

Protective and promotive effects of Latino early adolescents' cultural assets against multiple types of discrimination

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This is the peer reviewed version of the following article:

Cavanaugh, A. M., Stein, G. L., Supple, A. J., Gonzalez, L. M., & Kiang, L. (2018). Protective and promotive effects of Latino early adolescents' cultural assets against multiple types of discrimination. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*. doi:10.1111/jora.12331

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Abstract:

Given adversity associated with discrimination, it is important to identify culturally relevant factors that may protect against its harmful effects. Using latent variable interactions, this study examined the moderating effects of cultural assets on the association between multiple types of discrimination and adolescents' adjustment. Participants included 174 seventh- and eighth-grade Latino adolescents (51% girls); majority were of Mexican origin. Peer discrimination was associated with higher internalizing symptoms, whereas cultural assets predicted higher academic motivation above and beyond racial–ethnic discrimination, demonstrating a promotive effect. Adolescents' Latino cultural assets also protected against higher levels of externalizing symptoms in the context of high peer discrimination and foreigner objectification. The discussion focuses on the conceptual and applied implications of these findings.

Keywords: discrimination | Latino/a adolescents | cultural assets

Article:

Latino youth are one of the fastest growing populations in the United States, representing nearly a quarter of the population under the age of 18; it is projected that by 2060 one out of three children will be Latino (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Consistent with García Coll et al.'s (1996) cultural-ecological model, racial–ethnic discrimination is a relatively common, stressful experience for Latino youth across multiple contexts of their lives (Perreira, Kiang, & Potochnick, 2013). Studies consistently reveal that racial–ethnic discrimination is associated with a host of negative developmental outcomes including lower academic motivation and performance and higher internalizing and externalizing symptoms (Armenta et al., 2013; Berkel

et al., 2010; Stein, Gonzalez, Cupito, Kiang, & Supple, 2013). The harmful effects of racial–ethnic discrimination is a key problem facing our nation because academic disengagement and poorer psychosocial adjustment is linked with increased risk for substance use problems, suicide and self-harm, and school dropout (Institute of Medicine (US) and National Research Council (US) Committee on the Science of Adolescence, 2011; Maynard, Salas-Wright, & Vaughn, 2015).

Cultural-ecological theorists have also argued that adolescents' experiences of discrimination vary by context of settlement (Perreira & Smith, 2007), and that diversified settlement patterns of Latino families to nontraditional receiving sites call for greater understanding of Latino adolescents' experiences within Latino emerging immigrant communities (Perreira & Smith, 2007). Emerging Latino communities tend to be less diverse in racial composition and have fewer ethnic group representations and access to resources (e.g., translators, culturally relevant support programs) compared to established Latino communities (Marrow, 2011). As a result, proximal contexts (e.g., schools) within emerging immigrant communities often may not support Latino adolescents' cultural socialization and traditions but instead may accentuate pressure for youth to assimilate to U.S. culture (Ko & Perreira, 2010). In these communities, discrimination may be even more frequent given newcomers' reports of ambivalence and hostility toward Latino families and Latino adolescents' greater fears of discrimination compared to counterparts from traditional receiving sites (i.e., Los Angeles; Marrow, 2011; Potochnick, Perreira, & Fuligni, 2012).

Yet, in the face of discrimination, studies have also found that Latino youth in emerging Latino immigrant communities displayed resilience despite experiencing adversity by relying on cultural strengths and protective factors (i.e., cultural values and traditions, increased family communication and support, racial–ethnic identity; Ko & Perreira, 2010; Perreira et al., 2013). Thus, it is important to consider both contextual influences and ways in which youth are active participants in shaping their experiences (Perreira & Smith, 2007). Examining resiliency factors is particularly important for youth in emerging immigrant communities as these populations continue to grow and are met with racial–ethnic tensions. Using data from a study of Latino (predominantly Mexican origin) youth within a unique cultural context of an emerging immigrant community in a semi-rural, southern U.S. locale, this study examined (1) the main effects of three types of racial–ethnic discrimination (i.e., peer, school-adult, and foreigner objectification), and (2) the potential main and (3) moderating effects of a higher order construct of Latino cultural assets for youth's internalizing and externalizing symptoms, and academic motivation.

Racial–Ethnic Discrimination and Youth's Key Developmental Outcomes

Contexts marked by discrimination and racism and low support are conceptualized as *inhibiting environments* because of their harmful effects on adolescents' developmental competencies (García Coll et al., 1996). School-based discrimination, assessed in this study as unfair and negative treatment from peers and school adults because of one's race and ethnicity (e.g., disliked, not trusted, shown less respect), has been associated with higher internalizing and externalizing symptoms and lower academic motivation and performance (Berkel et al., 2010; Gonzalez, Stein, Kiang, & Cupito, 2014; Stein et al., 2013). Some work examining unique

effects has found that peer discrimination predicted higher internalizing and externalizing symptoms, whereas teacher discrimination was significantly associated with poorer academic motivation and performance (Benner & Graham, 2013). An additional layer of racial–ethnic discrimination measured in this study is foreigner-based discrimination which includes overt verbal threats such as “Go back where you came from!” and more subtle microaggressions that denote difference such as “Where are you from?” or “Wow, how did you learn English so well?” (Armenta et al., 2013; Rivera, Forquer, & Rangel, 2010). This construct has been conceptualized as foreigner objectification because it stems from the perpetual foreigner stereotype which assumes a sense of “otherness” for people of color in which they are treated and viewed as foreigners within a society that privileges Whiteness (Q. Huynh, Devos, & Smalarz, 2011). The inclusion of foreigner objectification is important, particularly for U.S.-born Latino youth, who despite their U.S. citizenship will likely experience these microaggressions and may be left feeling that they do not belong in U.S. society (V. W. Huynh, 2012). Qualitative studies have begun to shed light on the experiences of Latino families within new receiving sites, particularly those in semi-rural southern locales, who maybe even more likely to feel marginalized and characterized as outsiders due to xenophobia, ambivalence, and fear from local non-Latino community members (Marrow, 2011). Studies on U.S.-born Latino college students and adults have linked foreigner objectification experiences with depressive symptoms and low levels of hope and life satisfaction above and beyond general discrimination (Armenta et al., 2013; Q. Huynh et al., 2011). V. W. Huynh (2012) also found that ethnic microaggressions, defined as assumptions of difference or foreignness, were associated with Latino and Asian American youth's elevated anxiety, anger, and stress.

Discrimination is a proximal and chronic stressor in the lives of Latino youth because perpetrators may be their peers, school adults, or community members (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). Indeed, research has shown that Latino youth experience discrimination from multiple sources (i.e., peers, school adults, and general others) and in multiple forms (i.e., school-based, foreigner-based), all of which contribute to the adversity that youth must overcome to engage in developmental tasks across cognitive, emotional, and social domains (Armenta et al., 2013; Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). Examining these three types of discrimination separately can provide greater understanding of the effects of discrimination on developmental competencies and motivational states (Umaña-Taylor, Tynes, Toomey, Williams, & Mitchell, 2015). In addition, increased specificity of pathways can provide critical information for intervention programs, especially given the limited research on early Latino adolescents living in emerging immigrant communities.

