

Ethnic Identity and Familism Among Latino College Students: A Test of Prospective Associations

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Abstract:

The present study examined the longitudinal associations among familism respect and obligations values, ethnic centrality and private regard, and ethnic self-identification. Data were drawn from a socioeconomically diverse sample of Latino students attending a predominantly White university. The selection of a White label was associated with less positive private regard, less ethnic centrality, and less strong endorsement of familism respect and obligation values at the start of the academic year compared to those students who selected a national origin label. There was a complex relationship between ethnic identity and familism values over time. Ethnic centrality supported the growth in familism respect values across time, but familism respect values also predicted later growth in ethnic private regard. Our results highlight the fact that ethnic identity processes and familial cultural values can mutually influence each other in emerging adulthood for Latinos.

Keywords: cultural context | identity | family relationships | college | positive youth development

Article:

Although ethnic identity and familism values have demonstrated protective effects in diverse ethnic groups (cf. Neblett, Rivas-Drake, & Umaña-Taylor, 2012), the relationship between these cultural processes has only begun to be examined among Latino emerging adults. In the transition to young adulthood, familial obligations tend to increase, particularly among Latino youth (Fuligni & Pedersen, 2002; Sánchez, Esparza, Colón, & Davis, 2010), and changes in ethnic identity are also evident during this period of life (Syed & Azmitia, 2009; Syed, Azmitia, & Phinney, 2007). Past work examining associations between ethnic identity beliefs and familism values during adolescence indicates that adolescents with higher levels of ethnic belonging and exploration demonstrated greater increases in familism respect and obligation values 1 year later (Kiang & Fuligni, 2009); to our knowledge, no past studies have examined the longitudinal association of familism values and ethnic identity in an emerging adult sample. Thus, the current study sought to further explore whether ethnic identity influenced later

familism value endorsement in an emerging adult sample of Latino college students or whether these values served to promote changes in later ethnic identity.

Although conceptualizations of ethnicity include both ethnic identity and cultural values such as familism, these constructs are not interchangeable (Schwartz, Unger, Zamnonga, & Szapocznik, 2010). Affective feelings toward one's group (i.e., private regard), how important one's ethnicity is to one's self-concept (i.e., centrality), and cultural values are distinct, interrelated constructs that likely develop in tandem. However, theory posits that different aspects of ethnic identity more generally and cultural value endorsement do not uniformly change, but instead change at different rates (Schwartz et al., 2010). Yet, how these two aspects of identity influence each other through adolescence and emerging adulthood is not well understood. If ethnic identity processes bolster value endorsement, and these values are protective for emerging adults, then it follows that strengthening ethnic identity would result in greater familism respect and obligation value endorsement. It also would suggest that these values are not solely socialized in the home environment but continue to develop as emerging adults navigate their college environments. On the other hand, if cultural value endorsement fuels more positive affect toward one's ethnic group and greater ethnic centrality, it would suggest that part of the changes in ethnic identity in emerging adults can be attributed to cultural value endorsement.

Familism Respect and Obligation Values

Familism values dictate expectations of family cohesion, loyalty, support, respect, and obligation (Stein et al., 2014). To clarify the role these values play in the development of Latino youth, it is imperative that research further examines the specific components of familism values across multiple stages of development. Two central components of familism are respect for one's family and obligations to provide support to one's family currently and in the future (Fuligni, Tseng, & Lam, 1999). Familism respect values have been defined as showing deference to adults in conjunction with a need to take into account one's family when making individual decisions (Fuligni et al., 1999). Familism obligation values are characterized by a sense of duty to family and obligations to provide financial and emotional support, and in particular, these have been divided into the current assistance that youth should provide their family as well as the obligations that youth have to provide support to their families in the future (Fuligni et al., 1999). Latino young adults who endorse greater familism respect and obligation values tend to have more adaptive psychosocial adjustment, including better emotional well-being, greater emotional persistence, and higher grade point averages (Fuligni & Pedersen, 2002; Rudolph, Cornelius-White, & Quintana, 2005; Sánchez et al., 2010; Sy, 2006), and given their promotive effects, further inquiry on the development of these values at this stage in development is warranted.

