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LATINO ADOLESCENT ADJUSTMENT:  
AN EXAMINATION OF CULTURAL VALUES

by

Maria I. Iturbide

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of  
The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
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Under the Supervision of Professor Brian Wilcox

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LATINO ADOLESCENT ADJUSTMENT: AN EXAMINATION OF CULTURAL  
VALUES AND ACCULTURATION

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University of Nebraska, 2011

Advisor: Brian Wilcox

In the U.S., 22% of children under the age of 18 are Latino and 52% of Latino children have at least one parent who is foreign-born (Fry & Passel, 2009). Latinos are likely to experience acculturative strains associated with a range of negative outcomes such as academic underachievement. A mixed method sequential explanatory design was used to examine the protective effects of cultural factors that may ameliorate the negative effects of acculturative strains on psychological and academic adjustment.

The quantitative phase of the study examined whether biculturalism and ethnic identity would reduce the negative influence of acculturation strains on adjustment and if age-related differences existed between models such that moderation effects would be greater for older adolescents than younger adolescents would. Moderation was found for biculturalism and ethnic identity, however only for three of the four types of adjustment. Comparisons of moderation effects by age found biculturalism was a moderator for the acculturation-depression model for older adolescents but not for younger adolescents.

In the qualitative phase of the study the adolescents who participated in the group interviews showed an understanding of what culture is, what it meant to them personally, and how it is directly or indirectly associated to their adjustment. From the themes that emerged it was inferred that family is essential to the understanding and prosperity of the Latino culture. Results have implications for theory, research and practice.

## DEDICATION

Para mi mama. Gracias por todo su amor y apoyo. Sin usted esto no hubiera sido posible.

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## **CHAPTER 1: Latino Adolescent Adjustment: An Examination of Cultural Values**

Latinos are the largest ethnic minority group in the U.S., and from 2000 to 2010 the Latino population increased by 43% (Ennis, Rios-Vargas, & Albert, 2011). Moreover, 22% of U.S. children under the age of 18 are Latino and 52% of Latino children have at least one parent who is foreign-born (Fry & Passel, 2009). Latinos are likely to experience acculturation and acculturative stress, which are associated with a range of negative outcomes among ethnically diverse populations, including mental health (Balls Organista, Organista, & Kurasaki, 2003; Cuellar, 2000) and academic underachievement (Gonzales, Knight, Birman, & Sirolli, 2004). Researchers suggest that as youths acculturate they are more susceptible to their American counterparts' habits and encounter an increased number of stressors (Barrera, Gonzales, Lopez, & Fernandez, 2004). Furthermore, the maintenance of cultural values is associated with positive outcomes (Gonzales et al., 2004; Padilla, 2006) and may decrease the likelihood of negative outcomes (Phinney 1995). It is important to identify factors that may protect Latino adolescents from acculturation strains in order to develop interventions to decrease risk behaviors and negative outcomes.

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the protective nature of cultural values for Latino adolescents. Several aspects of psychological and academic adjustment previously identified as areas of concern for Latinos were considered. In the current study, psychological adjustment was examined in terms of depression and self-esteem. Research has suggested that 10-15% of children and adolescents report depressive symptoms at some point in their lives (Nolen-Hoeksema, Girgus, & Seligman, 1992), with Mexican adolescent males and females reporting more depressive symptoms than

non-Mexican adolescents do (Roberts & Sobhan, 1992). Cultural beliefs may be associated with higher rates of depression and depressive symptoms among Latinos as compared to non-Latinos (Mirowsky & Ross, 1984; Roberts, Roberts, & Chen, 2000; Ross, Mirowsky, & Cockerham, 1983). Self-esteem was selected as a positive indicator of adjustment. Research indicates that ethnic identity is positively associated with self-esteem, self-worth, and self-evaluation for adolescents (Phinney & Chavira, 1992; Phinney & Rosenthal, 1992). Academic adjustment was also considered. This domain is especially important to examine because Latinos have elevated dropout rates compared to non-Hispanic Whites (5% for Whites compared to 15% for Latinos; Aud et al., 2012). Latino immigrants are likely to experience acculturation strains that may influence their educational attainment; thus, there is an urgent need to identify potential protective factors.

This dissertation consists of six Chapters. Chapter 1 presents a review of theory and empirical literature on acculturation and adjustment, and discusses culturally relevant moderators of this relation. An integrative model is proposed that conceptualizes the relations between acculturation, cultural factors, and adjustment. The next four chapters describe a mixed method study conducted to evaluate the model. Chapters 2 and 3 present the method, results, and conclusions of a quantitative study testing the proposed model. Chapters 4 and 5 present the method, results, and conclusions of a qualitative study exploring on the relations between acculturation, cultural factors, and adjustment. Chapter 6 integrates the findings from the two studies and discusses general limitations and future directions.

## Acculturation and Adjustment

### Acculturation: Theoretical Review

Acculturation is the process that occurs when two or more distinct cultures interact and there is an exchange of behaviors, attitudes and values between them (Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, & Vedder, 2001). The acculturation process encompasses the retention of one's heritage and the integration of the host culture's attitudes, beliefs, and values; the interaction between cultures results in changes in an individual's attitudes, beliefs, and values. Changes that occur at the individual level are examined as a function of psychological acculturation, a concept introduced to identify that acculturation happens at both the group and individual level (Szapocnik, Scopetta, Kurtines, & Aranalde, 1978), and that not all individuals acculturate in the same way (Berry, 2006). Four strategies classify these individual differences.

Berry (1994) described four possible acculturation strategies: *assimilation*, *separation*, *integration*, and *marginalization*. These strategies may be a result of forced acculturation or an individual's personal choice. *Assimilation* is associated with an individual adopting the host culture's attitudes and beliefs and detaching from the native culture. For example, Juan changes his name to John, only speaks English and refuses to engage in Latino traditions. *Separation* is the converse of assimilation in which the individual denies the host culture's attitudes and beliefs and chooses to uphold the native culture. An example is the Amish community, which maintains its distinct cultural values and practices and chooses to live separately from the majority culture. *Marginalization* is the imposed denial (by society) or (more rarely) self-denial of both the host and native cultures' attitudes and beliefs. Apartheid in South Africa is an example of



marginalization against the Blacks by the Afrikaners. Finally, *integration* is the blending of both the host and native cultures' attitudes and beliefs. The blending of the English and Spanish language to form *Spanglish* would be a form of integration.

### **Acculturation Measurement**

At this time, it is important to review the conceptualization and methods used to assess acculturation and related constructs. Two approaches to assessing acculturation have been used: 1) bipolar adaptation (also known as unidimensional or linear adaptation) and 2) independent culture change (i.e., bidimensional). Bipolar adaptation assumes that as individuals adapt to the host culture the connections to the native culture are weakened (Zane & Mak, 2003). For example as an adolescent becomes proficient in English, they lose their proficiency in Spanish. The second approach assumes that adaptation to the host culture can occur independently, with individuals maintaining connections to their native culture even as they adjust to the new culture (Zane & Mak, 2003). For example, as an adolescent becomes proficient in English she can remain proficient in Spanish. Models conceptualizing acculturation as a bidimensional process are congruent with Berry's (1994) conceptualization of acculturation strategies.

As discussed above, acculturation can occur at the individual level, which is described as psychological acculturation. Psychological acculturation consists of several behavioral and attitudinal domains, and these domains are measured to determine acculturative change (Zane & Mak, 2003). Language use, preference, and proficiency are a subset of the domains examined. Most measures of acculturation have questions that pertain to the language domain (Gonzales, Knight, Morgan-Lopez, Saenz, & Sirolli, 2002; Zane & Mak, 2003). Additionally, the language domain tended to account for the

greatest amount of variance in acculturation when a factor analysis was conducted on the multiple domains of acculturation (Gonzales et al., 2002).

### **Links of Acculturation to Psychological Adjustment**

Acculturation (variously operationalized as acculturation, acculturation strains, acculturation conflict or acculturative stress) is linked to psychological, behavioral, and academic adjustment (Chun, Balls Organista, & Marín, 2003; Gonzales et al., 2004). Variations in the acculturation process and strategies may affect individual adjustment because acculturation is inherently stressful. *Acculturative stress* may be experienced as a direct result of the acculturation process (Berry, 2003; Umaña-Taylor & Alfaro, 2009). The stress is a result of conflict between multiple cultures, exposure to a new culture, or because of changes in daily experiences. For example, immigrants may experience strains or stress because of a lack of social support (that they had before immigrating), difficulties with language (which may be different from their native language), or economic struggles (difficulty reestablishing themselves financially in the new country). Although acculturative stress is conceptualized as a byproduct of the acculturation process, the amount of stress experienced by individuals varies. For example, based on Berry's model (e.g., Berry, 2003) certain strategies (e.g., marginalization) may be associated with greater difficulties than others are. In the case of a person whose is marginalized, neither the host nor his native culture accept him. This person could have made repeated attempts to be a part of both or either culture without success. It is not difficult to assume that the failure to be a part of either culture could be stressful or even distressing. In contrast, a person who is integrated (i.e., accepted by both the host and native culture) would experience much less stress than a marginalized individual would.

Acculturation is an inherently stressful process and therefore acculturating individuals will experience some form of stress.

Moreover, acculturative strains are experienced not just by immigrants but can occur in later generations because of prejudice and discrimination or cultural conflict between generations (Barrera et al., 2004; Mena, Padilla, & Maldonado, 1987; Roysircar-Sodowsky & Maestas, 2000). Therefore, it should not be assumed that only recent immigrants experience acculturative strains: strain and stress can be caused by the incongruence between cultures.

Furthermore, research with Latino adults indicates that the relation between acculturation and psychological adjustment is complex and related to multiple factors. For example, Latino individuals who are more acculturated (U.S. born, Anglo oriented), have low educational achievement, or are female; are at greater risk for depressive symptoms (Moscicki, Locke, Rae, & Boyd, 1989). Acculturation strains are associated with self-esteem and mental health among adolescents. Adolescent boys who experienced language conflicts, acculturation conflict, and perceived discrimination reported lower levels of self-esteem (Gil, Vega, & Dimas, 1994). Additionally, Latino adolescents who experienced higher levels of acculturative stress were found to be at elevated risk for depression and suicidal ideation (Hovey & King, 1996).

### **Links of Acculturation to Academic Adjustment**

Language difficulties are one particular aspect of acculturation that are related to youth's academic adjustment. When examining adolescent difficulties with English it is implicit that the student would experience some stress; extreme difficulty would be associated with large amounts of stress while minimal difficulty would be associated with

smaller amounts of stress. When acculturation was measured as a function of language use, more acculturated students (more English language use) were found to have greater school expectations, school competence, and feelings that school was important for future success than students that were less acculturated (Ibañez, Kuperminc, Jurkovic, & Perilla, 2004). However, if academic achievement were a cultural value for the ethnic group, maintaining this value (not acculturating on this level) would prove to be beneficial to the adolescent (Bernal, Saenz, & Knight, 1991). These are examples of the conflicting results of research studies, which suggest a need for further investigation of cultural factors and acculturation in relation to academic success.

**Summary of acculturation and adjustment.** In summary, the acculturation experienced by ethnic minorities may be associated with negative outcomes such as depression (Balls Organista et al., 2003), low self-esteem (Gonzales et al., 2004), and poor academic performance (Barrera et al., 2004). More research is required to advance the understanding of the impact of acculturation and acculturative stress on Latino adolescent psychological and academic adjustment and identify ways to ameliorate the negative effects of acculturation and acculturative stress.

### **Moderators of Acculturation and Adjustment**

As previously stated, acculturation is associated with mental health, behavioral health, and academic adjustment among Latino adolescents (Barrera et al., 2004; Chun et al., 2003; Gonzales et al., 2004). Thus, it is important to identify factors that will mitigate the negative effects of acculturation on adjustment. Two possible moderators are biculturalism, and ethnic identity. Moderator variables are variables that change the relation between two other variables (in this case, acculturative and adjustment).

Protective factors are moderators that reduce the negative effects of acculturation. The selection of moderators for this review was based on the identification of cultural factors that are conceptually relevant for adjustment and linked empirically to the constructs of interest. The review is organized as follows: each moderator is theoretically reviewed, followed by its links to adjustment, and finally evidence of moderation is presented if available.

### **Biculturalism: Theoretical Review**

Biculturalism is a part of the bidimensional model of acculturation that supports the theory that people can exist in a multicultural environment without having to sacrifice their native culture (Buriel, 1993). Researchers agree that biculturalism is a result of an interaction between two cultures. A person who is bicultural will retain some aspects of each culture (Barrera et al., 2004; Buriel, 1993; Gonzales et al., 2002; Gonzales et al., 2004). In keeping with Berry's (2007) model of acculturation, integration can be identified as the equivalent of biculturalism -- people who are able to adapt to two cultures after experiencing both their native and host cultures. They are able to conduct themselves in a culturally appropriate manner in multiple settings because they understand the social norms for both cultures. However, the conceptualization, manifestation, and even labeling of biculturalism vary across researchers (Boski, 2008): for some researchers biculturalism is a cognitive frame of reference; for other researchers biculturalism is the ability to speak two languages; and yet other researchers suggest that biculturalism is advantageous, while others believe that biculturalism is stressful. These varied interpretations need to be examined to understand the actual influence of biculturalism.

In a review of the conceptualization of integration, one theory suggested two possible outcomes: individuals could experience either *encapsulated marginality* such that they are distanced from the two cultures they belong to or *constructive marginality*, where individuals are able to be a part of both cultures and have positive associations with both (Boski, 2008). This conceptualization is similar to Berry's model, in that constructive marginality is the equivalent of Berry's integration (i.e., biculturalism) and encapsulated marginality is the equivalent of marginalization.

Other scholars conceptualize biculturalism as bicultural identity. In this view, biculturalism is considered part of the individual's self-concept. Individuals may show a preference for specific attitudes, values, and beliefs in each culture and in turn integrate the two sets of preferences into their self-concepts (Benet-Martínez, Leu, Lee, & Morris, 2002). Conceptually, this suggests that an individual should be able to hold two cultures as equally important (Benet-Martínez et al., 2002), such that if psychometrically assessed, individuals would report having a strong ethnic identity as well as a strong American identity.

Another interpretation of biculturalism is bicultural competence, the ability and flexibility to function in multiple cultural environments (Rotheram & Phinney, 1983; Rotheram-Borus, 1993). This view implies that biculturalism functions on a cognitive and behavioral level. Bicultural competence has also been referred to as frame switching or code switching (Benet-Martínez et al., 2002). In this view, bicultural individuals understand how to conduct themselves in both cultures. They are able to identify contextual cues that would determine the culturally appropriate responses and behaviors. For example, an adolescent uses informal language with non-Latino adults but knows that

when addressing Latino adults he should use the formal register (i.e., *Usted* as opposed to *tu*) which for his culture is the most appropriate (Rotheram-Borus, 1993).

Bilingualism is considered a form of biculturalism (Barrera et al., 2004; Gonzales et al., 2002; Rotheram-Borus, 1993); however, language is only one facet of biculturalism. As with language acculturation, bilingualism does not capture the attitudes, values, and beliefs that are found in the two cultures or whether the individual adequately navigates between the two cultures.

Other research has suggested that biculturalism can prove to be stressful if one culture is not accepted by the other (e.g., the majority culture does not accept a minority one). Individuals may know that they can function in both cultures but also understand that the majority culture may not value the minority culture and openly reject a part of bicultural individuals. Furthermore, the mere fact of being bicultural can be stressful because of the demands put forth by the two cultures and inconsistent messages set forth by both cultures (e.g., responsibilities of language brokering for adolescents or collectivism versus individualism; Roysircar-Sodowsky & Maestas, 2000). A recent measure of bicultural stress identifies translation and interpretation as stressors within Mexican adolescents' families (Romero & Roberts, 2003). Bicultural stress consisted of stress "that may occur within a bilingual and bicultural environment" (p. 175) as well as the pressure to adopt both the host and native culture in adolescents' daily lives. However, some items used to create this scale were based on previous acculturative stress measures (e.g., *I feel uncomfortable when others make jokes about or put down people of my ethnic background*). From a measurement standpoint, it may be argued that this assessment is a measure of acculturative stress rather than bicultural stress. It may also be

that the stress is a product of familial conflict that occurs because different generations acculturate at different rates (Rosenthal, 1983). Alternatively, perhaps the stress experienced by the adolescent can be attributed to the general stress that occurs between adolescents and parents (e.g., conflicts related to autonomy granting; Steinberg, 1990). This stress may not necessarily be related directly to cultural factors such as acculturation differences between parent and child.

In summary, a variety of conceptualizations of biculturalism have been proposed. The impact of biculturalism on functioning has also been described as positive or negative (e.g., Bennett, 1993; Bennett & Bennett, 2004). Variations in the positive and negative effects of biculturalism may be a result of the operationalization of biculturalism, and the outcome examined. This is especially true when biculturalism is operationalized as adaptive by some researchers (i.e., likely to lead to positive adjustment) and stressful by other researchers (i.e., likely to lead to negative adjustment). Further examination of biculturalism is required to clarify its impact on Latino adolescent adjustment.

### **Biculturalism Links to Adjustment**

It has been suggested that biculturalism is adaptive and functional (Rogler, Cortes, & Malgady, 1991) and associated with multiple positive outcomes (Barrera et al., 2004; Gonzales et al., 2002). For example, compared to first generation immigrants, those in the second generation (who have the opportunity to function in multiple cultures) experience positive outcomes, such as higher educational achievement, occupational expectations, and self-esteem (Padilla, 2006; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). In one study, bicultural adolescent boys reported lower levels of acculturative stress and more family



pride than boys that were highly acculturated or not acculturated (Gil et al., 1994).

When bilingualism is measured as a form of biculturalism, it was found that students who spoke both Spanish and English were less likely to drop out of school than those who were English monolinguals (Feliciano, 2001). Additionally, students who were from homes with bilingual adults were less likely to drop out of school than students who were from homes with no bilingual adults (Feliciano, 2001).

Other researchers have incorporated biculturalism in therapeutic settings, providing evidence of its links to adjustment (e.g., Szapocznik, Santisteban, Kurtines, Perez-Vidal, & Hervis, 1984). Szapocznik and colleagues (1984) suggested that the inability of some individuals to adapt properly to multiple cultures is associated with maladjustment. They also suggested that the intergenerational gap caused by differential acculturation between parents and children adds to family conflict. Their Bicultural Effectiveness Training provides skills that help families cope with conflict that may occur because of cultural discrepancies between parents and children.

In sum, there is converging evidence that biculturalism is associated with positive adjustment. However further research is required to disentangle the relations between these constructs. Researchers need to define what biculturalism is more explicitly, clarify how biculturalism is assessed, and distinguish stress related to biculturalism from acculturative stress or general stress experienced in adolescence due to normative development.

### **Evidence of Moderation for Biculturalism**

As previously mentioned, biculturalism can lead to skills that prove to be adaptive and lead to positive outcomes in adjustment, which allows for the speculation that

biculturalism, may be a possible moderator between acculturation strains and adjustment. Studies that empirically examine this question are rare, especially with the forms of adjustment examined in this review. One empirical study did not find that biculturalism was a moderator. For Hispanic college students biculturalism did not moderate the relation between family and peer differences (stressors in the models) and loneliness and alienation, although biculturalism was negatively correlated with loneliness and alienation (Suarez, Fowers, Garwood, & Szapocznik, 1997). It is possible that moderation would be found for the indicators of psychological and academic adjustment reviewed here but examples of such cannot be reported at this time because of the lack of empirical evidence. The lack of evidence only lends strength to the argument that more research is needed in this area, particularly given that biculturalism is repeatedly reported in the literature as a protective factor.

In sum, there is a range of operational definitions of biculturalism and -- depending on the conceptualization of biculturalism -- a variety of positive and negative outcomes associated with biculturalism. To understand how biculturalism contributes to adolescent adaptation, research is required that examines multiple contexts (e.g., home life versus work) and domains (e.g., attitudes, language, or behavior). Moreover, if biculturalism is viewed as adaptive then it should function as a protective factor, but if biculturalism is viewed as a stress inducer then it would exacerbate negative outcomes. Therefore, the conceptualization and operationalization of biculturalism are essential to determine if biculturalism will positively or negatively moderate the relations between acculturative strains and adjustment.

### **Ethnic Identity: Theoretical Review**

Erikson (1968) stressed the importance of having a clear sense of self and purpose. Without a secure identity, individuals experience negative consequences such as poor psychological adjustment and low self-esteem (Erikson, 1968). For ethnic minorities, ethnicity presents an additional element that must be integrated into their self-concept (Phinney & Rosenthal, 1992). Ethnic identity is the commitment and sense of belonging individuals experience with their ethnic group; this involves interest in and participation within the group as well as a positive evaluation of the group (Phinney, 1990). Ethnic identity has been examined as a component of social identity and as a developmental process. Social identity is described as the collective self, focusing on the group's behaviors and processes, unlike personal identity, which focuses on the individual (Hogg, 2003; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). In the case of ethnic identity, the social group is the individual's ethnic group.

