



Association of Intergenerational Enculturation Discrepancies, Familial Conflict, and Depressive Symptoms among Latinx College Students

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Introduction

MENTAL HEALTH STATUS OF LATINX COLLEGE STUDENTS

- College students of Latinx background have been steadily growing in college enrollment and are expected to continue their growth into the future (Flores, 2017).
- Research suggests that Latinx college students, in particular, report higher depressive symptoms compared to their counterparts of other ethnic backgrounds (e.g., Asian American and Whites) (Gore & Aseltine, 2003).
- Suffering from depression while pursuing a college degree can impact academic performance and college persistence and, thus, increase the likelihood of dropping out (Eisenberg et al., 2009).
- Given the prevalence of depression and the increasingly growing population of Latinx on college campuses, it is imperative to investigating if there are certain cultural processes (such as enculturation) and familial factors (such as family conflict) that contribute to the risk of depression for Latinx college students.

INTERGENERATIONAL ENCULTURATIVE DISCREPANCIES

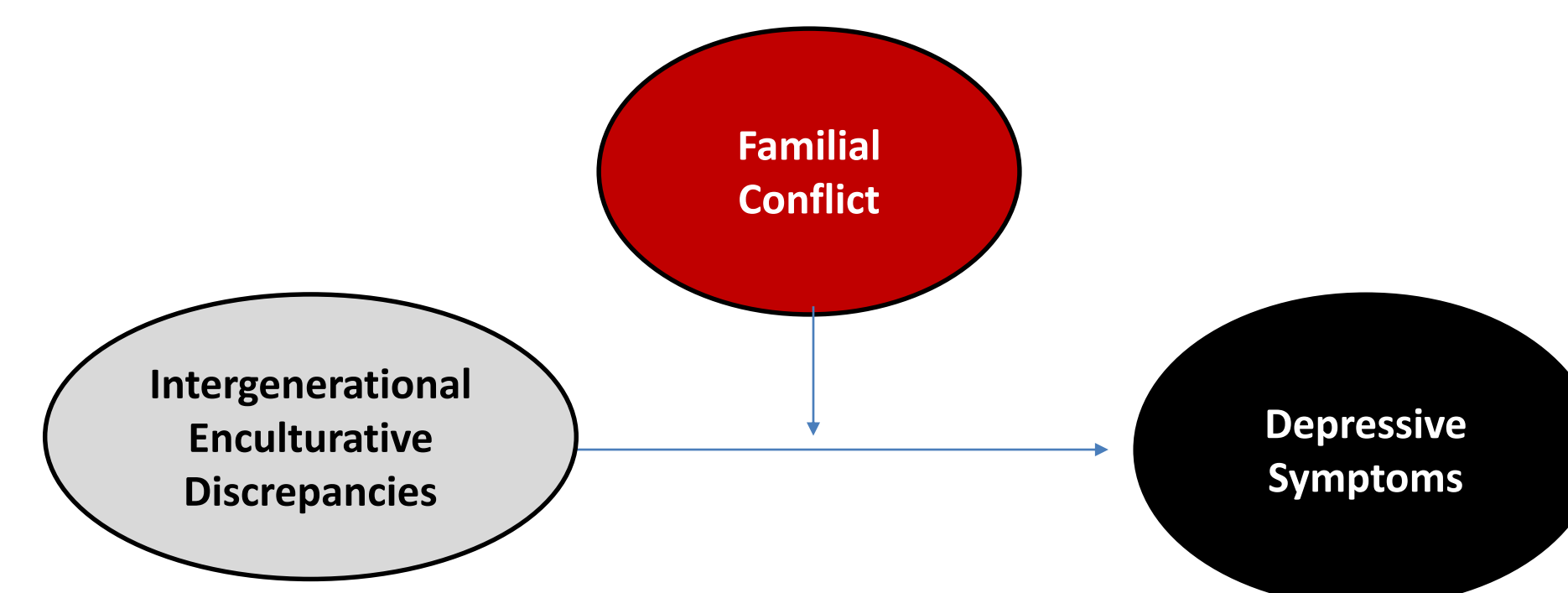
- One process that has been related to increased depression for Latinx is **cognitive enculturative discrepancies**. This is defined as differences between children and parents regarding *cultural values* that serves standards of behavior (Birman & Poff, 2011).
- Acculturation gap hypothesis states that immigrant children and their parents acculturate and adapt at different rates to the host country in terms of behaviors, cultural values, and practices (Szapocznik et al., 1978).
- Cognitive enculturative discrepancies have not been studied sufficiently compared to behavioral enculturation discrepancies, thus their relation to mental health outcomes should be further examined (Schwartz et al., 2010).
- Prior related research has found that discrepancy over *gender role values* was significantly correlated with adolescent depression in Latinos, when **family dysfunction** was present (Céspedes & Huey, 2008).

