

Ethnic Identity Development and Socialization of Latinx Youth from Divorced
Households

by

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ABSTRACT

The current study examines responses of Latinx young adult's (n=65) perceptions, as youth, of disruptions related to the divorce of their parents. To do this, a sample of Latinx young adults who experienced parental divorce during adolescence were asked to retrospectively assess their experiences surrounding their parents' divorce and their adherence to Latinx cultural values, ethnic socialization, and ethnic identity. Findings indicated higher levels of parental divorce disruptions experienced by participants. Additionally, association between the perceived disruptions and adherence to Latinx cultural values varied across different domains of disruptions related to the divorce. Families also appeared to engage in ethnic socialization of the youth, as the divorce did not disrupt this process. Clinical implications encourage mental health professionals to provide culturally relevant care and opportunities for ethnic identity exploration for Latinx young adult clients who are from divorced households.

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CHAPTER 1

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

According to a study conducted by the U.S. Bureau and Labor Statistics (2013), 43% of all marriages end in divorce. More recent data indicates however, that the U.S. divorce rate fell from 9.7 new divorces per 1,000 women ages 15 and over in 2009 to 7.6 in 2019 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009, 2019). Although divorce appears to be declining, parental divorce can have a significant detrimental psychological impact on the children of divorced parents. It has been proven in previous studies the harmful effects divorce has on children in-the-moment and later in life (Tullius, 2021; Gatins et al., 2013), and recent studies have also concluded divorce can have a detrimental impact in the lives of children as seen in their poorer academic performances and increases in risk taking behavior, and later in life in social and emotional attachments (Ferrer & Pan, 2020; Gustavsen et al., 2016; Boccia et al., 2021). Recent studies have also stressed the importance the role social support has increasing self-esteem and confidence later in life for children of divorce (Jackson & Fife, 2018). Because of biological and psychosocial changes that occur during adolescence can have a significant influence on parent-child relationships and other important social relationships (Branje, 2018), there has been a great deal of interest in understanding how parental divorce affects adolescents. For example, researchers have examined adolescents' feelings about their parents' divorce, adolescents' affect and psychological distress after the divorce, parent-child relationships post-divorce, and how a parents' divorce influence the way adolescents engage in romantic relationships (Gatins et al., 2013; Carr et al., 2019; Kurdek & Berg, 1987). Together these studies indicate the negative impact divorce has on an adolescents'

psychological wellbeing and emotional health. While these studies provide important information about how adolescents' experience and react to parental divorce, study participants were over 75% White and came highly educated, middle-class families. Because the cultural experiences of Youth of Color are different from the experiences of White youth, differences may arise regarding the effects of parental divorce on Youth of Color. Hence, it is difficult to generalize these findings to the experiences of racially and ethnically diverse adolescents that experience parental divorce. In this study, I focus on the level of family disruption, defined in this study as the parental relationship, experienced by Latinx young adults of divorced parents.

According to an analysis by the Pew Research Center, Latinx adolescents are the fastest growing under-18 population in the U.S. (López et al., 2018). Although divorce rate of Latinx households is only 18.5%, significantly lower than the rate reported for the general U.S. population (Schweizer, 2019), some data suggests that divorce rates among Latinxs in the U.S. has steadily increased over the past twenty years (Padilla & Borrero, 2006; U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Therefore, it is critical to investigate how disruptions caused by parental divorce influence the experiences of Latinx adolescents.

This lower rate of divorce in Latinx communities could partly explain why there is less information about how parental divorce affects Latinx youth. While research is limited, available studies on parental divorce and Latinx adolescents has examined the association between parental divorce and Latinx youth's perceived social support, attitudes towards marriage and divorce, parent-child attachment, and intimate (adult) relationships later in life (Lopez et al., 2000; Riggio & Valenzuela, 2011). Additionally, these studies have been conducted with college students examining in-the-moment

attitudes and relationships. An important factor to consider when examining the experiences of Latinx youth who have faced parental divorce is the role Latinx cultural values may play in how they react to family disruption or navigate post-divorce family dynamics. For example, Latinx adolescents who have a strong value of *familismo* (importance of family and family unity; Arredondo et al., 2014), an important cultural value in Latinx communities, may experience more family disruption following parental divorce compared to Latinx youth who endorse lower levels of *familismo*. Additionally, because parents have an important role of the socialization on Latinx youth ethnic identity development (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2004; Falicov, 2016; Arredondo et al., 2014), it is critical to understand how potential family disruption that develops from divorce may affect ethnic socialization and ethnic identity development of Latinx youth of divorced parents. For example, if a Latinx youth has less contact with a parent who had a primary ethnic socialization role, how would this influence the youth's ethnic identity development? Accordingly, understanding the association between parental divorce and Latinx youth ethnic socialization and identity is also important because ethnic identity has been consistently identified as an important correlate of psychological health and wellbeing for Latinx youth (Dougless & Umaña-Taylor, 2016 & Umaña-Taylor et. al, 2014a). If there is a major disruption within the family, such as divorce, it could be implied the mental health of Latinx youth can be negatively impacted. Dismantling something as critical as *familismo*, a key cultural value, eradicates a vital support system for all members. This can have detrimental impacts towards the psychological wellbeing of children of divorced Latinx families because as they learn about significant cultural

values, such as *familismo*, their family is engaging in a cultural taboo that does not follow traditional values.

Despite the importance cultural values and ethnic socialization and identity has within Latinx family dynamics, the existing literature on Latinx youth and parental divorce has not examined how cultural values or ethnic identity and socialization may influence how Latinx young adults perceive themselves and family disruption associated with divorce. Therefore, the current study seeks to understand how Latinx young adult's perceptions as youth of disruptions related to parental divorce were associated to adherence to Latinx cultural values, ethnic socialization, and ethnic identity. To do this, we asked a sample of Latinx young adults who experienced parental divorce during adolescence to retrospectively assess their experiences surrounding their parents' divorce.

