

A longitudinal examination of perceived racial/ethnic discrimination, public ethnic regard, and depressive symptoms in Latino youth

By: [Gabriela Livas Stein](#), Laura Taylor, Andrea Kulish, and [Laura McLaughlin Gonzalez](#)

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Abstract:

This longitudinal study examined the role of perceived racial/ethnic discrimination and public ethnic regard on depressive symptoms in an adolescent Latino sample (n = 141) living in an emerging immigrant community. Using a cross lagged model, this study found that Time 1 (T1) discrimination did not predict T2 depressive symptoms, nor did depressive symptoms predict T2 discrimination. However, public ethnic regard served as a significant moderator of the longitudinal association of discrimination. For youth who reported high public ethnic regard and high racial/ethnic discrimination at T1, they reported greater discrimination at T2 compared to those who reported low public ethnic regard. These findings suggest that an internalized positive perception of the public's view of one's ethnic group is a potential vulnerability factor that needs to be better understood. These findings imply the need for additional research on the unique role of public ethnic regard in emerging immigrant communities.

Keywords: Latino adolescents | racial/ethnic discrimination | depression

Article:

1 INTRODUCTION

Perceived racial/ethnic discrimination plays a significant role in the prediction of depressive symptoms for Latino youth (e.g., Potochnick & Perreira, 2010; Stein, Gonzalez, & Huq, 2012). This relation has been borne out with longitudinal studies (e.g., Berkel et al., 2010); however, few studies have examined the longitudinal associations between perceived racial/ethnic discrimination and depressive symptoms in samples of Latino youth in an emerging immigrant community. It is important to examine these longitudinal associations in emerging immigrant

communities in particular because Latino youth in these emerging communities (e.g., North Carolina) report greater discrimination compared to Latino youth in well-established Latino communities (e.g., California; Potochnick, Perreira, & Fuligni, 2012).

Additionally, there has been little empirical attention investigating how these longitudinal associations are mitigated by ethnic identity processes such as public ethnic regard, which is the internalized perception of other's evaluation of one's ethnic group (Rivas-Drake et al., 2014). In emerging immigrant communities, it may be critical to further explore the role of public ethnic regard—the anti-immigrant rhetoric in these communities has been notable (Lacy & Odem, 2009)—and the ways in which Latino youth have internalized this rhetoric into an understanding of their ethnicity. To address these limitations, the current study examined the longitudinal relations between perceived racial/ethnic discrimination and depressive symptoms over time and whether public ethnic regard influenced the nature of these associations.

1.1 Perceived racial/ethnic discrimination in emerging immigrant communities

In the past two decades, there has been a significant increase in the Latino population throughout the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010), and this growth has been prominent in new areas, such as the South and Midwest, that had not traditionally served as destinations for Latino immigrants (Lichter, Parisi, Taquino, & Grice, 2010). Compared to established immigrant communities, emerging Latino immigrant communities have fewer immigrant resources and a poorer infrastructure for immigrants due to the lack of an established Latino population (Stamps & Bohon, 2006). These communities have also witnessed some anti-immigrant rhetoric and racial tensions that were exacerbated during the economic downturn when immigrants were viewed as a population that took jobs and public resources but did not contribute taxes (Crowley & Lichter, 2009).

Given these unique social forces within emerging immigrant contexts, it is imperative to understand how discrimination unfolds and affects the development of Latino adolescents in this context (Stein, Gonzales, Garcia Coll, & Prandoni, 2015). It is important to note that discrimination in these communities can be the result of the multiple, intersecting identities that characterize Latino adolescents (e.g., foreigner status, undocumented status, national origin). While more research is necessary to understand the multifaceted experience of discrimination for Latino youth, this study will focus on perceived racial/ethnic discrimination given that the majority of literature has focused on these experiences in adolescence (e.g., Zeiders, Umaña-Taylor, & Derlan, 2013; Rivas-Drake, Hughes, & Way, 2009).

