimation of Unconditional Growth Models

Before a conditional model was estimated to examine predictors of growth in ethnic identity, an unconditional measurement model was estimated for each ethnic identity component (exploration, resolution, and affirmation) to estimate the intercept and slope for the repeated measures of ethnic identity at W2, W3, and W4 over time. Of note, we did not include assessments of the dependent variables (i.e., exploration, resolution, affirmation) at W1 in our models because one of our predictor variables (i.e., perceived discrimination) was assessed at W2 and including data from the dependent variables at W1 would have violated the temporal ordering of variables. Mean estimates in exploration and resolution, respectively, from W 2–4 supported a linear pattern of growth as evidenced by a model with excellent fit across the majority of indices (scaled χ^2 s[2] = 12.40 and 9.84, χ^2/df = 6.20 and 4.92, CFI = .96 and .96, SRMR = .04 and .03), whereas stable mean estimates from W 2–4 and an excellent model fit supported an intercept-only model with no slope, for ethnic identity affirmation (scaled χ^2 [8] = 7.09, χ^2/df = 0.89, CFI = .99, SRMR = .06).

Estimation of Unconditional Multiple-Group Models

Baseline unconditional models were analyzed next to assess gender invariance in the parameter estimates of the latent intercept and growth factors across time points. To determine whether there was measurement invariance between male adolescents and female adolescents for the intercept and slope latent factors for each ethnic identity component, we compared models constraining the intercept (for all models) and slope factors (for exploration and resolution models) across gender to unconstrained models (where paths were allowed to vary across gender).

Exploration. A scaled chi-square difference test was conducted for the multiple-group model estimating linear growth in ethnic identity exploration for male adolescents and female adolescents. Results indicated that a model where the mean intercept and slope were allowed to vary between male adolescents and female adolescents was a better fit than a model in which the mean intercept and slope were constrained to be equal across adolescent gender, scaled $\Delta\chi^2(2) = 16.88$, $p = .0002$. Thus, mean intercepts and slopes for exploration were allowed to vary by gender in subsequent models.

Resolution. Next, a baseline unconditional model comparing parameter equivalence between male adolescents and female adolescents was estimated for resolution. Again, the model in which parameter estimates were allowed to vary between male adolescents and female adolescents was a better fit compared to a model in which mean intercept and slope were invariant, scaled $\Delta\chi^2(2) = 10.46$, $p = .005$. This indicated differences between male adolescents and female adolescents in their mean intercepts and slopes for resolution.

Affirmation. Finally, for the unconditional intercept-only model for affirmation, a less constrained model, where the intercept was allowed to vary between male adolescents and female adolescents, was a better fit compared to a model constraining the mean intercept to be equal between male adolescents and female

adolescents, scaled $\Delta\chi^2(1) = 5.05$, $p = .03$. The scaled chi-square difference test supported the notion that there were gender differences in mean levels of ethnic identity affirmation.

Familial Ethnic Socialization, Parental Support, and Discrimination as Predictors of Ethnic Identity

Next, we tested a set of sequentially constrained conditional models for each ethnic identity component. Conditional models were estimated such that unconditional growth in ethnic identity was regressed upon the predictors of familial ethnic socialization, maternal and paternal support, and discrimination. First, we tested an unconstrained conditional model for each ethnic identity component, where the paths predicting the intercept and slope were allowed to vary for male adolescents and female adolescents. Second, we tested an alternate (constrained) model for each ethnic identity component using the previously described procedures for testing nested models. Specifically, in the conditional constrained models, all paths that were initially nonsignificant for both male adolescents and female adolescents in the unconstrained conditional models were set to be equal for male adolescents and female adolescents; in all instances, we tested for model equivalence using the chi-square difference test and CFI difference.

Exploration. Several indices demonstrated acceptable fit for the unconstrained conditional linear growth model for exploration, which examined familial ethnic socialization, maternal support, paternal support, and discrimination as predictors of exploration (scaled χ^2 [10] = 33.68, χ^2/df = 3.37, CFI = .95, SRMR = .04). Next, all paths that were nonsignificant for both male adolescents and female adolescents in the unconstrained conditional model were set to be equal, and the significant paths from familial ethnic socialization (W1) and discrimination (W2) to the exploration intercept were allowed to vary. Results for the partially constrained conditional model for exploration indicated acceptable fit (scaled χ^2 [15] = 39.73, χ^2/df = 2.65, CFI = .94, SRMR = .04). A nonsignificant chi-square difference test provided further evidence that the partially constrained model was a more parsimonious fit of the data for exploration, $\Delta\chi^2(5) = 5.66$, $p = .34$ (Δ CFI = .01).