In Chapter two, a literature review has been conducted, to exploring past research regarding parental divorce on adolescents, parental divorce specific to Latinx adolescents, Latinx cultural values and divorce, and Latinx cultural values, ethnic identity, and Latinx youth wellbeing. This chapter will be concluded by the hypothesis of the study. Chapter three will review methodology of the study, such as a sample, recruitment and consent, measures used, and analysis of the data. Chapter four will expand upon the results of the study. Chapter five will consist of discussion and study limitations.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Effects of Parental Divorce on Adolescents

Divorce has been on a steady decline across the U.S according to data reported by the U.S. census (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009, 2019, 2021). To illustrate, the divorce rate per 1,000 men 15 years and older was 9.9 and it was 10.5 for women 15 years and older in 2008, which had decreased to 7.8 for men and 8.2 for women in 2016 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). This decline is also reflective of a 2019 study also conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau (2019) that showed the divorce rate fell from 9.7 new divorces per 1,000 in 2009 to 7.6 in 2019 for women.

Although data shows consistent declines in the divorce rate among married couples in the United States, the literature on parental divorce and family wellbeing continues to indicate that the children of divorced parents face significant levels of distress and challenges as a result of family separation. To illustrate, adolescents who experience parental divorce report diminished psychological wellbeing as consequence of their parents' divorce (Gatins et al., 2013). For example, conflict related to custodial arrangements has been correlated with psychological distress among teenagers (Vanassche et al., 2013). Conflict associated with parental divorce has also been linked to strained parent-child relationships (Poortman, 2018). In relation to this, adolescents who maintain a healthy relationship with their father after the divorce can positively influence how they view relationships, especially if there is a poor mother-child relationship (Carr et al., 2019). Diminished wellbeing caused by parental divorce can also negatively impact other areas in a child's life, such as academic achievement. For example, in a study by

Potter (2010), results showed how psychosocial distress reported by the children of divorce parents was associated with academic challenges. Perceived social support was also an important factor measured as perceived satisfaction has stronger positive effects on adolescent self-esteem compared to quantity of social support (Jackson & Fife, 2018). Psychological outcomes among children of divorced parents have also been correlated with the quality of the divorced-parents' relationship post-divorce. In a study by Beckmeyer et al. (2021), results showed that the quality of parents' post-divorce relationship was a significant correlate of psychological outcomes for the child. Specifically, Beckmeyer et al. (2021) reported that positive post-divorce relationship amongst parents was significantly related with positive child psychological wellbeing. On the other hand, strained post-divorce parental relationships were a significant correlate of psychological distress (Beckmeyer et al., 2021). Together, these studies show how parental divorce can have a negative impact on the psychological wellbeing of youth. Additionally, these studies were also conducted with a sample that was primarily white and highly educated, or they provided no information regarding racial and ethnic differences. Participants in Jackson and Fife's 2018 study proved to be the most diverse, with only 35% of adolescents identifying as White and the rest being from a non-White racial background.

Limitations in the existing literature on the psychological wellbeing of children of divorced parents warrant future examination to expand our understanding of how parental divorce affects the psychological health and development among youth. First, very little information is available about how the psychological wellbeing of youth post-divorce may be related to post-divorce single parent custody arrangements or parental remarriage

(Carr et al., 2019; Gatins et al., 2013; Vanassche et al., 2013). The importance of this study is to inform how parental divorce can impact health outcome in Latinx adolescents. Secondly, research that has been conducted surrounding divorce does not have representative samples and are focused primarily on White youth and college-educated young adults. Studies that have focused on Latinx youth do not focus on ethnic socialization or ethnic identity. As stated previously, a strong connection to ethnic identity has proven to be a strong protective factor for psychological wellbeing (Dougless & Umaña-Taylor, 2016 & Umaña-Taylor et. al, 2014a). Understanding an individual's connection to their ethnic identity then provides insight for clinical implications regarding mental health and wellbeing. This lack of research is concerning and more light needs to be shed upon this marginalized population.

Perhaps the most significant limitation is the inadequate representation of diverse samples in the available literature and lack of description of ethnic and racial characteristics of the samples in these studies. For example, the race and ethnicity of the children are not consistently reported across studies. The underreporting of racial and ethnic data is problematic because it assumes that psychological wellbeing of youth is unaffected by race- or ethnic-related factors (Delgado-Romero et al., 2005) However, sociocultural factors such as acculturation, race, racial discrimination, and ethnic identity, have been identified as significant determinants of psychological wellbeing among diverse populations (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014b; Streit et al., 2020). Specific to Latinx populations, scholars have provided empirical evidence of how factors such as race, adherence to cultural values, and ethnic identity are significant determinants of Latinx mental health (Adames & Chavez-Dueñas, 2018; Borrell, 2005; Capielo Rosario et al.,

2020; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2015). When racial and ethnic breakdown in this literature is reported, White children represent close to 60% of the samples (Jackson & Fife, 2018; Beckmeyer et al., 2021; Beckmeyer et al., 2021). Because of the significant role sociocultural factors have on the mental health of Latinx populations, it is critical to consider how sociocultural factors such as adherence to Latinx cultural values, ethnic identity, and ethnic socialization may relate to how Latinx youth perceive parental divorce disruption.