Promotive and Protective Effects of Cultural Assets

Although discrimination is damaging to adolescents' psychological, behavioral, and academic well-being, Latino youth and their families are active agents in the development of youth's competencies and many demonstrate resilience despite such adversity. As described by cultural-ecological theory (García Coll et al., 1996), families of color actively create *adaptive cultures* that help to protect against the harmful effects of discrimination by bolstering children's developmental competencies through culturally relevant mechanisms. Risk and resilience theory (Masten, Cutuli, Herbers, & Reed, 2009) explicates that youth's assets may operate as a protective or moderating effect, which decreases the negative impact of discrimination at high

levels. Youth's assets also may operate as a promotive effect by directly fostering positive motivational states and developmental competence regardless of risk level (i.e., direct or main effects). A burgeoning set of research studies with Latino youth and youth of color more broadly, has identified cultural values, racial–ethnic identity, and enculturative behaviors and knowledge as key cultural assets that promote positive youth development and protection against racial–ethnic discrimination (Neblett, Rivas-Drake, & Umaña-Taylor, 2012; Perreira & Smith, 2007; Stein et al., 2014). Specifically, two components of racial–ethnic identity of interest include positive beliefs about their ethnic and racial group (i.e., private regard), and beliefs that their racial–ethnic identity is central (i.e., ethnic centrality). We also examined youth's enculturation orientation, which is defined as an individual's orientation to their ethnic culture and reflects their cultural values at one point in time (Neblett et al. 2012; White, Knight, & Roosa 2014, 2015), and indicated in this study by enculturative behaviors, knowledge, and cultural values (i.e., familism). Most work on enculturation orientation (or cultural orientation) has focused on language and behavioral indicators (e.g., language preferences for home, media, and social relations), while less work has included cultural values (e.g., familism values) within the conceptualization of enculturation orientation (Neblett et al., 2012). Grounded in culturally informed theorizing (White et al., 2015), we selected these cultural assets because we sought to understand how an early adolescent's culturally based values, identity, behaviors, and knowledge *collectively* serve as a promotive or protective effect when encountering discrimination across multiple sources and forms.

Studies consistently have provided evidence for promotive effects of Latino youths' enculturative behaviors, racial–ethnic identity, and familism values on positive developmental outcomes and motivational states, including greater prosocial behaviors, academic motivation, and predicting lower levels of internalizing and externalizing symptoms (Kuperminc, Wilkins, Roche, & Alvarez-Jimenez, 2009; Stein et al., 2013; Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007). Although the specific mechanisms that explain these promotive effects continue to be explored, scholars have theorized that these cultural assets may promote youth's self-concept through positive messages and feelings about being an ethnic group member, provide adaptive coping strategies including greater coping resources (e.g., family support), and help youth cognitively appraise discrimination as a reflection of others' bias, ignorance, or prejudice rather than a reflection of self (Neblett et al., 2012).

Despite such theorizing, there has been mixed evidence of the protective effects of these key cultural assets across studies and outcomes of interest within the context of high discrimination. For example, several studies found a buffering effect of private regard/affirmation against the negative impact of discrimination (i.e., general and peer discrimination) on adolescents' externalizing symptoms, but not for internalizing symptoms or in the context of high adult discrimination (Toomey, Umaña-Taylor, Updegraff, & Jahromi 2013; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2015; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2011). Other studies found that private regard/affirmation and enculturative behaviors (e.g., language use, affiliation with ethnic culture) protected against the harmful effects of general discrimination for risky behaviors and depressive symptoms, but only for boys (Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007; Umaña-Taylor, Wong, Gonzales, & Dumka, 2012). Although some studies found evidence for protective functions of high familism in the context of other risk factors for adolescents' risky behaviors (i.e., deviant peers; Germán, Gonzales, & Dumka, 2009), little work has yet found buffering effects of familism values in the context of

high discrimination for adolescents' externalizing and internalizing symptoms or feelings of school belonging (Stein et al., 2013; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2011). Taken together, these mixed findings indicate that there is promise for the protective effects of racial–ethnic identity, enculturative behaviors, and familism values, but perhaps multiple cultural assets are required to protect against the harmful effects of high racial–ethnic discrimination across youth's psychosocial and academic adjustment outcomes. Given previous theoretical arguments for their importance (Neblett et al., 2012; White et al., 2015), we examined the potential protective effects of a higher order construct of youth's Latino cultural assets within the context of high racial–ethnic discrimination.

Cultural Asset Model

Cultural-ecological theory and empirical work have demonstrated that adolescence is a key developmental period during which youth internalize cultural attitudes and belief systems that influence their overarching identity, motivational processes, and behavioral responses to stress (Eccles, 1983; García Coll et al., 1996; Stein et al., 2014). Additionally, researchers have argued that youth who display culturally congruent behaviors and beliefs (i.e., enculturative behaviors and Latino cultural values), display positive beliefs about their ethnic and racial group (i.e., private regard), and view their racial–ethnic identity as central (i.e., ethnic centrality) will experience greater protection from discrimination because they are better able to attribute negative discriminatory feedback to the perpetrator's biases and prejudices while maintaining a positive sense of self (Berkel et al., 2010; Romero, Edwards, Fryberg, & Orduña, 2014; Sellers, Copeland-Linder, Martin, & Lewis, 2006). Little work to date has examined the protective and promotive effects of Latino youth's cultural assets as a higher order, latent construct within the context of multiple types of racial–ethnic discrimination and across youth's academic and psychosocial outcomes. Indeed, examining only one type of cultural asset (e.g., private regard) or partitioning out the uniqueness of each cultural asset or component of enculturation orientation (e.g., enculturative behaviors vs. familism values) may underestimate the protection provided by these cultural processes, particularly in the context of a harmful stressor like discrimination that may require youth to draw upon different aspects of their adaptive cultural identity and orientation (i.e., values, identity, behaviors, and knowledge). Thus, this study seeks to contribute to clarify the limited work that exists and provide greater understanding of protective and promotive effects of Latino early adolescents' cultural assets within the context of multiple types of discrimination for their academic and psychosocial well-being.

The Present Study

Utilizing latent variable modeling in structural equation modeling (SEM), we expected that Latino cultural assets would be associated with lower levels of internalizing and externalizing symptoms and higher levels of academic motivation. Given that little work is available on the protective role of Latino cultural assets across multiple types of racial–ethnic discrimination, we drew upon previous theoretical support (García Coll et al., 1996; Neblett et al., 2012) and hypothesized that Latino cultural assets would buffer or attenuate the negative effects of discrimination on Latino youths' internalizing and externalizing symptoms and academic motivation; in the context of high levels of cultural assets, discrimination would not predict youth's symptoms or academic motivation. With regard to the direct effects, we expected school-

adult discrimination to uniquely predict lower academic motivation, while peer discrimination would predict higher levels of internalizing and externalizing symptoms above and beyond the other types of racial–ethnic discrimination. We did not make specific hypotheses regarding the unique effects of foreigner objectification, as there is a lack of research that has explored these three types of racial–ethnic discrimination in the same study. We hypothesized that Latino youth's cultural assets would be associated with higher levels of academic motivation and lower levels of internalizing and externalizing symptoms.