Method

RESEARCH AIMS

- In the present study we will examine the relationships between intergenerational enculturative discrepancies and depressive symptoms as moderated by family conflict in Latinx college students.
- Given the fact little is known about the reason why enculturation discrepancies may be related to mental health outcomes, we examine familial conflict as a potential moderating mechanism for Latinx college students.

CONCEPTUAL MODEL



PARTICIPANTS

- Sample consisted of 132 college students ($M = 19.22$, $SD = 3.45$; 68.2% women) most of which were of Mexican descent (80%) collected at a university in West Texas.

MEASURES

- Asian American Family Conflict Scale (Lee et al., 2000). Completed 2 times (if applicable) for conflict with female caregiver & male caregiver.
- Mexican American Cultural Values Scale (Knight et al., 2010). Completed 3 times (if applicable).
 - From the perspective of female caregiver.
 - From the perspective of male caregiver.
 - From students' perspectives.

PROCEDURE

- Students completed study online and received course credit through SONA.

Analysis & Results

ANALYSIS

- To calculate discrepancies, the child's values were subtracted from their male or female caregiver's values on enculturative cultural values. The absolute value of the difference was used in the regressions.
- Two hierarchical linear regressions were analyzed to identify main and interaction effects of intergenerational enculturative discrepancies (for each female caregiver and male caregiver, if applicable) and familial conflict on depressive symptoms of Latinx college students background.
- Variables were centered prior to computing the interactions (Frazier, Tix, & Barron, 2004; Kreft, De Leeuw, & Aiken, 1995). In step 1, the centered intergenerational enculturative discrepancies variable was entered followed by the centered familial conflict variable in step 2. In step 3, the interaction term was entered. Only statistics from the last step will be presented in results.

RESULTS

- Moderating effects of family conflict were **not significant** on the relationship between intergenerational enculturative discrepancies and depressive symptoms of Latinx college students for either female caregivers, $F(3, 125) = 0.478$, $p = .69$ or male caregivers, $F(3, 106) = .574$, $p = .63$.
- No main effects were identified in either regression.

Table 1. Correlations, Means, Standard Deviations, and Alphas of Variables ($n = 132$)

	1	2	3	4	5
1. IED-female caregiver	----				
2. IED-male caregiver	0.77**	----			
3. FC-female caregiver	0.11	0.79	----		
4. FC-male caregiver	0.13	0.93	0.73**	----	
5. Depressive Symptoms	0.11	-0.18	0.13	-0.13	----
α	---	---	0.89	0.92	0.93
M	1.89	0.92	3.21	3.32	1.86
SD	0.65	0.73	0.96	1.11	0.61

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$; IED: Intergenerational Enculturative Discrepancies; FC: Familial Conflict

Conclusions

- This study highlight how discrepancy between children values parents or caregivers' values in the face of existing familial conflict *may not* consistently predict negative mental health outcomes in the children.
- Instead, it is likely that parents react not to what their children's internal values are, but to what they see manifesting as their *behaviors*. If there is incongruence in enculturative expectations, this may be most salient in their behaviors rather than in their internal values or beliefs.
- Future research should aim to examine discrepancy on the behavioral domain of acculturation or enculturation given its saliency and how it may relate to other familial dynamics and mental health outcomes for Latinx emerging adults.

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