Effects of Parental Divorce in Latinx Adolescents

It is important to note the variability of divorce rates among Latinx groups. Patterns of divorced have been seen to vary by country of origin, class, education, and race (Falicov, 2014). For example, families of Mexican origin have the lowest divorce rate across Latinx families (Falicov, 2014). Meanwhile, Puerto Rican families have a similar divorce rate to Black and African American families, and Cuban families divorce more than Mexican families but tend to remain in the same household even after the divorce (Falicov, 2014). Differences across participants' race, class, education, acculturation, and adherence to religious and Latinx cultural values have been offered as potential explanations for these within group differences (Falicov, 2014; Arredondo et al., 2014).

Literature on parental divorce and the psychological wellbeing and development of Latinx adolescents is limited. In one of the few studies that have included diverse samples, Lopez et al., (2000) found that how the parental marital status of White, Latinx, and Black college students is indicative of their intimate adult relationships and attachment styles later in life. More recently, using a sample of 431 Latinx undergraduate

college students, Riggio & Valenzuela (2011) showed that the quality of the parent-child relationship post-divorce was related to how these children perceived social support. In a study by Hinojosa (1999), Latinx adolescents reported fewer positive perceptions of themselves following the divorce of their parents. The same study showed that Latinx girls also reported more anxiety and viewed their families as less adaptive compared to the Latinx boys in the study (Hinojosa, 1999). In one of the few studies that have considered the role Latinx cultural values (a set of shared set of values and customs) may have on the psychological outcomes, Latinx children of divorced parents were associated with significantly higher negative affect among adolescents who had stronger adherence to cultural values like *familismo*, or a strong family loyalty (Mechanic & Hansell, 1989). Together, these studies underscore the importance of considering how sociocultural factors and perceptions of disruptions influence youth and adolescent outcomes regarding parental divorce. These outcomes have implications for influencing the psychological wellbeing of Latinx youth. Accordingly, in this study I will examine Latinx youth from divorced households perceived disruption of their parents' divorce and how the perceived disruptions affect adherence to cultural values, ethnic socialization, and ethnic identity.

Sociocultural Factors that May Affect Perceptions about Divorce

Latinx Cultural Values and Parental Divorce

Researchers suggest that of the decision to divorce among Latinx families could be in part influenced by their adherence to cultural values that prize and prioritize family cohesion and sacrifice (Falicov, 2016; Arredondo et al., 2014; Herrero & Garcia, 2007). Cultural values are defined as awareness to, “culturally related knowledge, behaviors, beliefs, attitudes, and values” (Knight et al., 2014). While some cultural values are cross-

cultural (i.e., collectivism and individualism), others are culture specific (Schwartz et al., 2010). Multiple Latinxs cultural values are believed to influence familial and interpersonal relationships within Latinx families. These include: *familiamo*, *respeto*, spirituality, *marianismo*, and *machismo* (Arredondo et al., 2014; Calzada et al., 2010; Delgado-Romero et al., 2013; Mayo, 1997; Falicov 2016). *Familismo* refers to family togetherness, keeping the family whole by any means, and placing high values on needs of the family rather than the individual (Arredondo et al., 2014). *Respeto* is showing respect to elders within and outside the family unit. Spirituality refers to devotion to religious beliefs and institutions and looking to them for guidance in times of trouble (Arredondo et al., 2014). Latinx families may also endorse cultural values that adhere to patriarchal gender norms like *marianismo* and *machismo*. *Marianismo* are expectations Latina women are expected to uphold, as it entails taking care of and keeping the family together, motherhood, sacrifice, and submissiveness (Delgado-Romero et al., 2013). *Machismo* is defined as hyper-masculinity, avoidance of all things feminine, emotional avoidance, and physical toughness (Mayo, 1997). For example, these values can be shown as a child not talking back and showing respect to an elder or a Latina mother's personal sense of responsibility of keeping the family together (Calzada et al., 2010, Arredondo et al., 2014). Together, these cultural values are thought to inform how members within the family interact with one another privately and publicly. This interaction shows how being socialized into practicing and adhering to cultural values informs an individual's behavior.

Latinx Ethnic Identity, Ethnic Socialization, and Parental Divorce

Beyond informing how members of the same family relate to each other, cultural values also are critical to how members of the same ethnic or racial group create a sense of cultural identity and belongingness to other members of the same group (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014a; Tajfel, 1981). According to Umaña-Taylor and colleagues (2004), ethnic identity is a component of an individual's social self, that already comprised of various social identities, which is linked to an ethnic background. Cultural values are also believed to inform how individuals within the same groups behave and interact with one another (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014b; Tajfel, 1981; Knight et al., 2014). These interactions are in turn informed by the socialization individuals receive about cultural values, roles, and responsibilities associated with their ethnic group (Streit et al., 2020). Cultural values also inform familial wellbeing and child behaviors and self-esteem. Torro and Nieri (2018) found in their study that because of acculturation (the process of assimilating into a dominant culture), children of Latinx families were shown to have lower self-esteem and greater aggression if they did not endorse traditional Latinx cultural values at the same level as their parents. This study demonstrates how, aside from psychological wellbeing, the disassociation from traditional cultural values is also shown to influence adolescent self-esteem and behavior. This scholarship highlights the need to understand how adherence to Latinx cultural values informs individual wellbeing, familial dynamics, and group interaction. In the current study, I examine how perceptions of disruptions resulting from parental divorce influences Latinx young adult's adherence to Latinx cultural values, ethnic socialization, and ethnic identity.

Beyond stigmatization and potential rejection, parental divorce in Latinx families could have important implications for Latinx children's cultural and ethnic socialization.

Umaña-Taylor and colleagues (2014b) defines ethnic socialization as the process of individuals becoming socialized into the culture of a specific ethnic group. An example of this is how parental divorce could disrupt or alter how Latinx youth may define or adhere to values such as *familismo*, which is learned through ethnic socialization. Disruption caused by parental divorce could also influence how Latinx adolescents see themselves as a member of their cultural and ethnic group. For example, Latinx adolescents of divorced parents might feel outcasted by other members of their family and community because of their parents' decision to act in ways that counter key cultural values. This rejection or stigmatizing could be a potential correlate of negative feelings about their Latinx culture and identity.