This study contributes important information on the potential protective effects of youth's Latino cultural assets within an emerging immigrant community, which is critical as these communities may be characterized as more inhibiting due to xenophobia and less acceptance of Latino culture by local community members (Marrow, 2011). The strong methodological design (i.e., SEM) will account for measurement error in the manifest variables that define the latent variables and allow for more parsimonious tests of regression paths from discrimination to adolescents' outcomes (Bollen, 1989). In addition to child report of their externalizing symptoms, this study also included maternal report.

Method

Participants

This study included 176 Latino mothers and adolescents who ranged between the ages of 11 and 14. Youth participants were recruited from two middle schools in a central region of North Carolina and the ethnic composition of these schools consisted of majority Latino (40.6%), White (39.3%), and Black (14.5%) students. One adolescent from a set of twins was randomly excluded from current analyses, resulting in a sample of 175. Using full information maximum likelihood (FIML), one case was excluded due to missing information on gender in structural models 2–3 (when covariates were added into the models) resulting in a final analytic sample of 174. Adolescents, over half of which were girls (51%), were in seventh and eighth grades, and the majority had parents who were born in Mexico (mothers = 88%, fathers = 86%). Mothers and fathers had lived in the United States for an average of 15.67 ($SD = 4.61$) and 17.08 ($SD = 6.43$) years, respectively. The median family income was \$24,999 and, in the sample, ranged from less than \$5,000 to \$99,999. The youth sample primarily included participants who were born in the United States ($n = 151$, 86%) and of those who were not born in the United States ($n = 24$, 14%); the average age of immigration was 4.25 years of age ($SD = 4.12$). All youth were bilingual and fluent in English, with the exception of three adolescents who primarily spoke Spanish and completed the assessment in Spanish.

Procedure

Project staff visited two rural middle schools with large Latino populations and provided information about this study to school staff. Per internal review board guidelines, flyers and letters about the study were given to students and mailed home. Using school call lists of enrolled seventh- and eighth-grade Latino students, project staff called families to identify interested and eligible families based on the following criteria: (1) both biological parents were Latino, (2) the mother was the resident caregiver of the participating adolescent, and (3) youth

ranged between 11 and 14 years of age. A second phase of data collection included door-to-door home visits to recruit families who were not reached via phone calls. A total of 597 families were targeted for recruitment via phone or door-to-door recruitment. Of these, 16 families had moved (3%) and 217 were not located (e.g., disconnected numbers, families not home; 36%). Of the families who were contacted ($n = 364$), 47 were not eligible (13%), 125 declined (34%) and 16 consented but did not complete interviews (4%); 176 families consented and completed interviews (48%). Upon enrollment in the study, trained research assistants (including at least one Spanish-speaking assistant) visited families' homes to interview and administer questionnaires separately to the mother and the adolescent. All assessment materials were available in both Spanish and English and administered according to participants' language preference. Materials not originally available in Spanish were translated and back translated by a team of bilingual, bicultural project staff. Youth completed questions using a computer-assisted interview format, which lasted approximately 1.5 to 2 hr. Bilingual research assistants read responses out loud to mothers and then recorded responses on the survey. Following completion of the survey, research assistants distributed a \$10 gift card to the adolescent and \$20 gift card to the mother for their participation. Data were entered into protected computer databases and double-checked for validity.

Measures

Racial–ethnic discrimination. Adolescents reported on the extent to which they experienced receiving unfair treatment from peers and school-adults at school because of their ethnicity and race using the 7-item Peer and School-Adult Discrimination subscales of the Way Discrimination Scale (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004; Way, 1997). Sample items included “being insulted and called names” and “being treated unfairly.” Response choices ranged on a 5-point scale from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*all the time*). The subscales demonstrated adequate internal consistency (peer, $\alpha = .79$; school adult, $\alpha = .69$). Items were averaged and scored such that higher scores indicated higher levels of peer and school-adult discrimination, respectively. Foreigner objectification was assessed by a 4-item measure developed by Armenta et al. (2013). Adolescents reported on the extent to which they experienced discrimination events in the past year due to adolescents' ethnicity and race and others' assumptions of immigrant status. Sample items included “Had your American citizenship or residency questioned” and “Asked by strangers, ‘where are you from?’ because of your ethnicity/race.” Response choices were on a 4-point scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 4 (*five or more times*) and demonstrated adequate reliability ($\alpha = .71$). Items were averaged and scored such that higher scores indicated higher levels of foreigner objectification.

Latino cultural assets. To evaluate protection of youths' Latino cultural assets, a latent construct of enculturation orientation was created and indicated by a total of four manifest variables including enculturative behaviors and knowledge, racial–ethnic identity (i.e., private regard and centrality), and familism values, which are each described further below. Enculturative behaviors and knowledge assessed adolescents' knowledge and behavioral orientation toward their culture of origin using an adapted version for Latino populations of the Asian American Multidimensional Acculturation Scale (AAMAS; Chung, Kim, & Abreu, 2004). The 9-item subscale consists of items on cultural behavior and cultural knowledge, and uses a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not very much*) to 5 (*very much*). A sample item is “How much do you practice the traditions and keep the holidays of your own Latino culture of origin (e.g.

Mexican)?” Items were averaged and scored such that higher scores indicated higher levels of enculturative behaviors and knowledge. In this study, the scale demonstrated acceptable reliability ($\alpha = .82$), similar to previous research that used comparable adaptations of the culture of origin subscale from the Multidimensional Acculturation Scale measure for Latino populations (e.g., Zea, Asner-Self, Birman, & Buki, 2003; $\alpha = .94-.86$). Racial–ethnic identity was assessed using two 4-item measures: private regard scale (i.e., personal beliefs and feelings toward their racial–ethnic group) and centrality scale (i.e., importance of their racial–ethnic identity) from an adapted version for Latino populations of the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI; Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton, & Smith, 1997), which has been used successfully in previous research (Maxwell Johnson, Robinson Kurpius, Dixon Rayle, Arredondo, & Tovar-Gamero, 2005). Sample items include “I feel good about being a member of my ethnic group” (private regard), and “In general, being a member of my ethnic group is an important part of my self-image” (centrality). Both measures used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) and demonstrated acceptable reliability ($\alpha = .88$, private regard; $\alpha = .82$, centrality). Consistent with previous definitions (Stein et al., 2014), familism values included items on familism support (6 items), obligation (5 items), referent familism (5 items), and respect (8 items) and were assessed using an overall average score across these 24 items from the Mexican American Cultural Values Scale for Adolescents (MACVS; Knight et al., 2010). Response choices were on a 5-point subscale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*completely*) and the internal consistency for this measure was high ($\alpha = .93$).

Academic motivation. Academic motivation assessed youth's interest and valuing of school indicated by three manifest variables of utility value of school, intrinsic academic motivation, and value of academic success (Eccles, 1983; see also Kiang, Supple, Stein, & Gonzalez, 2012). The 3-item utility value of school subscale measured the usefulness of school for their everyday life currently, in the future, and after graduation on a scale ranging from 1 (*not all useful*) to 5 (*very useful*) and demonstrated adequate internal consistency ($\alpha = .71$). A sample item is, “How useful do you think the things you have learned in school are?” Intrinsic academic motivation was assessed using two items. Adolescents were asked, “In general, I find working on school work...” ranging from 1 (*very boring*) to 5 (*very interesting*). Youth also were asked, “How much do you like working on school work?”, which ranged from 1 (*a little*) to 5 (*a lot*). These two items were significantly correlated ($r = .62, p < .001$). The 6-item measure of adolescents' perceived importance of school and academic success ranged from 1 (*not important*) to 5 (*very important*) and demonstrated adequate internal consistency ($\alpha = .81$). A sample item assessed the importance “that you get an ‘A’ on almost every test.” Each subscale was averaged, respectively, to compute three manifest variables for the latent construct of academic motivation specified in Mplus. Previous work with Mexican American adolescents and ethnic minority adolescents more broadly has shown adequate reliability across the academic motivation indices ($\alpha = .74-.84$; Fuligni, 1997; Fuligni, Witkow, & Garcia, 2005).