As demonstrated in Figure 1, familial ethnic socialization at W1 predicted higher mean levels of exploration for both male adolescents and female adolescents: 95% CIs [.33, .62] and [.36, .81], $f^2 = 0.29$ and 0.51, respectively. According to Cohen's (1988) interpretation of the f^2 effect size, where 0.02 indicates a small effect, 0.15 indicates a medium effect, and 0.35 indicates a large effect, these findings reflect medium and large effects for male adolescents and female adolescents, respectively. For paths that were allowed to vary for male adolescents and female adolescents, there were no other significant predictors of the mean intercept of exploration for female adolescents, but two significant predictors did emerge for male adolescents. Specifically, male adolescents' perceptions of father support at W1 and discrimination at W2 significantly predicted the mean intercept for exploration, such that, as male adolescents perceived more father support and discrimination, they also tended to report higher levels of exploration: 95% CIs [.00, .31] and [.01, .29], $f^2 = 0.03$ and 0.02, respectively. These significant findings suggest small effects for the paths from father support and discrimination to the mean intercept of exploration. No significant predictors of growth in exploration (i.e.,

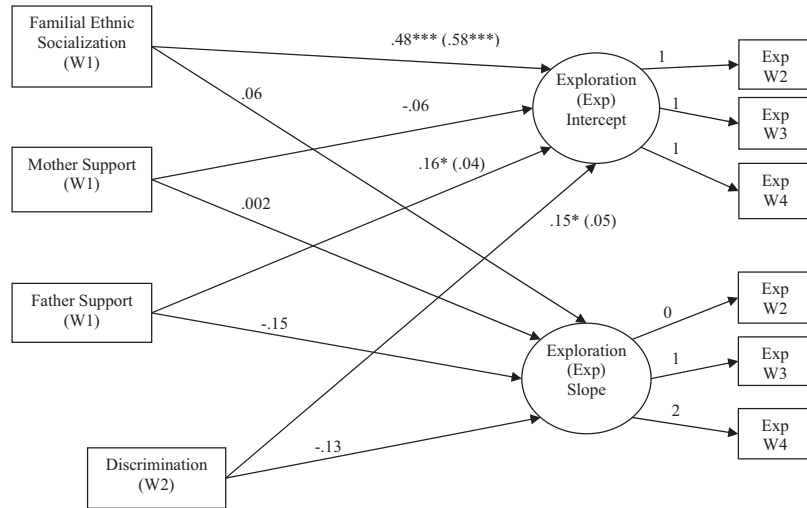


Figure 1. Conditional constrained growth model for ethnic identity exploration. Standardized coefficients presented for male adolescents (with female adolescents shown in parentheses). For paths that are constrained to be equal for male adolescents and female adolescents, only coefficients for male adolescents are presented. W = Wave. * $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

exploration slope) emerged for male adolescents or female adolescents.

Resolution. The unconstrained conditional growth model for resolution suggested a good fit to the data (scaled $\chi^2[10] = 22.43$, $\chi^2/df = 2.24$, CFI = .96, SRMR = .03). Similar to the process followed above, paths that were nonsignificant for both male adolescents and female adolescents were constrained to be equal across gender, and the significant paths from familial ethnic socialization (W1) to both the resolution intercept and slope were allowed to vary for male adolescents and female adolescents. The resulting partially constrained conditional model for resolution demonstrated adequate model fit (scaled $\chi^2[16] = 24.01$, $\chi^2/df =$

1.50, CFI = .97, SRMR = .04). A nonsignificant chi-square difference test also suggested that the partially constrained model for resolution was not significantly different from an unconstrained model, $\Delta\chi^2(6) = 1.80$, $p = .95$ ($\Delta CFI = .01$), and thus was retained.

