



# Intragroup Marginalization as a Moderator in the Relationship between Linguistic Acculturation and Depressive Symptoms for Mexican Descent Emerging Adults

Mercedes M. Fuentes, Linda V. Loredó, Gabriela Manzo, B.A., Matthew Sharkey, B.A. & Brandy Piña-Watson, Ph.D.  
Texas Tech University



## Introduction

### ACCULTURATION & DEPRESSION

- Acculturation refers to the multidimensional processes of adapting to the host majority culture.<sup>1</sup>
- Acculturation is composed of various domains including affective, behavioral, and cognitive domains.
  - Linguistic acculturation is a practice under the behavioral domain and is used to describe one's extent of involvement related to linguistic processes to the host-culture (linguistic acculturation).<sup>2</sup>
- Acculturation has been linked to depression and depressive like symptoms.
  - However some of these findings have *been mixed* and some do not find relation from acculturation to depressive symptoms, particularly in young adults.<sup>3</sup>
- Collectively, literature has failed to find a significant association between the relationship of acculturation and depression.
- One reason that may contribute the continuous inconsistency in findings between this relationship is that it may not solely be acculturation but rather the *related stress processes* that accompany acculturation such as intragroup marginalization (IM).<sup>4</sup>

### INTRAGROUP MARGINALIZATION & DEPRESSION

- IM is defined as interpersonal distancing that is created when an individual exhibits acculturation to dominant culture.<sup>4</sup>
- IM for Latinx college students has been found to be a risk factor for psychological and academic outcomes including depression.<sup>5</sup>
- IM was found to contribute to the variance of depressive symptoms in Mexican American students.<sup>6</sup>

### MODERATION OF INTRAGROUP MARGINALIZATION

- Many studies have examined the role of IM as moderator and how it may impact the strengths of different relationships that are relevant to Latinx college students.
- Prior research that has focused on IM on Latinx population IM as a moderator for the Latinx population includes:
  - The role of IM as a moderator between social support of friends and acculturative stress.<sup>7</sup>
  - The role of IM as a moderator between anxious attachment and acculturative stress.<sup>8</sup>
  - No literature to date has explored the effects of intragroup marginalization of friends, family, and ethnic group on depression, **simultaneously**.



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at Texas Tech University

## Purpose & Hypotheses

### PURPOSE

- Studies that link acculturation to mental health among Latinx have been mixed. One explanation for this may lie in the stress processes that sometimes accompany acculturation such as intragroup marginalization.
- The purpose of the present study is to examine intragroup marginalization as a moderator in the relationship between linguistic acculturation and depressive symptoms in Mexican-descent emerging adults.

### HYPOTHESES

- H<sub>1</sub>:** Higher levels of all forms of intragroup marginalization will be related to higher reporting of depressive symptoms.
- H<sub>2</sub>:** All forms of intragroup marginalization will moderate the relationship between linguistic acculturation and enculturation on depressive symptoms such that higher levels of intragroup marginalization will put one at risk of acculturation and enculturation being related to higher depressive symptoms. Lower levels of intragroup marginalization will be protective in that it will not produce higher depressive symptoms in the context of being more highly acculturated and enculturated.

## Methods

### PARTICIPANTS

- 422 emerging adults of Mexican descent from a college located in Rio Grande Valley, Texas
- Ages:** 18-25 years
- Gender:** 73.2% women; 26.5% men

### INSTRUMENTS

- Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans** ( $\alpha$  = [MOS] .94 & [AOS] .74; ARSMA-II)<sup>9</sup>
- The Intragroup Marginalization Inventory** ( $\alpha$  = .82 [IM-Family], .73 [IM-Ethnic Group], and .86 [IM-Friends])<sup>4</sup>
- Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CESD-10;**  $\alpha$  = .79)<sup>10</sup>

### PROCEDURE

- Students were recruited through introductory psychology courses.
- Students were provided a link to complete the study online via Qualtrics.
- Study took approximately an hour to complete.
- Participants were awarded course credit.