Familism respect and obligation values may be particularly important to understand in emerging adulthood, a developmental period marked by ambiguity and change, as young adults establish their self-sufficiency and financial independence (Arnett, 2000). While Latino youth have increased autonomy in decision-making (e.g., going to college, courses to take), this autonomy may serve to highlight the culturally grounded obligations to family. These values may be manifested in young adults' consideration of familial goals in making individual decisions,

particularly around their careers and college (Fuligni & Pedersen, 2002). Compared to earlier in adolescence, future family obligations may become more realized, as youth seeking higher levels of education embark on a path that will lead to the increased ability to provide financial and emotional support for their families. Thus, these obligations to provide economic assistance may become more pressing as youth near the completion of their educational trajectories (Sánchez et al., 2010).

Indeed, the limited research examining changes in familism values across development supports the notion that emerging adulthood may propel increases in these values compared to other points in development. In particular, one study including Latino young adults found increases in familism obligations, as youth entered emerging adulthood (Fuligni & Pedersen, 2002), but similar increases are not evident earlier in adolescence (e.g., Updegraff, Umaña-Taylor, McHale, Wheeler, & Perez-Brena., 2012). Additionally, qualitative work at this stage in development highlights the salience of these values not only in supporting academic pursuits but also in guiding individual personal growth (Ovink, 2013; Sánchez et al., 2010). However, although familism values on the whole serve to promote positive adaptation in Latino emerging adults, no past studies at this stage in development have examined how these values intersect with ethnic identity processes.

Ethnic Self-Identification, Private Regard, and Centrality

Ethnic self-identification, the response given when asked to label one's ethnicity (Phinney & Ong, 2007), is considered a foundational aspect of an individual's sense of ethnic group membership. Although the area of ethnic self-identification is understudied, research has shown that the labels individuals choose may have implications for the thoughts and feelings they have about their ethnic group membership. For example, Tovar and Feliciano (2009) found that Mexican descent young adults change over time in ethnic self-identifications based on their changes in affect associated with their ethnic group membership. Specifically, participants stated that growth in ethnic pride was related to choosing a "Mexican" (national) label as opposed to a "Hispanic" (pan-ethnic) label (Tovar & Feliciano, 2009). Research has further demonstrated that ethnic self-identification is related to psychosocial outcomes. For example, Kiang (2008) found that for young adults from Chinese ancestry, ethnic labels were associated with self-esteem. Those of heritage national and American labels (e.g., Chinese American) reported the highest levels of self-esteem, particularly when compared to pan-ethnic American labels (e.g., Asian American; Kiang, 2008). Thus, we see that the ethnic labels chosen may stem from the affect behind these labels and that these labels have implications for psychosocial outcomes. However, on the whole, the role of ethnic self-identifications in emerging adulthood has not been fully examined in Latino youth, nor the differences that may result because of the ethnic self-identifications. For Latinos, ethnic self-identification can vary significantly based on the diversity of immigration status, socioeconomic status (SES), racial identity, and countries of origin within the population (Taylor, Lopez, Martinez, & Velasco, 2012). Thus, the ethnic self-identification young adults choose may be meaningful in understanding cultural and developmental processes and can vary significantly for Latino young adults.

Ethnic identity, which generally refers to the cultural values, attitudes, and behaviors associated with an individual's culture of origin (Phinney, 1992), helps provide information beyond ethnic self-identification (labels). Among the numerous dimensions used to examine ethnic identity are *centrality*, the extent to which an individual typically defines himself or herself through his or her ethnic group membership, and *private regard*, how positively one feels about one's ethnic group (Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998). Both centrality and private regard have been linked to positive outcomes among Latino youth, such as psychological well-being and academic achievement (Rivas-Drake et al., 2014).

Ethnic identity, broadly, is often seen as a fluid construct that changes throughout the life span and is related to social context (Umaña-Taylor & Shin, 2007). College-going youth, particularly those at 4-year institutions, experience a significant change in their social surroundings when they begin college. Moreover, college provides emerging adults with a time to revisit and renegotiate their many identities, and the solidification of their identity and self-definition is considered a critical developmental task in emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000). Thus, understanding ethnic identity processes at this period in development is paramount.

Unfortunately, there are few studies of the developmental nature of ethnic identity in emerging adulthood, and those studies that have examined these developmental changes have examined different ethnic identity constructs (such as exploration). Of the longitudinal research conducted on ethnic identity in diverse emerging adults, it has been demonstrated that ethnic identity does not remain static throughout the college years and that growth is evident over the course of an academic year. For example, Syed and Azmitia (2009) noted that ethnic identity exploration increased each year over the span of 3 years for Black, Latino, Asian American, and White participants. For Latino emerging adults specifically, research has found that within the first year of college there is variation in ethnic identity exploration and commitment (Syed et al., 2007). Ethnic commitment, albeit a distinct measure from private regard, also includes positive affect toward one's group. Because research has found that college is a time for ethnic minority students to reflect on their ethnic identity and to negotiate its personal meaning (Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2004), it is possible that other aspects of ethnic identity (i.e., private regard, centrality) can change at this time.

