



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

International Journal of Intercultural Relations

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/ijintrel

A process-oriented analysis of parent acculturation, parent socio-cultural stress, family processes, and Latina/o youth smoking and depressive symptoms

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 13 February 2015

Received in revised form 18 February 2016

Available online 29 April 2016

Keywords:

Acculturation
 Latino/a families
 Smoking
 Depression
 Stress
 Parenting

ABSTRACT

Latina/o youth in the U.S. are often characterized by elevated rates of cigarette smoking and depressive symptoms, and these rates appear to vary by youth acculturation and socio-cultural stress. Scholars suggest that parents' cultural experiences may be important determinants of youth smoking and depressive symptoms. However, few studies have examined the influence of parent acculturation and related stressors on Latina/o youth smoking and depressive symptoms. To address this gap in the literature, in the current study we investigated how parent-reported acculturation, perceived discrimination, and negative context of reception affect youth smoking and depressive symptoms through parent reports of familism values and parenting. The longitudinal (4 waves) sample consisted of 302 Latina/o parent-adolescent dyads from Los Angeles ($N = 150$) and Miami ($N = 152$).

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2016.04.001>

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Forty-seven percent of the adolescent sample was female (M age = 14.5 years), and 70% of the parents were mothers (M age = 41.10 years). Parents completed measures of acculturation, perceived discrimination, negative context of reception, familism values, and parenting. Youth completed measures regarding their smoking and symptoms of depression. Structural equation modeling suggested that parents' collectivistic values (Time 1) and perceived discrimination (Time 1) predicted higher parental familism (Time 2), which in turn, predicted higher levels of positive/involved parenting (Time 3). Positive/involved parenting (Time 3), in turn, inversely predicted youth smoking (Time 4). These findings indicate that parents' cultural experiences play important roles in their parenting, which in turn appears to influence Latino/a youth smoking. This study highlights the need for preventive interventions to attend to parents' cultural experiences in the family (collectivistic values, familism values, and parenting) and the community (perceived discrimination).

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1. Introduction

Adolescence is a developmental period marked by high risk for cigarette smoking, the leading cause of preventable death in the U.S. (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014). Cigarette smoking also often co-occurs with depressive symptoms (Beal, Negriiff, Dorn, Pabst, & Schulenberg, 2014), and depressive symptoms can become a chronic and serious condition (Pratt & Brody, 2014). Reasons for the co-occurrence of cigarette smoking and symptoms of depression are not fully understood. Although some studies suggest that individuals use cigarettes to self-medicate their depressive symptoms (e.g., Maslowsky & Schulenberg, 2013), other studies indicate the opposite, that nicotine/smoking leads to depressive symptoms through various mechanisms (e.g., Beal et al., 2014; Quattrocki, Baird, & Yurgelun-Todd, 2000). Still others have argued against a causal relationship between smoking and depression, proposing that depression and smoking are simply influenced by common factors such as stress (Kendler et al., 1993). Although there is controversy regarding the causal models involving smoking and depressive symptoms, most people who smoke start smoking during adolescence (Prokhorov et al., 2006), and the majority of people experience depressive symptoms for the first time before age 18 (Weersing & Brent, 2006). Given that Latina/o youth are often characterized by elevated smoking and depressive symptomatology, it is important to understand factors that contribute to these youth outcomes.

Prior research on Latina/o youth smoking and depressive symptoms has focused on the roles of youth acculturation, youth socio-cultural stressors (e.g., perceived discrimination and negative context of reception), and youth-reported family processes (e.g., familism values and parenting strategies; Cano et al., 2015; Gerdes & Lawton, 2014; Lorenzo-Blanco, Unger, Baezconde-Garbanati, Ritt-Olson, & Soto, 2011, 2012). Much less is known about the influence of parents' acculturation and parents' socio-cultural stress on family processes and youth smoking and depressive symptoms. Theory and empirical research suggest that parents' acculturation and socio-cultural stressors may influence youth smoking and depressive symptoms, possibly by influencing parents' familism values and parenting (Conger, Conger, & Martin, 2010; Santisteban, Coatsworth, Briones, Kurtines, & Szapocznik, 2012). To investigate this possibility and the processes through which parent acculturation and parent socio-cultural stress (i.e., perceived discrimination and negative context of reception) may influence smoking and depressive symptoms in Latina/o youth, we integrated empirical research and theory on acculturation, socio-cultural stress, and family into a hypothesized process-oriented model (see Fig. 1). This model draws on parent acculturation (U.S. and Latino/a cultural values, practices, and identifications) and parent socio-cultural stress (perceived discrimination and negative context of reception) as influences on youth smoking and depressive symptoms through parent-reported familism values and parenting.

1.1. Acculturation: dimensions and domains

Acculturation refers to the cultural, social, behavioral, and psychological changes experienced by individuals and groups of individuals when they come into continuous contact with new receiving cultural contexts (Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, & Szapocznik, 2010). Acculturation has been described as a bi-dimensional process that consists of both receiving culture acquisition and heritage culture retention/acquisition (Berry, 1997). Latina/o families in the United States can learn about and continue to adhere to elements of their Latina/o heritage culture while also learning about and adopting elements of U.S. culture (Padilla & Perez, 2003; Lorenzo-Blanco & Cortina, 2013). As such, acculturation can affect values, beliefs, and parenting behaviors among parents (Ogbu, 1994; Santisteban & Mitrani, 2003; Santisteban et al., 2012), which in turn can influence the well-being of Latina/o youth (whose well-being often depends on their parents; Coleman, 2011). Parent acculturation may, for example, influence parents' familism values and parenting strategies, which, in turn, may impact the well-being of Latina/o youth (Gerdes & Lawton, 2014; Ogbu, 1994; Santisteban et al., 2012).

Acculturation also consists of multiple domains. Schwartz et al. (2010) proposed a bi-dimensional and multi-domain model of acculturation in which receiving-culture acquisition and heritage-culture retention each operate within three separate yet related cultural domains. Receiving-culture acquisition domains include orientations towards U.S. practices (e.g.,

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