The developmental understanding of ethnic identity is borrowed from social identity theory and further developed from the work of Erickson and Marcia (Phinney, 1990), which focus on the development of an individual's self. Erickson described identity development as one of the eight stages of life, during adolescences an adolescent resolves the conflict of identity versus role confusion (Erickson, 1968). Expanding on Erickson's work, Marcia (1980) identified four possible outcomes of this conflict: *diffuse*, *foreclosed*, *moratorium*, and *achieved*. Individuals who have not explored or committed to an identity are considered to be diffused, whereas individuals who have committed to an identity but have not explored are said to be foreclosed. Those who have explored but not committed to an identity are in moratorium, and individuals who have both explored and committed to an identity are achieved. These classifications are echoed in the

developmental process of ethnic identity.

Phinney (1993) described the developmental process of ethnic identity in a three-stage model. Individuals begin unexamined; they have accepted the attitudes and beliefs of the host culture without looking at their own culture or vice versa. Even though exploration has not occurred, these individuals may still have a positive outlook in regards to their ethnicity (Phinney, 1993; Phinney & Rosenthal, 1992). The process continues with exploration; individuals begin to seek out information regarding their culture, with the goal of further understanding their relationship to their ethnicity. The process ends with achievement -- individuals have made a conscious choice, and have a sense of self in relation to their ethnicity (Phinney, 1993).

Phinney's stage model of ethnic identity was developed to be inclusive of all ethnic and racial groups. Specific models of ethnic identity have also been developed for different ethnic and racial groups (e.g., African Americans; for review see Cross, 1991). These models utilize specific ethnic and racial constructs in their development. Of particular interest to the current dissertation are models that describe ethnic identity development for Latinos. According to one model, there are five components of ethnic identity for Mexican American children (Bernal, Knight, & Ocampo, 1993). The five components follow a developmental progression: 1) ethnic identification (i.e., the label one chooses), 2) ethnic constancy (i.e., the understanding that there are specific and permanent ethnic characteristics), 3) ethnic role behaviors (i.e., engaging in behaviors that reflect the ethnic groups), 4) ethnic knowledge (i.e., knowing the ethnic group's traditions, customs and values), and 5) ethnic feelings and preferences (i.e., individuals' feelings and beliefs about their ethnic group). The meaning of each component varies

with children's cognitive ability. For example, self-identification as Latino in early childhood may be a result of restating what the child has heard instead of an actual understanding that Latino is an ethnic group that is associated with specific countries and languages.

Researchers theorize that ethnic identity is conveyed through societal and familial socialization (Knight, Berkel, Carlo, & Basillo, 2011; Knight, Bernal, & Cota, 1993). Through the process of enculturation, families teach the cultural values, beliefs, traditions, and languages associated with the home culture (Gonzales et al., 2004). The process of acculturation occurs through contact with people outside of the home and the media. As they learn about the host culture, adolescents are presented with values that are different from those presented at home, such as the importance of autonomy and individualization. The processes of enculturation and acculturation occur simultaneously, influencing an individual's developing ethnic identity (Gonzales, Fabrett, & Knight, 2009).

The terms ethnic identity and acculturation have been sometimes used interchangeably in the literature, perhaps as a result of how the two constructs have been defined and measured (e.g., the use of language as an indicator of ethnic identity and acculturation; Phinney, 2003). Research has shown that ethnic identity and acculturation are negatively associated; individuals who exhibit high acculturation tend to have low ethnic identity (Cuellar, Nyberg, Maldonado, & Roberts, 1997). The two are conceptually distinct even though they have been defined and measured in similar ways. Ethnic identity is the subjective expression of one's ethnicity, and consists of cognitive, affective and behavioral components (Cuellar et al., 1997; Phinney, 2003).

Acculturation influences ethnic identity but the two are not synonymous. Acculturation consists of the shifts and changes in how individuals express their ethnicity, leading to increases or decreases in the expression of the cognitive, affective and behavioral components associated with their ethnicity and therefore their ethnic identity. Thus, although acculturation and ethnic identity have been similarly measured and defined, they are conceptually distinct. Because of this, it is necessary to examine their separate influences and the interaction between them.

### **Ethnic Identity Links to Adjustment**

Ethnic identity has generally been found to be positively associated with Latino youth's psychological (Phinney & Rosenthal, 1992; Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007) and academic (Fuligni, Witkow, & Garcia, 2005) adjustment. Ethnic identity affirmation is negatively associated with depression among Mexican American college students (Iturbide, Raffaelli, & Carlo, 2009). Acceptance or pride in one's group may lead to higher levels of self-esteem (Phinney, 1995). Additionally, ethnic identity achievement and self-esteem are associated (Phinney, 1989), such that individuals with high levels of ethnic identity (an achieved identity) report higher levels of self-esteem than those who have low levels of ethnic identity (i.e., have not explored their ethnic identity).

Associations between ethnic identity and academic achievement have also been reported, although findings are mixed. Some studies indicate a positive association between ethnic identity (positive identification) and academic achievement (Fuligni et al., 2005; Supple, Ghazarian, Frabutt, Plunkett, & Sands, 2006) yet others find no associations (Guzmán, Santiago-Rivera, & Haase, 2005). Variations in ethnic identification are associated with different views and goals for academic achievement.

For example, Matute-Bianchi (1991) found that students who were “Mexican-Oriented” had higher academic performance and success than students who she identified as “Chicano” or “Cholo” Further study is required to determine if relations vary because of the differences in ethnic identification or if variations are related to measurement differences across studies.

### **Evidence of Moderation for Ethnic Identity**

Conceptually, ethnic identity, as a cultural factor, should ameliorate the impact of stress stemming from cultural conflicts and minority status. Individuals who have a secure sense of themselves as a member of a particular group should be better able to withstand potential threats that are culturally based (e.g., discrimination, pressure to assimilate; Porter & Washington, 1993). Individuals who have positive feelings about their ethnic group may be fully aware of negative stereotypes but not apply them to themselves, protecting their self-esteem (Phinney, 1995). Moreover, “high personal self-esteem leads to ability to cope with racial and ethnic discrimination more successfully” (Porter & Washington, 1993, p. 155).

Research indicates that ethnic identity can attenuate the direct effects of stress on adjustment (Kiang, Yip, Gonzales-Backen, Witkow, & Fuligni, 2006). For example, ethnic regard (positive feelings about one’s ethnic group) moderated the negative association between normative daily stressors and happiness (Kiang et al., 2006). In this study, Mexican adolescents who explored their ethnic identity and developed a positive sense of the meaning of their ethnicity to them were better able to deal with culturally related stressors. For Latina college students, it was found that under low levels of acculturative stress, ethnic identity affirmation and belonging, and ethnic identity

achievement, reduced the effect of acculturative stress on depressive symptoms (Iturbide et al., 2009).

The formation of ethnic identity is a central aspect of development for ethnic minority adolescents in a multicultural environment. In addition to the other cultural factors mentioned above, ethnic identity is important to both psychological and academic adjustment. Latino adolescents benefit from maintaining positive associations with their culture and ethnicity. Therefore, developing methods of effectively examining the impact of these cultural factors on adolescent adjustment is essential to developmental and cultural research.

#### **Summary of moderators of links between acculturation and adjustment.**

Psychological and academic adjustment for Latino youths is influenced by a number of factors, including culturally relevant factors such as acculturation, ethnic identity, and biculturalism. However, the existing literature is limited in several ways. Not all possible relations between these factors have been studied even though current research would implicitly suggest that these unexamined associations exist. For example, scholars have suggested that biculturalism can serve as a protective factor but little research has tested the moderating effects of biculturalism. Moreover, these cultural factors are rarely considered together when Latino youth adjustment is examined. Relevant cultural factors have been examined separately but Latino adolescents experience these factors concurrently and it would be informative to examine how they work together to affect adolescents' adjustment. Furthermore, it is important to understand how to mitigate the negative effects of acculturative stress experienced by Latino adolescent.

#### **Proposed Integrative Model and Current Study Overview**



A model is proposed to conceptualize the protective effects of ethnic identity and biculturalism. The model was guided by the stress-buffering hypothesis (Cohen & Wills, 1985), which suggests that protective factors (e.g., individual and social resources) diminish the effects of an individuals' ability to appraise "situation[s] that are threatening or otherwise demanding and [do] not have an appropriate coping response" (Cohen & Wills, 1985, p. 312). For this study, acculturation (because of the inevitable strains caused by acculturating) was hypothesized to be associated with negative adjustment (i.e., higher levels of depression and decrease in self-esteem and academic self-efficacy). In Cohen and Wills' (1985), model, social support served as the buffer or protective factor. Buffers were described as social resources that can provide support to an individual and therefore ameliorate the negative impact of stressors. Four types of support are described as protective factors in the stress-buffering model: emotional, informational, diffuse / belongingness, and instrumental.

In the current study, cultural factors serve as buffers and can be a function of emotional, instrumental, and diffuse/belongingness support categories. That is, individuals who are bicultural and have a strong sense of ethnic identity see that they:

- 1) "are valued for their own worth and experiences and are accepted despite any difficulties or personal faults" (emotional support; Cohen & Wills, 1985, p. 313);

- 2) have the ability to appraise situations accordingly because informational support provides "help in defining, understanding, and coping with problematic events" (instrumental support; Cohen & Wills, 1985, p. 313) that are caused by cultural incongruence;

- 3) social companionship "may reduce stress by fulfilling a need for affiliation and

contact with others, by helping to distract persons from worrying about problems, or by facilitating positive affective moods” (diffuse/belongingness support; Cohen & Wills, 1985, p. 313)

Therefore, the proposed model represents a direct adaptation of the stress-buffering model and may be utilized to examine the protective properties of cultural factors.

This study, acculturation, because of the inevitable strains caused by acculturating, lead to poorer academic and psychological adjustment among Latino youth. For example, the literature reviewed earlier indicates that exposure to acculturative strains is associated with lower levels of academic achievement. Additionally, acculturative strains are associated with increased levels of depression and decreased self-esteem. The researcher postulated that ethnic identity and biculturalism would moderate these direct relations, diminishing the association between acculturation and adjustment difficulties and ultimately promoting positive outcomes for Latino adolescents.

As discussed above, ethnic identity has been examined as a protective factor but few studies have examined whether biculturalism also diminishes the linkages between acculturation and adjustment. The model proposes that biculturalism, and ethnic identity will moderate the relation between acculturation and adjustment difficulties, serving as protective factors. The conceptual model (see Figure 1a and Figure 1b), shows that there is an expected direct effect of acculturation on adjustment; however, this relation is expected to change in the presence of culturally relevant moderators. Specifically, the positive association between acculturation and psychological maladjustment should be reduced at high levels of biculturalism and ethnic identity. Similarly, the negative relation

between acculturation and academic adjustment should be reduced at high levels of biculturalism and ethnic identity.

The overall model is consistent with the stress-buffering hypothesis. The model also considers the dynamic nature of development, such as changes that occur as children mature and age. The associations depicted in the conceptual model are expected to differ according to age. As discussed earlier, identity development follows a progression from childhood to adulthood, such that children's ethnic identity begins unexamined and in adolescence individuals begin to explore their identity, and eventually these individuals achieve an ethnic identity that is salient to them. Identity development is congruent with individuals' cognitive abilities, which develop with age. That is to say, exploration and saliency of ethnicity can only occur if individuals have the ability to understand and appreciate the significance of their culture to their self-concept. This would also hold true for biculturalism, such that the cognitive ability to understand and appreciate the adaptive ability of functioning in multiple cultures will only occur with the development of cognitive functioning that occurs as an individual ages. That is to say that the ability to hold multiple culture schemas in one's head as well as being cognizant of when and how to switch between these schemas would develop as adolescents develop the cognitive skills necessary to engage in these tasks. For these reasons, both cultural and developmental factors must be considered simultaneously to understand their unique and joint impact on Latino adolescent adjustment.

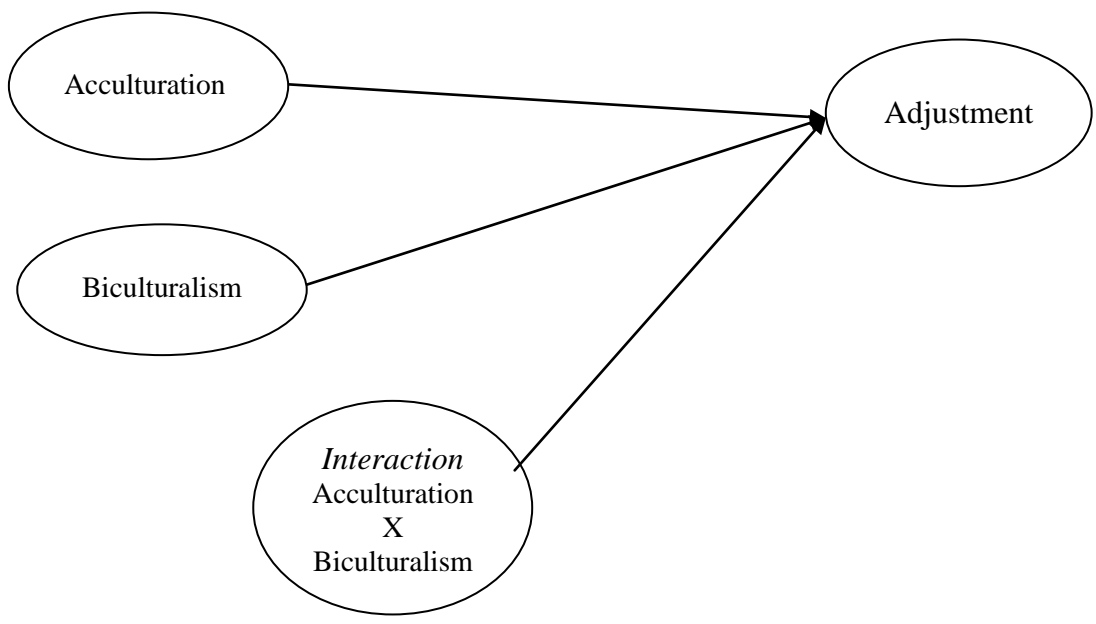


Figure 1a. Latino Adjustment Stress-buffering Conceptual Model for Biculturalism

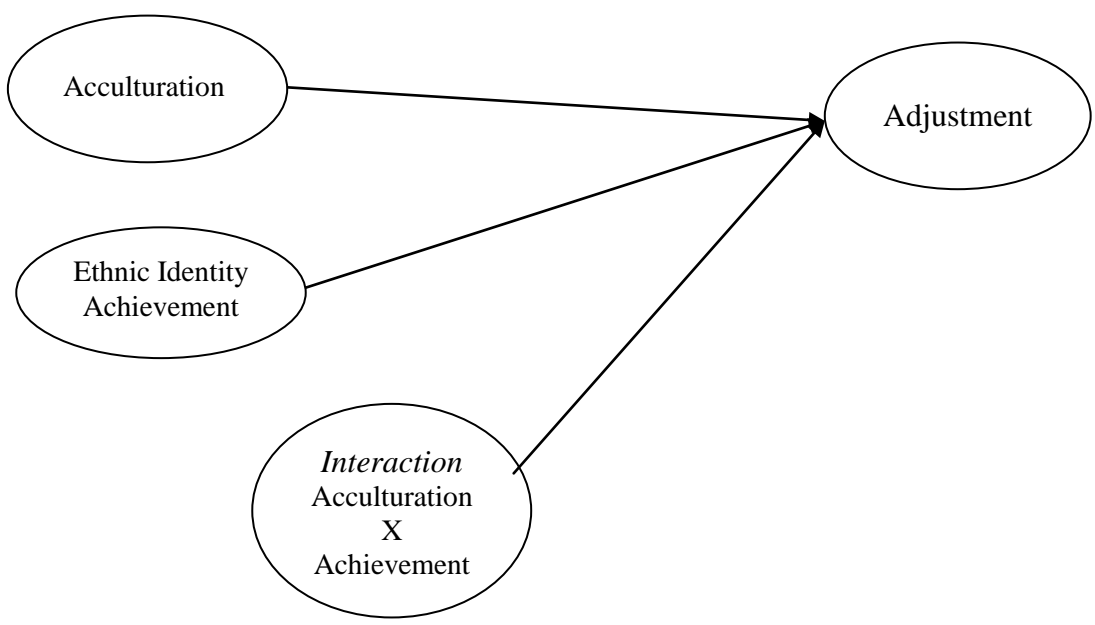


Figure 1b. Latino Adjustment Stress-buffering Conceptual Model for Ethnic Identity

The family is the first socializing agent for children. Through the family, the child experiences both the native and the host culture by means of enculturation and acculturation; the family filters social and cultural experiences (Gonzales et al., 2004; Knight et al., 1993). The family's motivations and reactions to these experiences may vary by the number and severity of stressful events experienced by the family. Consequently, how the child identifies with both cultures (i.e., ethnic identity and biculturalism) in early life is largely a result of how the family reacts to acculturation strains.

The influence of the family changes as the child enters other social contexts and develops new relationships. For example, the school system is a social context that Latino children experience when they venture outside of the home. In this new context, Latino children are exposed to different cultural values and norms that may conflict with those that are taught at home. With this shift in cultural influence, there may be an increase in the level of acculturation strains adolescents experience, which is likely to affect both academic and psychological adjustment. Latino adolescents are more likely than European Americans to report that family connectedness and obligations are important aspects of their family life (Fuligni, Tseng, & Lam 1999; Hardway & Fuligni, 2006). However, these views may be challenged when adolescents are presented with other cultural scripts that do not support these cultural values. In late adolescence, children experience many more contexts that may challenge their cultural scripts. However, ethnic identity and biculturalism in later adolescence are more formalized; they are more salient to adolescents and more likely able to be protective factors for acculturation strains and adjustment relations. Ethnic identity and biculturalism are better developed in later

adolescence than in early adolescence because older adolescents have a better understanding of their ethnicity and the skills associated with biculturalism. Therefore, these cultural factors are able to change the direct influence of acculturation strains on adjustment.

In light of these considerations, it was postulated that Latino adolescents who report higher levels of ethnic identity would report fewer depressive symptoms and higher levels of self-esteem and academic self-efficacy than those with low levels of ethnic identity, regardless of the amount of acculturation they experience. Similarly, bicultural adolescents should know how to negotiate conflicting cultural messages and would report fewer depressive symptoms and higher levels of self-esteem and academic self-efficacy than those who are not bicultural.

This study concentrated on the role of cultural values on Latino adolescent adjustment. An explanatory mixed method using a sequential design (see Figure 2; Creswell, 2002; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007) was used. The design involved collecting qualitative data after a quantitative phase in order to explain, expand, and provide further insight into the quantitative findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). This design is appropriate for studies in which researchers need qualitative data to help explain and expand on quantitative results that are significant, nonsignificant, or contrary to researcher expectations (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

In the quantitative phase of the study (Study I), secondary data analyses was conducted using data collected from Latino adolescents between 10-24 years of age. This phase of the dissertation tested the proposed model of how acculturation, biculturalism, and ethnic identity relate to academic and psychological adjustment. The quantitative

phase was followed by the qualitative phase (Study II). Study II was conducted to further explain and answer questions generated from Study I results. This explanatory phase was meant to answer questions that could not be answered by the quantitative data alone. In the explanatory follow-up, the relations between cultural values and adjustment were explored by conducting group interviews with Latino adolescents.