Ethnic Self-Identification, Ethnic Identity, and Familism Values

Although few studies have examined the links between private regard and centrality and familism respect and obligation values, empirical research with both adolescent and adult Latino samples demonstrates that different aspects of ethnic identity are associated with greater levels of familism values (e.g., Rodriguez, Mira, Paez, & Myers, 2007). One longitudinal study with Latino, Asian, and European American youth found that ethnic identity (defined as a composite of ethnic affirmation, belonging, and exploration) predicted increases in familism respect and obligation values across the 9th and 10th grades, but not vice versa (Kiang & Fuligni, 2009). In this study, the ethnic identity measure included similar items to private regard that capture positive affective feelings toward one's group. This suggests that private regard may influence value formation and integration, and it is possible that these values are viewed as expressions of one's ethnic identity (Phinney & Ong, 2007).

To date, however, the nature of the linkages between ethnic self-identification, ethnic identity, and familism values has not been examined in an emerging adult Latino sample. Given that this stage in development is associated with increased autonomy, as youth begin to make personal decisions based on their more established identities (Arnett, 2000), the longitudinal relationships between cultural values and the different dimensions of ethnic identity need to be elucidated at this point in development. Because familism values dictate that decision-making takes place in the context of familial responsibility, ethnic identity may further strengthen these values, as emerging adults start to make more autonomous decisions guided by these values. Moreover, familism values may influence later ethnic identity processes, as youth reflect their level of obligations compared to their other ethnic peers, which may foster the solidification of their ethnic regard and centrality. Drawing from literature on familial cultural values among this population, we hypothesized that private regard and centrality at the start of the academic year would predict greater familism respect and obligation values at the end of the academic year. We also explored whether initial levels of familism respect and obligation values predicted changes in ethnic identity (i.e., private regard and centrality).

In addition, this study sought to explore how ethnic self-identification was related to cultural value endorsement and ethnic identity processes. No past studies to our knowledge have examined how ethnic self-labels predict familism value endorsement. Ethnic self-labels in Latino populations are complicated by the dichotomization of race and ethnicity, which at times force Latinos to select a racial categorization that does not fit their self-concept as evidenced by the high levels of selection of “some other race” in the census survey (Taylor et al., 2012). Furthermore, as discussed above, ethnic labels have typically been examined, considering the use of national origin labels compared to pan-ethnic labels. However, although social scientists have debated the distinction between racial and ethnic categorization, for Latinos their self-labeled identity does not necessarily conform to these distinctions. For instance, Rivas-Drake and Mooney (2008) found that approximately half of the Latino sample in the National Longitudinal Survey of Freshmen self-identified “Hispanic White,” and the students in this category were from Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Dominican, Central American, and South American origins. Thus, understanding the role of self-labeling should consider racial as well as pan-ethnic and country of origin labels.

Past sociological work suggests that those who label themselves White differ significantly from those choosing other racial classifications. In an examination of 2006 Latino National Survey, those self-selecting the White label saw themselves as having more in common with the larger White population, were more likely to speak English in the research interview, and were less likely to want to preserve Spanish compared to those who selected the “some other race” label (Stokes-Brown, 2012). This suggests that those selecting a White label may be less connected both to Latino cultural values, and thus, they may endorse fewer familism values and demonstrate less strong private regard and less central ethnic identity. Thus, we hypothesized that those selecting a White label compared to those selecting a national label would demonstrate lower levels of private regard and centrality as well as lower levels of familism respect and obligation values.

The Present Study

The purpose of the present study was to examine the longitudinal association between ethnic identity (centrality and private regard) and familism respect and obligation values in Latino emerging adults. Given the heterogeneity of the Latino population, we also investigated the role of ethnic self-labels in ethnic identity (centrality and private regard) and familism respect and obligations values. Our model tested two main hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Those who select a White ethnic self-label compared to those who select a national label will demonstrate lower levels of private regard and centrality, as well as lower levels of familism respect and obligation values.

Hypothesis 2: Both ethnic identity centrality and private regard will predict greater familism respect and obligation values. We also examined whether initial levels familism respect and obligation values predicted changes in ethnic identity (i.e., private regard and centrality), but these tests were exploratory, as past work has not documented this relationship.

