

Coping with Discrimination and Subsequent Suicide Risk for Latinx Emerging Adults: Is it Sometimes Better to Just Walk Away?

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Introduction

BACKGROUND

- For Latinx, research has found that higher reporting of discriminatory experiences is related to elevated risk of suicide.¹
- Although this association is clear, one may wonder what factors may protect one from suicide risk when we do experience discrimination.
- Discrimination is deplorable and not the fault of the victim however, we know that the way one deals with stressors can have a profound impact on the psychological consequences of that stressor.
- Studies that address suicidal behavior in emerging adults often do not consider the cultural factors that play a role in this interaction.⁵ Discrimination can be associated with up to a three times higher odd of sustaining past suicide attempt among emerging adults.⁵
- This study aims to address the cultural factors of discrimination due to the impact that social acculturative stress can have over emerging adults and their mental health.

GAPS IN LITERATURE

- Much literature neglects to consider the protective factors that these emerging adults can potentially use while experiencing discrimination. High disengaged coping has predominantly been viewed as a risk factor however, this one has never been viewed as a potential protective factor for minoritized and discriminated populations.

Purpose & Hypotheses

PURPOSE

- Examine engaged and disengaged coping as moderators in the relationships between discrimination and suicide risk among Latinx emerging adults.
- Determine the association between discriminatory experiences and risk of suicide in the Latinx population.
- Establish the potential forms of coping that may protect individuals from suicide risk when experiencing discrimination.

HYPOTHESES

- **H₁:** Higher discrimination will be related to higher suicide risk.
- **H₂:** Higher disengaged coping will be related to higher suicide risk.
- **H₃:** Higher engaged forms of coping (primary control and secondary control) will be related to higher suicide risk.
- **H₄:** Higher disengaged coping will put one at risk for higher suicide risk in the context of higher reporting of discrimination.
- **H₅:** Higher engaged forms of coping (primary and secondary control) will protect one from higher suicide risk in the context of higher reporting of discrimination.

Methods

PARTICIPANTS

- **n:** 419 Mexican descent emerging adults
- **Ages:** 18-25 ($M = 19.45$; $SD = 1.63$)
- **Gender:** 73.5 % women; 26.5% men

INSTRUMENTS

- **Perceived Racism Scale for Latina/os** $\alpha = .96$
- **Coping and Responses to Stress Questionnaire** $\alpha = .83 - .86$
- **Suicidal Behaviors Questionnaire**⁴

PROCEDURE

- Data collected through an online questionnaire at the University of Texas at Rio Grande Valley.
- Participants were awarded research credit for a class course.

Results

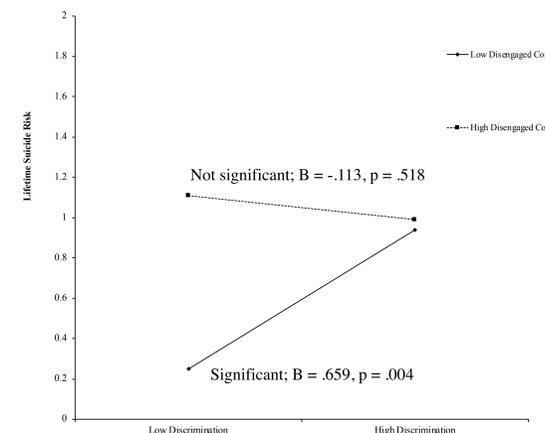
REGRESSION RESULTS: SUICIDE RISK

Table 1. Suicide Risk Linear Regression Statistics

	B	SE	95% CI		β
			Lower	Upper	
Step 1					
DC	0.41***	0.12	0.17	0.65	0.22
PC	-0.20	0.11	-0.41	0.01	-0.12
SC	-0.06	0.13	-0.30	0.19	-0.3
Step 2					
DC	0.38**	0.12	0.14	0.62	0.20
PC	-0.19	0.11	-0.40	0.02	-0.11
SC	-0.05	0.13	-0.29	0.20	-0.03
Discrimination	0.20	0.11	-0.01	0.40	0.09
Step 3					
DC	0.38**	0.12	0.14	0.62	0.20
PC	-0.20	0.11	-0.41	0.16	-0.11
SC	-0.04	0.13	-0.29	0.20	-0.03
Discrimination	0.27	0.11	0.05	0.49	0.13
Discrimination X DC	-0.64*	0.29	-1.20	-0.08	-0.18
Discrimination X PC	0.03	0.25	-0.46	0.52	0.01
Discrimination X SC	0.48	0.30	-0.10	1.06	0.15

Note: DC = Disengaged Coping, PC = Primary Control Coping, SC = Secondary Control Coping; * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

- **H₁: Supported;** Higher discrimination is related to higher suicide risk ($B = .27$, $p = .015$).
- **H₂: Supported;** Higher disengaged coping is related to higher suicide risk ($B = .378$, $p = .002$).
- **H₃: Not Supported;** Engaged forms of coping were not related to suicide risk.



- **H₄: Partially Supported;** Disengaged coping moderated the relationship between discrimination and suicide risk, but was protective.
- **H₅: Not Supported;** Engaged forms of coping did not significantly moderate the relationship between discrimination and suicide risk.

Conclusions

DISCUSSION

- This study provides evidence that higher levels of disengaged coping is protective in the context of discrimination for Mexican descent college students. This gives evidence that certain coping strategies may be adaptive depending on the type of stressor and the group being studied (i.e., majority vs. minority individuals).

IMPLICATIONS

- This research provides another view on the coping literature that states that engaging with a stressor is a more adaptive form of coping among predominately non-Latinx White participants when it comes to examining stressors that are not discrimination based.

References

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References

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