Internalizing and externalizing symptoms. Adolescents' internalizing and externalizing symptoms were assessed using the broadband internalizing and externalizing scales of the Youth Self-Report Form (YSR; Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001). Mothers also reported on adolescents' externalizing symptoms using the broadband externalizing scale on the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL; Achenbach and Rescorla, 2001). The broadband internalizing scale assesses anxiety, withdrawn behavior, and depressive symptoms indicated by 21 items, whereas the broadband

externalizing scale assesses rule-breaking and aggressive behavior indicated by 30 items. Sample items include “I feel worthless or inferior” (internalizing) and “I am mean to others” (externalizing). Response choices are on a 3-point scale ranging from 0 (*not true*) to 2 (*very true or often true*). Both scales demonstrated high internal consistency ($\alpha = .89$, internalizing; $\alpha = .90$, externalizing—adolescent report; $\alpha = .90$, externalizing—mother report). Items were summed and scored such that higher values indicated higher levels of internalizing and externalizing symptoms, respectively.

Covariates. Gender (0 = girls and 1 = boys) and nativity status (0 = non-U.S.-born youth and 1 = U.S.-born youth) were included as covariates in the model.

Data Analytic Strategy

Using Mplus 7.3, latent variables were constructed to examine peer and school-adult discrimination, foreigner objectification, cultural assets, and academic motivation. To create a parsimonious model, peer and school-adult discrimination were indicated by three parcels per construct. A parcel is an indicator comprised of two or more items that have been averaged. Parcels were created in this study by conducting an exploratory factor analysis per construct and sorting the items based on their loadings from largest to smallest. Then, to create three parcels, the item with the largest loading was assigned to parcel 1, the second largest to parcel 2, the third largest to parcel 3, the fourth largest to parcel 3, the fifth largest to parcel 2, and so on. Once items were distributed, an average of the items per parcel was conducted. This approach helps to distribute the true variance across parcels (Kishton & Widaman, 1994). Cultural assets included enculturative behaviors and knowledge (i.e., cultural behaviors and knowledge from culture of origin), private regard, centrality, and familism values (support, obligation, referent, and respect). Academic motivation was indicated by utility value of school, intrinsic motivation, and the importance or value of academic success. Due to sample size constraints and the complexity of the model, internalizing and externalizing symptoms were specified as manifest variables. Using latent variable modeling via SEM, we examined (1) the fit of the proposed latent variable model, (2) main effects of peer and school-adult discrimination, foreigner objectification, and cultural assets on adolescents' academic and psychosocial outcomes, and (3) the moderating effect of cultural assets on the association between discrimination and psychosocial and academic outcomes.

First, a baseline model (Model 1) was tested to explore the model fit of these data with regard to the proposed measurement model (i.e., factor loadings of latent constructs) without any direct paths. Next, we tested a main effect model (Model 2) to examine the hypothesized direct effects from discrimination and cultural assets to youths' outcomes. Youth and maternal report of externalizing symptoms were tested in separate models. Lastly, a final model (Model 3) was tested to explore the moderating effects of cultural assets on the association between the three forms of racial–ethnic discrimination and youth's outcomes; interactions were tested in separate models. Good model fit was evaluated using a nonsignificant chi-square statistic, comparative fit indices ($CFI > .95$), the root mean squared error of approximation ($RMSEA < .05$), and the standardized root mean squared residual ($SRMR < .08$); acceptable model fit was evaluated using $CFI > .90$ and $RMSEA < .08$ (Brown & Cudeck, 1993; Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Results

Preliminary Analysis

First, descriptive statistics of key study variables were examined (see Table 1). With regard to potential covariates, boys were more likely to report lower internalizing symptoms than girls ($r = -.25, p < .01$) and U.S. born youth were more likely to report lower perceived importance of school and academic success ($r = -.21, p < .01$) and lower intrinsic motivation ($r = -.17, p < .05$) compared to their counterparts born outside of the United States. The baseline measurement model (Model 1) provided an adequate fit to these data $\chi^2(108) = 177.03, p = .00$; CFI = .93; RMSEA = .06; RMSEA 90% = .04–.08; SRMR = .06).

Baseline Main Effect Model: Model 2

As shown in Figure 1, the main effect model (with structural paths added, Model 2—youth report externalizing symptoms) also provided an adequate fit to these data ($\chi^2[164] = 237.10, p = .00$; CFI = .94; RMSEA = .05; RMSEA 90% = .04–.06; SRMR = .06), with covariates included in the model (i.e., gender and nativity). The main effect model with mother's report of youth's externalizing symptoms also provided an adequate fit to these data ($\chi^2[164] = 249.63, p = .00$; CFI = .92; RMSEA = .06; RMSEA 90% = .04–.07; SRMR = .06).