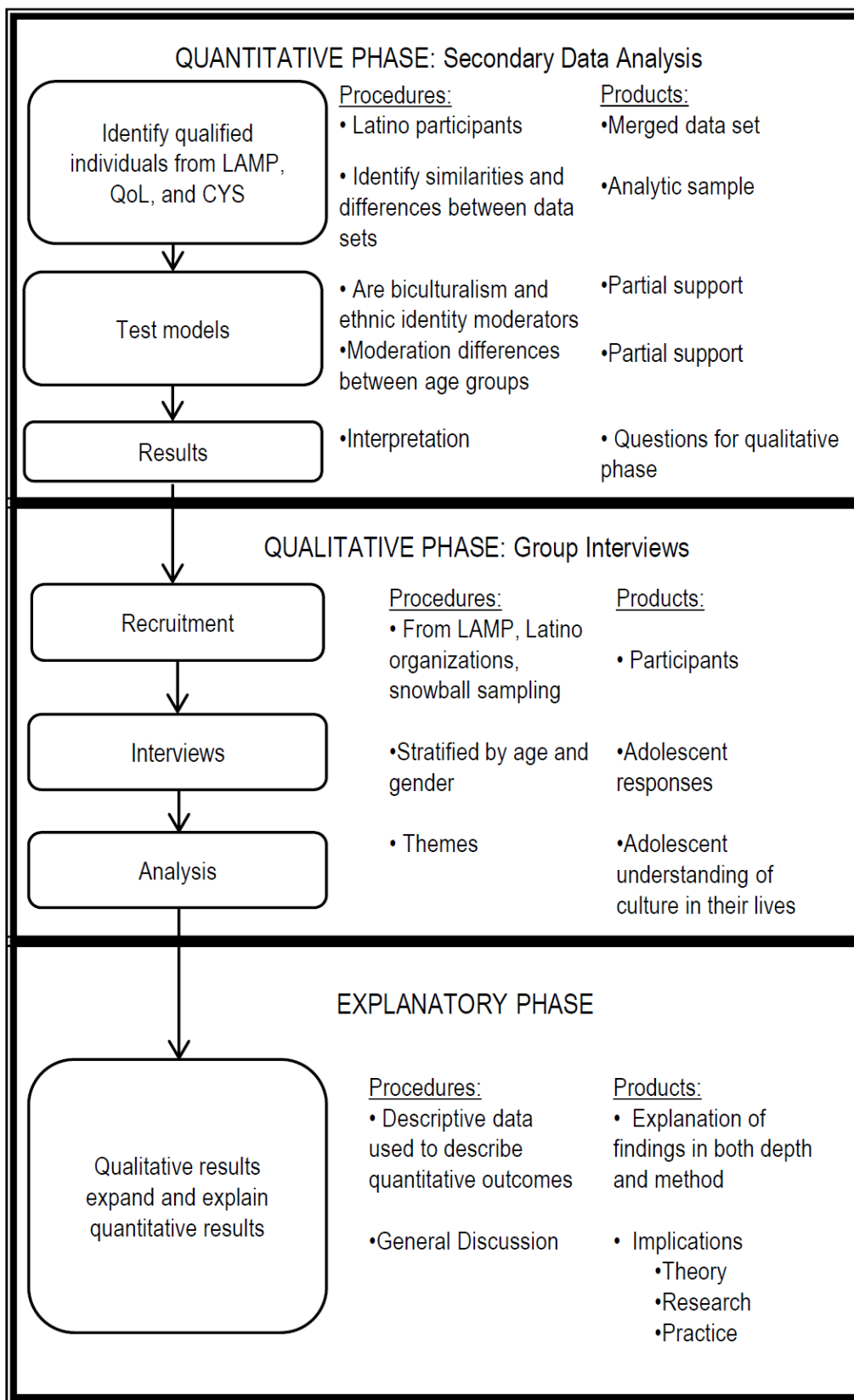


Figure 2. Mixed Method Explanatory Sequential Design



## **Chapter 2: Study I Hypotheses and Method**

This study addressed two research questions: are biculturalism and ethnic identity protective factors for the acculturation and adjustment relation; and are there age related differences between younger adolescents and older adolescents? Study I tested the proposed model utilizing secondary data analysis.

### **Hypotheses**

Two specific hypotheses were tested in Study I:

**Hypothesis 1:** Biculturalism and ethnic identity would moderate the relation between acculturation and both psychological and academic adjustment. In other words, these cultural factors would reduce the negative influence of acculturation strains on adjustment for Latino adolescents.

**Hypothesis 2:** Model significance would vary by age group, such that moderation effects would be greater for older adolescents than younger adolescents would.

### **Method**

#### **Participants**

The analytical sample for Study I was drawn from three larger studies: the Latino Achievement Mentoring Program (LAMP), Quality of Life for Latinos in Lincoln Study (QoL), and College Youth Study (CYS). Both LAMP and QoL targeted Latino participants in a mid-sized city in Nebraska, and all respondents were included in the current study. The CYS involved a multi-ethnic sample in Texas and California. For the current study CYS respondents were selected based on self-identification as belonging to a Latino group (e.g., Mexican or Mexican American) and/or on an open-ended question regarding ethnic self-label from the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (Phinney, 1992).

If participants did not list an ethnicity, their data were further examined to determine if they were of Latino descent (e.g., they or one or both parents were born in a Latin American country).

The combined data sets yielded an analytic sample of 222 Latino respondents (see Table 1 for demographics): 48 participants from LAMP, 62 participants from QoL, and 112 participants from CYS. The analytic sample was 65% female, and ranged in age from 10-24 years. In terms of Latino ethnicity, the analytic sample consisted of 69% Mexican/Mexican Americans, 11% Hispanic, 8% Central American, 5% other (mix of Latino and other ethnic groups), 3% Cuban/Cuban American, 2% Latino, and 2% South American.

Table 1

*Demographic Descriptives by Dataset*

Data Sets	Variables			
	Age Mean (SD)	Age Range	Gender	N
LAMP	12.61 (2.07)	10-18 years	69% female	48
QoL	14.55 (2.01)	11-18 years	50% female	62
Texas Location	20.65 (1.83)	18-24 years	68% female	47
California Location 1	21.90 (1.56)	19-24 years	73% female	30
California Location 2	21.21 (1.20)	20-24 years	76% female	45

## **Procedure**

The LAMP data were collected between 2000-2006 from students who agreed to participate in the evaluation component of the mentoring program (Zamboanga, Roy, Knoche, & Snyder, 2001). Participants completed self-report measures every six months and were paid for their participation. The first (baseline) assessment occurred when youths entered the program; these data were used in the current analyses. The QoL was conducted in 2001 as a larger study involving adolescents and their parents (de Guzman, et al., 2003; Knoche, Carranza, Raffaelli, Carlo, & Gonzalez-Kruger, 2004). Parents completed an individual interview while youths completed self-report measures; both were paid for their participation. The current analyses use data from the adolescents. The CYS involved students at three state universities (two in California, one in Texas). Undergraduate students recruited from psychology classes completed self-report surveys in small group sessions lasting about 45 minutes. Students received course credit and were debriefed after participating. CYS data have been utilized for other analyses (Crockett, Iturbide, Torres Stone, et al., 2007; Iturbide et al., 2009; McGinley et al., 2010; Raffaelli et al., 2007).

All three studies received IRB approval at the time they were originally conducted (LAMP IRB#EX200511095; QoL IRB#FB199911071; and CYS IRB#FB199802208), and parents' consent and youth assent was obtained before adolescents participated. IRB approval for the current dissertation was obtained for secondary data analysis (IRB Approval #: 2008048810 EX).

## **Measures**

These datasets contain a core set of variables needed to test the proposed models.

Measures are described below. Unless otherwise indicated, aggregate scores on multi-item scales were computed as averages, and participants must have completed at least 80% of the items to receive a scale score. Where needed items were reverse coded prior to scoring so that higher scores indicated more of the construct present. See Table 2 for scale descriptive statistics and alphas across data sets.

**Demographics.** Students self-reported their age (in years), gender (0 = *female*; 1 = *male*), and mother's education, rated on a 7-point scale (1 = *Elementary or junior high school* to 7 = *Professional or graduate degree*). Mother's education in the QoL study was reported as number of years of school completed. Mother's education was standardized for analyses.

**Acculturation.** Acculturation was assessed with a revised version of the Short Acculturation Scale for Hispanics – Youth (SASH-Y; Barona & Miller, 1994). The SASH-Y items for this study assess language acculturation. Nine items are rated on a 5-point scale (1 = *native language only*, 3 = *both the same*, 5 = *English only*). Higher scores indicate greater English language use, which signifies a more acculturated adolescent. Example items are “*In general, what language do you speak?*” and “*In general, in what language are the movies, T.V., and radio programs you prefer to watch and listen to?*” The SASH-Y is commonly used and has shown adequate reliability and validity (e.g., Raffaelli et al., 2007).

Table 2

*Core Variables and Descriptive Statistics by Dataset*

Variables	LAMP		QoL		College Data	
	M (SD)	Alpha	M (SD)	Alpha	M (SD)	Alpha
Acculturation	3.19 (0.75)	.80	3.83 (1.11)	.94	3.63 (1.04)	.95
Biculturalism	0.85 (0.92)	NA	0.77 (0.91)	NA	0.39 (0.744)	NA
Ethnic Identity Achievement	3.10 (0.48)	.63	3.00 (0.53)	.67	2.80 (0.58)	.73
Ethnic Identity Affirmation/Belonging	3.53 (0.52)	.81	3.50 (0.50)	.75	3.23 (0.65)	.82
Ethnic Identity Other Group	3.25 (0.47)	.56	3.34 (0.66)	.83	3.21 (0.53)	.70
Depression	2.28 (2.88)	NA	2.25 (2.64)	NA	0.88 (0.51)	.78
English Self-efficacy	3.86 (0.88)	.81	3.68 (0.92)	.84	3.70 (0.92)	.93
Math Self-efficacy	3.81 (0.93)	.84	3.80 (0.91)	.86	3.41 (0.98)	.91
Self-esteem	5.80 (2.08)	NA	5.90 (2.12)	NA	3.23 (0.51)	.87

***Ethnic identity.*** Three scales from the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM, Phinney, 1992) were administered. Two scales tap into individuals' feelings about their ethnic group and the extent to which they have explored and resolved their ethnic identity: *Affirmation and belonging* (affirmation; 5 items; e.g., *I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group and its accomplishments*) and *ethnic identity achievement* (achievement; 7 items; e.g., *In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people in my ethnic group*). The third subscale is *other group orientation* (orientation), which measures respondents' involvement with groups other than their own (six items; e.g., *I enjoy being around people from ethnic groups other than my own*). All items are rated from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 4 = *strongly agree*. The MEIM has been used extensively with Latinos and shows excellent reliability (Phinney, 1992).

***Biculturalism.*** A biculturalism index was created from the MEIM subscales of achievement and other group orientation. The method used to calculate biculturalism followed that used with the Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans-II (ARSMA-II; Cuellar, Arnold, & Maldonado, 1995), where the indicator is derived from the Anglo oriented subscale (AOS) and the Mexican oriented subscale (MOS). The AOS is analogous to the MEIM's other group orientation subscale (AOS item: *my friends are now of Anglo origin*; Orientation item: *I often spend time with people from ethnic groups other than my own.*), while the MOS is analogous to affirmation (MOS item: *I like to identify myself as a Mexican American*; affirmation item: *I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to*).

Mean scores were calculated for both affirmation and other group orientation within age group, and individuals were categorized into three groups using the respective

age cutoffs. Those who scored more than a third of a standard deviation below the mean for each scale were categorized as *not bicultural* (assigned a value of 0; 66.7%); those who scored between the mean and a third of a standard deviation above or below on each scale were categorized as *moderate bicultural* (assigned a value of 1; 10.3%); and those who scored above a third of a standard deviation on each scale were categorized as *high bicultural* (assigned a value of 2; 23.1%). Following Cuellar et al., (1995), the biculturalism index was treated as a continuous variable where higher scores indicate more bicultural than lower scores.

**Academic self-efficacy.** English and Math efficacy scales (Eccles, Wigfield, Harold, & Blumenfeld, 1993) assess the beliefs of respondents about their own competence in these academic areas (example item: *Compared to other students how good are you at English?*). There are 4-items per scale, rated from 1 (*not very good*) to 5 (*very good or one of the best*). The measure has previously been used with Latino adolescent with good reliability (English self-efficacy alpha = .88 and Math alpha = .91; Laible, Carlo, & Raffaelli, 2000).

**Depression.** Younger adolescents completed the depression scale of the Behavioral Assessment System for Children (BASC; Reynolds & Kamphaus, 1992). The BASC is used to measure the behavior and self-perceptions of children ages 4-18 years old (adolescent measure 12-18 years old, 13-items). Youths determine if items are true or false about them. Example items are “*Nothing about me is right*” and “*nothing ever goes right for me.*” Items rated as true are scored as one and items rated as false are scored as zero; an overall score is then created by summing using the scoring software (Reynolds & Kamphaus, 1992). The summed (raw) score was used in analyses. Scores for the BASC

depression scale range from 0 to 13. The BASC was normed in nationally representative samples and has high internal consistency, temporal stability, and validity (Reynolds & Kamphaus, 1992).

Older adolescents completed the Center for Epidemiologic Studies-Depression Scale (CES-D), which was originally designed to measure somatic and affective symptoms of depression in community samples of adults (Radloff, 1977). Individuals rate 20 symptoms (e.g., *I did not feel like eating; my appetite was poor; I enjoyed life*) based on how often they were experienced during the past week on a scale from 0 = *rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)* to 3 = *most or all of the time (5-7 days)*. The CES-D has been used with multiethnic samples of adolescents (reported alphas ranged from .84-.87, Crockett, Randall, Shen, Russell, & Driscoll, 2005). Depression scores were standardized within sample for analyses because the measures completed by younger and older adolescents had different metrics.

***Self-esteem.*** The LAMP and QoL participants completed the 8-item BASC self-esteem scale (see previous scale for description). Items (e.g., *I like who I am* and *I like the way I look*) are rated as true or false, and an overall raw score is computed by summing. Scores range from 0 to 8. Older participants completed the Rosenberg Self-Esteem measure (1979), a 10-item scale that assesses the extent to which individuals have positive feelings about themselves (e.g., *On the whole, I am satisfied with myself; I am able to do things as well as most other people*). Items are rated from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 4 (*strongly agree*). Reliability alphas range from .79 - .85 with multiple ethnic groups (e.g., Mexican, Dominican, Puerto Rican, African American, and White adolescents; see Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2001 for review). Again, because these measures had different



scoring metrics, for analyses, scores were standardized.

## Chapter 3: Study I Results

### Plan of Analyses

First, to examine sample differences, mean difference tests were conducted across data sets. These comparisons used standardized scores for variables measured on different metrics across samples (i.e., mother's education). Two of the three data sets were predominantly girls (See Table 1). A one-way ANOVA for mother's education,  $F(2, 203) = 4.21, p < .05$ . After conducting a pairwise comparison it was determined that mothers of CYS participants had lower levels of education than mothers of LAMP respondents ( $p < .05$ ); QoL mothers did not differ from LAMP and CYS mothers in education levels.

Data from the three data sets were merged to test the proposed integrative model and evaluate possible model variations by age. Preliminary analyses included examining descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations to identify the relations between all variables in the study. The standardized scores for mother's education, BASC, CES-D, and Rosenberg self-esteem were used in overall path model analyses. Study I hypotheses were tested using a regression approach to path analyses. Each path analysis consisted of a series of regressions. The first regression consisted of demographic control variables (mother's education and adolescent gender). The second regression consisted of mother's education, adolescent gender and acculturation to determine their association to the relevant moderator (ethnic identity achievement or biculturalism). The third regression consisted of demographic controls, acculturation, the moderator, and the interaction between acculturation and the moderator predicting one of four outcomes (depression, self-esteem, English self-efficacy, or math self-efficacy). The interaction is the actual test

of moderation. Significant interactions or trends ( $p < .10$ ) were plotted to provide a visual depiction of the moderation and allow interpretation of the results (Aiken & West, 1991).

The entire analytic sample was used to test the hypothesis that ethnic identity and biculturalism moderated the relation between acculturation and adjustment. To identify age related differences for Hypothesis 2, the analytic sample was divided into younger (10-18 year olds) and older (19-24 year olds) adolescents. Mother's education and adolescent gender were demographic controls for these path models.

### **Preliminary Analyses**

Means and standard deviations are displayed in Table 3 by age group.

Adolescents aged 10-18 reported higher levels of maternal education than those aged 19-24,  $F(1, 204) = 5.19, p < .05$ . Younger adolescents (10-18 years old) also reported higher levels of ethnic identity achievement,  $F(1, 192) = 7.99, p < .01$ ; biculturalism,  $F(1, 193) = 11.06, p < .01$ ; and math self-efficacy,  $F(1, 216) = 8.50, p < .01$ . Examination of bivariate correlations among the study variables by age group revealed different patterns of association within age group (Table 3). Among younger adolescents, biculturalism was associated with being female (vs. male) and with higher levels of ethnic identity achievement. Additionally, for younger adolescents, higher levels of self-esteem were associated with lower levels of depression; and math and English self-efficacy were positively related. For older adolescents (19-24 years old), higher levels of ethnic identity achievement were associated with higher levels of biculturalism, self-esteem, English self-efficacy, and with lower levels of depression. In the older age group, self-esteem was also negatively associated with depression and positively associated with mother's education; and depression was negatively associated with English self-efficacy.

Contrary to expectations, initial correlations did not suggest a direct association between acculturation and adjustment; therefore, hypotheses regarding possible moderators of the acculturation-adjustment association could not be evaluated. However, possible interactions between variables cannot be identified from correlations (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2002). Therefore, path models were conducted to investigate if there were interactions between study variables as proposed in the theoretical model. These analyses were conducted first in the overall sample and then within age group. Furthermore, it should be noted that the researcher set out to assess acculturation strain (because acculturation is inherently stressful) but upon further inspection it became evident that the measure assessed acculturation status and not strain. From this point on in Study I, acculturation and acculturation strain will be referred to as acculturation status.

Table 3

*Overall Intercorrelations for Study Variables by Age Group*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Mean (SD)
1. Gender		.05	.12	.06	-.25*	.09	.14	-.10	.03	58.2% female
2. Mother's education	.06		.18†	-.08	.05	.12	-.14	.09	.14	-0.15 (0.73)
3. Acculturation	-.03	.19†		-.18†	.10	.06	.08	-.13	-.10	3.56 (1.02)
4. Achievement	.02	-.08	-.16		.22*	-.21†	-.01	.15	.01	3.03 (0.51)
5. Biculturalism	-.06	.07	-.05	.38**		-.10	.03	.03	.12	0.60 (0.72)
6. Depression	.11	-.06	-.02	-.21*	.10		-.55**	-.04	-.08	0.01 (1.00)
7. Self-esteem	-.07	.22*	.10	.20*	-.07	-.48**		-.16	-.05	-0.00 (1.00)
8. English self-efficacy	-.09	-.04	.06	.21*	-.04	-.30**	.18†		.35**	3.76 (0.90)
9. Math self-efficacy	.02	.05	-.05	.04	-.03	.06	.07	-.14		3.81 (0.91)
Mean (SD)	72.3% female	0.17 (1.22)	3.63 (1.04)	2.80 (0.58)	0.29 (0.58)	0.00 (1.00)	0.00 (1.00)	3.70 (0.92)	3.41 (0.98)	

Note: Correlations for age group 10-18 years reported in upper right hand corner; correlations for age group 19-24 years reported in lower left hand corner. Gender coded 0 = female, 1 = male.

† $p < .10$ , \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$

### Overall Path Models

To test the proposed model, separate path models were conducted for each cultural factor (achievement and biculturalism) and outcome (i.e., depression, self-esteem, English self-efficacy, and math self-efficacy). This resulted in eight path models (see Table 4 for path model statistics). For these series of linear regressions, mother's education (as a proxy for SES), child's age, and gender were included as control variables.

For all of the path models, mother's education significantly (positively) predicted language acculturation status, but not ethnic identity achievement or biculturalism. Adolescent's age significantly predicted biculturalism, such that younger adolescents were more bicultural than older adolescents. Further discussion of analyses focuses on the theoretically relevant variables of ethnic identity achievement, biculturalism, and their possible moderating role. Figures with significant main effects for ethnic identity and biculturalism as well as significant interactions are presented even if the model was not significant.

**Path models with ethnic identity achievement as a moderator.** The model predicting depression was significant (Table 4), with higher levels of achievement associated with lower levels of depression ( $\beta = -.25, p < .01$ ). Achievement was the only significant predictor in the model and the interaction between achievement and acculturation status was not significant (not shown).

The self-esteem model was not significant; however, achievement significantly positively predicted self-esteem ( $\beta = .18, p < .05$ ) and the interaction of achievement and acculturation status suggested a positive trend ( $\beta = -.13, p < .10$ ; Figure 2). The

interaction indicated that adolescents with high ethnic identity achievement report higher levels of self-esteem at low levels of acculturation status than adolescents who report low achievement (Figure 3). At high levels of acculturation status, the effect is still present but the difference between high and low ethnically identified adolescents' self-esteem was smaller.

