



Suicidal Ideation and Attempts Across Ethnicity, Gender, and Development: A Longitudinal Examination of Relational and Individual Factors

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Introduction

SUICIDALITY MENTAL HEALTH DISPARITIES

- Suicide is the third leading cause of death for adolescents 15-24 years old and differ by gender and ethnicity (Center for Disease Control [CDC], 2012).
- An estimated 10.6% of girls attempt suicide as compared to 5.4% of boys. Additionally, 22.4% of girls and 11.6% of boys reported suicidal ideation (CDC, 2014).
- Similarly, non-Latina/o White, African American, and Latina/o adolescents have shown different rates of suicide attempts (6.3%, 8.8%, 11.3%, respectively; CDC, 2014) and suicidal ideation (16.2%, 14.5%, 18.9%, respectively; CDC, 2014).

RELATIONAL FACTORS

- More positive caregiver relationships have been related to better mental health outcomes, including lower reports of suicidality across gender and ethnic identity (Ackard et al., 2006).
- A dearth of literature has shown that social capital can act as a protective factor against suicidal ideation and behaviors for adolescents (Rojas & Stickley, 2014).
- It is possible that relational factors could be a more profound impact on mental health for collectivistic cultures (i.e., African Americans and Latina/os), whereas individual factors may have more of an impact for individualistic cultures (i.e., non-Latina/o Whites; Markus & Kitayama, 1991).
- Additionally, girls may be more impacted by relational issues and boys by individual issues (Cross & Madson, 1997).

INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

- Some research has found that youth who reported lower levels of depression also reported less suicidal ideation (Garlow et al., 2008).
- High impulsivity, one aspect of self-control, was related to a higher probability of reporting suicide attempts for adolescents (Dougherty et al., 2009).
- Higher self-esteem has been shown to be related to lower levels of suicidal ideation and lower reports of suicidal behaviors (Kuhlberg et al., 2010).

GAPS IN THE LITERATURE

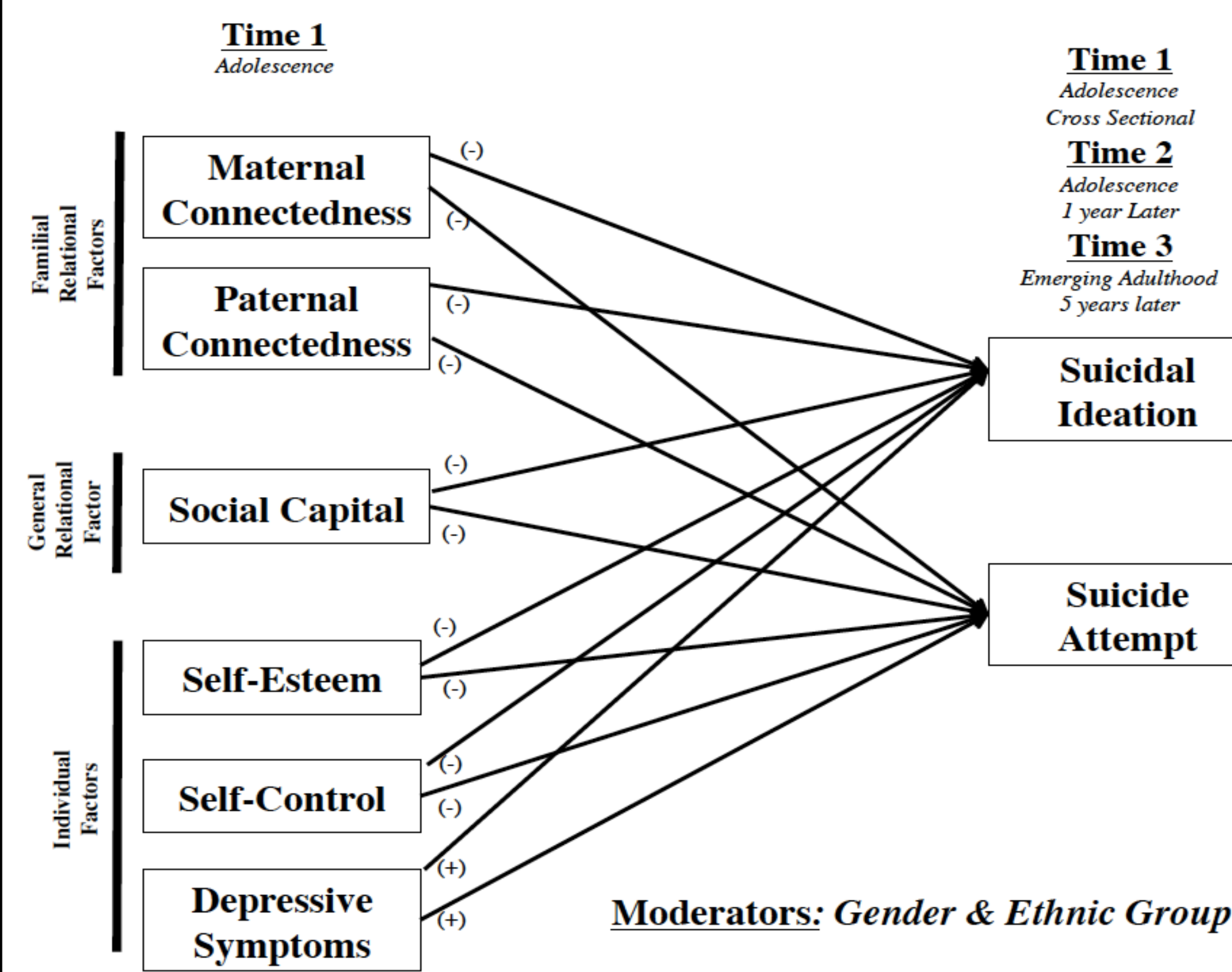
- Many studies on the mother-adolescent relationship only look at Latina girls (Baumann et al., 2010).
- Few studies have looked at the paternal-adolescent relationship specifically (Ackard et al., 2006).
- Limited research exists on the impact of these factors on suicidality longitudinally.