Method

Setting and Participants

Data for this study were drawn from a sample of Latino students attending a predominantly White, highly selective university in the northeast. At this institution, Latino, Black, Asian, and Native American students comprised approximately 28% of the student population; Latino undergraduates alone comprised about 7% of the student population. Approximately 85% of the faculty at the university were non-Latino White, 12% were non-Latino ethnic minorities, and 3% were Latino.

All students who were classified as “Hispanic” (no Latino option) noninternational students by the university registrar ($N = 532$; approximately 7% of undergraduate enrollment) were sent a letter inviting them to participate in a yearlong web-based study of their experiences and beliefs over the course of the 2008–2009 academic year. Of those solicited, 235 consented to participate though 8 were ineligible (2 did not indicate their age or birth date in two separate filter questions, and thus eligibility could not be determined; 6 self-identified as international students in a filter question). The remaining 227 students were eligible and participated in the initial survey; of these, nine students were missing ethnic label information, and six students were excluded who were missing all identity and familism variables.

The sample for the primary analytic model comprised 212 students (68% women) across all four class years (24% freshmen, 26% sophomore, 26% junior, and 24% senior). Seventy-six percent reported having either an immigrant mother or father. With regard to socioeconomic diversity, 27.8% of students had parents who completed high school or less education, 23.6% had parents who completed some college or a 2-year degree, and 48.6% had parents who completed a bachelor’s degree or higher.

Procedure

Surveys were administered during the summer prior and over the course of the 2008–2009 academic year. Data for the present study are drawn from a baseline survey prior to the start of the academic year, in August (Time 1 [T1]), and a follow-up survey administered at the end of the academic year, in April (Time 2 [T2]). All measures were presented in a different order at each time point, and surveys were completed in approximately 30–40 min. Participants were informed that the questionnaire was voluntary and confidential, provided informed consent prior to beginning the T1 survey, and received US\$20 as a token of gratitude for each survey completed.

Measures

Familism respect and obligation values

Two measures based on a scale developed by Fuligni, Tseng, and Lam (1999) were used to assess familism respect and obligation values. Familism respect values subscale includes 7 items that tap into the importance of respect for and deference to the family, such as treating “your parents with great respect” (T1 and T2 α range = .75–.77). The future family obligations subscale taps into expectations for the provision of emotional and instrumental support to the family in the future and includes 6 items such as “How important is it to help your parents financially in the future?” (T1 and T2 α range = .74–.76); an item in the original scale inquiring about living near parents or going to college was modified such that it read, “How important is it to live near your parents in the future?” The current assistance subscale of filial obligation measure was not included in the current study, as the majority of youth lived on campus. Scores for these subscales reflect an average of their items, with higher scores indicating greater endorsement of family respect and future support obligations.

Ethnic centrality and private regard

The centrality subscale of the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI; Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton, & Smith, 1997) and the private regard subscale of MIBI-Teen (MIBI-T; Scottham, Sellers, & Nguyen, 2008) were used to assess centrality and private regard. The items in these subscales were adapted to state “my ethnicity” or “my ethnic group” instead of Black identification in the original MIBI and MIBI-T. Centrality was assessed through 8 items asking participants to indicate how important their ethnicity was to their self-definition (T1 and T2 α range = .84–.88). Sample item includes “My ethnicity is an important reflection of who I am.” Private regard toward one’s ethnic group was assessed with 3 items inquiring the extent to which individuals felt “good,” “happy,” or “proud” of their ethnicity (T1 and T2 α range = .75–.77). The content of the private regard measure also reflects that of most other measures of the analogous concepts of ethnic pride and affirmation (cf. Rivas-Drake et al., 2014). Scores for these subscales reflect an average of their items, with higher scores indicating greater centrality and private regard.

Ethnic self-label

At Time 1, participants were asked to indicate all the labels they identified with and then the label that best reflected the group they “most felt a part of.” We used the forced-choice label

provided in the latter question in order to create mutually exclusive categories for analysis. If the participant picked “other” in the forced-choice option and specified a national origin, we coded him or her as “national origin.” If they did not, we classified them as “other,” which means this category includes participants who identified with as multiracial (e.g., Cuban, White), with multiple Latino options (e.g., Latino, Mexican), multiple pan-ethnic options (e.g., Latino, Asian), or another term altogether (e.g., Hapa). There were four dummy codes (1 = *yes*, 0 = *no*) to capture the various and mutually exclusive types of ethnic labels: White, pan-ethnic (i.e., Latino or Hispanic), national origin (e.g., Mexican), and other (e.g., “Hispanic and White,” “Latino and Mexican”), with national origin as the reference group.