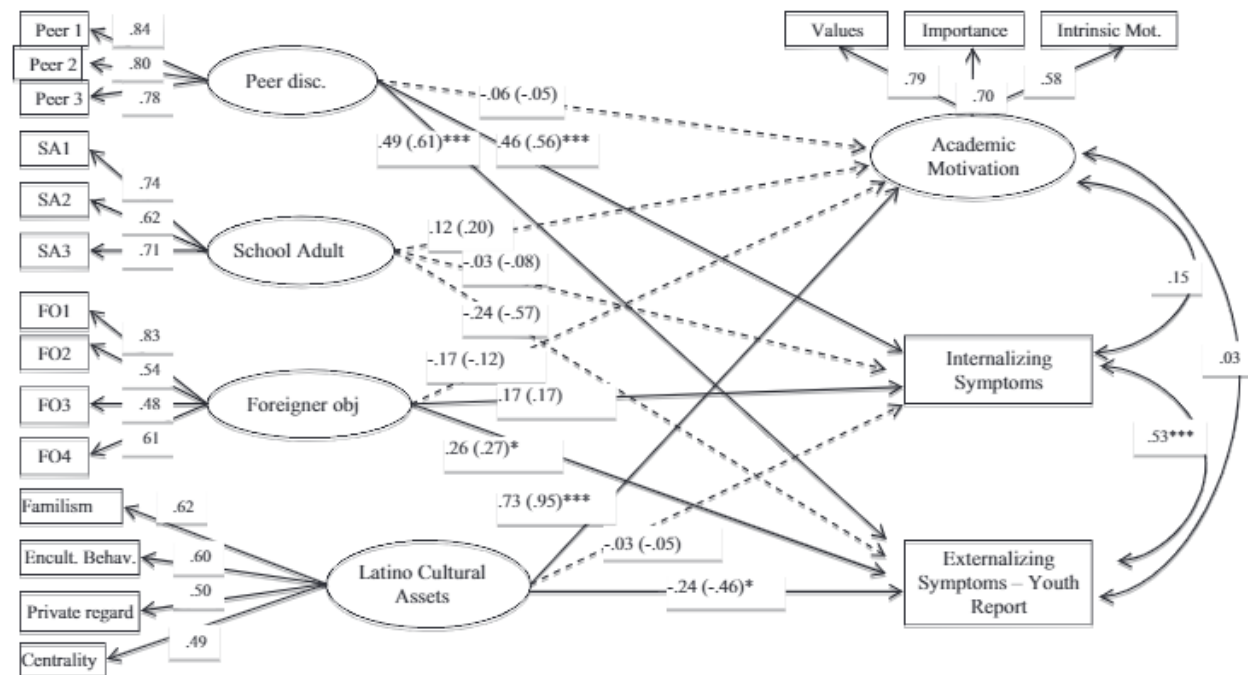


Figure 1. The structural model with youth reported outcomes fit these data well ($\chi^2[164] = 237.10, p = .00$; CFI = .94; RMSEA = .05; RMSEA 90% = .04–.06; SRMR = .06), with gender and nativity covariates in the model. Maternal report of youth externalizing symptoms was tested in a separate model and findings reported in text. Peer 1–3 = Parcels, peer discrimination. SA 1–3 = Parcels, school-adult discrimination. FO1–4 = Foreigner objectification indicators. Encult. Behav. = Enculturative behaviors and knowledge. Unstandardized coefficients are displayed in parentheses. Dashed lines indicate nonsignificant paths. The main effects of peer discrimination, foreigner objectification, and youth's Latino cultural assets on youth reported that externalizing symptoms were conditioned upon the presence of a significant interaction.

Table 1. Youth Report of Racial–Ethnic Discrimination, Latino Cultural Assets, and Adjustment Outcomes: Correlations and Descriptive Statistics

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Peer 1	—											
2. Peer 2	.66***	—										
3. Peer 3	.64***	.65***	—									
4. School adult 1	.41***	.32***	.35***	—								
5. School adult 2	.46***	.42***	.40***	.44***	—							
6. School adult 3	.52***	.38***	.29***	.55***	.44***	—						
7. Foreigner 1	.47***	.41***	.41***	.47***	.35***	.40***	—					
8. Foreigner 2	.26**	.23**	.24**	.35***	.21**	.15	.42***	—				
9. Foreigner 3	.30***	.37***	.30***	.07	.23**	.15	.35***	.29***	—			
10. Foreigner 4	.27***	.21**	.25**	.21**	.15	.22**	.51***	.41***	.35***	—		
11. Encultur.	-.17*	-.11	-.09	-.24***	-.06	-.14	-.06	-.15	.02	.02	—	
12. Private regard	-.08	.02	-.04	-.16*	.02	-.04	-.08	-.16	.07	-.03	.36***	—
13. Centrality	-.01	.03	-.01	-.09	.11	-.00	-.05	-.07	.11	.04	.38***	.82***
14. Familism	-.10	-.03	-.09	-.30***	-.06	-.09	-.11	-.22*	-.08	.06	.31***	.31***
15. Internalizing	.42***	.47***	.45***	.32***	.35***	.20*	.38***	.23**	.31***	.16*	-.03	.04
16. Extern.—Y	.45***	.45***	.37***	.28***	.25**	.19*	.39***	.25**	.31***	.15	-.19**	-.09
17. Extern.—M	.04	.16*	.14	.00	-.07	.02	.01	-.13	.00	-.01	-.23**	-.04
18. Values school	-.18*	-.02	-.16*	-.22**	-.14	-.07	-.13	-.08	-.02	-.11	.33***	.27***
19. Importance	-.14	-.12	-.03	-.16*	.02	-.10	-.17*	-.15	-.09	-.04	.32***	.30***
20. Intrinsic mot.	-.20*	.05	-.13	-.23*	-.11	-.10	-.17*	-.09	-.08	-.13	.36**	.24***
21. Gender	-.03	-.13	-.06	-.03	-.08	.02	-.01	-.13	-.10	-.05	-.10	-.08
22. Nativity	-.07	-.11	-.01	.01	-.04	-.03	-.06	-.01	-.17*	-.14	-.01	-.06
<i>M</i>	1.65	1.56	1.78	1.20	1.39	1.26	1.49	1.37	1.62	1.82	4.01	4.33
<i>SD</i>	.64	.67	.90	.38	.67	.53	.80	.72	.90	.92	.65	.72
	1–5	1–5	1–5	1–5	1–5	1–5	1–4	1–4	1–4	1–4	1–5	1–5
Variables	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22		
13. Centrality	—											
14. Familism	.29***	—										
15. Internalizing	-.01	-.11	—									
16. Extern. – Y	-.11	-.18*	.66***	—								
17. Extern. – M	-.08	-.04	.14	.21*	—							
18. Values School	.22**	.44***	-.08	-.24**	-.22**	—						
19. Importance	.26**	.38***	-.01	-.16*	-.21**	.52***	—					
20. Intrinsic mot.	.20	.36***	-.04	-.19*	-.23**	.80***	.75***	—				
21. Gender	-.05	-.07	-.25**	-.08	.06	-.12	-.03	-.07	—			
22. Nativity	-.06	-.02	-.03	-.03	.10	-.10	-.21**	-.17*	.24**	—		
<i>M</i>	4.11	4.14	7.02	6.97	7.11	4.47	4.45	4.15	.48	.87		
<i>SD</i>	.75	.58	6.48	6.71	6.86	.59	.60	.50	N/A	N/A		
Range	1–5	1–5	0–33	0–35	0–34	1–5	1–5	1–5	0/1	0/1		

Note. Peer 1–3 = Parcels, peer discrimination indicators. School adult 1–3 = Parcels, school-adult discrimination indicators. Foreigner 1 = “Had someone speak to you in an unnecessarily slow or loud way.” Foreigner 2 = “American citizenship or residency questioned?” Foreigner 3 = “Surprised by your English language ability?” Foreigner 4 = Asked “where are you from?” Encultur. = Enculturative behaviors and knowledge. Extern. – Y = Externalizing symptoms youth report. Extern.—M = Externalizing symptoms maternal report. Familism = Youth’s familism values. Internalizing = Internalizing symptoms. Extern.—Y = Youth report of externalizing symptoms. Extern. – M = Maternal report of youth externalizing symptoms. Values school = Utility value of school, academic motivation indicator. Importance = Importance of school, academic motivation indicator. Intrinsic mot. = Intrinsic motivation, academic motivation indicator. Gender = 0, girls and 1, boys. Nativity = 0, born outside of the United States and 1, born in the United States.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

The results from Model 2 indicated that peer discrimination was significantly associated with higher levels of internalizing ($\beta = .46, p = .000$) and externalizing symptoms (youth report: $\beta = .49, p = .000$; maternal report: $\beta = .35, p = .02$). School adult discrimination was not significantly associated with any of the outcomes. Foreigner objectification was significantly associated with higher levels of externalizing symptoms (youth report only: $\beta = .26, p = .03$). Cultural assets were significantly associated with higher levels of academic motivation ($\beta = .73, p = .000$), and lower levels of externalizing symptoms (youth report: $\beta = -.24, p = .01$; maternal report: $\beta = -.23, p = .03$). The main effects of peer discrimination, foreigner objectification, and youth's cultural assets on externalizing symptoms (youth report) were conditioned upon the presence of a significant interaction, which is described below. Youth born in the United States reported lower levels of academic motivation compared to their counterparts born outside of the United States ($\beta = -.19, p = .02$) and girls reported higher levels of internalizing symptoms compared to boys ($\beta = -.24, p = .000$; results reported from youth outcome model).