When comparing Latinos in established immigrant communities to those in emerging ones, Latino adolescents in emerging communities reported greater frequency of discrimination experiences on daily diary measures and also endorsed a greater likelihood of experiencing discrimination (Perreira, Fuligni, & Potochnick, 2010; Potochnick et al., 2012). These two studies compared the experiences of Latino youth in urban and rural North Carolina to those in Los Angeles. Regardless of nativity status, rural North Carolina youth reported a greater percentage of days when they experienced negative ethnic treatment than youth in Los Angeles, who reported the fewest days of negative ethnic treatment (Potochnick et al., 2012). These findings are consistent with sociological work with Latino immigrant adults who report

experiences of discrimination in multiple contexts in emerging immigrant Latino communities (e.g., school, government offices, work; Dalla, Ellis, & Cramer, 2005; Marrow, 2011; Torres, Popke, & Hapke, 2006). However, more research is needed to further explore the role of perceived racial/ethnic discrimination for Latino adolescents in these contexts, particularly how these experiences vary over time and influence mental health functioning.

1.2 Perceived racial/ethnic discrimination and depressive symptoms

There has been a robust and consistent relation between experiences of perceived racial/ethnic discrimination and depressive symptoms, and this relation has been documented for Latino youth in emerging communities (Potochnick & Perreira, 2010; Stein et al., 2012). According to the integrative model of child development proposed by Garcia Coll and colleagues (1996), experiences of discrimination in the proximal environment are salient predictors of child developmental outcomes but need to be understood within the larger social context. In these emerging immigrant communities, experiences of racial/ethnic discrimination may be particularly harmful psychologically for Latino youth in immigrant families because these experiences may fuel feelings of powerlessness and hopelessness in an environment that is supposed to be their new home. Consistent with the integrative model, this risk may be magnified if their parents have less experience with handling racial/ethnic discrimination and are less able to provide socialization messages about handling discrimination (Roffman, Suarez-Orozco, & Rhodes, 2003). Furthermore, emerging immigrant communities may also have fewer social resources aimed at maintaining a positive cultural orientation and fewer well-established ethnic enclaves (Stein et al., 2015).

Taken together, this would suggest that for Latino youth in these communities, experiences of discrimination would be associated with greater depressive symptoms, but few studies have examined this question longitudinally. Past work in established immigrant communities suggests that there is a longitudinal relationship between experiences of discrimination and the prediction of greater depressive symptoms over time for Latino adolescents (Basáñez, Warren, Crano, & Unger, 2014; Berkel et al., 2010). Thus, we expected that perceived racial/ethnic discrimination in the proximal environment would predict greater depressive symptoms at one year later.

1.3 Public ethnic regard

How immigrant groups are received into a community in general has long been a central aspect of acculturation and sociological work with Latinos (e.g., Berry, 2001; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001), and is now gaining increased attention as an important psychological contributor to the adjustment of Latino youth (Schwartz et al., 2014). As Latino youth in immigrant families experience their receiving context, this likely informs their internal conceptualization of their ethnic group and in particular their public ethnic regard. Public ethnic regard is an important aspect of ethnic identity that has been defined as one's perception of how negatively or positively others evaluate one's ethnic group (Rivas-Drake et al., 2014).

Although ethnic identity serves as one of the most frequently studied protective factors in the relationship between perceived racial/ethnic discrimination and depressive symptoms (Shelton, Yip, Eccles, Chatman, Fuligni, & Wong, 2005), the role of public ethnic regard in protecting

against experiences of racial/ethnic discrimination is not well understood. Theoretically, it has been argued that a lower public ethnic regard (i.e., feeling that others view one's group more negatively) protects youth when they experience racial/ethnic discrimination as the experiences of discrimination are consistent with their worldview (Sellers, Linder, Martin, & Lewis, 2006; Shelton et al., 2005). Because these youth expect this type of treatment, protection is conferred when they do not make personal attributions to the experiences of discrimination, thereby minimizing damage to their self-concept (Neblett, Rivas-Drake, & Umaña-Taylor, 2012; Sellers, et al., 2006; Shelton et al., 2005). And, in fact, one past study with African American youth suggested that lower public ethnic regard protected against depressive symptoms when youth were confronted with discrimination (Sellers et al., 2006).