Analysis Strategy

To answer our major research question, a path analysis model was tested in a structural equation modeling (SEM) framework (using Mplus Version 7.2); missing data were handled using full information maximum likelihood. First, we examined differences in T1 (summer prior to academic year) private regard, centrality, and familism respect and obligation values by ethnic self-label. Then, we examined the relation of T1 centrality and private regard and familism respect and obligation values at T2 (end of academic year) and, conversely, whether T1 familism respect and obligation values predicted T2 private regard and centrality. For each longitudinal outcome, we included a lagged path predicting T2 from T1 (i.e., controlling for prior level of the outcome). We also allowed familism respect and obligation values and ethnic identity variables to correlate within each time point. As recommended by Kline (2009) and due to the differential sensitivity of particular fit indexes on their own (e.g., Kenny, Kaniskan, & McCoach, 2015), various indices for the hypothesized model were examined to obtain a holistic assessment of model fit. We used absolute fit indices (i.e., root mean square error of approximation [RMSEA] and standardized root mean square residual [SRMR]), which assess deviations from a perfect fitting model. We also used incremental fit indices (i.e., comparative fit index [CFI] and Tucker–Lewis index [TLI]), which measure the improvements from a null or independent model. The RMSEA, CFI, and SRMR are some of the most common and widely reported fit indices when using an SEM framework (Kline, 2009), and the inclusion of the TLI is provided for holistic assessment of model fit. Lastly, we report the model χ^2 , given our small sample size (Kenny, 2015).

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Missing data analyses

A sensitivity analysis indicated that 57% of the sample had no missing data for centrality, private regard, family respect values, and future support obligations scales at both Times 1 and 2. There were no significant differences in the representation of students by ethnic self-label (White, non-White) among those with complete data versus those with any missing data, $\chi^2(1, n = 218) = 2.15$ ($\Phi = .099$), $p = .143$. Significant differences in the representation of student ethnic self-label (other, nonother) among those with complete data versus those with any missing data were

found, $\chi^2(1, n = 218) = 5.76$ ($\Phi = -.16$), $p = .018$. That is, there were more other identified students who were missing data than what would be expected by chance.

Descriptive analyses

To begin, we describe frequencies of each type of ethnic label category: national origin (43%), pan-ethnic (27%), White (17%), and other (8%). Means and standard deviations for centrality, private regard, familism respect, and familism obligation are provided in Table 1, as well as correlations between all main variables. Centrality at T1 was significantly correlated to T1 familism respect ($r = .38$, $p < .001$) and T1 familism obligation ($r = .40$, $p < .001$), as well as T2 ($r_s = .39$ and $.35$, respectively, both $p_s < .001$). T1 private regard was significantly correlated with T1 familism respect ($r = .21$, $p = .003$) and T1 familism obligation ($r = .15$, $p = .033$). Private regard was also significantly correlated with familism respect ($r = .42$, $p < .001$) and familism obligation ($r = .22$, $p = .008$) at T2.

Table 1. Correlations Between Variables of Interests.

	M (SD)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
(1) T1 centrality	3.26 (.78)	-							
(2) T1 private regard	4.01 (.61)	.565**	-						
(3) T1 familism respect	4.01 (.54)	.381**	.207**	-					
(4) T1 familism obligations	3.38 (.65)	.399**	.149**	.624**	-				
(5) T2 centrality	3.39 (.72)	.733**	.492**	.296**	.365**	-			
(6) T2 private regard	4.08 (.57)	.492**	.604**	.309**	.248**	.566**	-		
(7) T2 familism respect	3.95 (.57)	.397**	.219*	.705**	.482**	.388**	.418**	-	
(8) T2 familism obligations	3.40 (.69)	.297**	.153	.451**	.708**	.353**	.221**	.588**	-

Note. Means and standard deviations in parentheses. Correlations are based on the full sample ($n = 227$). T1 = Time 1; T2 = Time 2. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Examination of Hypothesized Model

A collective assessment of multiple fit indexes suggested that the hypothesized model was an excellent fit to the data. Specifically, the RMSEA, which is suggested to be below .05 (Hu & Bentler, 1999), was .049 (.000, .086). The CFI and TLI, both of which are suggested to be greater than .95 (Hu & Bentler, 1999), were .99 and .96, respectively. The SRMR, which is suggested to be less than .08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999), was .037.