Disruptions associated with parental divorce could also lead to Latinx youth having less access or opportunities to engage in conversations and/or activities that expose them to rituals, traditions, and intragroup interactions that are central to cultural identity and behaviors (ethnic socialization). To illustrate, *familismo* may encourage Latinx families to prioritize time together (Falicov, 2016). These times of togetherness create opportunities for Latinx youth to learn about cultural and family rituals and history and strengthen *familismo* within the family unit. During these moments of family togetherness, other cultural values are taking place, such as *respeto* and the upholding of gender roles (Arredondo et. al, 2014, p. 20). The interaction of cultural values takes place during times of togetherness, however, disruption caused by divorce does not allow this process to take place. Dismantling the family unit does not allow Latinx youth to take part in these cultural practices. Deviating from this could negatively influence the cultural

and ethnic socialization of Latinx youth as they are not given opportunity to learn about what it means to be a member of the Latinx community.

The Ethnic Racial Identity Theory (ERIT) proposed by Umaña-Taylor and colleagues (2014b), provides a framework for understanding how parental divorce in Latinx families could affect Latinx adolescents' adherence to Latinx cultural values, ethnic identity, and how they may perceive disruptions associated with parental divorce. According to ERIT, an individual's sense of belongingness to their racial and ethnic group develops overtime through three distinct phases (exploration, affirmation, resolution). Ethnic racial identity (ERI) is said to take place on a developmental timeline and is informed by interaction with the cognitive milestones and interactions with the socioenvironmental contexts. Exploration commences in adolescence as youth within this developmental period begin to explore their identity through ethnic-racial self-identification. Affirmation solidifies and further embeds a sense of belongingness an individual holds within their specific ethnic and racial group through positive or negative feelings towards the group. Resolution is best described as the development of a secure sense of ethnic and racial identity to one's group through affirmation and a sense of belonging (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2004; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014b). Parental divorce can drastically disrupt ERI, especially during a critical developmental period such as adolescence. Since Latinx adolescents are learning cultural values during the adolescence period (e.g. *familismo*), parental divorce can impact a stage like exploration, as an adolescent might not see themselves aligned with Latinx culture because of the undoing of the family unit. This has potential for adolescents to develop negative feelings towards

Latinx culture (affirmation), which can lead to feeling as though they do not belong (resolution).

ERI socialization starts within the family unit amongst parents and grandparents. Positive ethnic socialization from the parents of Latinx youth has been shown to increase academic performance and social competence, and lower levels of depression (Kim et al., 2014; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014a; Streit et al., 2020; Lorenzo-Blanco et al., 2012). Ethnic socialization has even shown in the ways grandparents interact and show support to their children and how that influences wellbeing amongst the grandchildren. A study by Zeiders and colleagues (2015) showed how grandmothers' adherence to *familismo* and showing support towards their pregnant, adolescent daughter is predictive of the academic performance and social competence of their grandchildren. Additionally, Latina adolescents and women tend to experience more disruption regarding their wellbeing if ethnic identity and values are not as endorsed within the family unit (Diaz & Bui, 2017; Corona et al., 2019; Lorenzo-Blanco et al., 2012). Because of the disruption to parent-child relationships observed as a consequence of parental divorce, it is important to consider how divorce may influence this process of ethnic socialization and ethnic identity.

Study Hypotheses

The purpose of this study is to understand how Latinx young adults perceived parental divorce as youth and how these perceived disruptions relate to adherence to Latinx cultural values, ethnic socialization, and ethnic identity. In turn, understanding how parental divorce could impact ethnic socialization could inform the psychological health and wellbeing of Latinx youth and young adults. Endorsement of Latinx cultural

values, ethnic identity, ethnic socialization, and perceived family disruption will be measured in this study. Based on this review of the literature, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

1. More perceptions of parental divorce disruptions will be negatively correlated with Latinx cultural values.
2. More perceptions of parental divorce disruptions will be negatively correlated with Latinx ethnic identity exploration, affirmation, and resolution.
3. More perceptions of parental divorce disruptions will be negatively correlated with ethnic socialization.
4. The association between perceptions of parental divorce and Latinx cultural values and ethnic identity will depend on the level of ethnic socialization.

Specifically, I hypothesize that:

- a. The association between perceptions of parental divorce and Latinx cultural values will be weaker for young adults with lower levels of ethnic socialization.
- b. The association between perceptions of parental divorce and Latinx ethnic

identity will be stronger for young adults with higher levels of ethnic socialization.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

Procedures

Sample

A total of 188 participants were recruited to take part in this study, however, after undergoing data cleaning procedures (evaluating individual survey completions and responses to filter-questions) the final sample size was reduced to 65. Within the cleaning procedure, participants who failed the five validity questions and who had more than 25% missing data were not included in this study. Participants (n=65) in this study consisted of young adults, ages 18 – 25, who identified as being Latina/o/e/x and/or Hispanic.

Average participant age was n=23.25 years old with a standard deviation of 1.82. The majority of the participants identified as second generation (n=29), followed by first generation (n=17), third generation (n=13), and fourth generation (n=6). Ethnic identification was determined through familial heritage deriving from Latin American countries. Countries of familial origin included: Mexico (47.7%), Puerto Rico (3.1%), Cuba (3.1%), Columbia (3.1%), Guatemala (3.1%), and Nicaragua (3.1%). It is important to recognize a participant who identified as being Tejano rather than Latina/o/e/x or Hispanic.