Yet other studies have found no protective effect of public ethnic regard on depressive symptoms when youth experience racial/ethnic discrimination (e.g., Rivas-Drake, Hughes, & Way, 2008; Seaton, Upton, Gilbert, & Volpe, 2014). For example, in a study of Chinese American youth, public ethnic regard did not moderate the association between ethnic/racial discrimination and depressive symptoms, but instead it served to predict fewer depressive symptoms (Rivas-Drake et al., 2008). Although there are no past studies of Latino adolescents examining this precise question, a series of studies by Rivas-Drake (2011, 2012) demonstrated the important role of public ethnic regard as a promotive factor for Latino college students such that it predicted fewer depressive symptoms and greater self-esteem. Thus, public ethnic regard can serve as either a promotive factor for Latino youth leading to fewer depressive symptoms over time or as a protective factor by buffering against experiences of racial/ethnic discrimination (Neblett, et al., 2012).

However, public ethnic regard may also predict how Latino adolescents perceive their environment and may make them more aware of experiences of racial/ethnic discrimination (Sellers & Shelton, 2003). For example, in the study conducted by Rivas-Drake (2012) public ethnic regard was associated with the sense of community that the Latino college students felt on campus suggesting that public ethnic regard served to help shape the experiences of Latinos within their context. Moreover, in a multi-ethnic adolescent sample, a more negative public ethnic regard was associated with greater perceived racial/ethnic discrimination (Rivas-Drake et al., 2009). This question has yet to be explored in a Latino adolescent sample in an emerging immigrant community, but it is likely that public ethnic regard may influence later perceptions of racial/ethnic discrimination.

1.4 Hypotheses

The current study examines a cross-lagged model of the links between perceived racial/ethnic discrimination, depressive symptoms, and the moderating role of public ethnic regard in a Latino adolescent sample living in an emerging immigrant context. Given the literature review, we hypothesized that racial/ethnic discrimination at Time 1 (T1) would predict greater depressive symptoms at T2 and not vice versa. We also explored how public ethnic regard influenced depressive symptoms and perceived racial/ethnic discrimination over time, and predicted that it would be associated with fewer depressive symptoms. Given the limited research on the role of public ethnic regard in predicting discrimination in these communities, we did not have a specific hypothesis for this question. Finally, we hypothesized that public ethnic regard would

serve as a protective factor buffering the auto-regressive associations between perceived racial/ethnic discrimination and depressive symptoms across time.

2 METHOD

2.1 Participants

A total of 140 Latino adolescents participated in a school-based longitudinal study of cultural factors, academic achievement, and psychological functioning (53% female; mean [M] = 14.02, standard deviation [SD] = 1.34 years old at T1). The original sample at T1 comprised 191 Latino adolescents in the 7th–10th grades living in an emerging immigrant context (for the description of the original study, see Stein et al., 2012), 78% of whom were Mexican origin (the next largest group was mixed Latino heritage that accounted for 8% of the sample with the remainder of the sample having immigrated from various countries in Central America). In terms of nativity status, 58% were U.S. born, and of those born outside the United States, 65% immigrated at age 5 or younger (for additional information, see Stein et al., 2012). A follow-up study was conducted 1 year later, in which 141 of the original sample participated. There were no significant differences between those who participated at both time points on T1 variables.

2.2 Procedure

The researchers attempted to recruit all Latino 7th–10th-grade students in a rural school district in North Carolina (two middle schools, one high school; $n = 442$) that had a large growth in the Latino population. At the time data were collected (2010–2012), the school district (K-12) was 34% Latino, with 68% of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch (Department of Public Instruction, 2009). In order to participate in the study, parental consent was obtained either at a back-to-school night, through bilingual consent letters sent home, or through phone recruitment. Taken together, 221 parents consented for their child to be in the study (79% of those reached; 50% of total) and 40 parents declined participation (14% of those reached; 9% of total). All students with parental consents were invited to completed measures in their school cafeteria at a time designated by the school ($n = 192$). One student declined participation during the school data collection.

Students were provided with the option to complete the survey in English or Spanish, and all but one student chose English. Students who participated in the study were then invited to participate in a follow-up study 1 year later, and students who were at school that day and in the previous study participated in the follow-up study ($n = 141$). Students in the follow-up study were provided with a \$5 gift card for their participation. All follow-up surveys were completed in English.