Purpose & Hypotheses

PURPOSE

The present study seeks to expand previous literature by longitudinally comparing relational and individual factors across ethnicity and gender to determine if those factors impact Latina/os, African Americans, and non-Latina/o White youth differentially. This will help shed light on the suicidality mental health disparities that exist for U.S. youth by ethnicity and gender.

HYPOTHESES



Methods

PARTICIPANTS (Wave 1)

- **n** = 12,311
- **Ages:** 11-16 (M = 15.14; SD = 1.21)
- **Ethnic Groups:** 32% African American/Black; 59% non-Latina/o White; 9% Latina/o
- **Gender:** 51.7% girls/women; 48.3% boys/men

INSTRUMENTS

- **Maternal Connection** (5 items; $\alpha = .80$)
- **Paternal Connection** (5 items; $\alpha = .89$)
- **Social Capital** (4 items; $\alpha = .94$)
- **Self-Control** (4 items; $\alpha = .76$)
- **Self-Esteem** (6 items; $\alpha = .85$)
- **Depressive Symptoms** (9 items; $\alpha = .86$)
- **Suicidal Ideation and Attempts** (single items)

Demographics

PROCEDURE

- AddHealth National Longitudinal Dataset
- Used first 3 waves of data (Wave 1: Baseline; Wave 2: 1 year later; Wave 3: 5 years later)
- Data was collected from a nationally representative sample across the U.S. via self-report interviews

Results

GENDER ANALYSES

Developmental Period	Significant Time 1 Predictors	Regression Coefficient	
Ideation			
Time 1	Adolescence	Maternal Connection	-.54*
		Paternal Connection	-.64***
		Social Capital	-.50**
		Self-Esteem	-1.22***
		Self-Control	-.39**
		Depression	2.28***
		Depression x Gender	-.29*
Time 2	Adolescence (1 year later)	-Boys	1.99***
		-Girls	1.69***
		Social Capital x Gender	-.56***
		-Girls	-.62***
		Paternal Connection	-.51*
Time 3	Emerging Adulthood	Social Capital	-.39***
		Self-Control	-.28**
		Depression	.78**
		Social Capital x Gender	-.39***
		-Girls	-.39***
Attempts			
Time 1	Adolescence	Self-Control	-.56*
		Depression	.88*
Time 2	Adolescence (1 year later)	Self-Control	-.86**
		Self-Control x Gender	-.52**
Time 3	Emerging Adulthood	-Boys	-.34*
		Depression	.75*

ETHNICITY ANALYSES

Developmental Period	Significant Time 1 Predictors	Regression Coefficient	
Ideation			
Time 1	Adolescence	Maternal Connection	-.78***
		Paternal Connection	-.51**
		Social Capital	-.52***
		Self-Esteem	-.95***
		Self-Control	-.44***
		Depression	1.50***
		Social Capital x Ethnicity	-.55***
		-African American/Black	-.14***
		-White (non-Latina/o)	-.46***
		-Latina/o	-.79***
Time 2	Adolescence (1 year later)	Maternal Connection	-.43*
		Paternal Connection	-.47*
		Social Capital	-.39***
		Self-Esteem	-.66**
		Self-Control	-.29*
		Depression	.43*
		Social Capital x Ethnicity	-.39***
Time 3	Emerging Adulthood	-African American/Black	-.07***
		-White (non-Latina/o)	-.30***
		-Latina/o	-.52***
Attempts			
Time 1	Adolescence	Paternal Connection	-.51**
		Self-Esteem	-.62**
Time 2	Adolescence (1 year later)	Self-Control	-.28*
		Depression	.47*
		Social Capital	.65*
Time 3	Emerging Adulthood	Social Capital	-.62*
		Maternal Connect x Ethnicity	-.52*
		-Latina/o	-.43*
		Social Capital x Ethnicity	-.56**
Time 3	Emerging Adulthood	-White (non-Latina/o)	-.40**
		-Latina/o	-.71**
		Depression	-.71**

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Conclusions

FAMILIAL RELATIONAL FACTORS

- Maternal and paternal factors are related most consistently to suicidal ideation, in that higher levels of connection are related to lower reporting of suicidal ideation regardless of gender or ethnicity.
- The only factor that differed across ethnicity was maternal connectedness on suicide attempts, whereby only Latina/o adolescents showed a significant relationship.
- No familial relation factors differed by gender on the suicidality variables.

GENERAL RELATIONAL FACTORS

- Social capital provided the most compelling findings. Specifically, there was a trend longitudinally that the relationship between social capital and suicidality was moderated by gender and ethnicity. Girls and Latina/o suicidality were significantly impacted by social capital. This means that social capital is particularly salient in protecting girls from suicidality.

INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

- At various time points, all of the individual factors were related to suicidality. The only factor that varied by gender was self-control on suicide attempts at Time 2. Namely, this was only significant for boys. This provides evidence that most of the individual factors are salient for adolescents regardless of gender and ethnicity.

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