## Results

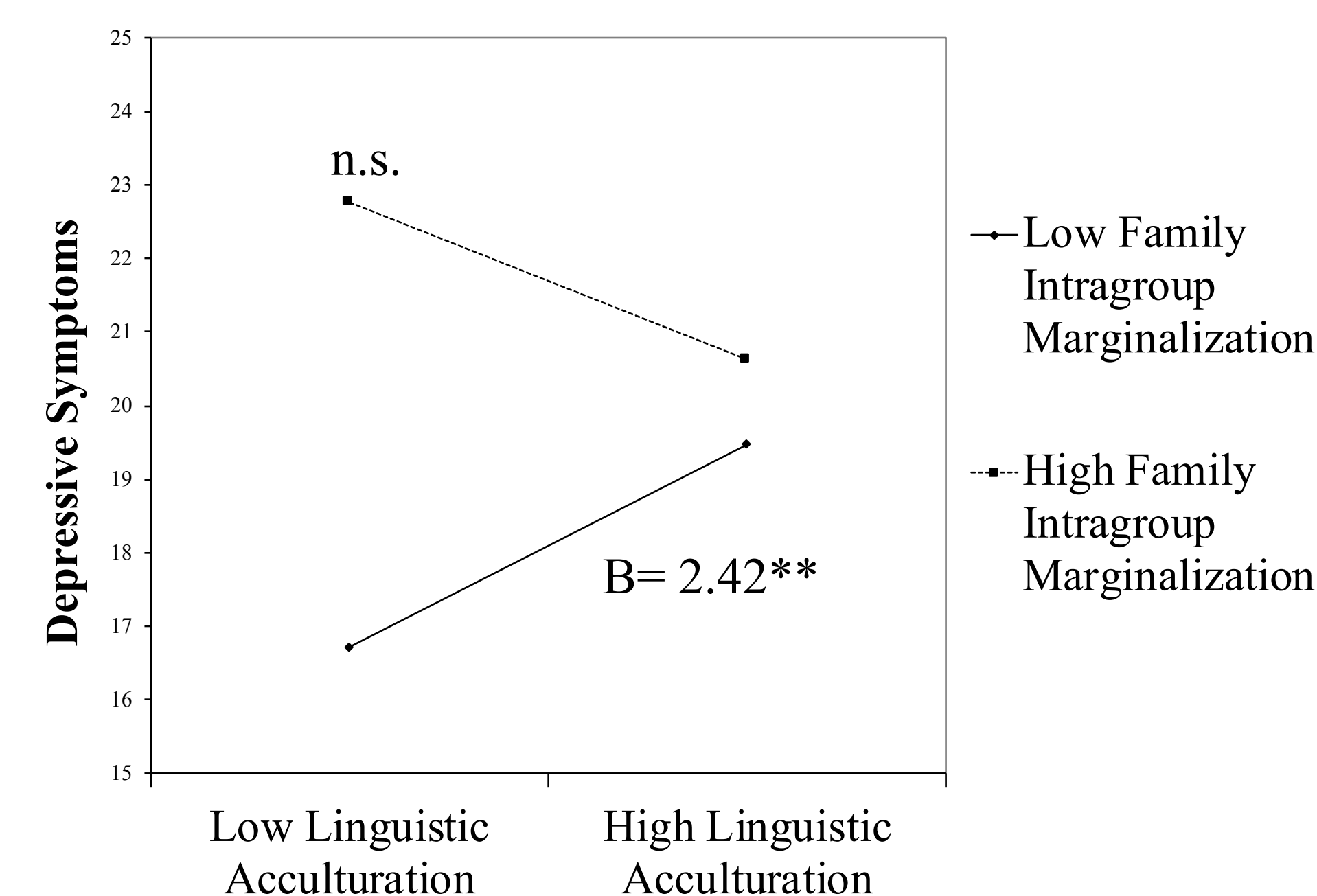
### REGRESSION ANALYSIS

- H<sub>1</sub>:** *Partially Supported*
  - Higher levels of only familial intragroup marginalization were related to a higher reporting of depressive symptoms.

Table 1. Hierarchical Linear Regression Analyses

Step	Variable	B	SE	95% CI		$\beta$	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$
				Lower	Upper			
Step 1	Age	-0.02	0.16	-0.33	0.29	-0.01	0.00	0.00
Step 2	Age	0.42	0.15	-0.25	0.33	0.01	0.12	0.12***
	IM-Family	0.13***	0.03	0.07	0.19	0.29		
	IM-Ethnic Group	-0.40	0.04	-0.11	0.03	-0.06		
	IM-Friends	0.05	0.03	-0.01	0.01	0.12		
Step 3	Age	0.75	0.59	-0.25	0.34	0.06	0.12	0.00
	IM-Family	0.13***	0.03	0.07	0.19	0.28		
	IM-Ethnic Group	-0.04	0.04	-0.11	0.03	-0.07		
	IM-Friends	0.05	0.03	-0.00	0.01	0.13		
	Enculturation	-0.05	0.24	-0.52	0.43	-0.01		
	Acculturation	0.30	0.47	0.64	1.22	0.03		
Step 4	Age	0.00	0.15	-0.30	0.3	0.00	0.14	0.02
	IM-Family	0.14	0.03	0.08	0.21	0.32		
	IM-Ethnic Group	-0.05	0.38	-0.12	0.03	-0.07		
	IM-Friends	0.04	0.03	-0.01	0.09	0.11		
	Enculturation	-0.03	0.24	-0.51	0.45	-0.01		
	Acculturation	0.27	0.49	-0.69	1.23	0.03		
	IM-Family x Acculturation	-0.17***	0.07	-0.30	-0.04	-0.20		
	IM-Friends x Acculturation	0.06	0.05	-0.04	0.16	0.10		
	IM-Ethnic Group x Acculturation	0.09	0.07	-0.06	0.23	0.08		
	IM-Family x Enculturation	-0.01	0.03	-0.07	0.04	-0.04		
IM-Friends x Enculturation	0.01	0.02	-0.03	0.06	0.04			
IM-Ethnic Group x Enculturation	0.00	0.03	-0.06	0.06	0.01			

- H<sub>2</sub>:** *Partially Supported*
  - Only familial intragroup marginalization moderated the relationship; however, contrary to how we hypothesized.



Low Family IM is set at -1 SD; High Family IM is set at +1 SD; \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

## Conclusions

- Study provides evidence that higher familial IM is related to higher depressive symptoms for Mexican descent emerging adults.
- This study also highlights importance of familial relations for this population as suggested by construct of familismo.
- For those who were low in familial IM, there was a significant relationship between linguistic acculturation and depressive symptoms. Meaning that as linguistic acculturation increased, so did these depressive symptoms. Being low in familial IM in the context of high linguistic acculturation may actually put one at risk and may be detrimental to depressive symptoms.
- Suggestions for future studies include examining IM with other domains of acculturation such as other forms behavioral acculturation practices (aside from linguistic acculturation) OR with other acculturation domains entirely, such as affective (identity) acculturation or cognitive acculturation (values), in order to better understand how acculturation and acculturation processes (such as IM) are related to mental health outcomes.

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TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
Department of Psychological Sciences