2.3 Measures

2.3.1 Perceived racial/ethnic discrimination

We used the 21-item Way Discrimination Scale to assess perceived peer racial/ethnic discrimination. The measure was developed based on in-depth, semistructured interviews with

Latino, African American, and Asian American adolescents (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). At T1 and T2, adolescents reported the frequency they had experienced 21 specific discriminatory events from their peers because of their “race or ethnicity” (e.g., other students in school make fun of you; other students expect you will get a bad grade). Adolescents reported their experiences on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*all the time*). This scale has demonstrated adequate psychometric properties in past studies (e.g., Rivas-Drake et al., 2008). In the current sample, the reliabilities at T1 ($\alpha = .95$) and T2 ($\alpha = .93$) were excellent.

2.3.2 Depressive symptoms

We used the 33-item Mood and Feelings Questionnaire (Angold et al., 1987) to assess adolescents’ depressive symptoms at T1 and T2. Adolescents endorsed on a 3-point Likert-type scale the extent of their depressive symptoms (0 = never true, 1 = sometimes true, and 2 = mostly true). Sample items were “I felt I was no good” and “I didn't enjoy anything at all.” This measure has demonstrated adequate psychometric properties (Burlinson Daviss et al., 2006) and was reliable in this sample as well (T1 $\alpha = .94$; T2 $\alpha = .93$).

2.3.3 Public ethnic regard

We used an adapted version of the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998) to assess at T1 and T2 adolescent's level of public ethnic regard. The adapted version has been used in past research with multiple ethnic groups, including Latinos (e.g., Rivas-Drake et al., 2008). The four-item public ethnic regard scale asked adolescents to endorse their level of agreement about how others viewed their ethnic group. Participants rated their responses on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Sample items were “In general, others groups view my ethnic group in a positive manner” and “In general, others respect members of my ethnic group.” The scale has demonstrated adequate psychometric properties (Fuligni, Witkow, & Garcia, 2005; Kiang, Yip, Gonzales-Backen, Witkow, & Fuligni, 2006) and good reliability in this sample (T1 $\alpha = .88$, T2 $\alpha = .85$).

2.4 Data analytic plan

We used structural equation modeling (SEM) in Amos Graphics 18. SEM is an extension of a regression framework but it also has the advantages of being able to (a) account for measurement error in scales, (b) model multivariate outcomes, and (c) estimate the concurrent relations among endogenous predictors and exogenous variances. Thus, all hypotheses can be simultaneously tested in a single model. We assessed overall fit using the guidelines of a χ^2 /degree of freedom [*df*] index ≤ 3 , a Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) and comparative fit index (CFI) $\geq .90$, and a root mean square residual (RMSEA) $\leq .08$ (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

The first step in SEM is to build the measurement model. We estimated latent variables using manifest indicator, or items from the scales, for the two key constructs (i.e., depression and discrimination). Rather than using each individual item as an indicator, we used a parceling approach because it increases the efficiency of estimation; more specifically, aggregating two or

more items into a manifest indicator, or parcel, the factor solution's stability and the scale's representativeness and reliability (Little, Cunningham, Shahar, & Widaman, 2002). We used the “items-to-construct balance” approach to create each parcel for latent variables of discrimination and depression, respectively. In this procedure, the parameters of the factor loadings were ordered from strongest to weakest. As an “anchor,” one of the three highest loading items was allocated to each parcel. The remaining items were assigned to each parcel in a snake order (e.g., 1, 6; 2, 5; 3, 4), which achieves a reasonable balance for each parcel.

The discrimination scale had 21 items, so 7 were allocated to each parcel; the depression scale had 33 items, so 11 were assigned to each parcel. For depressive symptoms, the parcels were loaded onto a latent variable at each time point; the latent constructs were allowed to correlate over time for good model fit, $\chi^2(8) = 29.51, p > .05, N = 195; \chi^2/df = 1.19; TLI = .99; CFI = .99; RMSEA = .031; \text{confidence interval [CI] [.001, .093]}$. The same steps were repeated for discrimination, which also had good model fit, $\chi^2(8) = 17.57, p = .02, N = 195; \chi^2/df = 2.20; TLI = .98; CFI = .99; RMSEA = .079; CI [.027, .129]$. Given that the positive bias of the RMSEA is affected by low df (Kenny, 2014), Kenny, Kaniskan, and McCoach (2014) have cautioned against computing this fit statistic in small df models. Therefore, although the confidence interval of the RMSEA of the discrimination constructs exceeded the recommended bounds (MacCallum, Brown, & Sugawara, 1996), the excellent fit statistics across the other approaches justified retaining this model. These measurement models were used for the primary cross-lagged model of interest.