Recruitment and Procedures

Recruitment study was conducted via advertisements and digital flyers on social media platforms and professional academic listservs like the National Latinx Psychological Association. Data was collected between April 18 and May 6, 2022. Participants were the able to access a Qualtrics link which gave them access to the study

survey. Upon activating the survey link, participants were directed to the informed consent page, which familiarized them with the study's objectives and procedures. Once consent was given, participants were then able to participate in the study.

Measures

Participants were asked to complete five questionnaires to assess adherence to Latinx mainstream cultural values, Latinx ethnic identity, divorce-based family disruption, ethnic socialization, and demographics.

Demographic Questionnaire. The demographic questionnaire asked for participants' a variety of questions regarding age, place of birth, years living in the United States, generational status, gender, and race/ethnicity. Additionally, participants were also asked regarding their parents' current marital status and length of time both parents have been separated.

Cultural Values. Level of agreement towards Latinx cultural values was assessed using the Mexican American Cultural Values Scale (MACVS; Knight et al., 2010). The MACVS is a 55-item measure with nine subscales designed to analyze Mexican American and White American values. Given study research questions, only the Mexican American subscales (6) were assessed. Specifically, using the MACVS, endorsement of familism-support, familism-obligations, familism-referent, respect, religion, and traditional gender norms was assessed. Participants respond along a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = *not at all agree* and 5 = *completely agree*) with higher scores indicating stronger adherence to each values. Items within the MACVS six Latinx values subscale include: "Parents should teach their children that the family always comes first" (*Familism-Support*), "Children should never question their parents' decisions" (*Respect*),

“God is first, family is second” (*Religion*) “Children should be taught that it is their duty to care for their parents when their parents get old” (*Familism-Obligation*), “Children should always do things to make their parents happy” (*Familism-Referent*), and “Mothers are the main people responsible for raising children” (*Traditional Gender Roles*). In this current study, internal consistency for each subscale is as follows: *Familism-Support*: .859, *Respect*: .872, *Religion*: .948, *Familism-Obligation*: .727, *Familism-Referent*: .839, and *Traditional Gender Roles*: .860.

Latinx Ethnic Identity. The Ethnic Identity Scale (EIS; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2004) assessed participants’ ethnic identity development. The EIS is a 17-item scale designed to measure ethnic identity development across three domains: exploration (“I have participated in activities that have taught me about my ethnicity”), resolution (“I understand how I feel about my ethnicity”), and affirmation (“I feel negative about my ethnicity”). Responses were recorded on a four-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*describes me a little*) to 4 (*describes me very well*). After completing this scale, each participant receives an average score for each subscale. Higher scores on exploration suggest that a participant has engaged in activities to learn more about their ethnicity. High scores on resolution indicates a positive resolve in what participants’ ethnic identity means to them. Lower scores in affirmation indicates a negative point of view towards one’s ethnic identity. In the current sample, internal consistency was measured at .758 for exploration, .921 for resolution, and .909 for affirmation.

Latinx Ethnic Socialization. Ethnic socialization was measured through a revised version of the Familial Ethnic Socialization Measure (FESM; Umaña-Taylor & Fine 2004), which consisted of 12 items. Responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert-

Type scale; 1 = *not at all true* and 5 = *very much*. Sample questions from this measure include: “My family teaches me about my ethnic/cultural background”, “My family teaches my about the values and beliefs of our ethnic/cultural background”, and “My family feels a strong attachment to our ethnic/cultural background”. At the end of the assessment, each participant receives a summed score, with higher scores suggesting stronger family ethnic socialization. In the current sample, the internal consistency was measured at .944.

Parental Divorce Disruptions. Family disruption was measured through an adapted version of the modified Children’s Beliefs About Parental Divorce Scale (CBAPDS; Kurdek & Berg, 1987). The CBAPDS is a 36-item scale that assesses disruption caused by parental divorce across six subscales: peer ridicule and avoidance (“I’d rather play alone than with other kids”), paternal blame (“My father is usually a nice person”), fear of abandonment (“I feel that my parents still love me”), maternal blame (“My mother is usually a nice person”), hope of reunification (“My parents will always live apart”), and self-blame (“My parents often argue with each other after I misbehave”). Participant responses were recorded on a 2-point dichotomous scale, 1 = *yes* and 0 = *no*. At the end of the assessment, an index of disruption was created for each subscale. Higher index scores suggest more perceived disruptions per scale.

Analysis

All analyses were completed using SPSS Version 27 (IBM, 2020). The reliability of each scale and subscale was evaluated using Cronbach’s alpha reliability. To answer the first research question, levels of disruptions was determined through measuring centrality of means and the standard deviation of this domain. Hypotheses 2 – 4 were

tested by running bivariate correlations between disruptions, Latinx cultural values, ethnic socialization, and ethnic identity. To ensure there would be enough power to test the first four hypothesis, a post-hoc power analysis using GPower 3.1 was ran. The power analysis suggested that a sample of 65 would be sufficient to run the proposed bivariate correlations (Power $[1 - \beta \text{ error probability}] = .99$). However, not enough power was met to test the last hypothesis (Power $[1 - \beta \text{ error probability}] = .62$), so testing whether ethnic socialization would moderate the association between perceptions of parental divorce disruptions, cultural values, and ethnic identity was not able to be completed.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Parental Divorce Disruptions

Disruptions reported by participants indicated high scores in all subscales of the CBAPDS. Peer ridicule and acceptance ($m = 7.06, SD = 1.17 p < .001$), paternal blame ($m = 6.87, SD = 1.29 p < .001$), fear of abandonment ($m = 8.89, SD = 1.18 p < .001$), maternal blame ($m = 8.76, SD = .91 p < .001$), hope of reunification ($m = 9.74, SD = 1.65 p < .001$), and self-blame ($m = 9.98, SD = 1.77 p < .001$) all displayed higher levels of disruptions for participants.