Moderating Effects of Cultural Values: Model 3

Next, the moderating effects of youth's Latino cultural assets were tested in Model 3. Model 3 included the main effects of four latent constructs (i.e., peer and school-adult discrimination, and foreigner objectification and youth's cultural assets (i.e., enculturative behaviors and knowledge, private regard, centrality, familism values), on three adjustment outcomes (i.e., academic motivation—latent construct, internalizing and externalizing symptoms—youth and maternal report in separate models), as well as latent variable interactions of discrimination by cultural assets (e.g., peer discrimination by cultural assets) regressed on each of the outcomes. The most contemporary approach to testing for moderator effects is to use the XWITH command. This uses the Latent Moderated Structural Equations Method (LMS) and is specific to using latent variables (Klein & Moosbrugger, 2000; Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2012). As such, there is no centering of indicators required for this test. To probe significant interactions, Mplus users can specify estimated simple slopes at different levels of the moderator and graphically display simple slopes at the typical (Aiken & West, 1991) levels of $\pm 1 SD$ above and below the mean and the sample mean. Given fit statistics are not provided for latent variable interactions, the relative fit of Model 3 versus Model 2 was determined via a log-likelihood ratio test comparing the log-likelihood values of Model 2 and Model 3 as suggested by Maslowsky, Jager, and Hemken (2015). Comparing the youth outcome, Model 2 and Model 3 yielded a log-likelihood difference value of $D = 13.21$ (Model 3 with peer-by-cultural assets) and $D = 16.20$ (Model 3 with foreigner objectification-by-cultural assets) and a df value of 1 (difference of 84–83 free parameters). Using a chi-square distribution, this log-likelihood ratio test was significant ($p < .001$), indicating that the alternative models with the interaction effects (Model 3) provided a better fit to these data than the null model without the interaction effects (Model 1). As such, we describe the significant interaction effects from the youth outcome only model. There were no significant interactions in the model with maternal report of youth's externalizing symptoms.

Two latent variable interactions were significant for youth's externalizing symptoms (youth report). To illustrate these interactions, we probed the latent variable interaction using simple slopes analysis conducted in Mplus at low ($-1 SD$), moderate (mean), and high ($+1 SD$) values of youth's Latino cultural assets. First, the association between peer discrimination and youth report

of externalizing symptoms was lower at higher levels of cultural assets ($b = -2.27, p = .002$). As displayed in Figure 2, among youth reporting low ($-1 SD, b = 1.46, p = .000$) and moderate (mean, $b = 0.65, p = .005$) levels of Latino cultural assets, the significant association between peer discrimination and youth report of externalizing symptoms was positive. In contrast, among youth who reported high levels of Latino cultural assets, the association between peer discrimination and youths' externalizing symptoms was nonsignificant ($+1 SD, b = -0.17, p = .626$).

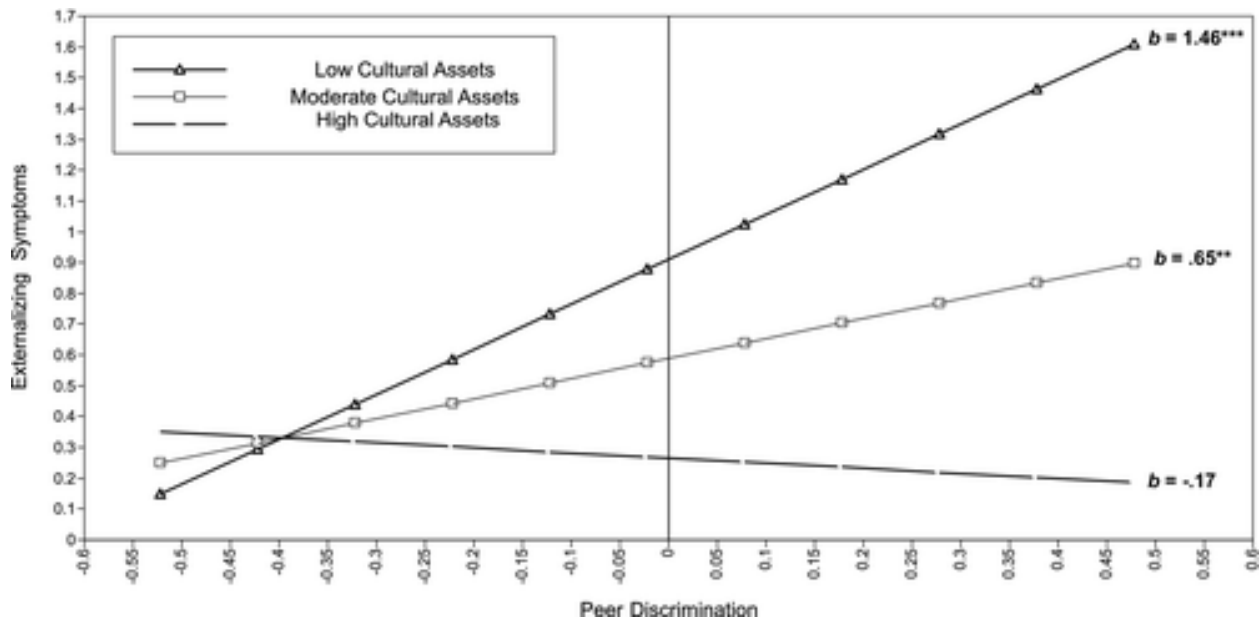


Figure 2. The protective effect of high Latino cultural assets in the context of high peer discrimination for youth's externalizing symptoms (youth report; $b = -2.27, p = .002$). Simple slopes analysis was conducted for low ($-1 SD$), moderate (mean), and high ($+1 SD$) levels of Latino cultural assets. Dashed lines indicate nonsignificant effects. $*p < .05$; $**p < .01$; $***p < .001$.

Second, the association between foreigner objectification and youth report of externalizing symptoms was lower at higher levels of cultural values ($b = -2.21, p = .019$). As displayed in Figure 3, among youth reporting low ($-1 SD, b = 1.22, p = .003$) and moderate (mean, $b = .43, p = .02$) levels of Latino cultural assets, the significant association between foreigner objectification and youth report of externalizing symptoms was positive. In contrast, among youth who reported high levels of Latino cultural assets, the association between foreigner objectification and youths' externalizing symptoms was nonsignificant ($+1 SD, b = -.36, p = .307$). That is, among youth who reported lower and average levels of cultural values, peer discrimination and foreigner objectification were significantly associated with higher levels of externalizing symptoms, whereas youth who reported higher levels of Latino cultural assets were protected against the harmful effects of peer discrimination and foreigner objectification, as they did not report experiencing higher levels of externalizing symptoms.