Table 4

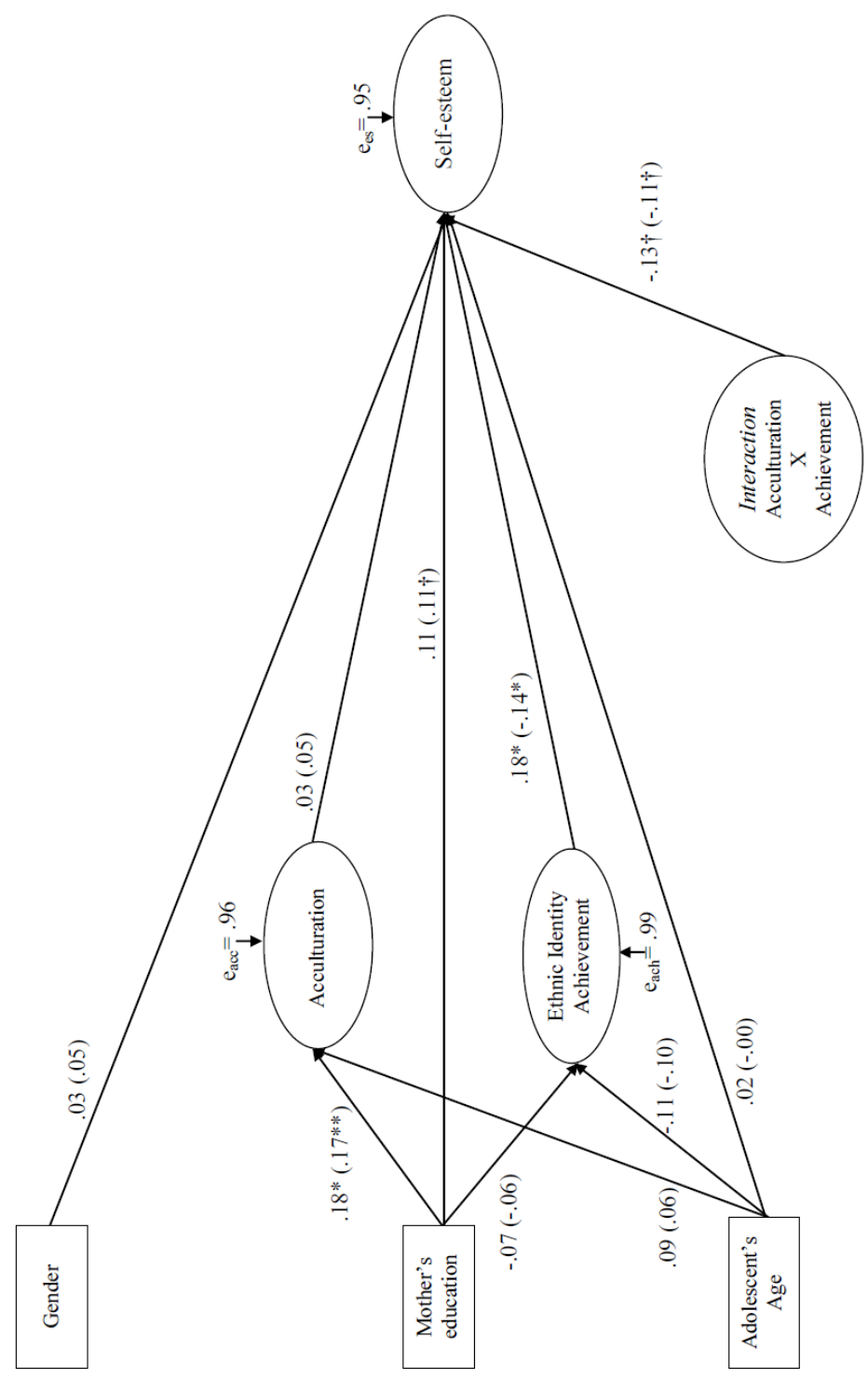
*Path Model Statistics*

Model	Overall Model		Age group			
			10-18 year olds		19-24 year olds	
	<i>F</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>F</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>F</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>
<b>Achievement</b>						
Depression	2.15*	.08	1.03	.07	2.09†	.09
Self-esteem	1.56	.05	0.91	.06	2.68*	.12
English self-efficacy	2.92*	.09	1.31	.09	2.46*	.11
Math self-efficacy	2.03†	.07	0.49	.04	0.82	.04
<b>Biculturalism</b>						
Depression	1.67	.06	0.92	.06	1.64	.08
Self-esteem	0.48	.02	0.87	.06	1.72	.08
English self-efficacy	0.49	.02	0.81	.06	0.56	.03
Math self-efficacy	2.30*	.08	4.38**	.24	0.16	.01

*Note:* control variables were omitted from the table but were included in the analyses.

†*p* < .10, \**p* < .05, \*\* *p* < .01

Figure 3. Overall Path Model for Ethnic Identity Achievement and Self-esteem



Note: Gender coded 0 = female, 1 = male; standardized betas reported; correlations reported in parentheses.  
 †p < .10, \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01



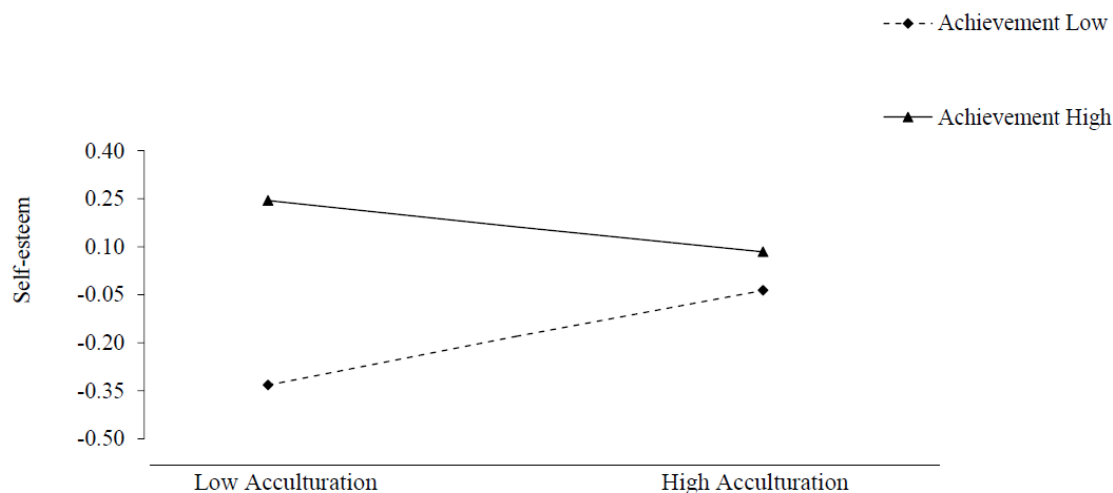
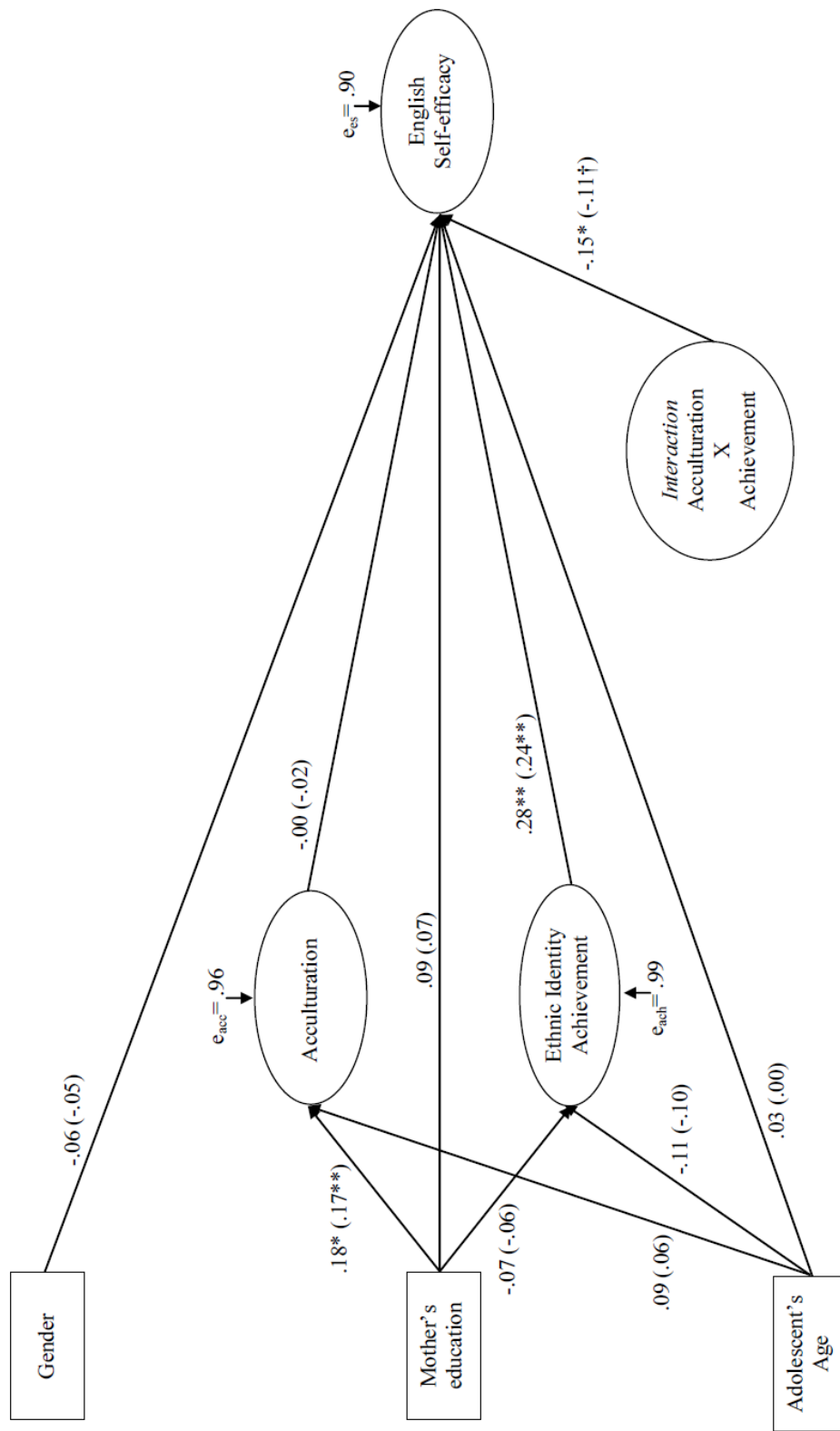


Figure 4. Interaction of Acculturation and Ethnic Identity Achievement for Self-esteem

The model for English self-efficacy was significant: achievement ( $\beta = .28, p < .01$ ) and the interaction between achievement and acculturation status ( $\beta = -.15, p < .05$ ) were the only significant predictors (Figure 5). Higher levels of achievement were associated with higher levels of English self-efficacy. The interaction suggests that adolescents who report high levels of achievement have a decrease in English self-efficacy as acculturation status increases (Figure 6). Additionally, adolescents who report low levels of achievement have an increase in English self-efficacy as acculturation increases.

The model predicting math self-efficacy was not significant. Acculturation status and age group were significant predictors but achievement was not a significant predictor. In this model, adolescents less acculturated had higher math self-efficacy than more acculturated adolescents ( $\beta = -.16, p < .05$ ; not shown), and younger adolescents had higher self-efficacy than older adolescents did ( $\beta = -.16, p < .05$ ; not shown).

Figure 5. Overall Path Model for Ethnic Identity Achievement and English self-efficacy



Note: Gender coded 0 = female, 1 = male; standardized betas reported; correlations reported in parentheses.  
 $^\dagger p < .10$ ,  $*p < .05$ ,  $**p < .01$

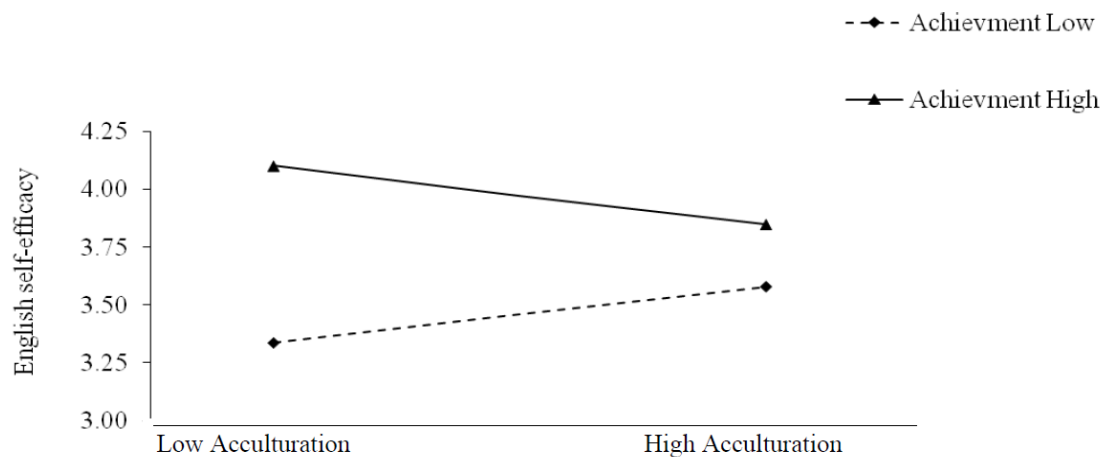
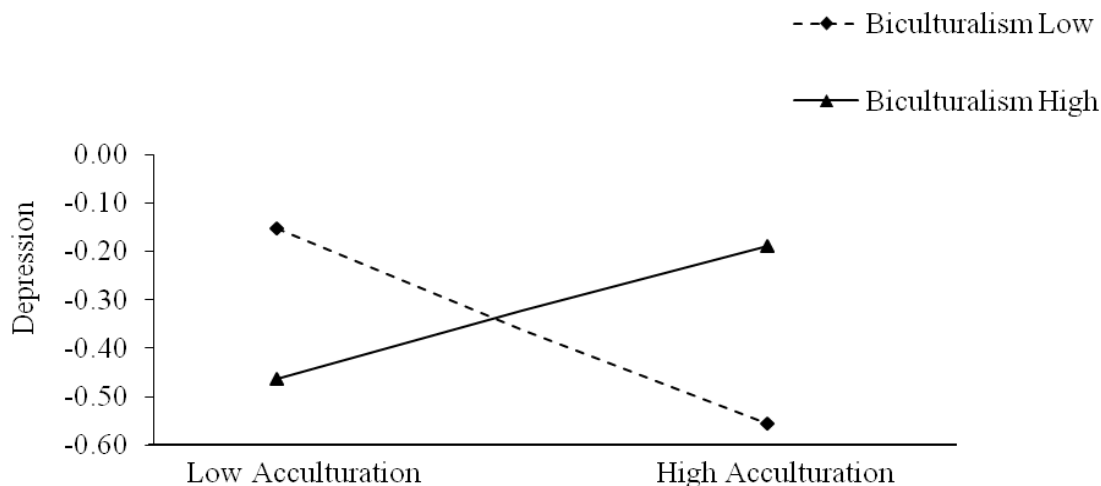


Figure 6. Interaction of Acculturation and Ethnic Identity Achievement for English self-efficacy

**Path models with biculturalism as a moderator.** Parallel analyses were conducted to examine the possible moderating role of biculturalism. The models predicating self-esteem and English self-efficacy were not significant. The model predicating depression was not significant, but the interaction between acculturation status and biculturalism was significant ( $\beta = .20, p < .05$ ). The interaction suggests that low bicultural adolescents experience less depression as acculturation status increases, conversely high bicultural adolescents experience more depression as acculturation status increases (Figure 7). The model predicting math self-efficacy was significant. Age group predicted math self-efficacy, younger adolescents reported greater math self-efficacy ( $\beta = -.16, p < .05$ ). Acculturation status ( $\beta = -.14, p < .10$ ) and biculturalism ( $\beta = .14, p < .10$ ) both suggested a positive trend.



*Figure 7.* Interaction of Acculturation and Biculturalism for Depression

**Overall path models results summary.** Of the overall path models for achievement, only two of the four models were significant with cultural factors predicting adjustment variables: ethnic identity achievement negatively predicting depression and positively predicting English self-efficacy. Moderation was found for English self-efficacy and a trend was suggested for self-esteem. Of the overall path models for biculturalism, only one of the four models was significant. In this model, acculturation status and age group significantly predicted math self-efficacy and biculturalism was a positive trend. Even though the biculturalism model for depression was not significant, the interaction was significant. Other models were not significant but there were significant cultural predictor or trends, suggesting a need to examine the models further.

### **Path Models by Age Group**

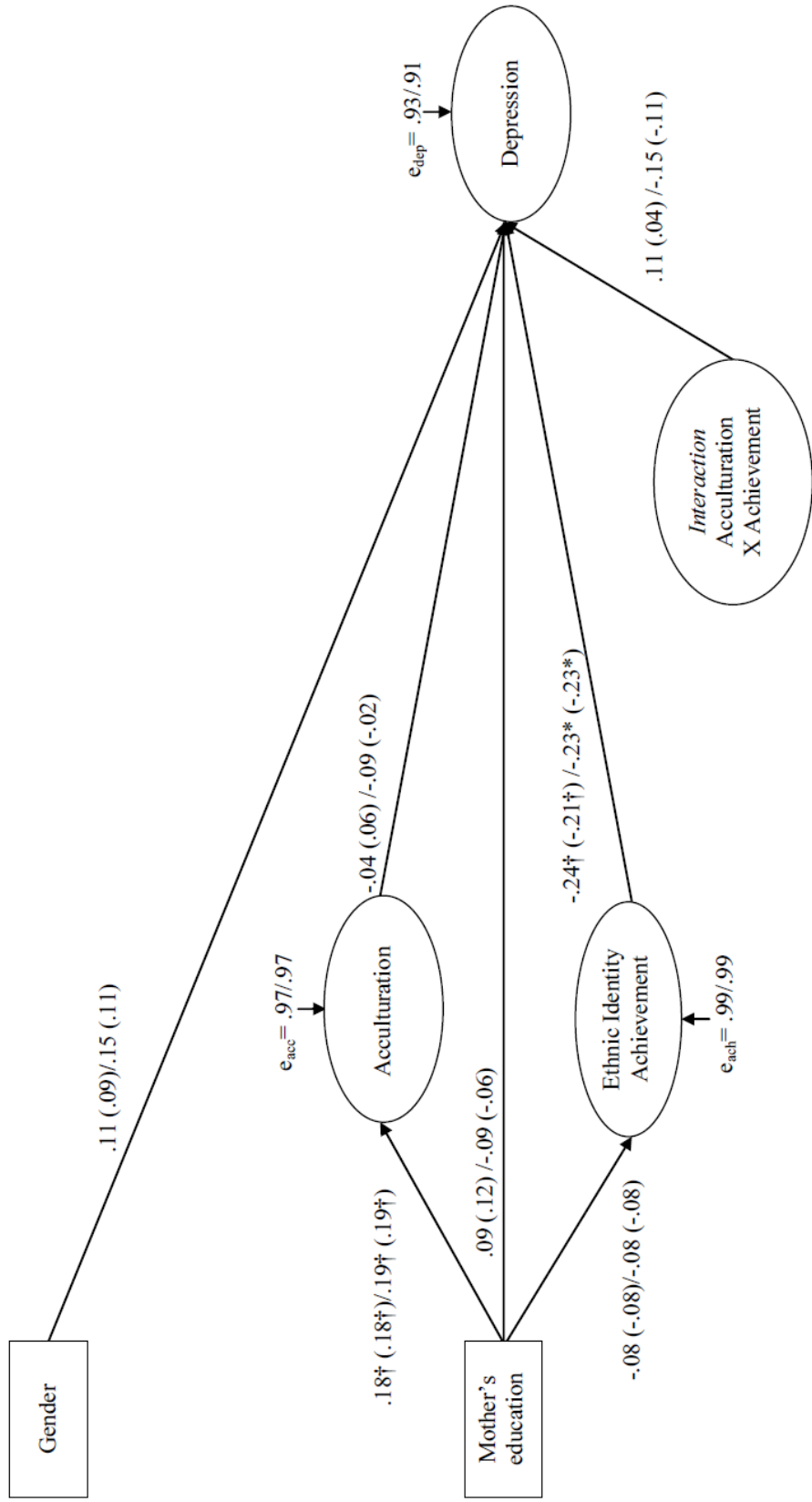
To examine if results would differ by age group, path models were conducted separately for younger (10-18 year olds) and older adolescents (19-24 year olds). For the younger adolescent models, the original BASC depression (mean = 2.27,  $SD = 2.74$ ) and self-esteem (mean = 5.87,  $SD = 2.09$ ) scores were used instead of the standardized scores used in overall model tests. For the older adolescent models, the original mother's education (mean = 2.61,  $SD = 1.61$ ), CES-D (mean = 0.88,  $SD = 0.51$ ), and Rosenberg self-esteem (mean = 3.23,  $SD = 0.51$ ) scores were used. Model predictors were created specifically for each age group using the original variables collected for the data sets; standardized scores were no longer necessary because model tests were conducted within each age group and not across ages.

Again, the first series of regressions established the path weights between mother's education and the potential moderators within each age group. Mother's education did not significantly predict achievement for either age group. A positive trend between mother's education and acculturation status was found for both age groups and was seen in all models. Adolescents whose mothers had more years of education were more acculturated than adolescents whose mothers had less education. No association between maternal education and biculturalism was found.