Parental Divorce and Latinx Cultural Values

Results from a bivariate correlation between the six different CBAPDS and three MACVS scales showed that fear of abandonment ($r = -.36, p = .009$), hope of reunification ($r = -.36, p = .009$), and self-blame ($r = -.38, p = .005$) were negatively associated with traditional gender roles. No significant correlations were found between peer acceptance, paternal blame, and maternal blame and gender roles (see Table 1). A negative association was also observed between hope of reunification and respect ($r = -2.85, p = .038$) and familism-support ($r = -3.46, p = .011$). There were no significant correlations between religion, familism-obligation, familism-referent, and traditional gender roles. Together, these results provide partial support for the first hypothesis. Specifically, in the current sample concerns about a hopeful reunification between parents and adherence to traditional gender norms were found to be influenced the most by parental divorce.

Parental Divorce Disruptions and Latinx Ethnic Identity Exploration, Affirmation, and Resolution

To assess whether parental divorce was negatively correlated with Latinx ethnic identity exploration, affirmation, and resolution, a second correlation was run between the six different domains of parental divorce disruption and ethnic identity exploration, affirmation, and resolution (Table 2). Significant positive correlations were found between fear of abandonment, exploration ($r = .28, p = .044$) and resolution ($r = .32, p = .017$). However, affirmation was negatively correlated with fear of abandonment ($r = -.28, p = .037$). Positive correlations were also found between self-blame and acceptance ($r = .45, p < .001$) and resolution ($r = .37, p = .005$). These two domains within the CBAPDS were the only ones which produced significant results. Peer ridicule and acceptance, paternal blame, maternal blame, and hope of reunification did not yield significant correlations.

Parental Divorce Perceptions and Latinx Ethnic Identity Socialization

A final correlation was calculated to examine the association between different domains of parental divorce disruptions and ethnic identity socialization. However, as shown on table 3, no significant associations were found between peer ridicule and acceptance, paternal blame, fear of abandonment, maternal blame, hope of reunification, and self-blame and ethnic identity socialization. Due to insufficient power given the small sample size, I determined it was inappropriate to assess the moderating effect of Latinx ethnic identity socialization on the association between parental divorce disruptions, Latinx cultural values, and Latinx ethnic identity.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Perceived disruptions endorsed by Latinx young adults as youth were high across all domains of the CBAPDS. The CBAPDS was first conducted on a primarily white, highly educated sample and did not have any cultural considerations. Compared to the current study, it additionally produced low means and standard deviations (CBAPDS; Kurdek & Berg, 1987). Adherence to cultural values could explain why higher disruptions were reported amongst this sample. The separation of the family unit would deviate from cultural values, which in turn, could lead to more disruptions. The results also follow suit with previous studies which also found negative perceptions of the self and family (Hinojosa, 1999) and higher disruptions for those with a strong adherence to cultural values (Mechanic & Hansell, 1989).

However, in this study, I found that the association between perceived disruptions and Latinx cultural values varied across the different domains of disruptions related to the divorce of their parents. For example, there were negative associations between endorsing traditional gender roles and not having a fear of abandonment, doubt towards parental reunification, and rejection of self-blame behaviors. Additionally, there were negative associations found between adherence to the cultural values of respect and family supportiveness and a disbelief parents would reunite after their separation. The Latinx cultural values of religion, familism-obligation, and familism-referent appeared to not have been altered. The data displays a split between the association of perceived disruptions of parental divorce and adherence to Latinx cultural values.

Various association was observed between Latinx ethnic identity and parental divorce. A positive correlation was discovered between a fear of abandonment and the exploration and resolution of one's ethnic identity. However, affirmation of an ethnic identity was low if associated with a high fear of abandonment during parental divorce. Additionally, self-blame was negatively associated with an affirmation towards one's ethnic identity but positively associated with a resolution towards it. These results indicate a negative association between fear of abandonment and engagement in self-blame and holding positive beliefs regarding ethnic identity and a resolution regarding their belief. These results seem to suggest that while parental divorce is associated with several disruptions, these could also create opportunities for youth to explore and make sense of their ethnic identity. This appears to be especially the case if there was a strong endorsement of a fear of abandonment after parental divorce. This could possibly be explained by the fear of losing connections to the family unit. Connections could help minimize self-blame, which in then increase affirmation, provide social support, and continue engaging in the ethnic socialization process.

What was discovered in the data was that Latinx young adults' perceptions of parental divorce did not influence how their families engaged in ethnic socialization. It appears that the ethnic socialization process within the family still occurred, despite parental divorce. This is evident by no significant correlation being found within the data. There could be multiple explanations as to why no associations were found. Regardless of the breakup of the family, family members were still engaging in the ethnic socialization process within their respected households. There is still a responsibility

parents follow into guiding their children into following culturally relevant traditions and practices and the dissolution of the family unit would not prevent that from doing so.

Clinical Implications

Moving forward, clinicians should be aware of how Latinx young adult client's perceptions of their parents' divorce could influence their adherence towards cultural values and ethnic identity formation. For example, disruptions associated with parental divorce may provide alternative opportunities for young adults to engage in the process of ethnic identity exploration and formation. Therefore, clinicians should be intentional about providing culturally relevant care and provide opportunities to engage and explore ethnic identity to their Latinx young adult clients.