As demonstrated in Figure 2, male adolescents' and female adolescents' reports of familial ethnic socialization at W1 significantly predicted the mean intercept for resolution such that, as adolescents reported higher levels of familial ethnic socialization, they also reported higher mean levels of resolution: 95% CIs [.22, .70] and [.29, .76], $f^2 = 0.27$ and 0.40, respectively. These findings suggest medium and large effects for male adolescents and female

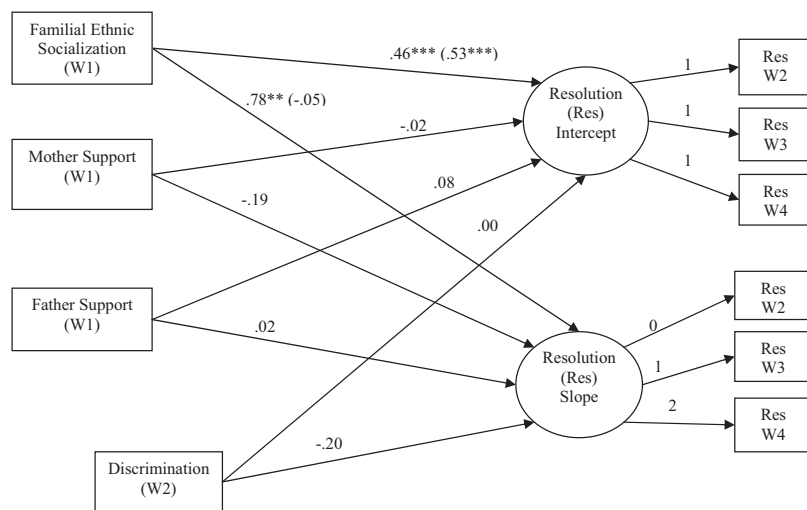


Figure 2. Conditional constrained growth model for ethnic identity resolution. Standardized coefficients presented for male adolescents (with female adolescents shown in parentheses). For paths that are constrained to be equal for male adolescents and female adolescents, only coefficients for male adolescents are presented. W = Wave. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

adolescents, respectively. In addition, male adolescents who reported higher levels of familial ethnic socialization at W1 demonstrated steeper growth in resolution from W2 through W4, but this was not the case for female adolescents: 95% CIs [-2.51, 4.06] and [-.52, .42], $f^2 = 1.51$ and 0.003, for male adolescents and female adolescents, respectively; this finding represented a large effect size.

Affirmation. Estimates for an unconstrained conditional (intercept-only) model for affirmation suggested an adequate fit to the data ($\chi^2[24] = 27.38$, $\chi^2/df = 1.14$, CFI = .97, SRMR = .04). Model fit indices were also acceptable for the partially constrained model for affirmation, where the significant path from discrimination (W2) to the affirmation intercept was allowed to vary for male adolescents and female adolescents and all other paths were constrained to be equal ($\chi^2[27] = 29.48$, $\chi^2/df = 1.09$, CFI = .97, SRMR = .05). A comparison of the unconstrained and partially constrained models suggested that there was no significant difference between the two, $\Delta\chi^2(3) = 1.80$, $p = .61$ ($\Delta CFI = .00$). Thus, the partially constrained model was retained as the final model.

The prediction of the mean intercept from familial ethnic socialization at W1, which was constrained to be equal for male adolescents and female adolescents, revealed a significant and positive effect (see Figure 3). Consistent with the models including exploration and resolution, as male adolescents and female adolescents reported perceiving higher levels of familial ethnic socialization at W1, they also reported higher levels of affirmation: 95% CIs [-.00, .35], $f^2 = 0.03$. Significant differences between male adolescents and female adolescents did emerge, however, in the prediction of affirmation from discrimination at W2: 95% CIs [-.53, -.11] and [-.48, .05], $f^2 = 0.11$ and 0.03, respectively. Effect size estimates suggested a small effect for male adolescents, where higher perceived discrimination at W2 was associated with significantly lower initial levels of affirmation. For female adolescents, this relation was not significant.