**Path models with ethnic identity achievement as a moderator.** In models with depression as the outcome, the younger adolescent model was not significant but the older adolescent model suggested a trend (see Table 4 for model statistics). Although the younger adolescent model was not significant, there was a negative trend for achievement such that more achieved adolescents were less depressed. The same association (now

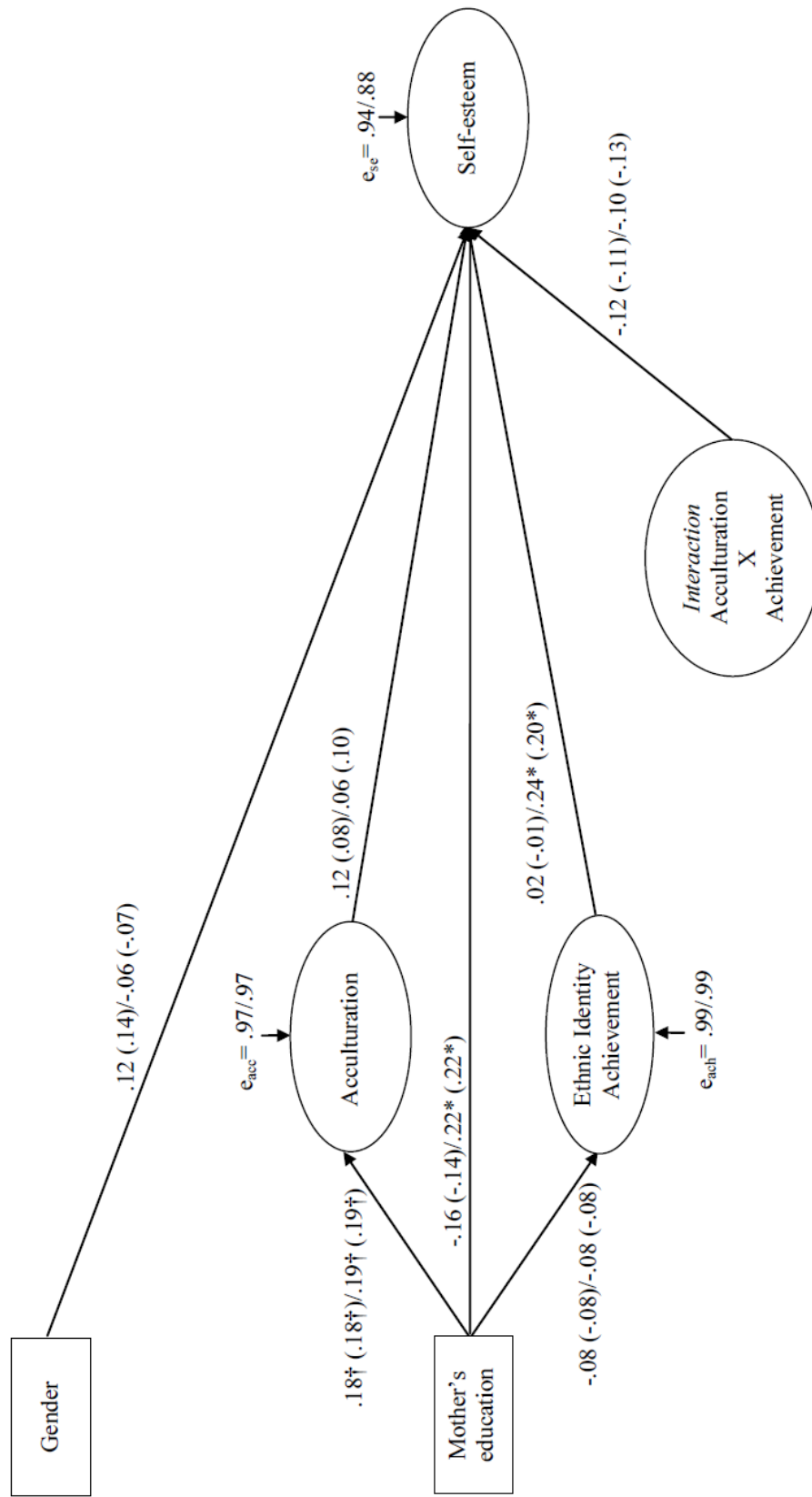
significant) was seen for older adolescents (Figure 8). For self-esteem, the younger adolescent model was not significant and none of the paths leading to self-esteem were significant. For older adolescents, mother's education and achievement both positively predicted self-esteem (Figure 9). For English self-efficacy, the younger adolescent model was not significant and none of the paths leading to English self-efficacy were significant (see Figure 10). The model for older adolescents was significant, and ethnic identity achievement was positively associated with English self-efficacy (Figure 10). For math self-efficacy models, neither the younger nor the older adolescent models were significant, and no significant paths leading to math self-efficacy were identified (see Figure 11).

Figure 8. Path Model for Ethnic Identity Achievement and Depression by Age Group



Note: Gender coded 0 = female, 1 = male; 10-18 year olds reported before the backlash and 19-24 year olds reported after the backlash; standardized betas reported; correlations reported in parentheses.  
 $^\dagger p < .10$ ,  $^* p < .05$

Figure 9. Path Model for Ethnic Identity Achievement and Self-esteem by Age Group

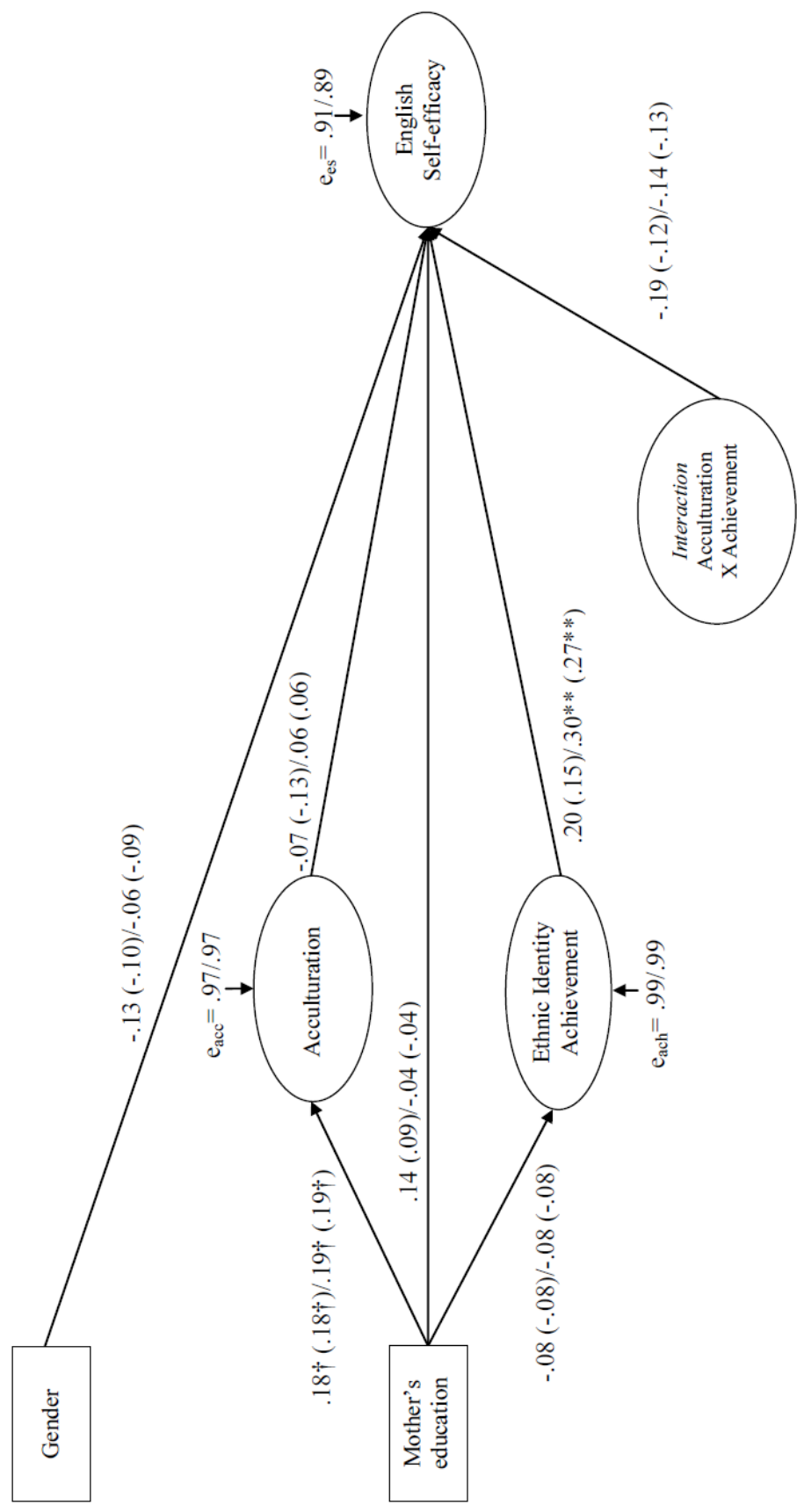


Note: Gender coded 0 = female, 1 = male; 10-18 year olds reported before the backlash and 19-24 year olds reported after the backlash; standardized betas reported; correlations reported in parentheses.

†p < .10, \*p < .05

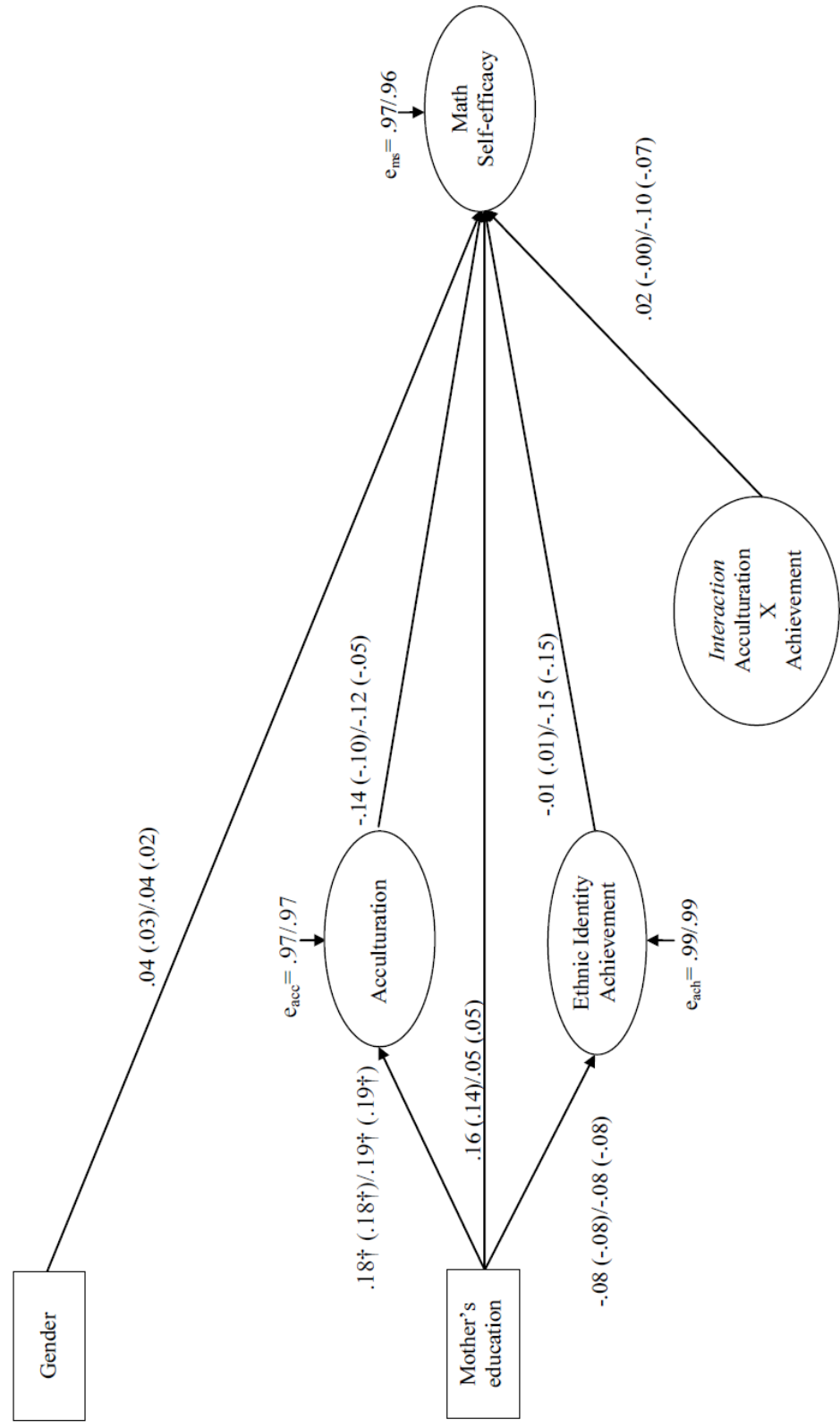


Figure 10. Path Model for Ethnic Identity Achievement and English self-efficacy by Age Group



Note: Gender coded 0 = female, 1 = male; 10-18 year olds reported before the backlash and 19-24 year olds reported after the backlash; standardized betas reported; correlations reported in parentheses.  
 $^\dagger p < .10$ ,  $^* p < .05$ ,  $^{**} p < .01$

Figure 11. Path Model for Ethnic Identity Achievement and Math self-efficacy by Age Group

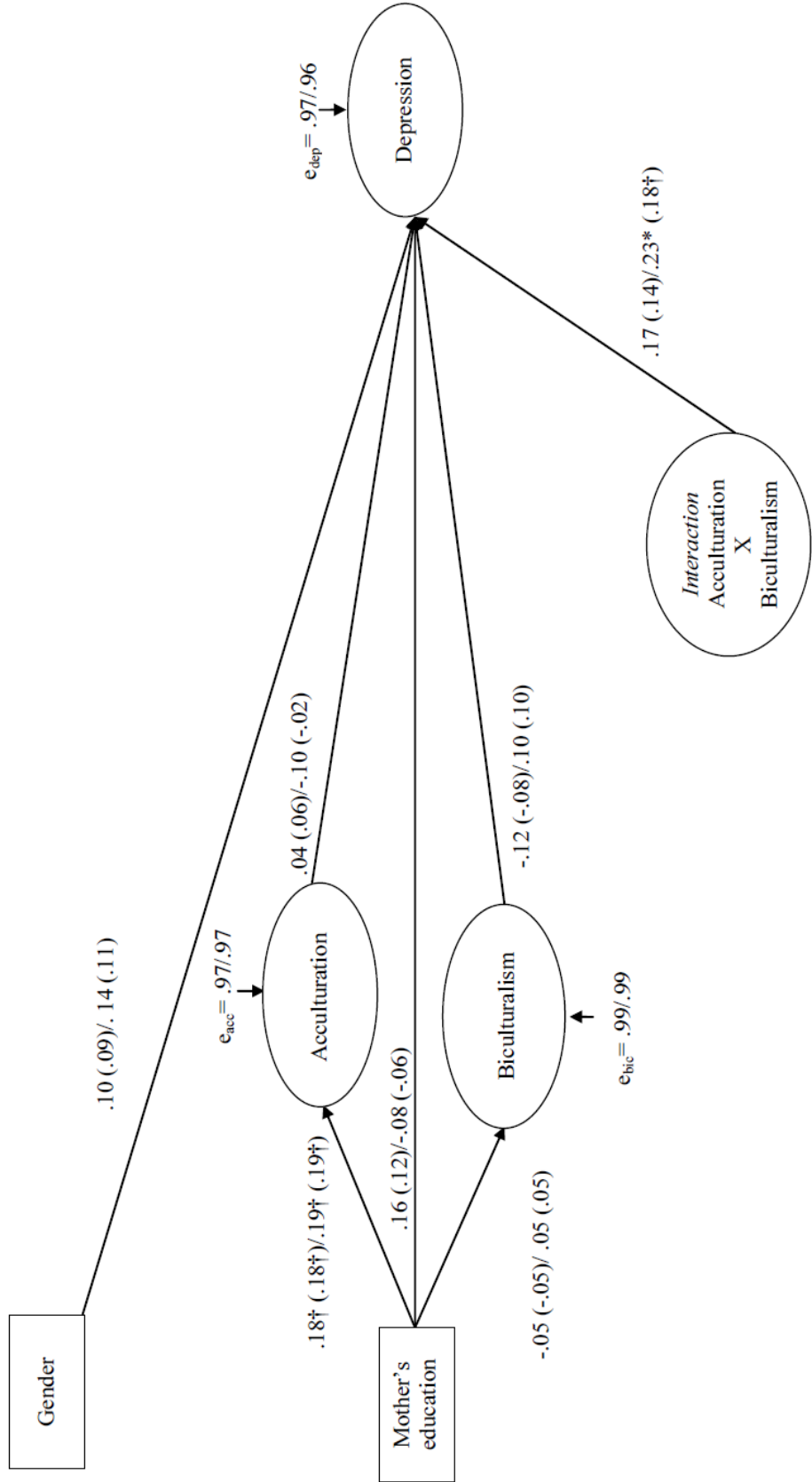


Note: Gender coded 0 = female, 1 = male; 10-18 year olds reported before the backlash and 19-24 year olds reported after the backlash; standardized betas reported; correlations reported in parentheses.

$^\dagger p < .10$ ,  $* p < .05$

**Path models with biculturalism as a moderator.** A set of parallel analyses were conducted with biculturalism as the potential moderator. In analyses of depression, the younger adolescent model was not significant and none of the paths leading to depression were significant (see Table 4 and Figure 12). For older adolescents, the model was marginally significant and several paths were significant. As shown in Figure 12, in the older age group, biculturalism was negatively associated with depression, and the interaction between acculturation status and biculturalism was significant. At low levels of acculturation status, both low and high bicultural adolescents experienced similar levels of depression. At high levels of acculturation status, adolescents classified as low bicultural adolescents reported more depressive symptoms than high bicultural adolescents (see Figure 13).

Figure 12. Path Model for Biculturalism and Depression by Age Group



Note: Gender coded 0 = female, 1 = male; 10-18 year olds reported before the backlash and 19-24 year olds reported after the backlash; standardized betas reported; correlations reported in parentheses  
 † $p < .10$ , \* $p < .05$

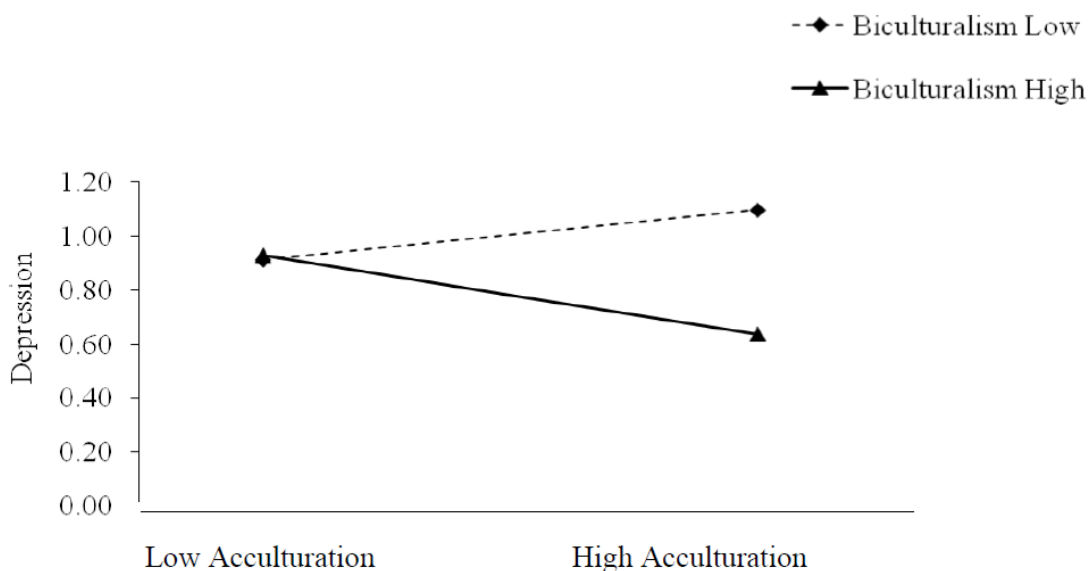
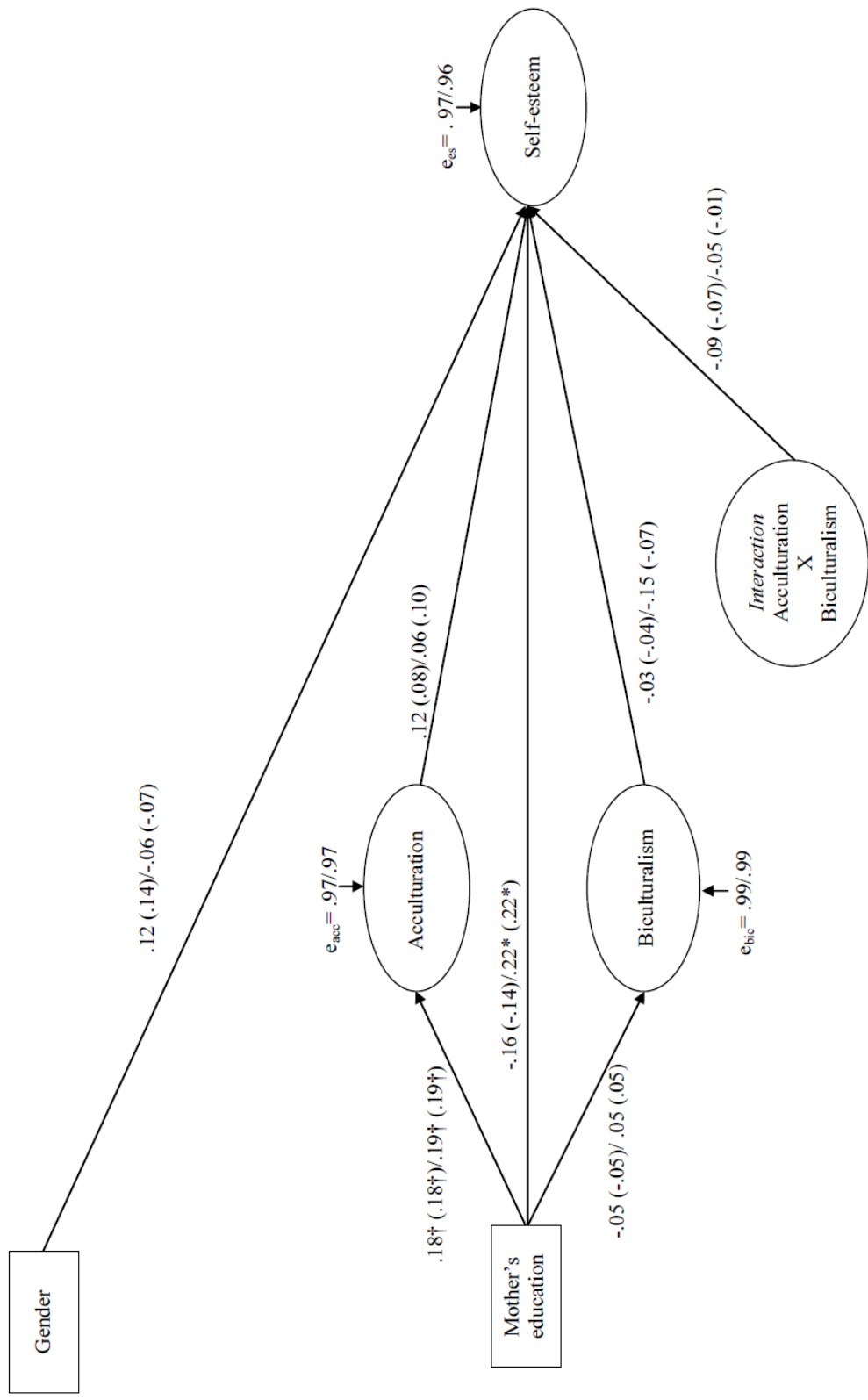