Additionally, previous studies have proven the importance of endorsing cultural values and its positive influence regarding psychological wellbeing (Torro & Nieri, 2018). It would be beneficial for Latinx clients to have a clinician who could support and provide resources to helping them connect with their cultural heritage. Especially if these clients are from divorced households. For example, holding culturally based group therapy sessions, providing handouts to community events, and distributing resources for support groups. This could then aid in increasing positive mental health and psychological wellbeing.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Multiple limitations should be considered when interpreting the results of this study. First, this was a correlational and cross-sectional design based on recollections of past experiences. Future studies could benefit from having participants who are able to provide immediate perceptions rather than relying on memories. A longitudinal study

could better observe ethnic socialization occur firsthand and receive the in-the-moment perceptions of youth as they navigate their parent's divorce. In addition, a qualitative study could also prove to be beneficial as participants would be allowed more freedom to verbalize their own perceptions of their parents' divorce and how disruptions associated with parental divorce impeded or facilitated adherence to cultural values and ethnic identity formation.

Another limitation to note is that this study was primarily advertised on academic social media platforms and listservs. Allowing the study to be advertised in community and low-serviced areas would have allowed for more participant engagement. Additionally, the survey for the study was only available in English. Providing a secondary survey in Spanish would be more inclusive and take into consideration participants who are not fluent or are not comfortable with reading in English. Additionally, this could have allowed for more participation within the study. Future studies should focus on addressing participants current perceptions rather than relying on memories and be inclusive towards non-English speaking participants.

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APPENDIX A

DATA COLLECTED APRIL – MAY 2022

Table 1

Parental Divorce and Latinx Cultural Values

		MACVS_REL	MACVS_SUP	MACVS_FAM-OB	MACVS_FAM-REF	MACVS_RESP	MACVS_TGE N	CBDAPD_PeerRidAccept	CBDAPD_PatBlame	CBDAPD_FearAband	CBDAPD_MatBlame	CBDAPD_HopeReun	CBDAPD_SelfBlame	
Spearman's rho	MACVS_REL	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.527**	.444**	.562**	.573**	.476**	-.008	.010	-.253	-.052	-.088	-.124
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	.956	.941	.065	.706	.529	.373
		N	65	65	65	63	65	64	54	54	54	54	53	54
	MACVS_SUP	Correlation Coefficient	.527**	1.000	.741**	.707**	.709**	.525**	-.082	-.127	-.072	-.045	-.384**	.009
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	.556	.362	.603	.745	.004	.946
		N	65	65	65	63	65	64	54	54	54	54	53	54
	MACVS_FAM-OB	Correlation Coefficient	.444**	.741**	1.000	.761**	.745**	.574**	-.280*	.114	-.213	.146	-.210	-.086
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	.	<.001	<.001	<.001	.040	.412	.123	.292	.131	.535
		N	65	65	65	63	65	64	54	54	54	54	53	54
	MACVS_FAM-REF	Correlation Coefficient	.562**	.707**	.761**	1.000	.811**	.505**	-.060	-.029	-.143	.135	-.104	-.136
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	.	<.001	<.001	.668	.837	.307	.335	.461	.330
		N	63	63	63	63	63	62	53	53	53	53	52	53
	MACVS_RESP	Correlation Coefficient	.573**	.709**	.745**	.811**	1.000	.595**	-.110	-.119	-.129	.022	-.281*	-.126
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	.	<.001	.428	.391	.351	.876	.042	.362
	N	65	65	65	63	65	64	54	54	54	54	53	54	
MACVS_TGEN	Correlation Coefficient	.476**	.525**	.574**	.505**	.595**	1.000	-.143	.033	-.269	.027	-.391**	-.256	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	.	.306	.815	.051	.847	.004	.064	
	N	64	64	64	62	64	64	53	53	53	53	52	53	
CBDAPD_PeerRidAccept	Correlation Coefficient	-.008	-.082	-.280*	-.060	-.110	-.143	1.000	.106	.155	-.137	.098	.255	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.956	.556	.040	.668	.428	.306	.	.446	.264	.324	.487	.063	
	N	54	54	54	53	54	53	54	54	54	54	53	54	
CBDAPD_PatBlame	Correlation Coefficient	.010	-.127	.114	-.029	-.119	.033	.106	1.000	-.080	.283*	.155	.102	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.941	.362	.412	.837	.391	.815	.446	.	.564	.038	.269	.464	
	N	54	54	54	53	54	53	54	54	54	54	53	54	
CBDAPD_FearAband	Correlation Coefficient	-.253	-.072	-.213	-.143	-.129	-.269	.155	-.080	1.000	.084	.199	.551**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.065	.603	.123	.307	.351	.051	.264	.564	.	.547	.152	<.001	
	N	54	54	54	53	54	53	54	54	54	54	53	54	
CBDAPD_MatBlame	Correlation Coefficient	-.052	-.045	.146	.135	.022	.027	-.137	.283*	.084	1.000	.034	.133	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.706	.745	.292	.335	.876	.847	.324	.038	.547	.	.811	.338	
	N	54	54	54	53	54	53	54	54	54	54	53	54	
CBDAPD_HopeReun	Correlation Coefficient	-.088	-.384**	-.210	-.104	-.281*	-.391**	.098	.155	.199	.034	1.000	.283*	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.529	.004	.131	.461	.042	.004	.487	.269	.152	.811	.	.040	
	N	53	53	53	52	53	52	53	53	53	53	53	53	
CBDAPD_SelfBlame	Correlation Coefficient	-.124	.009	-.086	-.136	-.126	-.256	.255	.102	.551**	.133	.283*	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.373	.946	.535	.330	.362	.064	.063	.464	<.001	.338	.040	.	
	N	54	54	54	53	54	53	54	54	54	54	53	54	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 2

Parental Divorce Disruptions and Latinx Ethnic Identity Exploration, Affirmation and Resolution