Discussion

Guided largely by ecological and socioecological frameworks (Bronfenbrenner, 1989; García Coll et al., 1996) and, specifically, scholar’s recommendations to focus on normative developmental processes with special attention to factors such as discrimination

(García Coll et al.), we examined in the current study the degree to which characteristics of the familial and societal context would predict Latino adolescents’ ethnic identity. Because Latino youth will have to grapple with the construct of ethnicity as they develop their identities (Umaña-Taylor, Gonzales-Backen, & Guimond, 2009), and ethnic identity has been identified as a significant protective factor among ethnic minority youth (Ong, Phinney, & Dennis, 2006), understanding the predictors of this developmental process is essential. Consistent with existing theory, familial ethnic socialization emerged as a significant predictor of future levels of ethnic identity exploration, resolution, and affirmation in the current study. Furthermore, familial ethnic socialization significantly predicted rate of growth for male adolescents’ ethnic identity resolution. Although paternal support significantly predicted male adolescents’ ethnic identity exploration, maternal support did not emerge as a significant predictor of either male adolescents’ or female adolescents’ ethnic identity. With respect to the broader societal context, perceived discrimination also emerged as a significant predictor of ethnic identity exploration and affirmation, but only for Latino male adolescents. Finally, a number of gender differences emerged, which highlight the need to consider variability in the process of ethnic identity by gender.

Familial Ethnic Socialization and Ethnic Identity

Scholars have consistently recognized the importance of familial ethnic socialization for youth’s ethnic identity formation (Hughes et al., 2006; Knight et al., 1993; Umaña-Taylor, Alfaro, et al., 2009); however, there is limited work in which these associations have been examined longitudinally. The current study contributed to this gap in the literature by providing longitudinal support for these notions. Findings for exploration and resolution, specifically, are consistent with previous work using concurrent assessments, which found a significant association between familial ethnic socialization and both exploration and resolution (Supple et al., 2006; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2004). Conceptually, Umaña-Taylor and colleagues (2004) argued that familial ethnic socialization may promote increased exploration and increased clarity regarding the role of ethnicity in adolescents’ lives because it may provide adolescents with information that will help them gain a clearer understanding about their ethnic group membership, but it

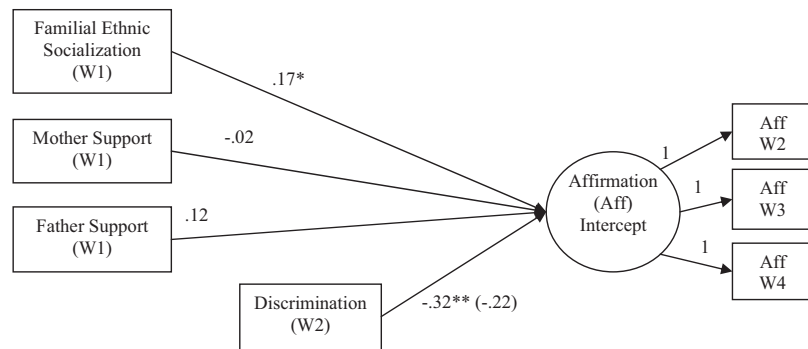


Figure 3. Conditional constrained intercept-only model for ethnic identity affirmation. Standardized coefficients presented for male adolescents (with female adolescents shown in parentheses). For paths that are constrained to be equal for male adolescents and female adolescents, only coefficients for male adolescents are presented. W = Wave. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

would not necessarily influence the affect (i.e., affirmation) that individuals espouse toward their group (Supple et al., 2006). Consistent with this argument, Umaña-Taylor and colleagues (2004) and Supple and colleagues (2006) did not find a significant association between familial ethnic socialization and ethnic identity affirmation, which is somewhat contrary to the current findings. An important difference, however, is that the current study examined whether initial levels of familial ethnic socialization predicted future levels of affirmation. It is possible that the effects of familial ethnic socialization are not evident immediately, in terms of more positive feelings about one's ethnic group membership; thus, there may be a sleeper effect such that the efforts parents are putting forth early in development plant the seeds for adolescents' future feelings about ethnicity. What families are doing to socialize their youth about ethnicity may have an immediate impact with respect to adolescents' exploration of their ethnicity and increasing their understanding of their ethnic group membership; however, it is not until these processes of exploration and resolution have further developed that adolescents may develop more positive feelings about their ethnicity.