Figure 13. Interaction of Acculturation and Biculturalism for Depression for 19-24 year olds

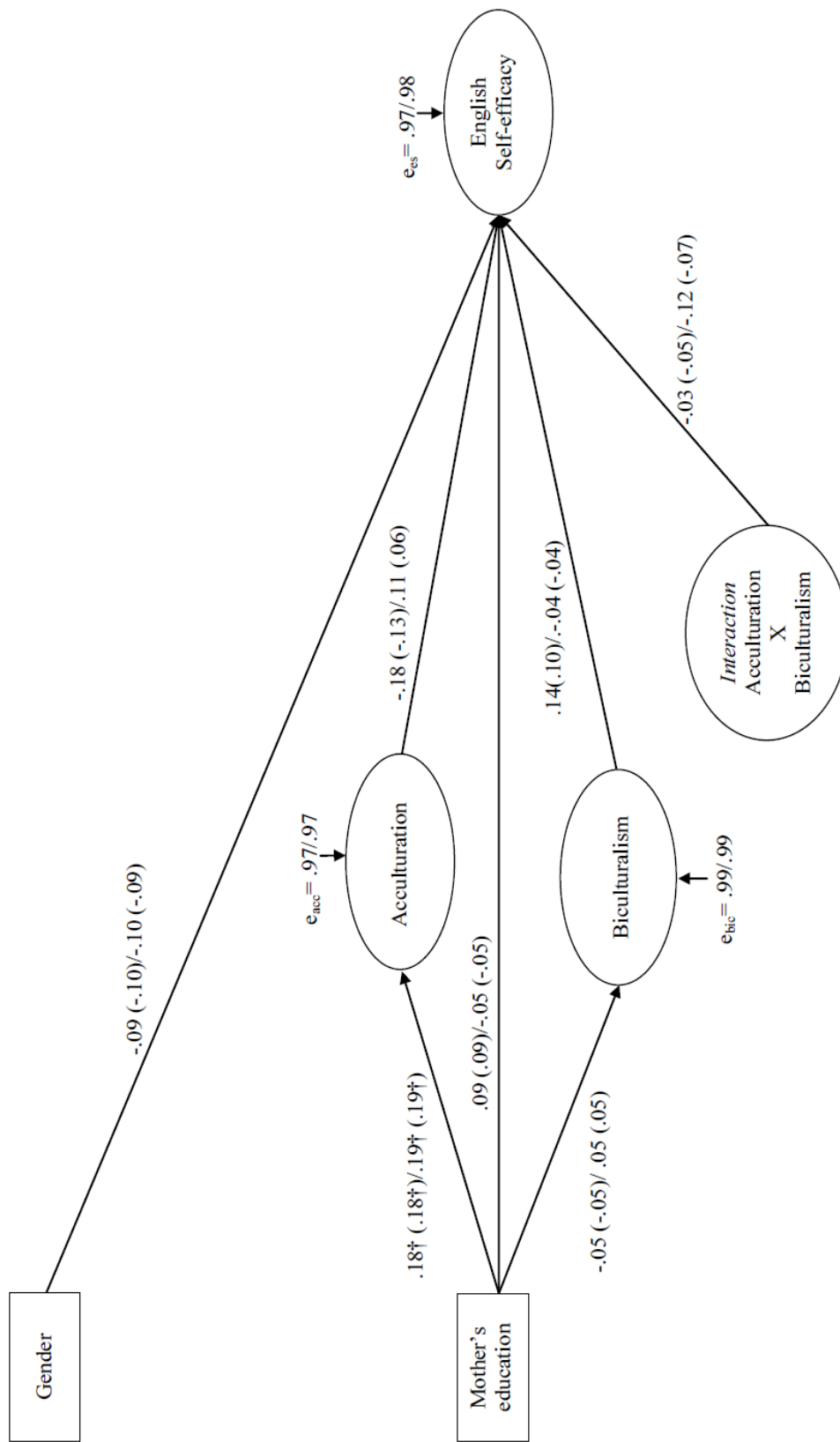
The younger adolescent self-esteem model was not significant and none of the paths leading to self-esteem were significant (Figure 14). A trend was seen for older adolescents such that mother's education and biculturalism both positively predicted self-esteem. English self-efficacy models were not significant for either age group. However, among older adolescents, biculturalism significantly predicted English self-efficacy; such that higher levels of biculturalism were associated with greater self-efficacy (Figure 15). Models for math self-efficacy was significant for younger adolescents but not for older adolescents (see Table 4 and Figure 16). For younger adolescents biculturalism positively predicted math self-efficacy, while acculturation status negatively predicted math self-efficacy.

Figure 14. Path Model for Biculturalism and Self-esteem by Age Group



Note: Gender coded 0 = female, 1 = male; 10-18 year olds reported before the backlash and 19-24 year olds reported after the backlash; standardized betas reported; correlations reported in parentheses.  
 $^\dagger p < .10$ ,  $^* p < .05$

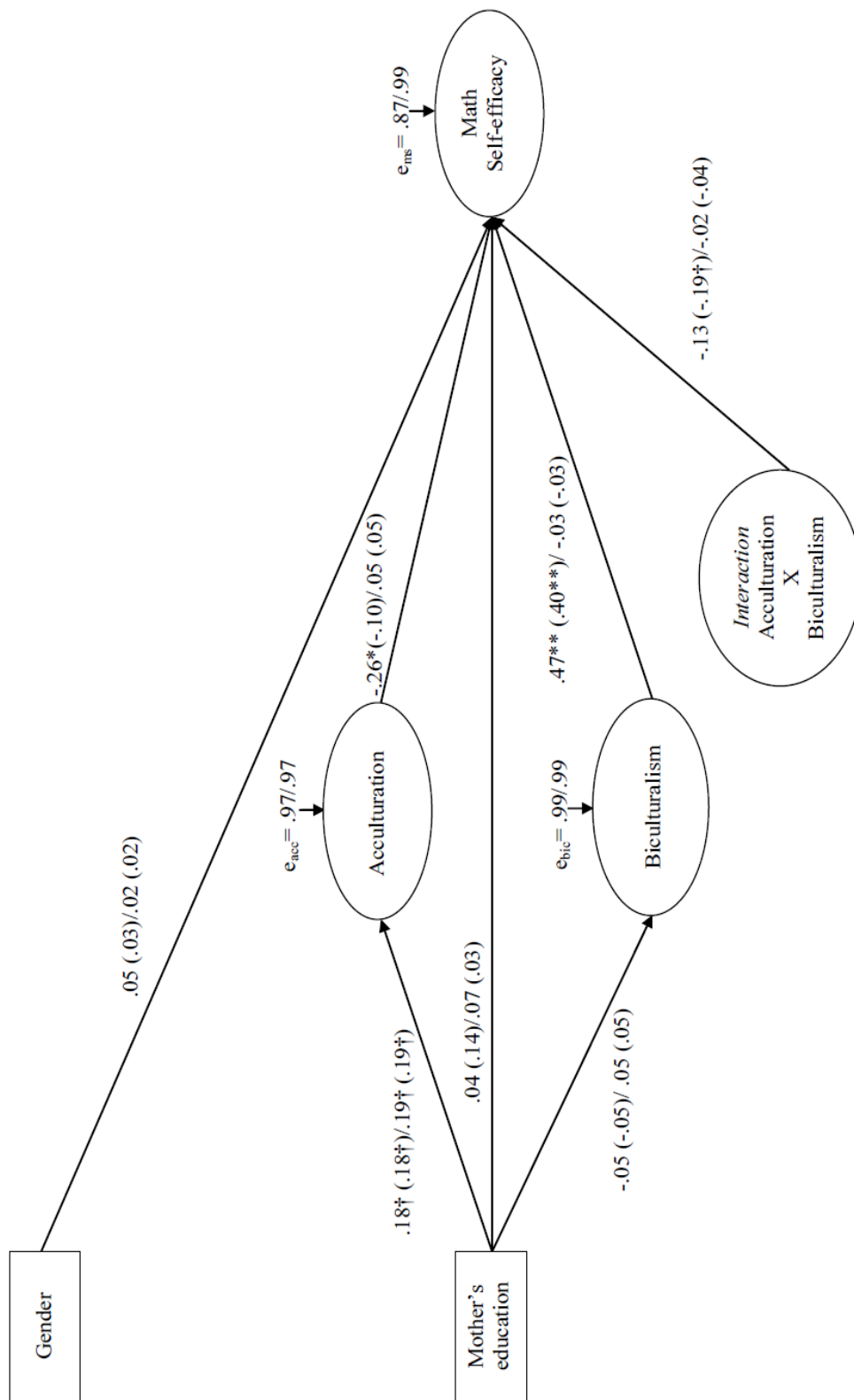
Figure 15. Path Model for Biculturalism and English self-efficacy by Age Group



Note: Gender coded 0 = female, 1 = male; 10-18 year olds reported before the backslash and 19-24 year olds reported after the backslash; standardized betas reported; correlations reported in parentheses.

$^\dagger p < .10$ ,  $*p < .05$

Figure 16. Path Model for Biculturalism and Math self-efficacy by Age Group



Note: Gender coded 0 = female, 1 = male; 10-18 year olds reported before the backlash and 19-24 year olds reported after the backlash; standardized betas reported; correlations reported in parentheses.

$^\dagger p < .10$ ,  $* p < .05$ ,  $** p < .01$



**Age path models results summary.** In analyses conducted within age group, three of the eight models were significant. For the older adolescents, models for self-esteem and English self-efficacy were significant. For both models achievement positively predicted self-esteem and English self-efficacy. For the younger adolescents, only one model was significant: biculturalism positively predicted math self-efficacy while acculturation status negatively predicted math self-efficacy. Moderation was found in only one of the eight models. The model for biculturalism and depression for 19-24 year olds was not significant, but the interaction for acculturation status and biculturalism was significant, such that adolescents who were not bicultural experienced more depressive symptoms than bicultural adolescents at high levels of acculturation status did.

### **Conclusion and Discussion**

The purpose of Study I was to test whether ethnic identity and biculturalism would moderate the previously reported association between acculturation strains and adjustment and if moderation varied by age group. The first hypothesis, that biculturalism and ethnic identity would reduce the negative influence of acculturation status on adjustment was partially supported. Acculturation status predicted math self-efficacy only for achievement and biculturalism. Results from the overall test of the path models indicated that ethnic identity achievement served as a protective factor for two specific outcomes (self-esteem and English self-efficacy). In both cases, higher levels of achievement were associated with more positive outcomes at low levels of acculturation status than at high levels of acculturation status.

Results for the direct association for ethnic identity and biculturalism are in line with previous research that states that biculturalism and ethnic identity are linked to

positive adjustment (e.g., Barrera et al., 2004; Fuligni et al., 2005; Gonzales et al., 2002; Iturbide et al., 2009; Phinney & Rosenthal, 1992; Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007).

Little empirical research has been conducted to indicate that biculturalism is a protective factor though many have reported it as such. Results indicate that biculturalism buffers the negative effects of acculturation status but only for a specific outcome and at specific levels of acculturation status (i.e., depression). As with biculturalism, ethnic identity results indicate that ethnic identity buffered the negative effects of acculturation status but only for specific outcomes and at specific levels of acculturation status (i.e., English self-efficacy and a trend for self-esteem). In the overall models, a direct relationship for acculturation status and adjustment was found for math self-efficacy only. This may be related to the method used to assess acculturation. The SASH-Y measures only one dimension of acculturation (i.e., language). The issue of dimensionality is complex; when the examination of acculturation is only one dimension such as language a measure may not capture specific changes in attitudes, values, and beliefs that an acculturating individual may experience (Gonzales et al., 2002; Rogler et al., 1991). Perhaps this language version of acculturation did not capture the strain placed on adolescents while in the process of acculturation. A more comprehensive measure of acculturation should be used in future studies.

The second hypothesis pertained to age-related differences in the proposed models, where moderation effects would be greater for older adolescents than younger adolescents would. Analyses conducted in the two age groups (10-18 year olds and 19-24 year olds) indicated that moderation was present for only one of eight models for comparison. Moderation was present for older adolescents but not for younger

adolescents in the biculturalism model predicting depressive symptoms; a comparison between paths was not possible. For this and all other age models this hypothesis was not supported; comparisons of moderation effects were not possible because moderation was not found.

It is possible that moderation for ethnic identity was not found for younger adolescents because they may have a limited ability to comprehend the role of ethnicity in their identity. Young Latinos have been found to identify and label themselves (Bernal, Knight, Garza, Ocampo, & Cota, 1990) while older adolescents have a more developed and established understanding of ethnicity (Knight et al., 2011; Knight et al., 1993; Quintana, 1998; Quintana & Scull, 2009). Older adolescents have internalized certain traditions and values and are aware that certain behaviors and preferences are directly tied to their ethnicity (Knight et al., 2011; Knight et al., 1993). In this study, the young adolescent group may encompass too many stages of ethnic identity development to capture their understanding of ethnic identity. For example, 10, 11 and 12 year olds may still be at the level of ethnic identification, while 13-15 year olds may have a more complex understanding of ethnicity and therefore beginning to explore their ethnic identity, and the 16-18 year olds may have a developed ethnic identity. Furthermore, younger adolescents may not have the ability and flexibility to function in multiple cultural environments on both a cognitive and behavioral level, which is necessary for biculturalism (Rotheram & Phinney, 1983; Rotheram-Borus, 1993).

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

Study I limitations should be taken into consideration. First, it should be noted that the expected associations between acculturation status and adjustment were

identified for Math self-efficacy only. Lack of association between acculturation and other indicators of adjustment may be attributed to the use of language acculturation as a measure of acculturation status. Although language is one domain of the acculturation process, greater proficiency in English may operate in contradictory ways by diminishing some types of acculturative strains (e.g., confusing interactions with the host culture) while exacerbating others (e.g., the language gap between youth and parents, distance from native culture). The measure of language acculturation utilized in this study did not capture the complexity of the acculturation process and the actual strains experienced by the adolescents. A more nuanced measure of acculturative strain would have taken into consideration other dimensions of acculturation such as perceived acceptance or socialization preferences (Zane & Mak, 2003). Furthermore, acculturative strain was conceptualized as a consequence of acculturation; the process of acclimating to a new culture, learning a new language, and lack of a social support system would seem to be inherently stressful. Some researchers have examined this association with ethnic identity (e.g., Iturbide et al., 2009; Kiang et al., 2006). The researcher suggests examining measures of acculturative stress in addition to acculturation status to determine if biculturalism would moderate those relations. However, acculturative stress was not directly measured, owing to limitations of the data set.

Additionally, range restriction for acculturation status could have resulted in the lack of association between acculturation status and adjustment. The correlation between acculturation status and adjustment may have been affected by the limited variances within acculturation status and adjustment in the current study. The limited variance within each variable reduces the size of the correlation between acculturation status and

adjustment, resulting in nonsignificant associations between measures of these constructs.

Another limitation in measurement was the creation of a bicultural index using the subscales of the MEIM. This index is likely to be a measurement of bicultural identity and not a measure of the adaptive nature of biculturalism. That being the case it would be difficult to say that biculturalism assessed in this was adaptive and therefore a buffer for the acculturation – adjustment association.

Additionally, a convenience sample was used so caution should be taken when generalizing the findings to Latino adolescents. As this is a cross sectional study, the researcher was unable to infer directional effects (i.e., causation). This is especially true for the association between language acculturation and English self-efficacy. The language aspect inherent in both variables confounds this association. That is to say, as adolescents increase their knowledge and usage of English it is assumed that their English self-efficacy would also increase (i.e., as they learn more English they have more positive appraisals of their ability to speak the language). The converse is also true -- the less English the adolescent knows the lower their English self-efficacy. Moreover, as adolescents progress from grade to grade in school English proficiency will also increase. Future research would benefit from examining these relations using longitudinal methods, which would allow researchers to see the developmental progression of the variables of interest and their interrelations.

As noted above the lack of significant findings associated with age may be related to the age grouping variable. The age range for younger adolescents (10-18 years) was greater than it was for older adolescents (19-24 years). As described above, children in very early adolescence (10-12 year olds) may only use ethnic identification labels, while

13-15 year olds may have a better understanding of ethnicity and are at the beginning of their exploration/commitment process, and the 16-18 year olds may have achieved their ethnic identity. To observe the developmental progression of ethnic identity, future research should utilize longitudinal methods, beginning in early adolescence and completing in late adolescence.

Furthermore, the sample was a mix of Latino groups (two thirds Mexican/Mexican American and one third of other Latino backgrounds). Results may vary by Latino subgroup (Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2001) so future research should consider examining Latino subgroup differences. Finally, although the study employed established measures with Latinos, self-report measures may result in the over or under reporting of symptoms, which may distort the relations between acculturation and adjustment. Future research should consider obtaining data from third party reporters. For example, when researchers collect data related to academic success they could request school records instead of relying solely on the adolescent.

Due to the results from Study I concerning biculturalism and to further understand ethnic identity in adolescence, Study II group interviews consisted of questions exploring the relations between ethnic identity, biculturalism, and adjustment. Results from Study I indicated that younger adolescents might not fully understand how ethnicity plays a role in their identity and in turn their adjustment. The adaptive nature of biculturalism was not seen in Study I, therefore questions regarding biculturalism and its usefulness in adolescent life were asked.

## Chapter 4: Study II

Study II was the qualitative phase of this explanatory mixed methods dissertation.

In an explanatory sequential design, the qualitative phase is meant to expand, explain, and shed light on the results of the quantitative phase (see Figure 2). In the quantitative phase, the two research hypotheses were partially supported – moderating effects of biculturalism and ethnic identity were found in only two of the models, and age differences in moderation (i.e., biculturalism) were found in only one model.

Additionally, acculturation status was associated with only one of the study outcomes. In light of these unexpected results, it seemed important to examine if adolescents understand what culture is, how culture relates to their development, whether adolescents feel that they can belong to multiple cultures and if they see any benefits to belonging to multiple cultures. Additionally it was important to identify how adolescents related to the majority culture and if they had any negative or positive experiences with the majority culture. Therefore, the goals for Study II were to examine and explore relations among ethnic identity, biculturalism, and adjustment by asking adolescents: 1) about their understanding of culture, 2) if biculturalism is possible, and adaptive, and 3) if culture is associated with adjustment.