Hypothesis 1: Our first hypothesis examined differences in initial levels of centrality, private regard, familism respect, and familism obligation, with the prediction that those who selected a White ethnic self-label would report lower levels of each dimension of ethnic identity and familism compared to those selecting a national label. Results indicate that students who self-labeled as White in the T1 survey (but had self-identified as Hispanic when enrolling in the university) reported significantly lower centrality, private regard, familism respect, and familism obligation, as compared to their peers who identified with any national origin (see Figure 1). In addition, students classified as other reported significantly lower familism respect values. No other significant differences in centrality, private regard, familism respect, or familism obligation were found.

Hypothesis 2: Our primary hypothesis predicted that ethnic centrality and private regard at T1 would predict greater familism respect and obligations values at T2. The model results indicate that ethnic centrality predicted later familism respect values. Specifically, after adjusting for T1 levels of familism respect and obligation values, stronger ethnic centrality at T1 was significantly associated with greater endorsement of familism respect at T2 ($b = .12, SE = .06, p = .039$; see Figure 1), but not familism obligation ($b = .05, SE = .07, p = .480$). Neither T1 familism respect ($b = .00, SE = .11, p = .967$) nor familism obligation ($b = .10, SE = .08, p = .238$) was significantly associated with T2 centrality.

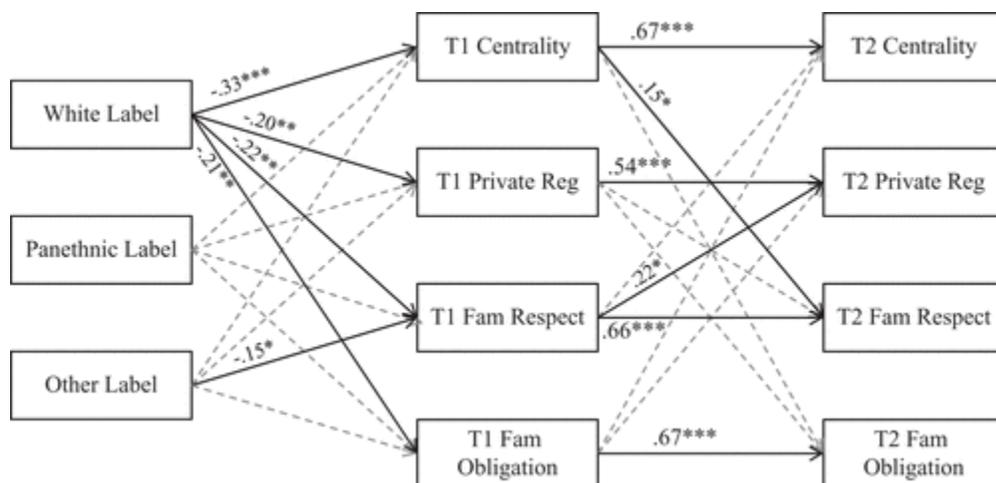


Figure 1. Path analysis model.

The results also suggest that prior familism values predicted later private regard. Specifically, after adjusting for T1 of each outcome, more positive private regard at T1 was not significantly associated with T2 familism respect ($b = .02, SE = .07, p = .828$) or with T2 familism obligation

($b = .01$, $SE = .09$, $p = .957$). Rather, adjusted for T1 private regard, more familism respect values were associated with more positive private regard at T2 ($b = .23$, $SE = .09$, $p = .017$), though no similar prospective association was found for familism obligations ($b = .01$, $SE = .07$, $p = .893$).

Discussion

The current study explored the longitudinal relationship between ethnic self-labels, familism values, and ethnic identity content in a diverse sample of Latino emerging adults (“Latino” refers to all of our participants including those who chose a White self-label). Latino participants who selected a White label also endorsed significantly less strong familism respect and obligation values, less positive affect regarding one’s ethnicity, and less central ethnic identity compared to those selecting a national origin label. Thus, consistent with our hypothesis, ethnic self-labeling influences the identity processes and cultural values endorsement. In addition, consistent with the past work in adolescence (Kiang & Fuligni, 2009), our findings suggest that ethnic centrality supports the growth in familism respect values across time. This is the first study to our knowledge to demonstrate the role ethnic centrality plays in fomenting familism values over time; it extends prior findings (Kiang & Fuligni, 2009) by documenting the role other aspects of ethnic identity play in the development of familism respect values. However, contrary to our hypothesis, our results also suggest that familism respect values predict later growth in ethnic private regard. These findings underscore the need to consider different aspects of both familism values and ethnic identity, as we attempt to clarify how cultural values and aspects of ethnic identity develop over time.