To test for moderation effects on later outcomes, public ethnic regard was added as a manifest variable at T1. Next, to prevent multicollinearity, the centered manifest scale for public ethnic regard was multiplied by each of the centered parcels for discrimination; this yielded three indicators for the latent interaction term. The procedure was repeated for using the centered parcels of depression and public ethnic regard to create a second latent interaction term. Finally, the controls of age and gender were entered as T1 and public ethnic regard at T2. All predictors were correlated and the outcomes' error terms were correlated, respectively.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Preliminary analyses

Table 1 displays the means, SDs, and bivariate correlations for all composite scales of latent constructs. Figure 1 depicts the primary model test of the cross-lagged effects of discrimination and depressive symptoms and the moderating role of public ethnic regard. Endogenous predictors and error variances for exogenous outcomes, respectively, were allowed to correlate. The full model had good overall fit, $\chi^2(99) = 299.86, p < .05, N = 195; \chi^2/df = 1.704; TLI = .95; CFI = .96; RMSEA = .060; CI [.048, .072]$. Table 2 includes all of the structural path estimates. The only significant path for adolescent age and gender control variables was that boys were less likely to report depressive symptoms compared to girls ($\beta = -.22, p < .05$). Age did not have a direct effect on depression or discrimination over time. Moreover, the direct effects of public ethnic regard at T1 and T2 on depressive symptoms and discrimination at T2 were also nonsignificant.

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations for all study variables (T1 N = 191; T2 N = 141)

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Male	47%		–						
2 Age (T1)	14.02	1.34	.154*	–					
3 Public ethnic regard (T1)	3.67	.93	.018	-.112	–				
4 Public ethnic regard (T2)	3.78	.83	.068	.008	.393**	–			
5 Discrimination (T1)	1.59	.67	.134	.233**	-.050	-.084	–		
6 Discrimination (T2)	1.49	.55	.173*	.121	-.070	-.121	.463**	–	
7 Depression (T1)	.29	.32	-.111	.071	-.156*	.029	.297**	.149*	–
8 Depression (T2)	.29	.33	-.201*	.056	-.081	-.071	.086	.410**	.194*

Note. M = mean; SD = standard deviation.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

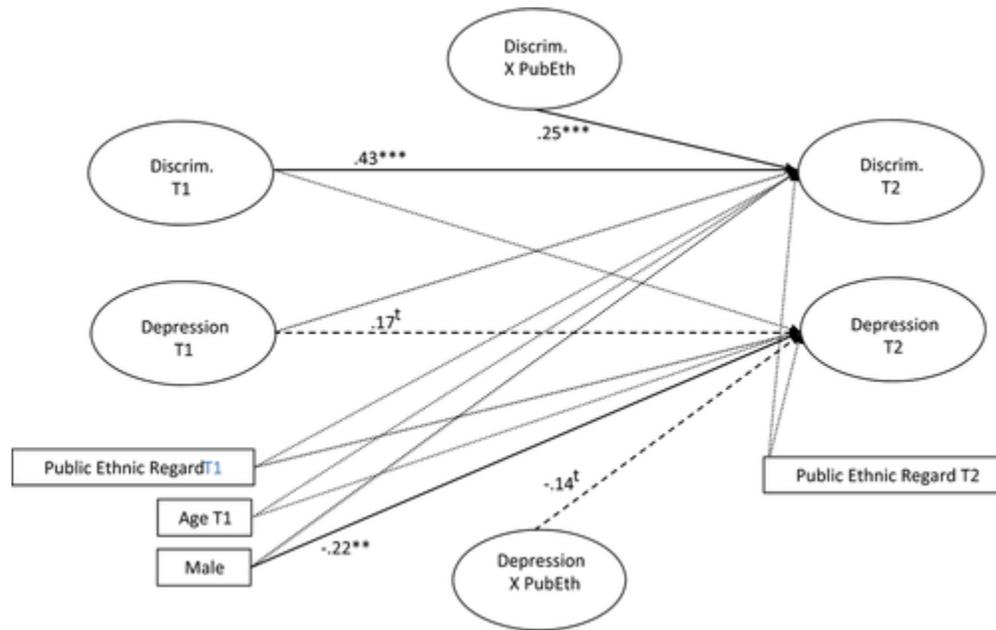


Figure 1. Simplified cross-lag model, including all significant direct and moderation effects of interest