This phase consisted of several group interviews with Latino adolescents. Group interviews permit interactions between the researcher and participants, encourage exchange of ideas, and support participants' responses (Vaughn, Schumm, & Sinagub, 1996). The interaction between participants in group interviews allows for greater amounts of data to be generated. Responses are unprompted and authentic because participants are not necessarily required to answer every question posed by the moderator

(Vaughn et al., 2000), unlike one on one interviews. The interviewer only asks the interview questions and for clarification of participant responses. The intention of this study was to expand and explain the results of Study I, answer questions generated from Study I, and further investigate the relations between acculturation status, ethnic identity, biculturalism, and both academic and psychological adjustment.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

Eleven Latina girls and eight Latino boys (girls  $M$  age = 16.64,  $SD$  = 2.11; boys  $M$  age = 14.88,  $SD$  = 1.25, over all age range 13-19 years of age) participated in group interviews about their culture and ethnicity. Adolescents were all Latinos; 13 self-identified as Mexican, four as South American, one as Hispanic and one as multiracial Mexican. Twelve of the adolescents were born in the U.S. and seven were born outside the U.S. Even though more than half of the participants were born in the U.S., 14 adolescents reported their native language as Spanish, four as English and one reported the combination of the two languages as the native languages. Fourteen adolescents reported that they lived in a two-parent home (e.g., biological/adoptive parents or two parents with one being a stepparent); four lived in a single parent home (two with mother only and two with father only) and one with one parent and another individual. Adolescents also reported where their parents were born; 13 mothers were born outside the U.S. (nine in Mexico and 4 in South America) and six in the U.S.; and 13 fathers were born outside of the U.S. (10 in Mexico and three in South America) and six in the U.S.

### **Procedure**

Adolescents were initially recruited from the Latino Achievement Mentoring



Program (LAMP; described earlier in Study I). Letters were sent to the parents of LAMP participants, who were asked to return the recruitment form (Appendices B and C) with their contact information if they were interested in having their child participate in the study. Of 23 letters, only four were returned to the researcher. Two of the families expressed interest in participation and the other two letters were returned because the mailing address was not current and therefore undeliverable. Due to the very low response rate, the researchers recruited adolescents through organizations that were frequented by Latinos ( $N = 5$ ). Furthermore, the researcher utilized snowball sampling to recruit additional respondents ( $N = 12$ ). Adolescents who had participated in the interviews gave recruitment materials to fellow Latino adolescents who might be interested in participating in the study. If a family expressed interest in the study, they were sent a parental consent form and a youth assent form (Appendices D-G). Signed parental consent and youth assent forms were given to the researcher before the interviews began. At the start of every interview, the moderator explained to the adolescents the interview process. They then verbally confirmed that they wanted to participate in the interview.

Demographic questionnaires and self-report cultural measures (see Appendix H) were completed by the youths the same day as the group interview. A Latina moderator conducted the group interviews. The moderator posed the study questions (see Appendix I for interview questions), facilitated the groups' conversation and took notes during the interview. Eight group interviews were conducted, stratified by age and gender to maximize the adolescents' ease of response. The interviews lasted between 8-51 minutes, 14 minutes was the average length of time for the boys' interviews and 27.5 minutes was

the average length of time for girls (20 – 75 minutes is the recommended length of time for these age groups; Vaughn et al., 1996). All interviews were videotaped. Youths who wished to participate but not to be videotaped were positioned so that they would be out of the recording frame but close enough so that their responses could be recorded. The audio portion of the videotapes was transcribed for analysis.

## **Measures**

**Demographics.** Demographic questions for the adolescent were age, gender, current grade, place of nativity, ethnicity, and length of time in the U.S. Demographic questions regarding the family consisted of mother's and father's education, number of siblings, where parents and grandparents were born, and how long they have lived in the U.S. These questions were based on prior studies conducted by the faculty advisors and their research collaborators (Crockett et al., 2007; Iturbide et al., 2009; McGinley et al., 2010; Raffaelli et al., 2007).

**Acculturation.** Acculturation was assessed with the Short Acculturation Scale for Hispanics – Youth (Barona & Miller, 1994; see Study I for description of measure). Adolescents were also asked to rate their mothers' and fathers' acculturation. The SASH-Y questions were modified so that the youths were answering for their parents (e.g., *What language do your parents speak at home?*). Adolescents rated the questions separately for their mother and their father. The overall Cronbach's alpha for adolescent ratings was .87 (boys = .77; girls = .91), for mothers .97 (boys = .93; girls = .96), and for fathers .96 (boys = .90; girls = .98).

**Ethnic identity.** Three scales from the MEIM (Phinney, 1992) were administered (see Study I for description of measure). Cronbach's alpha for the subscales of the MEIM

were as follows: affirmation and belonging .87 (boys = .81; girls = .93), achievement .84 (boys = .81; girls = .87), and other group orientation .76 (boys = .57; girls = .82).

**Interview.** Questions for the group interview were drawn from a cultural attachment interview (Hong, Roisman, & Chen, 2006; See Appendix I). The interview questions were originally asked of Chinese Americans. For this study, interview questions were modified to reflect Latino American culture instead of Chinese American culture. Further questions were developed based on the results from Study I (e.g., *Do you think that your culture has something to do with how you feel about yourself?*; see Appendix I for the interview questions; modified or created questions for this study are marked with an asterisk). The interview questions were presented to college-aged students of various ethnicities enrolled in a senior level class about Latino families at a Midwestern university. Students reviewed the questions for clarity and made suggestions to the researcher on how to improve the questions. The interview questions were submitted to the researcher's dissertation committee; questions were reviewed and approved by the committee.

## Chapter 5: Study II Results and Conclusions

### Plan of Analysis

Grounded theory employs qualitative data to develop a theory based on phenomena found in the data (Creswell, 2007; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). As described below, interviews were analyzed in detail to generate themes, identify relations among them, and generate a theory to explain the relations (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Demographic questionnaires and cultural measures were used to characterize the sample. Additionally, information from these measures was used to identify how similar the qualitative sample was to the quantitative sample. Data were analyzed by each interview questions and by gender because interviews were stratified by gender to maximize ease of response. Gender is a part of cultural socialization; research has indicated that boys and girls may be socialized differently based on cultural norms (Updegraff & Umaña-Taylor, 2010). Additionally, previous research has found differences in ethnic identity's protective nature by gender (Iturbide et al., 2009).

**Coding procedures.** It should be noted that the coding process is fluid and dynamic and not necessarily sequential (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) as it is described below. The coding process is described sequentially to clarify the methods used to analyze the data; nonetheless, with each pass through the data, codes, themes, concepts, and categories can be refined to better interpret the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In keeping with the recommendation that data collectors and interviewers be of the same ethnicity as the targeted population (Marín & Marín, 1999), both coders were of Latino heritage. The researcher chose not to use qualitative data computer software to code the data. Given the small sample size and the fact that the researcher was not planning to quantify the

qualitative data (e.g., generating counts on themes) it did not seem necessary to use coding software

Two coders began the coding process by reading the interview transcripts one time in their entirety. The coders next read the transcripts a second time and microanalyzed each word, sentence, and/or phrase. Microanalysis is the process of considering the initial categories and the associations between them by going through the transcript line by line. For example, when asked to describe their culture adolescents said “hard working” or “works hard”; these statements were considered individually at this step.

Microanalysis was followed by *open coding*, where codes from the microanalysis were further refined into themes. Themes were issues or events that participants indicated were important to them. Some of the codes stayed the same and became themes while others were grouped together. For example, the codes “hard working” and “works hard” were grouped together at this step to represent the theme of *hardworking*. After identifying an initial set of themes, coders met to discuss the themes they identified and establish consensus between them.

Once the open coding was complete, coders engaged in *axial coding* which identified the connections made between the themes and sub-themes (i.e., the whys and hows of the theme) that emerged from the interviews. All of the themes identified in the transcripts were synthesized together to identify the central phenomena or overarching categories. For example, after reviewing the concepts about how culture influences the ways adolescents perceived others, the researcher was able to identify that adolescents believe that their culture teaches them about stereotypes against Latinos as well as the

stereotypes that Latinos have about Whites. Additionally, coders met on separate occasions to review their themes together and resolve any discrepancies between the categories and themes. Both coders mutually agreed upon all themes and categories before they were finalized.

Lastly, *selective coding* is the integration and the refining of the theory generated by the various categories and concepts identified (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The theory developed was the interpretation of the data collected from the interviews; the researcher conducted this step.

### **Descriptive Statistics**

Overall survey means as well as means for boys and girls are reported separately in Table 5. These data were collected to be able to describe the sample used in the group interviews. Furthermore, this information provides an understanding of who responded to the interview questions. Boys' and girls' scores did not differ significantly on cultural measures or age,  $p > .05$ .

Table 5

*Descriptive statistics for group interviews*

Variable	<i>Mean (Standard Deviation)</i>		
	Boys <i>n</i> = 8	Girls <i>n</i> = 11	Overall <i>n</i> = 19
Age	14.88 (1.25)	16.64 (2.11)	15.89 (1.97)
Adolescent Acculturation	4.03 (0.60)	3.69 (0.86)	3.83 (0.76)
Mother's Acculturation	3.06 (1.15)	2.08 (1.43)	2.49 (1.38)
Father's Acculturation	3.08 (1.15)	2.62 (1.46)	2.84 (1.31)
Ethnic Identity Affirmation & Belonging	3.43 (0.49)	3.25 (0.80)	3.33 (0.67)
Ethnic Identity Achievement	3.16 (0.77)	2.87 (0.81)	2.99 (0.79)
Other Group Orientation	3.65 (0.38)	3.38 (0.66)	3.49 (0.56)

### **Group Interview Themes**

Results are based on eight interviews (four for boys and four for girls) with at least two people participating in the interview. Themes are presented by question and participants' sex. Negative cases are discussed for each question to provide an inclusive interpretation of the data. Negative cases were responses given by adolescents that were in direct contrast to the other responses to the question. Figures 17 and 18, graphically depict the themes that were identified for boys and girls respectively. The arrows indicate what themes are associated with culture and what themes are associated with family.

**What do you think culture means?**

Boys defined culture as a combination of traditions, values, and language, “Culture means a country’s general way of communicating, such as religion, government, language and yeah, all of those things”. As one boy stated:

Well, I would say culture it seems to be the environment in which the individual is raised. So, it’s not necessarily black and white and that you’re Hispanic, or that you’re Mexican or you’re American, you can be both cultures like we both do and be raised in a Hispanic home while living in American society. I believe it’s a convergence of both of those and then just how you are, how the individual comes to be.

Furthermore, they described their culture as family orientated and being festive on a grand scale. Another boy stated, “It’s not really the country from where you’re from but how you were raised. More so how your parent’s traditions and how they raise you.”

In the girls’ interview groups, culture was defined as the context in which you live. For example, one of the girls stated:

Culture means the way you live your life, like based on what, what you have on your surroundings, because your culture can be formed by you know, family or just like, your community, like maybe the block you live in. I think that might be culture, just depends on what you think.

Additionally, girls stated that culture is what has been passed down through generations and defined by family, traditions and celebrations.

Overall, both boys and girls provided a definition for culture that could be found in any textbook. Boys expanded the definition by adding the importance of family in



culture.

**What words would you use to describe your culture to someone who doesn't know you?**

Boys described their culture as family oriented:

I say very family-oriented, like Mexican culture is very family-oriented. Like, *Dia de los Muertos*, you're supposed to honor your past relatives." Another boy stated, "although the Mexican aspect is very centered on family values, the American aspect is very centered on the individual and how we have our personal liberties and we have to make our path.

Boys also associated their culture with food, clothes, languages, holidays, and partying on a grand scale.

Girls stated that their culture was fun: "I think it's very unique. It's, we tend to have lots more fun, I think. We tend to have more events that are more fun and it just, the Spanish language symbolizes so much in our culture."

Girls also said that their culture was vivid, interesting, brown, and food. Some of the girls expressed that their culture was different (implying that it was different from American culture) One of the girls expressed difficulty in describing her culture:

I think it depends. Because as someone who lives in the center of American society, in the context of American society I have I am influenced by American culture, but that's not, but also as a minority within American culture that's a whole other experience and I think as a *Chicano* that or as a *chicana* that's there's a separate *chicano* experience and that's a separate cultural experience. I think it's a multi-faceted question where on the one hand, you know, there's American

culture which is like forcing to assimilate and then there's *chicano* culture which is my history and like the culture which I want to be mine and like, it's different, so I don't.

Another girl noted that her culture is positive in nature, "They are always happy, and they always find the good side of everything."

Overall, the youth's references to their culture were very positive. From these responses, it can be inferred that the adolescents have a strong sense of pride with regards to their culture. The researchers purposefully did not ask what culture the youths belong to; the researchers did not want to force a particular culture on the adolescents. From their responses it is clear that almost all of the adolescents were referring to the Latino culture.

#### **How do you feel about your culture?**

When asked how they felt about their culture boys said they were happy, hardworking and bicultural. Additionally, boys said they were proud of their culture. For example:

Oh, I love my culture. I'm actually glad I'm in it. It's different and you just don't have to take like one perspective, I'm American and now I'm Hispanic and so I have I got to see two sides of a culture not just one and see how each one is different.

One of the boys noted he had not really thought about his culture.

When asked how they felt about their culture, the girls had an overall positive response. Girls said they felt good, proud, and different. For example, one girl said, "I feel maybe proud and I just feel good to know that I'm different." Girls also said that they felt great, "I feel great about it because I love where I come from, I love being Mexican,"

as well as hardworking and dedicated. There was one case where girl a noted that she felt like she did not fit in:

... sometimes I feel like I don't fit in as good as other people do because of how I was raised, and um. Like for example, not having like a dad around and all that, and I think that affects a lot of how, um I would say it is I guess...

In contrast another girl noted that, "cause I act more white than I do Mexican, so I don't understand it. I can't read it, I don't speak it, so I'm like hi, I'm the outcast..." This girl felt language was an important part of Latino culture.

In sum, both boys and girls had positive feelings about their culture with two exceptions. One boy had yet to explore his feeling about his culture and one girl who felt that she did not belong.

### **What do you think about Latino culture?**

Boys noted that the Latino culture is mixed and not exactly like the native country, "I'd say it's mixed with American and that they [U.S. Latinos] don't do as much practices as the regular like they usually do in Mexico." Another boy noted the subgroup differences in his culture, "Very diverse. There's just different, there's lots of different parts of Latino... Like, for example, like Puerto Ricans and Dominican Republicans and Cubans..." One boy thought that the Latino culture was hardworking, "... too, it's sort of more oriented towards hard work in my experiences. Like, um, if you want something, you've got to get yourself. No one is going to exactly help you." Yet another boy noted that all cultures have positives and negative aspects to them and that the Latino culture is no exception, "so I think that Latino culture, in general, in my experience, is very positive. There are negative aspects, there are negative aspects of every culture in

general, Latino culture is very positive.”

Girls noted that the Latino culture was positive, happy and had fun with lots of parties and celebrations. Some girls noted that the Latino culture was unique and different, “I think it’s very unique. It’s, we tend to have lots more fun, I think. We tend to have more events that are more fun and it just, the Spanish language symbolizes so much in our culture.” She went on further to explain that, “I mean one of the most well-known languages in the world and it just symbolizes a lot of love, a lot of family, it’s the culture is just so full of family and love.” One girl noted that she was proud of her culture but that she was more proud of the Latino culture than her American culture.

Girls also noted that the Latino culture is hardworking. However, this description has negative and positive aspects and became a discussion about criminal behavior. For example, one girl stated:

... can’t really base it upon one person, because we do have a lot of, um, criminals, and then we have a lot of hardworking families that come for the right thing. Um, so honestly, as the stereotype, um, I would see my culture as hardworking and then the other half being criminals and, which is bad, but we do have to accept, I guess, what we have in our culture. Um, I would say that we do have to work harder for what we get, so in a way maybe that’s why there is a lot of criminals out there. They want the easy way out of it. And um, I would say that that’s what I think about our culture...

Another girl responded by explaining that criminal activity was not unique to the Latino culture and that there are prejudices involved:

...I would say that every culture has um, criminals, I guess, or you know, the

wrong people, um but I guess, here in the U.S. they see ... more colored people, you know, they're gonna put it more as a bigger issue than if a Caucasian did it or so I guess...I'm not saying that we just do it, but I guess it concerns me more and I look at it that we do it a lot because that's my race ... So I'm not gonna sit there and look at white people and be like, "Oh my God, there's a lot of criminals," because that's not my race in a way so I'm not as concerned as I am for our people.

In sum, both boys and girls felt that the Latino culture is hard working and noted that Latino culture has positive and negative aspects. The girls were very explicit in their description of the negative aspects of belonging to the Latino culture. Boys unlike girls noted that the Latino culture is not homogenous and that the variety in the culture could stem from all of the Latino subgroups and their experiences in the U.S.

### **What do you think about American culture?**

Many boys felt that Americans do not have culture. Other boys noted that American culture is different from Latino culture. For example, one boy stated,

I think there's that difference, because from the Hispanic aspect, we're very centered on our roots, and where we come from and who we are and I think the American culture, you still have that to a degree, but it staggers and people are proud of their Irish heritage or their Polish heritage but they don't necessarily know it. They know that someone in their past was Polish or Irish, but they don't have that root.

Another boy stated:

American culture is very different. They don't care about what people say but

they also they like to feel pride in themselves so when they do something, when they accomplish something they're very like, strong and passionate about it, they like, they like to build new ideas every day and also want to help the environment...

One boy noted that there was diversity in American culture, "I guess that doesn't really constitute culture I guess American culture I mean, it, they're a lot of different people in America, so it's really broad."

Girls associated White (i.e., Caucasian) with American culture. They also noted differences between Latino and American culture, most of which were every negative.

For example, one girl stated:

I think they're kinda lazy. Because they say like, how they say that like Mexicans take their jobs, and like, we come here to take their jobs away. But I think we do the jobs that they pretty much don't want to do. Cause like, I don't know, that's just what I think.

Girls explained that Americans have privileged and easier lives than Latinos, and that Americans are unappreciative of what they have. As one girl said: "I think they have it easy, like living here, like in the country. They think, like, everything is easy... Like, getting a job. They can go get it, like quick."

Another girl stated,

They do get it easy, I guess, because I mean I've seen a lot of like, um, the people that stand around in the street, with the signs, and obviously they want it easy if they're standin' with the sign. You know, I don't see very, well here, maybe in other places where the population of Hispanics is bigger, you'll see people like

that. But ... I haven't seen a Hispanic man stand with a sign saying he needs money, you know? I think that they want the easy way out of things so um because they are a higher power they think they have every right, I guess you could say, and um I mean, I guess there's racism both sides, both ways. Um, but I mean, I guess they want everybody to live up to their expectations. And if you don't, then they're gonna look down on you and be like...

One of the girls felt that Americans are oppressive, stating, "They force us to assimilate and lose our own culture and just become like white, like white American culture. Like privileged but unappreciative, oppressive of other cultures."

In sum, both boys and girls explained that there are differences between Latino and American culture. Boys noted that Americans do not have a culture or if they do it is heterogeneous. Boys' feelings of American culture were generally not negative; for the most part their statements were positive. In contrast, girls spoke very negatively about the American culture, describing Americans as lazy privileged people that "have it very easy." These negative feeling could be attributed to the struggles the girls have observed in their own families.

**Do you think people can belong to two or more cultures? If so which cultures?**

**Why? Are you a part of two or more cultures? If so which cultures? Why?**

Boys felt that individuals could belong to two or more cultures and all of the boys felt that they belonged to more than one culture. Only a few referenced the American culture as the other culture they belonged to when stating their biculturalism (e.g., "I'm American and I'm South American, because I'm Hispanic"). Some of the boys also stated that they were a part of two cultures because they were born in two cultures and lived in

two cultures. For example, one boy stated:

I belong to the American culture and Mexican culture because I'm Mexican, my family is Mexican, and our traditions are Mexican, and we visit Mexico every year and we live, I'm part of the American culture, because I live in the American culture.

One of the boys explained that belonging to two or more cultures was a positive:

I think they can belong to it cause, it's not bad belonging to two different cultures, because you get a feel of different cultures and if you are, well, well, if you are I guess you can just see how the world is different around you, not just get a piece of one thing so see how the world is like different around you and see how these cultures can combine and mix and inspire you in different ways.

Regarding the question of belonging to two or more cultures, the majority of the girls agreed that they could be a part of two cultures. One girl further explained that for her, she can exist in two cultures, but was not sure about having a sense of belonging:

If that's what you mean, then literally we do. But like, if you mean belong as in exist in two or more cultures, then yeah. If you mean like belong in having a sense of belonging, then I don't know.

The girls also explained that they lived in two cultures and that the culture varied by context. For example, one girl stated "... you have a different culture, with like your family and with like your friends or like, the, the, like the groups you're involved in at school, they're all like different." One of the girls explained that she was Mexican but she acted "White":

I'm much more white than Mexican. And I'm like ok. And I speak, and most of



my friends are white because some of the people at school who are Mexican I don't want to deal with because they're irritating to me, and I'm like, I'm not going to deal with you. Have fun. So I just don't deal with them at all.

One girl expressed that her skin color was a barrier to belonging to multiple cultures, "Cause, I don't look white, I can't fit into white people's culture... No. I can fit into others, just not the white part. I can be considered as a colored person, like, the blacks."

