Risk and Protective Factors among Latino Families: Implications for Intervention

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Immigrant paradox

Immigrant adolescents, relative to US-born peers:
- are healthier from birth (e.g., lower infant mortality rates, higher birth rates)
- have fewer physical health problems
- are less likely to be depressed
- have less experience with sex
- are less likely to engage in delinquent and violent behavior
- are less likely to use controlled substances
- perform better in school (i.e., have higher grades)
  - spend more time on homework and have higher achievement-related goals

Gil et al. 2000; Gfroerer & Tan, 2003; Hussey et al., 2007; Cavanagh, 2007
Acculturation/Enculturation

US Culture (Acculturation)
- English Language
- Cultural Knowledge
- Cultural Behaviors
- Identity

Latino Culture (Enculturation)
- Spanish Language
- Cultural Knowledge
- Cultural Behaviors
- Identity
Acculturation and Negative Outcomes

• associated with conduct problems, delinquency and gang involvement (Dinh et al., 2002; Fridrich & Flannery, 1995; Samaneigo & Gonzales, 1999; Vega et al., 1995)

• associated with substance use (Lara, Gamboa, Kahramanian, Morales, Bautista; Vega & Gill 1996; Vega & Dimas; Velez & Ungemack)
  • English language preference/use associated with:
  • Substance use (Epstein et al 2001), such as marijuana (Chavez & Swaim, 1992) and cigarette use (Bethel & Schenker)
  • Spanish language use associated with:
  • Latinos who primarily speak Spanish with peers and family are less likely to use drugs. (Epstein et al., 1996; Welte & Barnes, 1995; Zapata & Kims, 1994)

• Theory of segmented assimilation (Portes & Zhou, 1993)
  • assimilation into the urban underclass
Differential Acculturation

- Differences between parent and adolescent in their levels and rates of acculturation → acculturation gap
  - Decreased reliance on parents
  - Increased reliance on peers
  - Inconsistent values
- Related to substance use (Martinez, 2006; Portes & Zhou, 1993)
Contradictory Findings

• Separation or lack of assimilation related to higher substance use (Fosados et al., 2007; Sommers et al., 1993; Warner et al., 2010)

• May depend on personal characteristics, social conditions

• Lack of clear conceptualization, measurement problems, lack of longitudinal studies
Benefits of Acculturation

- **Language**: children need English skills to succeed in school

- **Value-driven behaviors**: children with critical thinking skills may be more likely to succeed in school (Okagaki & Sternberg, 1993)

- **Identity**: children who identify with mainstream US culture have higher self-esteem (Valentine, 2001)
**Risk of Marginalization**

*Deculturation*: alienation from both Latino and mainstream American culture that may lead to conduct problems and school failure (Buriel & DeMent, 1997)

*Double jeopardy*: unacculturated US born youth at highest risk for poor outcomes (Vega, Gil, Wagner, 1998)
Acculturative Status (Berry, 2006)

- **High** Acculturation
  - **Integrated**
  - **Assimilated**
- **LOW** Enculturation
  - **Separated**
  - **Marginalized**

- **Optimal**
Biculturalism

- knowledge of both cultures
- a sense of efficacy within both cultures
- a sense of identity within both cultures
- communication competency in both cultures
- a role repertoire appropriate to each culture
- social affiliations within both cultures
Benefits of Biculturalism

- intergenerational conflict minimized
- access to social support networks within two cultures
- better able to negotiate mainstream and culture of origin institutions
- demonstrate cognitive flexibility
- tailor behavior to situational demands

Children who are bicultural →
- positive academic orientation (Gomez & Fassinger, 1994)
- better school adjustment (Coatsworth et al., 2005)
- higher self-esteem/self-worth (Birman, 1998; Phinney et al., 2001)
- higher social competence (Bautista de Domanico et al., 1994)
- lower involvement in delinquency and substance use (Brook et al., 1997)
Bicultural Parenting and Child Functioning

Calzada et al., 2009
Ethnic/Racial Socialization

- process through which parents transmit **cultural values**, beliefs, traditions and behavioral norms to their children (Hughes, Rodriguez, Smith, Johnson, Stevenson, & Spicer, 2006)
- socialization of ethnic minority children is central to their development (Harrison, Wilson, Pine, Chan, & Buriel, 1990)
- serves to promote the behavioral competence of children within their own culture of origin
Familismo