The Role of Labels

Our findings concerning ethnic self-labeling fit with the larger literature documenting that Latinos who endorse a White racial category are distinct from Latinos who identify as some other race (e.g., Stokes-Brown, 2012). Compared to those self-identifying as other than White, White self-identification is associated with higher educational levels, higher economic status, more English language use, lighter skin color, less perceived discrimination, and nonimmigrant status (Rivas-Drake & Mooney, 2008; Stoke-Brown, 2012; Tafoya, 2007; Taylor et al., 2012). However, our study expands this past work by finding that these differences translate into less strong endorsement of familism respect and obligation values, less central ethnic identity, and less positive affect associated with that identity. More than 50% of Latinos in the 2010 Census selected a White racial self-category (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Yet, at the same time, the Pew Hispanic Center found that 51% of Latinos prefer a country of origin label compared to a pan-ethnic one (Taylor et al., 2012). It is not clear how Latinos self-identify, as both of these surveys were hampered by measurement such that participants were forced to select both a racial and an ethnic group membership, which may not map onto how Latinos actually classify themselves. Although how Latinos more broadly self-identify according to ethnic and racial labels remains unclear, our study highlights that differences emerge among those who self-identify as White when selecting between national origin, pan-ethnic, and racial labels.

Future work should examine how ethnic identity and cultural values operate in Latinos who also self-identify as White to test whether the endorsement of these values and stronger ethnic

identity confer the same protective effects as Latinos who select national or pan-ethnic self-labels. Also, past work has demonstrated that ethnic self-labels can also change over time (Tovar & Feliciano, 2009), and while we were unable to examine how changes in ethnic self-labels were related to changes in value endorsement or private regard and centrality, future research should continue to examine these processes to better understand the diversity in the Latino population.

Familism Respect and Obligation Values

In a diverse sample of Latino college students, familism respect and obligation values were highly endorsed, highlighting the salience of these values in emerging adulthood and within a primarily White college context. The mean level of endorsement suggests that Latino college students felt it was important to consider their families when making individual decisions and continue to demonstrate respect for their wishes even when outside of the home. In addition, these students felt it was important to provide future economic assistance to their family, spend significant time with their families, and help care for siblings in the future. One of the strengths of our study was demonstrating the salience of these values in a socioeconomically diverse sample of Latinos. Our study included a greater proportion of Latino students whose parents had completed college (almost 50% of our sample) compared to other studies examining familism values at this stage in development which have been primarily conducted with families with parents with significantly lower levels of education (Ovink, 2013; Sánchez et al., 2010), and our findings lend support to the notion that familism respect and obligation values are important for Latinos across all levels of SES.

Ethnic Centrality and Private Regard

The primary goal of this study was to examine how ethnic centrality and private regard were related to family value endorsement at this developmental stage. Our findings suggest a nuanced relationship between ethnic identity processes and familism values in emerging adulthood. Ethnic centrality served to foment a greater increase in familism respect values over time, which is consistent with past work earlier in adolescence documenting that ethnic belonging and exploration influence later familial respect value and cultural value endorsement (Kiang & Fuligni, 2009). Yet, this finding was more nuanced than past work by suggesting that ethnic centrality, not private regard, influences later value endorsement in terms of respect values. That is, Latino emerging adults who define themselves through their ethnicity grow in their beliefs about respecting their families in terms of decision-making. This is critical, as emerging adults are beginning to evaluate how to make personal decision and future life choices and commitments (Arnett, 2000).

Our findings are in line with narrative research on ethnic minority college students, which finds that greater ethnic identity exploration was associated with more variation in ethnic narratives over time, and these were in part due to greater cultural connection (Syed & Azmitia, 2010). Perhaps as these Latino college students interact with their majority non-Latino White peers and professors, the centrality of their ethnic identity serves to foster a greater appreciation of the values that make them uniquely Latino, subsequently leading to increases in these values over time. Although it is not clear from our study whether this process would be different at an

institution with greater numbers of Latino peers and faculty, past research on university campuses has documented that ethnic identity influences self-esteem differentially depending on the density of Latinos (Umaña-Taylor & Shin, 2007), such that exploration is more protective in a university with much fewer Latinos. Future research should continue to explore how context influences these cultural value endorsement and ethnic identity processes.