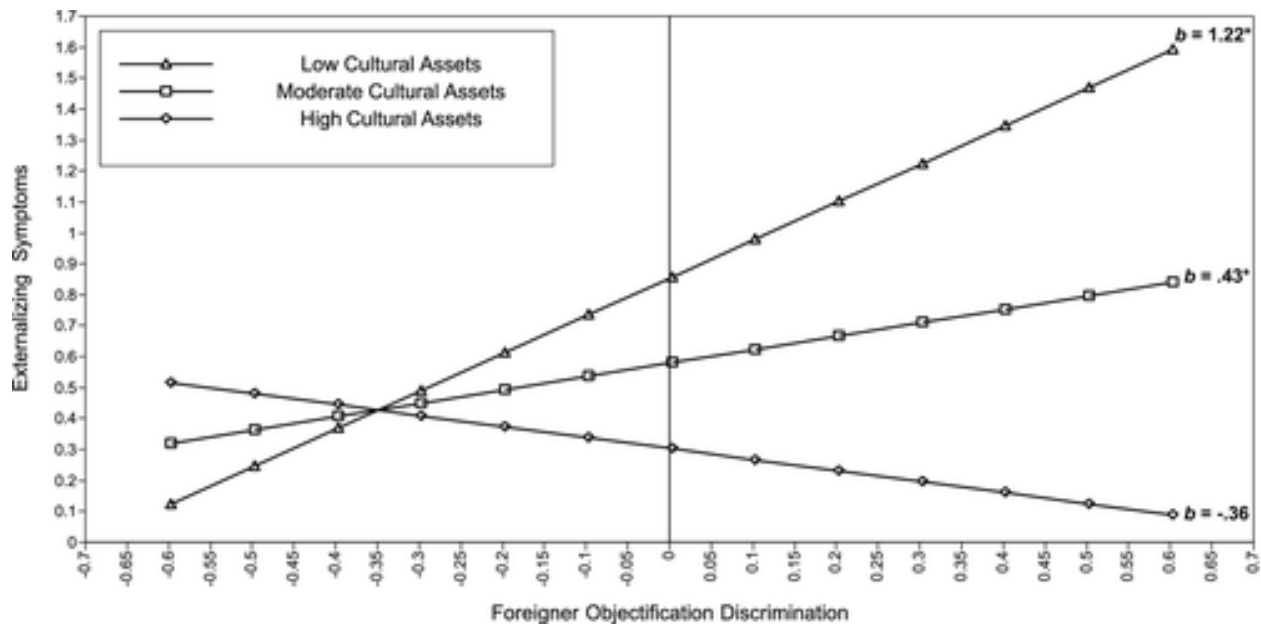


Figure 3. The protective effect of high Latino cultural assets in the context of high foreigner objectification discrimination for youth's externalizing symptoms (youth report $-2.21, p = .019$). Simple slopes analysis was conducted for low ($-1 SD$), moderate (mean), and high ($+1 SD$) levels of Latino cultural assets. Dashed lines indicate nonsignificant effects. $*p < .05$; $**p < .01$; $***p < .001$.

Discussion

Guided by cultural-ecological theory (García Coll et al., 1996), this study allows for the examination of risk and resilience by exploring the potential protective and promotive effects of youth's Latino cultural assets within the context of an emerging immigrant community. We found evidence for (1) protective effects of youth's Latino cultural assets for their outward behaviors of externalizing symptoms within the context of high peer discrimination and foreigner objectification, (2) peer discrimination as a unique stressor associated with higher levels of emotional distress, and (3) promotive effect of youths' Latino cultural assets for their academic motivation. Although some work has documented differential associations from peer and school-adult discrimination to youth's academic and psychosocial outcomes (Benner & Graham, 2013; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2015), few studies have examined these unique effects for youth's outcomes within the context of emerging immigrant communities. This study includes an additional layer of discrimination, known as foreigner objectification, which may be especially salient in emerging immigrant communities as the Latino immigrant presence increases and racial tensions heighten in southern U.S. rural communities (Marrow, 2011; Potochnick et al., 2012).

Protective Effect of Latino Cultural Assets for Youth's Externalizing Symptoms

As posited by cultural-ecological theory and risk and resilience frameworks (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005; García Coll et al., 1996), multiple culturally relevant assets provide greater protection against discrimination risk, particularly when such risk is present at high levels. Moreover, this study found that youth who reported higher levels of Latino cultural assets also reported protection against experiencing externalizing symptoms despite experiencing high

levels of peer discrimination and foreigner objectification. Meanwhile, among youth who reported low and moderate levels of Latino cultural assets, high levels of peer discrimination and foreigner objectification were associated with higher externalizing symptoms. Protection conferred at higher levels of youth's Latino cultural assets may indicate that these youth have internalized a strong enculturation orientation, guided by culturally relevant behaviors and values, and a strong racial–ethnic identity and connection to their family.

Furthermore, Latino cultural assets may uniquely provide protection for youth's externalizing symptoms through mechanisms of social control and behavioral regulation. For example, developing a strong cultural identity and orientation for Latino adolescents requires building relationships with family members and members of their ethnic group that includes prosocial behaviors (e.g., helping others, seeking family for support), positive connections and feelings associated with being part of their family and culture (e.g., pride, important part of self-image), and engaging in cultural traditions and holidays with family and ethnic group members (Knight, Carlo, Basilio, & Jacobson, 2015; Kuperminc et al., 2009; Neblett et al., 2012). Collectively, youth's internalization of Latino cultural assets may help regulate their behavior and decrease the likelihood that negative feelings caused by discrimination would be externalized, given aggression and rule-breaking behavior would harm their relationships. Umaña-Taylor et al. (2015) similarly found that ethnic affirmation and ethnic resolution protected against peer discrimination, in that the association was positive and significant among youth who reported lower levels of ethnic identity and nonsignificant among youth who reported higher levels of ethnic identity. This study extends previous research by examining protection of Latino adolescents' cultural assets in the context of high levels of foreigner objectification and among youth living in emerging Latino immigrant communities in a semi-rural southern U.S. locale.

Harmful Effects of Peer Discrimination for Adolescents' Internalizing Symptoms

Consistent with previous studies, peer discrimination was associated positively with youth's internalizing symptoms (Benner & Graham, 2013; Stein et al., 2013). Experiencing hostile and negative feedback from peers, such as being harassed and disliked, contributes to youth's feelings of marginalization and stigmatization that can lead to greater internalizing distress, particularly given the uncontrollable nature of such negative treatment (Benner & Wang, 2015; Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). Although youth in this study reported relatively low levels of peer discrimination, these experiences were powerful and harmful for youth's psychological well-being so much that youth's Latino cultural assets did not protect against the harmful effects of peer discrimination. We propose that peer discrimination is a potent stressor given the increased salience of peer relations during adolescence and may have unique associations to internalizing distress through physiological mechanisms that result in over-reactivity of stress responses. For example, in a recent physiological study of African American youth, Hoggard, Hill, Gray, and Sellers (2015) found that intergroup discrimination had prolonged negative effects on youths' physiological stress responses. A study of Mexican-origin adolescents also found that discrimination predicted greater cortisol output (Zeiders, Doane, & Roosa, 2012).