		CBDAPD_Peer RidAccept	CBDAPD_PatB lame	CBDAPD_Fear Aband	CBDAPD_Mat Blame	CBDAPD_Hop eReun	CBDAPD_Self Blame	FESM_Overt	FESM_Covert
CBDAPD_PeerRidAccept	Pearson Correlation	1	.105	.155	-.076	.144	.200	-.189	-.172
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.451	.263	.587	.305	.147	.183	.229
	N	54	54	54	54	53	54	51	51
CBDAPD_PatBlame	Pearson Correlation	.105	1	-.035	.295*	.215	.106	.082	-.011
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.451		.804	.031	.122	.445	.568	.941
	N	54	54	54	54	53	54	51	51
CBDAPD_FearAband	Pearson Correlation	.155	-.035	1	.063	.238	.550**	.112	.235
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.263	.804		.652	.086	<.001	.436	.097
	N	54	54	54	54	53	54	51	51
CBDAPD_MatBlame	Pearson Correlation	-.076	.295*	.063	1	-.005	.032	-.248	-.226
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.587	.031	.652		.969	.817	.079	.111
	N	54	54	54	54	53	54	51	51
CBDAPD_HopeReun	Pearson Correlation	.144	.215	.238	-.005	1	.258	-.025	-.085
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.305	.122	.086	.969		.063	.862	.552
	N	53	53	53	53	53	53	50	51
CBDAPD_SelfBlame	Pearson Correlation	.200	.106	.550**	.032	.258	1	.126	.240
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.147	.445	<.001	.817	.063		.377	.090
	N	54	54	54	54	53	54	51	51
FESM_Overt	Pearson Correlation	-.189	.082	.112	-.248	-.025	.126	1	.820**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.183	.568	.436	.079	.862	.377		<.001
	N	51	51	51	51	50	51	57	56
FESM_Covert	Pearson Correlation	-.172	-.011	.235	-.226	-.085	.240	.820**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.229	.941	.097	.111	.552	.090	<.001	
	N	51	51	51	51	51	51	56	57

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3

Parental Divorce Perceptions & Latinx Ethnic Identity Socialization Correlation

			CBDAPD_Peer RidAccept	CBDAPD_PatB lame	CBDAPD_Fear Aband	CBDAPD_Mat Blame	CBDAPD_Hop eReun	CBDAPD_Self Blame	FESM_Overt	FESM_Covert
Spearman's rho	CBDAPD_PeerRidAccept	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.106	.155	-.137	.098	.255	-.178	-.160
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.446	.264	.324	.487	.063	.212	.262
		N	54	54	54	54	53	54	51	51
	CBDAPD_PatBlame	Correlation Coefficient	.106	1.000	-.080	.283*	.155	.102	.056	-.058
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.446	.	.564	.038	.269	.464	.698	.685
		N	54	54	54	54	53	54	51	51
	CBDAPD_FearAband	Correlation Coefficient	.155	-.080	1.000	.084	.199	.551**	.133	.276*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.264	.564	.	.547	.152	<.001	.351	.050
		N	54	54	54	54	53	54	51	51
	CBDAPD_MatBlame	Correlation Coefficient	-.137	.283*	.084	1.000	.034	.133	-.173	-.193
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.324	.038	.547	.	.811	.338	.224	.174
		N	54	54	54	54	53	54	51	51
	CBDAPD_HopeReun	Correlation Coefficient	.098	.155	.199	.034	1.000	.283*	.016	-.048
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.487	.269	.152	.811	.	.040	.911	.736
		N	53	53	53	53	53	53	50	51
	CBDAPD_SelfBlame	Correlation Coefficient	.255	.102	.551**	.133	.283*	1.000	.109	.246
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.063	.464	<.001	.338	.040	.	.449	.082
		N	54	54	54	54	53	54	51	51
	FESM_Overt	Correlation Coefficient	-.178	.056	.133	-.173	.016	.109	1.000	.770**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.212	.698	.351	.224	.911	.449	.	<.001
		N	51	51	51	50	51	51	57	56
	FESM_Covert	Correlation Coefficient	-.160	-.058	.276*	-.193	-.048	.246	.770**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.262	.685	.050	.174	.736	.082	<.001	.
		N	51	51	51	51	51	51	56	57

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

APPENDIX B
ASU IRB APPROVAL



APPROVAL: EXPEDITED REVIEW

[Cristalis Capielo](#)
[CISA: Counseling and Counseling Psychology](#)

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Cristalis.Capielo@asu.edu

Dear [Cristalis Capielo](#):

On 4/6/2022 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	The Ethnic Identity Development and Socialization of Latinx Youth from Divorced Households
Investigator:	Cristalis Capielo
IRB ID:	STUDY00015769
Category of review:	
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CBAPD Scale.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions);• Consent Form.pdf, Category: Consent Form;• EIS with description.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions);• FESM English and Spanish.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions);• IRB Social Behavioral 2019_posted 09082021_4.docx, Category: IRB Protocol;• MACVS.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions);• Recruitment Methods.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials;

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The IRB approved the protocol from 4/6/2022 to 4/5/2027 inclusive. Three weeks before 4/5/2027 you are to submit a completed Continuing Review application and required attachments to request continuing approval or closure.

If continuing review approval is not granted before the expiration date of 4/5/2027 approval of this protocol expires on that date. When consent is appropriate, you must use final, watermarked versions available under the "Documents" tab in ERA-IRB.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

REMINDER - - Effective January 12, 2022, in-person interactions with human subjects require adherence to all current policies for ASU faculty, staff, students and visitors. Up-to-date information regarding ASU's COVID-19 Management Strategy can be found [here](#). IRB approval is related to the research activity involving human subjects, all other protocols related to COVID-19 management including face coverings, health checks, facility access, etc. are governed by current ASU policy.

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: Leonard Covarrubias