Interestingly, significant gender differences emerged with respect to the strength of these associations for male adolescents versus female adolescents. In fact, although familial ethnic socialization predicted ethnic identity exploration and resolution for both male adolescents and female adolescents, the association was significantly stronger for female adolescents than male adolescents, as hypothesized. These findings are consistent with the notion that females are typically viewed as the carriers of culture and expected to pass on cultural traditions (Phinney, 1990), and with existing work that has noted significant gender differences in expectations of female adolescents versus male adolescents in Latino families, particularly with respect to the expectation for female adolescents to remain close to the family (Raffaelli & Ontai, 2004; Updegraff, McHale, Whiteman, Thayer, & Crouter, 2006). These gendered family experiences may make familial ethnic socialization processes particularly salient to the ethnic identity formation of female adolescents, when compared to male adolescents. It also is possible that gender differences in rates of maturity may help to explain why familial ethnic socialization may have a stronger impact on ethnic identity processes for female adolescents than male adolescents during this developmental period. For instance, female adolescents may be more developmentally prepared than male adolescents to explore their ethnicity and grapple with abstract constructs such as their ethnic identity, which may make the ethnic socialization practices in which their families are engaging more salient to female adolescents' ethnic identity than male adolescents'. In fact, existing work has established that female adolescents mature more quickly than male adolescents with respect to various aspects of social and cognitive development (Adams & Gulotta, 1983), and recent findings suggest that, indeed, the developmental progression of ethnic identity appears to be faster for Latina female adolescents than Latino male adolescents (Umaña-Taylor, Gonzales-Backen, & Guimond, 2009). Regardless of the reason for these gender differences, the findings support a major tenet of ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1989), which suggests that contextual factors interact with individual characteristics (e.g., gender) to inform developmental processes (e.g., ethnic identity).

Also worthy of note, and contrary to our hypothesis, was the finding that familial ethnic socialization predicted rate of growth in ethnic identity resolution for male adolescents, but not for female adolescents. Interestingly, in other analyses with the current sample in which four waves of data for each ethnic identity component were examined (see Umaña-Taylor, Gonzales-Backen, & Guimond, 2009), findings suggested significant growth in ethnic identity resolution over the 4-year period for female adolescents, but not for male adolescents. Thus, the current findings importantly identify a potential predictor for male adolescents' growth in resolution. Put differently, ethnic identity resolution may not grow uniformly during middle to late adolescence for male adolescents as it does for female adolescents, but, rather, based on findings from the current study, growth for male adolescents may be heavily dependent on what their families are doing to socialize them about their ethnicity. In explaining why female adolescents and male adolescents differed with respect to growth over time, Umaña-Taylor, Gonzales-Backen, and Guimond (2009) suggested that perhaps gender differences in levels of social maturity may lead to the developmental processes of ethnic identity being engaged later in adolescence for male adolescents, compared to female adolescents. The current findings suggest that perhaps for male adolescents the familial context can facilitate the developmental process of ethnic identity resolution during middle adolescence to late adolescence. Although this finding may seem contradictory to the finding discussed above, in which familial ethnic socialization was a stronger predictor of future levels of exploration and resolution for female adolescents than male adolescents, it is important to note the distinction between predicting future levels of ethnic identity and predicting growth in ethnic identity. These findings suggest that familial ethnic socialization experiences may ignite a process of ethnic identity for male adolescents, whereas for female adolescents this process is already in progress; female adolescents may be more developmentally ready to benefit from familial ethnic socialization messages, which is perhaps why these experiences are more strongly linked to their future levels of ethnic identity. Thus, for male adolescents it is more about setting a process of development in motion, whereas for female adolescents it may be more about strengthening their existing identity.

It is important to note that the current study focused on adolescents' perceptions of familial ethnic socialization, and future research will need to examine whether findings would be consistent if parents' perceptions of familial ethnic socialization were examined. Existing research has demonstrated that parents and adolescents have differing perceptions of family processes and, specifically, parenting behaviors (Smetana, 1991; Tein, Roosa, & Michaels, 1994). Although researchers have not examined whether Latino adolescents' perceptions of ethnic socialization differ from those of their parents, it is possible that differences similar to those that have emerged for other family processes would emerge with respect to processes of familial ethnic socialization and, thus, are worthy of examination in future research.