Note. Black full lines represent significant paths, dashed lines represent trends, and dotted lines are nonsignificant. Correlation coefficients for exogenous variables and error variances for endogenous outcomes were omitted from the model for readability. $^{\dagger}p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

The autoregressive controls for both depression and discrimination were significant. That is, at the trend level, adolescents higher in depressive symptoms at T1 were also higher at T2 ($\beta = .17, p = .066$), and youth who perceived greater discrimination at T1 also perceived more discrimination at T2 ($\beta = .43, p < .001$). However, the cross-lagged effects were not significant. Earlier depressive symptoms did not significantly predict T2 discrimination, and discrimination did not predict depressive symptoms 1 year later.

However, the interaction effects for each construct did influence the later outcomes. Adolescents who were higher in discrimination at T1 and had a more positive public perception of their ethnic group were more likely to report discrimination at T2 ($\beta = .23, p < .001$). Thus, there was a stronger relation between perceived discrimination over time for youth with higher, compared to youth who had average or lower levels of public ethnic regard (Figure 2). There was a trend level

interaction between public regard and depressive symptoms at T1 the trend level ($\beta = -.14, p = .076$). The analyses suggested that valuing the public view of one's ethnic group was a vulnerability factor for adolescents with regard to discrimination, exacerbating that effect over time.

Table 2. Unstandardized, standardized, and significance levels for full model test (standard errors in parenthesis; N = 141)

Parameter estimate	Unstandardized	Standardized	p
Discrimination T1 → Discrimination T2	0.324 (.06)	0.43	***
Depression T1 → Depression T2	0.163 (.09)	0.17	0.061
Depression T1 → Discrimination T2	0.121 (.09)	0.11	0.17
Discrimination T1 → Depression T2	0.048 (.06)	0.07	0.43
Male → Discrimination T2	0.502 (.58)	0.07	0.39
Male → Depression T2	-1.445 (.57)	-0.22	*
Age T1 → Discrimination T2	0.086 (.22)	0.03	0.69
Age T1 → Depression T2	0.094 (.21)	0.04	0.65
Public Ethnic Regard (PER) T1 → Depression T2	-0.047 (.08)	-0.05	0.57
Public Ethnic Regard (PER) T1 → Discrimination T2	0.031 (.08)	-0.03	0.71
Public Ethnic Regard (PER) T2 → Depression T2	-0.050 (.08)	-0.05	0.57
Public Ethnic Regard (PER) T2 → Discrimination T2	-0.096 (.09)	-0.08	0.30
Discrimination X PER → Discrimination T2	0.055 (.02)	0.25	***
Depression X PER → Depression T2	-0.042 (.02)	-0.14	0.08

Note. Measurement model parameters available upon request.

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

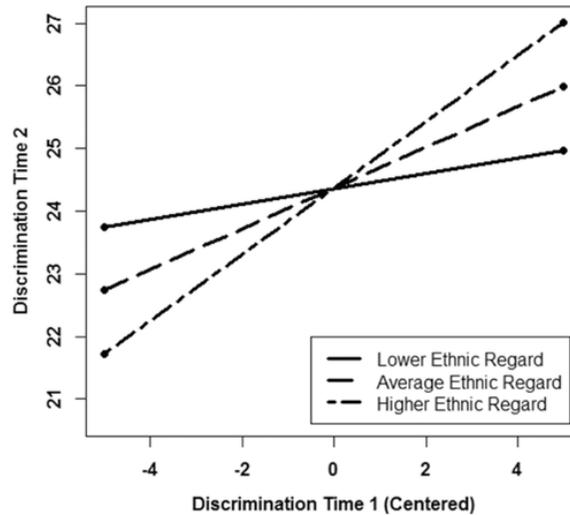


Figure 2. Interaction of centered discrimination x public ethnic regard

Note. The longitudinal relation discrimination is stronger for youth with higher public ethnic regard. Higher/lower public ethnic regard depicted at ± 1 SD; Higher/lower discrimination at T1 depicted at ± 1 SD