Moreover, it is possible that to activate the protective effects of youth's cultural assets for their psychological adjustment, external resources outside of the adolescent are also required to provide support and help youth process and make meaning of discriminatory events. A study of

Latino youth found that peer support protected against high levels of peer discrimination for youth's depressive symptoms (Gonzalez et al., 2014). Additional work should further examine how youth's peer relationships may serve as a risk or resilience factor depending on the presence of discriminatory messages, support for one's positive self-concept and cultural identity, or assistance with cognitively appraising discriminatory experiences.

Promotive Effect of Cultural Assets for Academic Motivation

Consistent with expectation, we found that youth's Latino cultural assets acted as a promotive factor by predicting higher levels of academic motivation. Although discrimination constructs were correlated with lower levels of academic motivation indices, none of the discrimination constructs were a significant predictor of youth's academic motivation above and beyond the significant effects of youth's Latino cultural assets. This finding is consistent with theory and research demonstrating that youth's Latino cultural assets promote adolescents' positive developmental competencies, such as their motivational processes that support their positive academic performance and may operate as compensatory protective mechanisms to reduce the risk of discrimination (García Coll et al., 1996; Gonzales et al., 2008; Stein et al., 2014).

A possible explanation for these findings is that contextual mechanisms may be influencing youth's interpretation of their discrimination and academic experiences. This study included mostly U.S.-born Latino youth with foreign-born parents living in an emerging Latino immigrant community in a semi-rural southern locale, and previous work has shown that academic motivation tends to be higher among those with foreign-born parents (García Coll & Marks, 2012). Considering the struggles endured by these families to emigrate to the United States and provide their children with a better life in the United States, parents may be more likely to socialize their children to view their educational success as a way to honor their family's sacrifices (Ceballo, Maurizi, Suarez, & Aretakis, 2014; Perreira, Chapman, & Stein, 2006). Moreover, youth's Latino cultural assets may increase the value and importance of doing well in school by providing youth the strength and motivation to overcome the adversity of experiencing discrimination. In addition, it is likely that academic motivation is also influenced by youth's knowledge of the struggles their parents face, which may be even more salient for foreign-born parents living in an emerging immigrant community where formal and informal supports tend to be less well developed.

For example, a study by Potochnick et al. (2012) found that Latino youth in an emerging Latino immigrant community in the rural South reported greater fears of discrimination than their counterparts in an established Latino immigrant community in Los Angeles, but also reported greater academic motivation and school belonging as a result of higher levels of Latino cultural values. Berkel et al. (2010) also found that youth's ethnic pride and Mexican cultural values reduced the risk of discrimination on youth's academic outcomes by promoting higher levels of youth's academic self-efficacy and academic performance. Another study of Latino youth found that racial-ethnic identity also promoted higher levels of academic values and academic efficacy within the context of these multiple types of discrimination (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2015). Thus, youth with higher levels of Latino cultural assets may be better able to filter out negative feelings associated with discrimination and persist in school tasks because their motivation is external, based in their desire to support and help their family and bolstered by their positive feelings

about their racial–ethnic group. For youth with foreign-born parents, their higher academic motivation also may be influenced by their aspiration to “give back” and thank their family for sacrifices made to provide opportunities for them in the United States. This study extends previous research by demonstrating the promotive effect of youth's Latino cultural assets for their academic motivation within a unique cultural context of an emerging immigrant community in a semi-rural, southern locale.

Limitations and Future Directions

Although this study contributes to knowledge on protective mechanisms among Latino youth living in an emerging immigrant community within a semi-rural southern U.S. locale, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, data were restricted within a relatively small geographic area that included predominantly families of Mexican origin and with lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Previous research has found evidence that Latino youth living in ethnic enclaves reported experiencing less peer discrimination over time (White, Zeiders, Knight, Roosa, & Tein, 2014), which may indicate that such communities also provide high support for youth's cultural assets and thus we would expect similar protective functions of Latino youth's cultural assets for racial–ethnic discrimination. Future research would be needed to explore how foreigner objectification would operate across different contexts, ethnicities, and generational status given the potential for within- and between-group discrimination.

Given challenges of collecting data within an emerging Latino immigrant community, the study sample is similar to other studies within this cultural context that has a relatively small Latino population in comparison to established Latino immigrant communities (Perreira & Smith, 2007). Second, the study was limited to early adolescence at one time point using cross-sectional data. Future research with longitudinal data guided by a developmental science perspective may help clarify how adolescents' perception of racial–ethnic discrimination changes or remains stable over time and how the protectiveness of culturally relevant factors changes with developmental maturity and contextual conditions. In addition, qualitative and mixed-method studies will likely help understand complex nuances of discrimination and culturally relevant factors for developmental processes among Latino youth, particularly those living in emerging immigrant communities that have been relatively understudied. The use of qualitative methodology could help strengthen our understanding of how adolescents internalize and perceive discrimination from school adults, peers, and strangers and, subsequently, how they may draw on their cultural assets in response to discrimination experiences.

Third, future research should further explore under what conditions (e.g., high vs. low stress) and types of stressors (e.g., discrimination vs. economic hardship) are multiple cultural assets needed for youth to demonstrate resilience. The emerging literature has demonstrated the usefulness of more nuanced approaches that examine the protective effects of individual racial–ethnic factors. However, relatively little empirical work has explored cultural asset models despite theoretical support for Latino youth's adaptive cultures in which associations among racial–ethnic identity and enculturation orientation (enculturative behaviors, knowledge, and familism values) are reciprocal and simultaneously influencing youth's positive self-system processes (Neblett et al., 2012). Finally, additional work should examine how these risk and protective processes may be similar or different for girls and boys, particularly as some research has found differences

in internalizing and externalizing symptoms and academic motivation across gender (Delgado, Updegraff, Roosa, & Umaña-Taylor, 2011; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2012).

Conclusion

Latino youth experience racial–ethnic discrimination across multiple contexts of their lives and, thus, must draw upon cultural assets to overcome such adversity (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005; García Coll et al., 1996). Broadly, scholars have proposed that cultural beliefs and values shape individuals' self-system processes (e.g., attitudes, motivations, expectations, and identity; Knight et al., 2010; Neblett et al., 2012) that are critical for promoting adolescents' positive developmental competencies. Yet relatively little work has examined the protective effect of Latino adolescents' cultural assets for academic and psychosocial adjustment outcomes in the context of multiple sources and types of racial–ethnic discrimination. Findings from this study addressed this gap by demonstrating that the protective functions of youth's Latino cultural assets may vary depending upon the particular outcome. Moreover, this study indicated that adolescents' Latino cultural assets were protective for youth's externalizing symptoms and academic motivation, but contextual changes that reduce and eliminate discrimination are also needed to experience the full benefit of such protection particularly for youth's internalizing symptoms. Furthermore, intervention programs are needed that work with schools and communities to create promotive contexts in which adolescents' social identities are affirmed and celebrated, and discrimination is not tolerated (Brown & Chu, 2012). In addition to bolstering youth's Latino cultural assets, interventions are required that increase youth's coping resources, including supportive relationships with peers, teachers, and community members to cultivate promotive environments and youth's psychological well-being (García Coll et al., 1996; Gonzalez et al., 2014). The question no longer should be whether discrimination is harmful for youth's academic and psychosocial well-being. Instead, we must ask, how can we create promotive contexts in which all children can thrive and reach their full potential? The well-being of our children depends on this knowledge.

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