Parental Support and Ethnic Identity

The current study set out to examine whether an indicator of positive parenting (i.e., parental support) would be linked with ethnic identity such that it would facilitate exploration and resolution of ethnicity and perhaps increased positive feelings toward one's group. We found partial support for this notion such that

fathers' support emerged as a significant predictor of male adolescents', but not female adolescents', ethnic identity exploration. This finding for male adolescents is consistent with a risk and resilience framework and, specifically, the notion that family support may enhance the positive effects of promotive factors (Garnezy, 1991; Masten, Best, & Garnezy, 1990). Furthermore, it is consistent with previous empirical work with European American adolescents, which found that fathers' support was positively associated with adolescents' identity exploration (Cooper et al., 1983). Drawing from Marcia's (1983) theoretical work on identity, these findings would suggest that fathers' supportive parenting, as perceived by adolescent male adolescents, is providing these youth with a secure base from which to explore their ethnic identity. The nonsignificant findings for fathers' support and female adolescents' exploration may reflect the unique relationship that fathers have with their sons, compared to their daughters (Flannery, Montemayor, Eberly, & Turquati, 1993). In fact, previous work with European American families found that affective expression was associated with parent-adolescent conflict only in father-son dyads (i.e., not in mother-daughter, mother-son, or father-daughter dyads; Flannery et al., 1993). Similarly, in another study of European American families, fathers' involvement played a unique role in sons', but not daughters', peer relationships (Updegraff, McHale, Crouter, & Kupanoff, 2001). It is possible that the unique relationship that sons have with their fathers makes fathers' influence on identity formation particularly salient for adolescent male adolescents. Future research is needed, however, to better understand the characteristics of the father-son relationship, compared to the father-daughter relationship, and clarify what is unique about fathers' influence on their sons.

In addition, although fathers' support predicted male adolescents' ethnic identity exploration, we did not find support for the hypotheses that parental support would predict ethnic identity resolution or ethnic identity affirmation. Perhaps parental support is particularly influential for the exploration component of ethnic identity because a supportive parental context provides adolescents with a sense of security and stability that encourages the process of exploration, which is what has been argued in the literature on global identity formation (Cooper et al., 1983; Marcia, 1983). It is possible that parental support is less salient for ethnic identity resolution, which focuses more on adolescents having a sense of clarity regarding what their ethnicity means to them. Parental autonomy granting, for example, may be a more consequential factor in predicting adolescents' ethnic identity resolution, such that adolescents who perceive being granted more psychological autonomy from their parents also may report higher levels of resolution. With respect to ethnic identity affirmation, adolescents' positive or negative affect toward their ethnicity may have little to do with the supportive context of their relationship with their parents and more to do with parents' specific messages about ethnicity. Our findings for familial ethnic socialization would support this idea, as this aspect of parenting was positively associated with both male adolescents' and female adolescents' ethnic identity affirmation.

Discrimination and Ethnic Identity

Findings from the current study also contribute significantly to the literature with respect to the potential effects of discrimination

on the normative developmental process of ethnic identity during adolescence. Specifically, male adolescents who reported higher levels of perceived discrimination also tended to report higher levels of ethnic identity exploration. Consistent with Erikson's (1968) theoretical notions, it is possible that adolescents' experiences with discrimination increase the salience of their ethnicity and, thus, ignite processes of exploration. Adolescents may try to find out more about their ethnic group to better understand the discriminatory experiences they are facing. Thus, discrimination may serve as a type of crisis that engages and/or increases adolescents' curiosity regarding their ethnic group membership.

Findings from the current study also indicated that male adolescents who reported higher levels of perceived discrimination also tended to report less positive feelings about their ethnic group membership (i.e., ethnic identity affirmation). This finding was in contrast to our hypothesis that higher levels of perceived discrimination would be associated with increased affirmation. It is important to note that social identity theory suggests that individuals may use one of several different strategies in their attempts to maintain a positive social identity when faced with negative messages about their group. Although one strategy is to attempt to reconcile negative information about their group by emphasizing the positive aspects of their group, another strategy is for individuals to try to leave or disassociate themselves from their group in order to maintain a positive social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). The current findings are consistent with the latter. With respect to ethnic group membership, it is difficult to leave a group, but perhaps as Latino male adolescents experience more discriminatory experiences against their group, they will espouse more negative feelings toward their group and espouse sentiments regarding wanting to be a member of a different group. In fact, one item in the measure of affirmation used in the current study is "I wish I were of a different ethnicity" (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2004). Interestingly, our findings also are consistent with those from a cross-sectional study of Mexican American middle school students in which discrimination was negatively associated with affirmation (Romero & Roberts, 2003). Thus, it is possible that increased discrimination is associated with more negative feelings about ethnicity because of adolescents' understanding that their social group is viewed negatively and, in turn, their desires to disassociate with their ethnic group and maintain a positive social identity.