4 DISCUSSION

Latino adolescents in emerging immigrant communities in the South navigate a racial/ethnic landscape that places them at risk for experiencing more racial/ethnic discrimination than Latinos in more established immigrant communities (Potochnick, 2012), but little is known about the longitudinal effect of these experiences on the mental health of Latino adolescents or how public ethnic regard influences these relationships. The results of our study suggest that public ethnic

regard plays a salient role in the longitudinal course of perceived racial/ethnic discrimination in an emerging immigrant community. Contrary to our hypotheses, racial/ethnic discrimination did not predict greater depressive symptoms over time and this relationship was not buffered by public ethnic regard. Nevertheless, modeling the interaction of public ethnic regard over time enables a greater understanding of the nuanced and oftentimes complicated role that public ethnic regard can play for developing adolescents.

4.1 Longitudinal increases in perceived peer racial/ethnic discrimination

In an emerging immigrant community, on the whole, Latino adolescents who perceived greater levels of racial/ethnic discrimination at T1 were more likely to have increased levels of perceived peer racial/ethnic discrimination over time compared to those adolescents who reported lower levels of peer racial/ethnic discrimination. This finding suggests that as adolescents continue to develop more sophisticated cognitive processes such as abstract and moral reasoning, they may also become more attuned to discriminatory experiences in their environments (Quintana, 2008; Spears, Brown, & Bilger, 2005). As youth become more aware of these experiences, they demonstrate increases in their reports of perceived racial/ethnic discrimination. This line of reasoning is supported by longitudinal studies that have indeed found significant increases in the reports of frequency of discrimination across adolescence in Latino and other minority groups (Benner & Graham, 2011; Juang & Cookston, 2009). However, other work suggests that perceptions of peer racial/ethnic discrimination do not increase during adolescence (Greene, Way, & Pahl, 2006; Bellmore, Nishina, You, & Ma, 2012; White, Zeiders, Knight, Roosa, & Tein, 2014).

Our findings are most consistent with the longitudinal work documenting increases in perceived racial/ethnic discrimination, perhaps because of the narrow developmental time frame of all of our studies (primarily 9th–10th graders; Benner & Graham, 2011; Juang & Cookston, 2009). The studies finding no evidence of longitudinal change involved trajectories across a longer developmental period (9th–12th grade: Greene et al., 2006; Bellmore et al., 2012; 5th–10th grades; White et al., 2014). This would suggest that there may be unique risk for increases in the perception of discrimination in the early high school period, and more research should further explore this question, with a particular focus on examining the underlying processes accounting for the differential findings.

4.2 The role of public regard

More attention needs to be paid to the role of public ethnic regard in influencing perceptions of peer racial/ethnic discrimination. Our findings suggests that perceptions of greater peer racial/ethnic discrimination were particularly strong for those adolescents who reported that other ethnic groups have positive evaluations of their ethnic group while perceiving high levels of discrimination at the first time point. It was for these youth that the increase in peer discrimination was most pronounced compared to those who had reported that other ethnic groups viewed Latinos in a more negative light. This suggests that increases in peer discrimination are because of not just youth finding confirming evidence to their worldview, but also that high levels of public ethnic regard may be a liability (Sellers et al., 1998).

Although this appears to run counter to predictions that the awareness of negative societal beliefs predicts greater perception of discrimination (Spears, Brown, & Biegler, 2005), it points to a more complex relationship between perceptions of discrimination and public ethnic regard that may occur in adolescence. At this stage, youth may be integrating their discrete discrimination experiences with a growing awareness of the greater level view of societal based discrimination for those belonging to marginalized groups (Quintana & Segura-Herrera, 2003). As youth perceive this increased level of racial/ethnic discrimination, this may lead to subsequent decreases in their public ethnic regard over time. Indeed, public ethnic regard tends to decrease during adolescence for ethnic minority youth (Hughes, Way, & Rivas-Drake, 2011).

Our study suggests that this process may be due to increases in youth's perception of racial/ethnic discrimination. Supporting this notion, African American youth who reported greater racial/ethnic discrimination across adolescence subsequently reported lower levels of public ethnic regard (Seaton, Yip, & Sellers, 2009). Our study is the first to our knowledge to examine how public ethnic regard influences the longitudinal relationship of discrimination at two time points, and it suggests a potential avenue for future work to untangle how ethnic identity processes influence outcomes in adolescence (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014).