- Latino culture emphasizes “the centrality of family life and its priority over other realities” (Arditti, 2006)
  - have larger family networks
  - spend more time with family
  - rely more on family for instrumental and emotional support (Baca Zinn & Wells, 2000; Buriel & Rivera, 1980; Marin & Gamba, 2003; Shkodriani & Gibbons, 1995)
  - socialize children to prioritize family (Updegraff, McHale, Whiteman, Thayer, & Delgado, 2005)
Familismo and Child Functioning

- **Better psychological adjustment** (Contreras, Lopez, Rivera, Raymond-Smith, & Rothstein, 1999)

- **Higher academic effort** (Esparza, & Sánchez, 2008; LaRoche & Shriberg, 2004)

- **Lower rates of behavior problems** (Gamble & Modry-Mandell, 2008; German, Gonzales, & Dumka, 2009; Gonzales et al, 2011)

- **Lower rates of substance use** (Schwartz et al., 2005; Wahl & Eitle, 2010) and **cigarette use** (Kaplan et al 2001)
Familismo and Parenting

- lower rates of child maltreatment (Coohey, 2001)
- associated with warm parenting (Gonzales et al 2011)
- less parent-child conflict (Kuhlberg, Pena & Zayas, 2010; Smokowski & Bacallao, 2007)
- more prosocial behavior opportunities (Calderon-Tena, Knight & Carlo, 2011)
- parental restrictions in peer relationships (Updegraff, Kim, Killoren, & Thayer, 2010)
**Familismo as risk**

- **Higher association with deviant peers** (Delgado, Updegraff, Roosa, & Umana-Taylor, 2009)
- **Higher substance use** (Shih et al. 2010; Unger et al. 2002; Warner et al. 2010)
- **Higher internalizing behaviors** (Kuhlberg, Pena & Zayas, 2010; Smokowski & Bacallao, 2007)
- **Family obligations often interfere with academic success** as they put a toll on children’s time and energy and lead to school absences, school dropout (Velez, 1989) and lower rates of college enrollment (Desmond & Turley, 2009)
- **Increases the negative impact of familial conflict when it occurs** (Hernandez, Garcia, & Flynn, 2010)
RESEPTO
“knowing the level of courtesy and decorum required in a given situation in relation to other people of a particular age, sex and social status” (Harwood, Miller, & Irizarry, 1995, p.98)

- **Obedience**
  - No matter what, no discussion

- **Decorum**
  - Present well

- **Deference**
  - Adult needs and desires come first
  - Stay out of adult matters

Calzada, Fernandez & Cortes, 2010
**Respeto as Protective**

- emphasis on respect during adolescence is associated with
  - deference to parental authority
  - more cooperative behavior
  - less risk-taking

*(Flanagan, 1996; Fuligni, 1997; Knight et al., 1993)*
**Respeto as Risk**

- *Respeto* associated with more mental health problems in young (4 – 5 yr old) Mexican and Dominican children
  - Via authoritarian parenting practices
- *Respeto* associated with lower levels of school readiness
  - in Dominican families only

Calzada et al., in press
Cultural Values and Processes

- dynamic, not static
- may be risky or protective
  - What aspects, for what outcomes, for what individuals, living in what circumstances, at which point in their developmental trajectory?
Implications for Intervention

What is the role of culture in prevention/intervention?
Evidence-based Practice

Kazdin, 2008; Sexton & Kelly, 2010
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Familias Unidas</th>
<th>Family Effectiveness Training</th>
<th>Puentes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Works with...</strong></td>
<td>Families of 12-17 yr olds</td>
<td>Families of 6 – 12 yr olds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>With goal of...</strong></td>
<td>Preventing conduct disorder, substance use and risky sexual behavior</td>
<td>Preventing conduct disorder, substance use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>By conducting...</strong></td>
<td>Parent groups; Family visits</td>
<td>Family sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Over the course of...</strong></td>
<td>3-5 months</td>
<td>13 weeks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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- [http://prc.asu.edu/Projects/bridges](http://prc.asu.edu/Projects/bridges)
Common Elements of Successful Programs

- **Focus on Family**
  - Particularly parent-child relationship
    - Communication and monitoring

- **Prevention Model**

- **Ecological Model**
  - Individual, family, peer, school and neighborhood networks all contribute to the health and well-being of Latino youth
    - 2 of 3 partner directly with schools

- **Explicit Focus on Culture**