It also is important to note that the measure of discrimination used in the current study did not assess the degree to which adolescents' experiences with discrimination were stressful to them. It is possible that perceptions of stress resulting from discrimination would be differentially associated with the variables examined in the current study. For instance, perhaps the stress associated with discrimination would impede adolescents' ability to explore their ethnic identity, which would result in slower growth among those who experience more stress as a result of discrimination. This is consistent with recommendations to acknowledge and assess individual differences in experiences of discrimination, particularly because the stress experienced as a result of discrimination is not universal (Edwards & Romero, 2008).

The current findings also highlight important gender differences with respect to discrimination, such that perceived discrimination was significantly linked to ethnic identity exploration and affirmation among male adolescents, but not female adolescents. It is

possible that male adolescents and female adolescents differ in the meanings that they attach to discriminatory experiences they may encounter and, thus, these experiences may have a differential impact on their development and outcomes. Research with European American and Mexican American adolescents found that male adolescents were more likely than female adolescents to anticipate that ethnic discrimination would limit their opportunities to achieve their educational and career goals (McWhirter, 1997). In fact, research with Latino adolescents found that male adolescents', but not female adolescents', experiences with discrimination were predictive of their future academic motivation (Alfaro et al., 2009). Because recent work shows that Latino male adolescents, compared to female adolescents, are given more freedom to explore the world outside of the family context (Raffaelli & Ontai, 2004), it is possible that male adolescents have more experiences with discrimination and, as a result, are more cognizant of the effects of discrimination on their lives. In work with Black adolescents, Pahl and Way (2006) suggested that Black adolescents' continuous exposure to racism may lead to continuous exploration of ethnicity; it is possible that the same reasoning can be applied to the gender difference found in the current study. Because, compared to female adolescents, Latino adolescent male adolescents are more likely to experience discrimination and experience higher levels of discrimination (Lopez, 1995), these elevated rates of discrimination may prompt ethnic identity formation processes more strongly for male adolescents than for female adolescents. Because assessments of discrimination were only available at W2, which is also when initial levels of exploration and affirmation were assessed, interpretation of these findings is limited to a concurrent association between these variables. Nevertheless, findings are consistent with previous longitudinal work in which experiences with discrimination were significantly associated with academic motivation among male adolescents but not female adolescents (Alfaro et al., 2009). Furthermore, they highlight the importance of considering the potential impact of discrimination and the notion that it appears to be a more significant predictor of outcomes among men than women (Cunningham & Sagas, 2007).

Finally, because a model estimating growth in ethnic identity affirmation over the 3-year period was not a good fit, we were only able to test the concurrent association (i.e., discrimination was only gathered at W2 and initial levels of affirmation began at W2) among these variables and were not able to test whether discrimination predicted growth in ethnic identity affirmation. Although we were able to test models estimating growth in exploration and resolution, we did not find that perceived discrimination predicted growth in either of those ethnic identity components. The current study was limited to an examination of three data points over a 3-year period (i.e., W2–W4). It is possible that findings did not emerge due to limited power and a restricted range in the span of development being examined. Thus, it will be important for future studies that have more data points to examine whether initial discriminatory experiences predict rate of growth in ethnic identity. Conceptually, it is possible that an experience with discrimination, which could be viewed as a crisis from an Eriksonian (1968) perspective, may prompt processes of ethnic identity exploration and resolution, similar to what has been shown with respect to racial identity (e.g., Cross, 1995). Along these same lines, future work will benefit from examining whether changes in

perceived discrimination over time predict changes in adolescents' ethnic identity development.