Contrary to our hypotheses, familism respect values also operated to foster greater positive affective connection to one's ethnic group. This process may be due to Latino emerging adults' further internalizing salient Latino values that help them feel more pride and connection to their ethnicity over time. Perhaps by honoring and respecting their families in terms of school and career paths, Latino emerging adults find additional meaning in their lives and, in particular, in their educational pursuits that strengthen positive affectivity toward one's group membership. Indeed, research with adolescents suggests that a sense of purpose provides a foundation for educational pursuits and hope for the future (Hill, Burrow, & Sumner, 2013) and is related to more positive affect (Burrow, O'Dell, & Hill, 2010). Similarly, meaning and purpose have been found to mediate the positive relationship between ethnic identity (e.g., commitment) and positive outcomes in ethnic minority youth (Kiang & Fuligni, 2010). Thus, it is possible that Latino emerging adults position their current educational pursuits in the context of their familial role, which serves to increase their connection with other Latinos who are similarly grounded and is contrasted with other peers who don't share this same value system. This process then strengthens one's connection to one's group.

Taken together, our findings suggest that familism respect values and ethnic centrality and private regard complement each other at this developmental stage, by mutually influencing growth across time. Interestingly, familism obligation values did not play a similar role, suggesting that it is potentially the current enactment of cultural values measured in what one currently believes as opposed to how one believes one will behave in the future that are linked with ethnic identity process. Future work should attempt to untangle how values, identity, and behavioral enactment of values influence each other as it may provide an avenue for potential intervention for strengthening identity for Latino college students, in particular.

Limitations and Future Directions

The study was limited in that we examined the endorsement of familial values and not necessarily whether the endorsement of these values translated to behavioral manifestations. The behavioral enactment of these values may indeed serve to foster and solidify private regard and centrality at this stage in development, as emerging adults are making actual behavioral decisions that reflect these values. Future work should further examine the interplay of value endorsement, behavioral enactment, and ethnic identity. Similarly, we also did not include beliefs about current assistance to family in this study as a measure of familism obligation values due to the fact that the majority of students lived on campus. Future work should explore whether proximity to family and current assistance values influence private regard and centrality.

Additionally, the study included Latino students from all 4 years. Future research should examine whether indeed there are changes in these values, as youth complete college and enter

the workforce, and how these values are manifested at that time frame. In addition, developmental changes in ethnic centrality, private regard, and familism values may be distinct for youth, as they enter a college environment, and this question should be further explored.

In summary, our study suggests that ethnic centrality, private regard, and familism respect values continue to influence and reinforce each other in emerging adulthood for Latinos. While work earlier in adolescence suggests that these values do not increase (e.g., Updegraff et al., 2012), emerging adulthood may be an important developmental stage where these values are reexamined and reinterpreted through the ethnic identity processes that Latino emerging adults experience in a college setting (Syed & Azmitia, 2010). In terms of application, college campuses should be aware of the intersection of ethnic identity and cultural endorsement, as they seek to serve an increasingly diverse college population. In particular, career counselors and academic advisors should be aware of how these values may continue to develop in a college context and provide culturally consonant advising.

Our findings regarding Latinos who self-identity as White are compelling in that these Latino emerging adults endorsed less strong connection to their ethnicity (i.e., private regard, centrality) and less strong familial respect and obligation values. Yet, our findings do not shed light on whether the weaker connection to Latino identity and values poses any risk for these emerging adults, as literature suggests that ethnic identity and cultural value endorsement predict better outcomes in Latino youth. These youth may demonstrate the benefits of White identity noted in the literature review above (i.e., higher SES, better educational outcomes), but these may come at a cost as they may not benefit from the protective effects conferred by a strong connection to one's group or its values. Future research should endeavor to understand whether there is any risk for Latino emerging adults who also identify as White.

Authors' Contribution

Gabriela L. Stein contributed to conception, analysis, and interpretation; drafted manuscript; gave final approval; and agrees to be accountable for all aspects of work ensuring integrity and accuracy. Deborah Rivas-Drake, contributed to conception, design, acquisition, analysis, and interpretation; critically revised manuscript; gave final approval; and agrees to be accountable for all aspects of work ensuring integrity and accuracy. Tissyana C. Camacho contributed to analysis and interpretation, drafted manuscript, gave final approval, and agrees to be accountable for all aspects of work ensuring integrity and accuracy.

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