Paradoxically, studies of Latino youth in emerging immigrant contexts find that, although these youth report higher discrimination than their established immigrant context counterparts, they also report higher levels of school attachment (Potochnick et al., 2012). Consistently, in past analyses with this sample at T1, Latino students reported high levels of peer discrimination and also social support within the schools (Gonzalez, Stein, Kiang, & Cupito, 2014). Thus, these Latino youth seem to feel both discriminated against and supported within the same context, which would explain how youth can hold both high levels of public ethnic regard and report high levels of peer racial/ethnic discrimination.

In the current analyses, public ethnic regard was not significantly correlated with perceived racial/ethnic peer discrimination at the bivariate level, which suggests that for Latino youth in an emerging immigrant community, other factors may inform their public ethnic regard. Future work should continue to explore predictors of public ethnic regard within an emerging immigrant context, like the perceived context of reception, because this is an area of ethnic identity research that has received relatively little empirical attention (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014).

4.3 Depressive symptoms

Contrary to our hypotheses, perceived racial/ethnic discrimination did not predict greater depressive symptoms 1 year later. Although this is not consistent with other work documenting the longitudinal association between peer discrimination and depressive symptoms (e.g., Berkel et al., 2010), it does suggest that the relationship between racial/ethnic discrimination and depressive symptoms may be more cross-sectional, which has been found in past work at this stage in development. For example, in a sample of Mexican-origin youth, racial/ethnic discrimination assessed at one time point predicted baseline depressive symptoms, but not changes over time (Zeiders et al., 2013). Likewise, in a sample of African American youth, racial/ethnic discrimination was associated in baseline psychological functioning but not with changes in functioning over time (Seaton, Neblett, Upton, Hammond, & Sellers, 2011).

Additional work is necessary to further understand the longitudinal trajectory of perceived racial/ethnic discrimination, and what factors may affect its course. These contradictory findings in the literature may be because of the fact that the measures of perceived ethnic and racial discrimination vary significantly across these studies (e.g., peer vs. societal); the different age ranges of the youth in the studies (ranging from late childhood to early adulthood); and the social context of the population (e.g., diversity of their school contexts).

4.4 Limitations and future directions

The current study extends the extant literature on the interrelation between depressive symptoms, perceived racial/ethnic discrimination, and public ethnic regard by examining these questions in an emerging immigrant community Latino sample. Although the relationship between depressive symptoms and perceived racial/ethnic discrimination was not evident across time, public ethnic regard emerged as an important moderator of the longitudinal association of perceived racial/ethnic discrimination. Future research should continue to clarify the role of public ethnic regard for adolescents living in these communities and, in particular, disentangle the interrelationship of public ethnic regard, experiences of racial/ethnic discrimination, and perceptions of the receiving community. Future work expanding on how different ethnic groups within a community receive immigrants may be particularly useful to research, especially regarding how this may be similar to or different from the national reception.

Similarly, work should also focus on whether certain characteristics of the community may also influence these relations (i.e., rurality, racial diversity, foreign-born population, SES) because these too have emerged in sociological work as important to the adaption of Latinos in emerging immigrant communities (Lichter, 2012; Marrow, 2011). Our study employed only two time points across two distinct developmental periods (i.e., early and mid-to-late adolescence), and thus future work should test these questions within distinct developmental periods and with multiple data points to predict depressive symptom trajectories. Additionally, future work should also consider how other aspects of social position influence experiences of discrimination and their emotional ramifications in these emerging immigrant communities (e.g., documentation status, foreigner status; Stein et al., 2015).

5 CONCLUSION

This paper highlights the need to continue to understand the intersection between ethnic identity processes, experiences of discrimination, and psychological functioning. In particular, more work understanding how public ethnic regard functions longitudinally in adolescence is warranted.

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Referees: Mia Smith Bynum, University of Maryland, msbynum@umd.edu; adolescent mental health and ethnic identity

Virginia Huynh, Cal State Northridge, virginia.huynh@csun.edu; discrimination, cultural factors and immigrant adolescents

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