Examining Multiple Components of Ethnic Identity

Findings from the current study demonstrated that the three ethnic identity components were differentially predicted by variables such as discrimination and, importantly, demonstrated different predictors for female adolescents and male adolescents. These findings support scholars' recommendations to examine the multiple components of ethnic identity as unique constructs (e.g., French et al., 2006; Pahl & Way, 2006; Supple et al., 2006). Furthermore, although familial ethnic socialization emerged as a significant predictor for all three ethnic identity components in the current study, there was a notable difference such that familial ethnic socialization significantly predicted rate of growth for male adolescents' ethnic identity resolution, and it did not predict rate of growth for the other two ethnic identity components. Similarly, fathers' support significantly predicted male adolescents' ethnic identity exploration, but not male adolescents' ethnic identity resolution or affirmation. It will be useful for future work with larger sample sizes and, thus, more statistical power to examine trajectories of the multiple components of ethnic identity and predictor variables in one model, which would enable researchers to account for the potential shared variance among the ethnic identity components and examine whether the current findings persist after accounting for the potential shared variance.

Conclusions, Limitations, and Directions for Future Research

Together, findings from the current study provide support for a cultural–ecological approach to understanding normative developmental processes among Latino youth (García Coll et al., 1996). Findings emphasize the importance of considering individual characteristics such as gender and how they interact with contextual factors such as familial socialization processes and experiences with discrimination to impact adolescents' development. Furthermore, findings advance the literature with respect to a normative developmental process among Latino youth, namely that of ethnic identity formation. Nevertheless, the study is not without limitations.

First, youth get messages about their ethnicity from numerous sources and contexts (e.g., parents, peers, media), and the current study was only able to focus on two (i.e., family socialization and discrimination). A focus on the family as a key socializing agent was important, given the vast empirical and theoretical work pointing to the unique influence of family and the importance placed on family in Latino cultures (Cauce & Domenech-Rodríguez, 2002; Sabogal et al., 1987). Similarly, because research has documented the salience and significance of discrimination in the lives of Latino adolescents (Romero & Roberts, 2003; Szalacha et al., 2003), the context of discrimination was an important predictor to explore. Nevertheless, part of the value of the ecological approach is that it acknowledges the multiple environmental factors that impact and interact with individual characteristics to influence developmental processes and outcomes. Because individuals spend increasingly more time with their peers and less time with family during adolescence (Updegraff et al., 2006), and

adolescents also tend to place a greater importance on their peers during this time (Harter, 1999), it will be important for future research to consider the role that peers play in adolescents' ethnic identity formation. It also will be important to examine how messages from peers regarding ethnicity interact with messages from the family to inform adolescents' ethnic identity. Future research will benefit from examining additional mechanisms that may prompt and impact ethnic identity formation during this time.

Another limitation of the current study is the focus on a heterogeneous Latino population that included adolescents who were members of various national origin groups (e.g., Mexican, Salvadoran). A majority of the sample was of Mexican origin, and sample sizes for the other groups were too small to allow multiple-group analyses by national origin group. Thus, findings should be generalized with caution to groups other than Mexican-origin Latinos who mirror the demographic characteristics of the current sample. Given that Mexican-origin Latinos were the largest Latino group represented in the schools from which data were gathered, experiences with discrimination and salience of ethnic identity may be different for these adolescents compared to those from another Latino national origin group. Future studies should examine these relations with other national origin groups and consider the groups' ethnic representation in the context.

Finally, the limited sample size of the current study precluded the examination of additional potential moderators. For instance, we were unable to examine variability in ethnic identity processes as a function of other normative transitions that occur during this developmental period (e.g., going to college, becoming employed full time). It will be important to examine how other normative transitions interact with the process of ethnic identity formation, particularly because characteristics of the work context and/or university or college setting may have differential effects on adolescents' ethnic identity. In addition, it was not possible to examine variability by generational status. Ethnicity may be more or less salient to individuals based on the amount of time and exposure they have had to U.S. mainstream society. Ethnicity as a marker of social identity must be considered within the cultural context, given that the meaning and importance ascribed to this construct will vary by context. Latino adolescents who are recent immigrants to the United States may have different experiences with respect to ethnicity than U.S.-born Latinos whose families have been in the United States for multiple generations. The two groups may differ in their perceptions of how others view their group, experiences with discrimination, and their general understanding of (and how they define) their ethnic identity. An exploration of this will likely require mixed-method studies that incorporate both qualitative and quantitative data to gain a more clear understanding of the role of generational status and time in the United States.

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