In sum, both boys and girls agreed that they could belong to multiple cultural groups. Boys noted that multiculturalism occurred because of their heritage and noted the benefits to being multicultural. Girls noted that their multiculturalism varied by context. In addition, one girl noted that she had difficulty fitting into both cultures (i.e., Latino and American) because of her overall behavior and appearance.

**Have you ever felt close to Latino culture? Can you tell me about an experience when you felt close to Latino culture?**

Most of the boys responded that they felt close to the Latino culture with one exception who said he "*kinda*" felt close to it. Boys felt close to the Latino culture when they attended celebrations or family events and when they were with their family ("Well, like at *quinceneras*"); another stated, "I guess, there's like family parties and friends, close friend events that are very centered on Mexican traditions."

All the girls felt close to the Latino culture with the exception of one girl who said she has never felt close to the Latino culture. Girls explained that they felt close to the culture when they attend family events or celebrations. For example, one girl stated:

...we go to the *quinceañeras*, that's kind of like a Latino culture thing, and so, every time we go and then we see like the *bailes* [dances] and everything that they

do. It just, makes us feel like we're close to it.

Girls also expressed that they may not feel as close to the culture as they did before:

I think I felt more close to it when I was younger, because maybe...I didn't do as I guess, as many things out of like, out of our culture that I can do now. Um, I guess, when I was younger, just um, when we went to Mexico, and I experienced how it was down there, and like, the um, the festivities and all that goin' on, and I felt really close to it, but um, I don't, I don't feel as close to it now as I used to.

In sum, both boys and girls felt close to the Latino culture with both groups having one exception. Boys and girls both noted that they felt close to the culture when participating in family functions. One girl stated that the now that she spends more time outside of the culture, she does not feel as close to it.

**Have you ever felt close to American culture? Can you tell me about an experience when you felt close to American culture?**

All the boys stated that they felt close to American culture with one boy saying he "*sorta*" felt close to it. One boy said that he felt close to American culture because he was in it. For example, one boy said, "Because I go to a Catholic school and they're all American there. There's barely any culture other culture there than American. So yeah."

Another boy stated:

I feel closer to American culture because I'm in it, I'm in one right now, so I get a taste of it every day so when that happens I think it's important to still practice your other cultures such as Spanish, so I'll never forget my Spanish culture cause I probably won't forget my American culture because I'm in it every day.

One boy said that he saw similarities between the two cultures, "... whenever I go to an

American friend's house and I just kinda sit with them because they have their own traditions, their own expectations and so I guess just seeing some link between my family and their family.”

Girls were split on this question, some of the girls said that they did feel close to the American culture yet others said no. Girls felt close to the American culture at work, around friends, or at school. One girl stated “...I've had ... several few friends, that one-on-one relationships... Yeah, and at school too. Um, I'd sit with somebody who's American and, we start talking, and it's like we're no different, we're just casually talking...” Another girl expressed that she felt closer to American culture when she was younger but not now, “I guess when I was younger, I had more white friends, and they would like, and I guess I would hear more about what they would do, and like, how they, their family would do things, but no.”

Another girl felt that her response would depend on how American culture would be defined:

...I think people often define American culture in terms of the hypothetical American dream, which is like freedom, and equality success and opportunity-equal opportunity- but whether or not that's real and so I think in those terms, the closest I've felt was when I attended President Barack Obama's inauguration.

Another girl felt close to American culture when she was at a school that was predominantly Caucasian, “There's basically more Caucasians there. And like, they didn't think of me as being Mexican, like I was, I fit in.” She also stated that this has changed now that she attends a school with a diverse ethnic population. Yet another girl felt close to the American culture because she looked like it (“I feel close to American

culture a lot just because I am white...”) and because she liked country music.

One of the girls who did not feel close to American culture explained that:

I’m more of the outcast between the two groups here... I don’t really fit in between these groups. I’m right on the border. If you have one group on one side, and you have another somehow on paper, I’d be right in the middle.

In sum, both boys and girls felt close to American culture with exceptions in each group. Boys said they felt close because they lived in the American culture. Girls on the other hand indicated that their closeness to the American culture was dependent upon different factors, such as context or physical appearance. There was one girl who felt marginalized, not belonging to either group.

**Do you have moments when you feel that you don’t know whether you are Latino or American?**

Boys’ responses to this question were mixed. Some boys stated that were able to determine which ethnic group they belonged to without confusion. In some cases, boys stated that they were not confused to about their identification because they were often reminded that they are Latino. As one boy explained:

I have always known that I am Latino and American. My parents always remind me of that, and I’ve always known about it since I was a kid. I’ve known about it cause my parents raised me as Latino and felt pretty close to it and I know that I’m American cause I’m in America right now, along with South America so it makes me a little bit of American. That’s why.

One boy stated that he was not conflicted in his ethnic identification because he knew he was both, “I don’t think there exists that divide between being Latino and American. I

think you can be Latino-American and still be part of both cultures.” Another boy stated that he felt “more” Latino when he was speaking Spanish. However, some of the other boys felt conflict in their ethnic identification when they were at school.

Almost all of the girls agreed that they knew they were Latinas and that there was no confusions. There were various reasons for the lack of confusion. One girl stated that her parents reminded her, “My parents would be saying, ‘*Mira al nopal que tienes en la frente*’ [look at the *nopal* you have on your forehead; a *nopal* is a cactus used in Mexican cuisine, some say there is nothing more Mexican than a *nopal*]. Look at the, look at your face. Look at it. You’re Hispanic.” Another girl explained that it was her appearance that provided her with the ability to determine her ethnicity, “Our color does not lie to us.”

Following this theme another girl explained that her appearance led to some conflict:

Um, because I’m white, it tends to be a lot easier to be what people think I am than to be what I know I am. It’s really, really hard because I can just fit into the white culture so easily that sometimes I can forget about my Hispanic culture. I realized how much I had been forgetting when I went to Argentina this summer.

One girl explained that she did not fit into either group but that this did not cause confusion:

‘Cause really, like I said before I really am an outcast, I don’t belong to either group... I feel like I’m on neutral ground so I’m not, I’m with Mexican-Americans, I’m not with Americans, I’m not with Mexicans, I’m just on neutral ground.

In sum, both boys and girls had mixed responses to this question. Some of the boys just knew they were Latino; others were reminded that they were Latino by other

people and yet others indicated that the confusion was situational. Girls also had family to remind them of their culture and added that their physical appearance does not allow for any confusion. The girl who indicated she was marginalized in the previous question indicated that she did not belong to either group but that it did not cause a problem for her.

**Do you think being a part of more than one culture can be useful? Why?**

All the boys agreed that being a part of multiple cultures could be useful. They indicate that there were multiple advantages to multiculturalism such as language skills and employment opportunities. One boy said, “Like in jobs where they need you to speak another language.” Another boy stated, “Yeah ‘cause you can probably get more money... Like you can speak two languages and they pay you more for more languages.” Other boys indicated social advantages. For example one boy stated, “... and also I think just helps you understand more about different people or, or being understanding of different people, and that can always be good.” Another boy explained, “I think it can give you multiple perspectives on not necessarily problem-solving, but addressing different aspects of society. Addressing different aspects of your society that you want to figure out.”

The girls also agreed on the usefulness of multiculturalism similarly to the boys. Girls stated that multiculturalism afforded them an appreciation of others, “Yes. Maybe because it gives you a better appreciation of certain aspects of whichever culture.” Additionally, the girls stated that multiculturalism could lead to employment opportunities. Some girls also felt that they were able to learn different things because of multiculturalism. One girl explained:

Or that you can understand better some aspects of another culture. If, like in the United States if you're from a minority in your, in the minority group, then you have a greater understanding of, like I was saying earlier like American culture and this idea of the American dream, and you kinda have a better understanding of whether or not that's hypothetical or realistic or like equal opportunity- does it actually exist? You know.

In sum, both boys and girls agreed that belonging to more than one culture is useful. Both groups saw employment advantages to being multicultural. Furthermore, they indicated that multiculturalism allowed them to appreciate other cultures and other viewpoints.

**How have your experiences with the Latino and American cultures influenced your personality or the person you are now? Is your culture a part of who you are?**

Boys believed that Latino and American cultures influenced their personalities, however exactly how these cultures affected the boys' personalities varied. Some of the boys indicated that they had certain values because of these cultures. These values were transmitted by how they were raised or what they observed. One boy stated about the Latino culture:

Well like I said before, it's very hard work-oriented, because my parents had a hard time establishing a home here, my parents always tell me to do well in school, because they would have too if they had the chance to go to school.

Another boy indicated that he wanted to do the opposite of what was expected of him from others, "I would say mostly that Latinos don't usually go to college and stuff, I want to, you want to be going to college so that you don't look bad and make Latinos look

bad.” Another said that he wanted to avoid the struggles of his parents, “Have seen your parents...how your parents talking to you, how they struggled. Then you grow up and you try not to make that same thing.” Another indicated the benefits of his culture:

I think you put, you don't, you learn to put others in front of yourself, to think of what your actions will, how your actions will affect others, I think that's, you learn to have more perspective on that matter.

In regards to the American culture, one boy said:

I came here, I used to just be like a normal kid, went to play outside but the American culture influenced me there's a lot more music, a lot more games to do and stuff like that. So now I'm a gamer, I like to listen to a lot of music...

Girls stated that their beliefs, values, and understanding of self are associated with their culture. One girl stated that the combination of both Latino and American cultures influence personality with happy results:

Hispanics are known for being really centralized in their family and always following their customs. Not only that, but there's always that saying that “*que trabajamos como burros*” [work like mules] ... And that really does tell, because in American culture, it's always strive to be your best, strive to be the top, and when you combine those two, you get a lot of happiness, I think, because you keep striving and you keep working hard, and you always do reach what you need to reach, or want to reach.

One girl seemed conflicted, stating that there was not an association between culture and personality but through their culture individuals learn many things. She stated, “it doesn't influence you, but you learn about, learn about their culture, what things they do, what



they eat, stuff like that.” There were also some girls who believed that culture and personality are not associated with each other at all.

In sum, there were some differences in how boys and girls felt about the association between culture and personality. Boys felt that the cultural values they learned from their family were related to their personality. Additionally, they felt that the negative experiences and expectations of their culture influenced the goals they set for themselves. Girls had two opinions with respect to culture and personality: 1) cultural values were associated with their personality or 2) there was no association between culture and personality.

**Do you think that your culture has something to do with how you feel about yourself?**

For the most part boys felt that culture was somehow associated with the self-perception. One boy explained that he knew that there are expectations about Latinos, “Well, yeah, cause back to expectations—Mexicans have different expectations than Americans so just like which expectations you reach and which you don’t can help you decide something about yourself.” Two other boys felt that there are culture stereotypes that they had to work against, to disprove them and show that they are better than what others think of Latinos:

P: When you think about Latinos, they’re like junky and like, pretty much the stereotypes of what Americans think of Latinos, and then that influences,

G: You want to change that.

P: You want to change that and not put a bad impression on Latinos.

G: Put a good impression on Latinos.

Yet another boy explained that culture does not influence how he feels about himself but rather provides rules and guidelines of how to behave:

Well I wouldn't say that it necessarily tells me how to feel,... but I do think it shows me some sort of guidelines of how I should be so I would say yes and no, in that it does give me that guideline, but it doesn't necessarily tell me to be this kind of way.

This suggested that there is a link between the adolescents' behaviors and how they feel about themselves because of the way they act. Another boy believed that his culture gave him the opportunity to do what he wanted:

Yeah, definitely. Culture has inspired me to do many different things. Since we're like an open spread kinda culture, like take in different things, so, we're not like, very strict about how you should do one thing, but we like to do many different things...

Girls had a different opinion than boys and within the girls' interviews there were mixed views. Some of the girls affirmed that their culture was related to how they felt but did not give an explanation. Most felt that culture was not associated with how they felt about themselves, but rather that they made these determinations on their own. As one girl explained, "You can be whatever you want, your culture is not going to affect much of that." Another girl explained, "I don't know. I think it's not the culture, it's just the things you do and like, who's in your life. It's like how you feel about yourself, who's around you. That's not really culture though." Other girls indicated that it was how you were raised by your parents, "Yeah, I guess how you're raised, and everything ... I guess it would just come from them [parents]. Most of all."

In sum, boys felt that culture provided guidelines for their behaviors as well as informed stereotypes about them. In turn the boys wanted to set goals and behaved in ways that would result in positive outcomes. Girls had slightly different views. Some of the girls indicated that there was an association with culture and self-perception but unlike boys the girls were unable to articulate how culture was related to how they felt about themselves. In contrast to boys, some of the girls did not feel that culture influenced how they felt about themselves.

**Do you think that your culture has something to do with how you feel about others?**

Boys disagreed about how culture influenced how they felt about others. Some boys said that there was no association between culture and how they perceived other individuals, others explained that culture was related to racism and stereotypes. Additionally, these boys stated that they are taught values, which influences how they think and feel about others. One boy explained, "...our culture has taught me that even though life throws curve ball at you, you still have to bring yourself through it and get past difficult times and help people." One boy explained that he saw the differences between cultures:

I think so yeah, because I think, how we mentioned earlier, how we sorta see our Hispanic culture as more family oriented and the American culture as less family oriented, I think that does generated the divide between how our cultures are different.

One boy said that his minority status in school showed him the difference between groups:

... I'm the minority, let's put it that way. Yeah, I'm pretty sure I'd be the minority

at any school in Lincoln, but, but so, so I guess I'm lookin from the outside so I might feel differently about others because of because I'm a different, a little bit of a different culture there, not not, it's not a huge difference but, you know it might make me feel a little different about that.

Girls' responses were mixed. Most of the girls said yes culture influenced how they feel about others. Some girls explained that racism and stereotypes influenced how they see others. As one girl explained:

Lots of times, when I think of first meeting someone, American or white, I usually feel they're gonna be racist to other cultures. So I've had a lot of experiences where until they find out that I am Hispanic or I do speak Spanish, I'm from a different culture, they'll start talking trash about other cultures, and then once they find out, it's kinda like, oh! But I didn't mean you, so I mean, I always come up with that if I want to talk to someone, I always think they're probably thinking something bad. Just because they're white or they're black or just depends.

Another girl explained that, when she meets people she compares and evaluates her culture with the other person's culture. Yet another girl explained that religion was a part of her culture and that her religious beliefs have taught her how to treat and see others. She stated, "...we have to just not compare ourselves to other but do what God wants us to do."

In sum, boys and girls both agreed that culture informs stereotypes which in turn influences how they perceive others. However some of the boys felt that culture was not associated with how they perceive others.

**Do you think that your culture has something to do with how you feel about and how well you do in school?**

Responses to this question were mixed; while some boys felt that there was a direct link between their culture and school success others did not. One boy explained, "...I don't think culture influences how much knowledge I have in inside of me ..."

Other boys felt that the stereotypes associated with Latinos and education were related to their academic achievement and that they wanted to prove them wrong, "Yeah, because it pushes me to do better than what the stereotypes think." Another felt that that cultural values influenced how he does in school. He stated that:

...if the values of your culture, or my culture are like hardworking or I guess yeah, if you work hard or I guess if getting is an important part of your culture, that might affect how how I feel about doing well in school or how that I feel that I need to do well in school because that's part of my culture's values.

Other boys indicated that their family situations were associated with academic expectations. One boy stated:

...it's like, well a lot of my friends, their parents went to college and a lot of opportunities opened up for them. But me, because my parents didn't have much education, I have to kinda set that for my kids.

Another boy stated, "...both my parents are Ph.D. graduates and so I think that that changes my experience because I was born into the expectation of academic not expectation of academic excellence but that existence."

Girls also had mixed feelings about culture's influence on their academic success. Some of the girls indicated that teachers' perceptions were influenced by culture, stating

that teachers had negative perceptions about Latino students and positive perceptions about White students. One girl explained that if she did well it was because of her “White” side:

I’m pretty sure if I started doing really, really bad in all my classes, there would be those talks of, oh you know, like every other Hispanic, she’s just going to let herself go or something like that, but because I’m doing well, it’s like that’s the white side of her coming out or whatever. I hear that a lot. And I know it’s what people are talking about.

Some of their girls said that parental guidance and expectations are associated with their academic success. As one girl explained:

... some parents don’t really know what like they want you to do good in school, but they don’t really know how to push you, because they didn’t have that...I think that’s how my mom is. Like she tries like, to get us to do good, but she doesn’t really knowhow to push us, because for one, she didn’t go, like, through, all of, like, middle school, all of, like she didn’t go through that, and like her mom didn’t really care, so I think it’s just passed on.

Another girl said that parents could only do so much that in the end it is your own choice to do well in school. Girls who felt that culture was not associated with school indicated that it was up to the individual to succeed in school. As one girl explained:

It’s really how much effort you put into it, into what you learn. And if you want to remember that, and do good. That’s all it really depends upon, not on your culture, it does push it out of the way. It’s really the effort you put into it.

In sum, boys and girls had three responses to this question. First, adolescents felt

that there are culture stereotypes and expectations for Latinos from society (specifically teachers) that they must work to overcome. Second, there are familial expectations related to academic success that adolescents must meet. Lastly, they noted that it is up to the individual to succeed; culture cannot influence what they retain or whether they choose to put forth the effort to succeed in school.

Figure 17. Themes for Latino Adolescent Boys

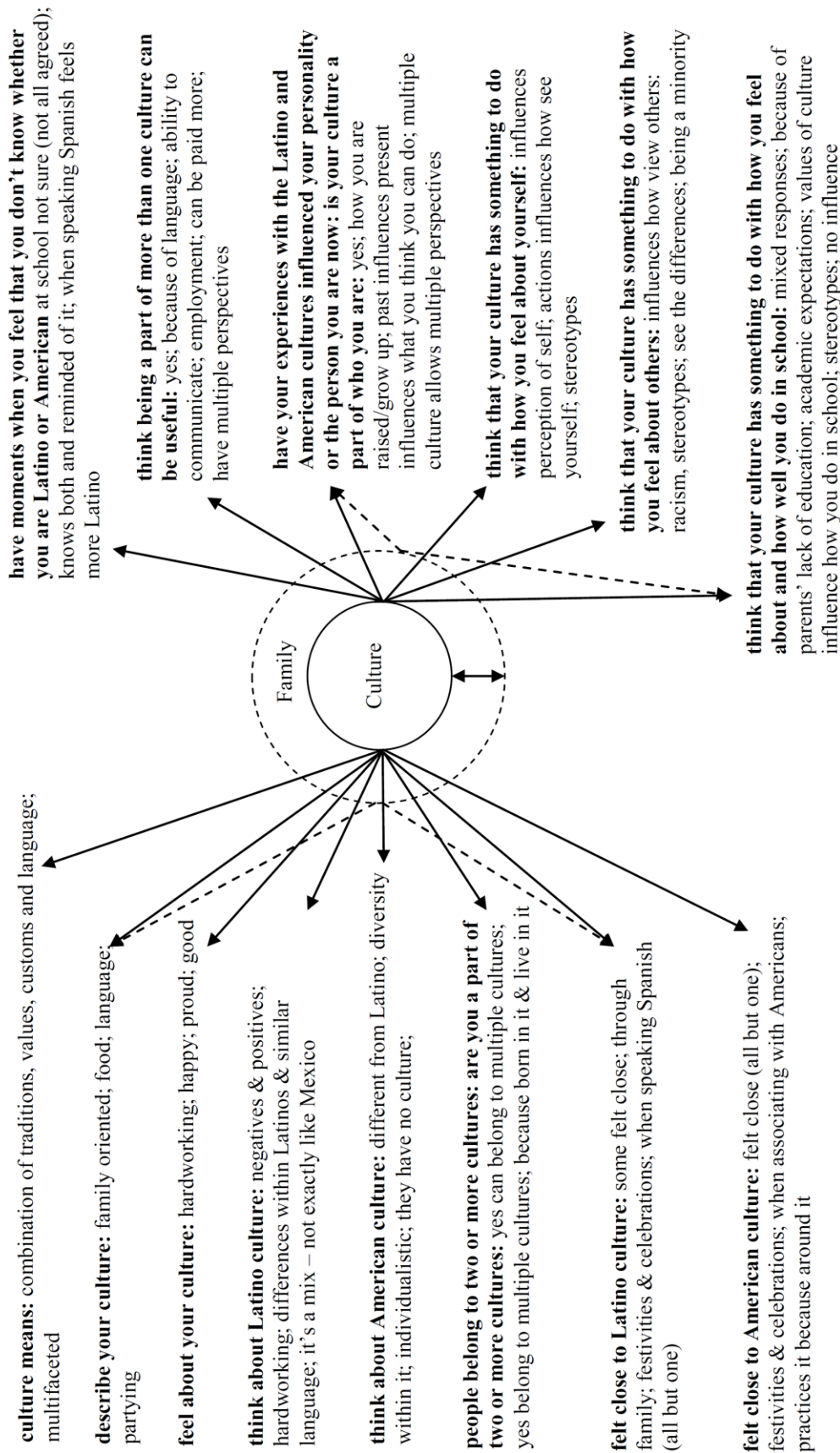
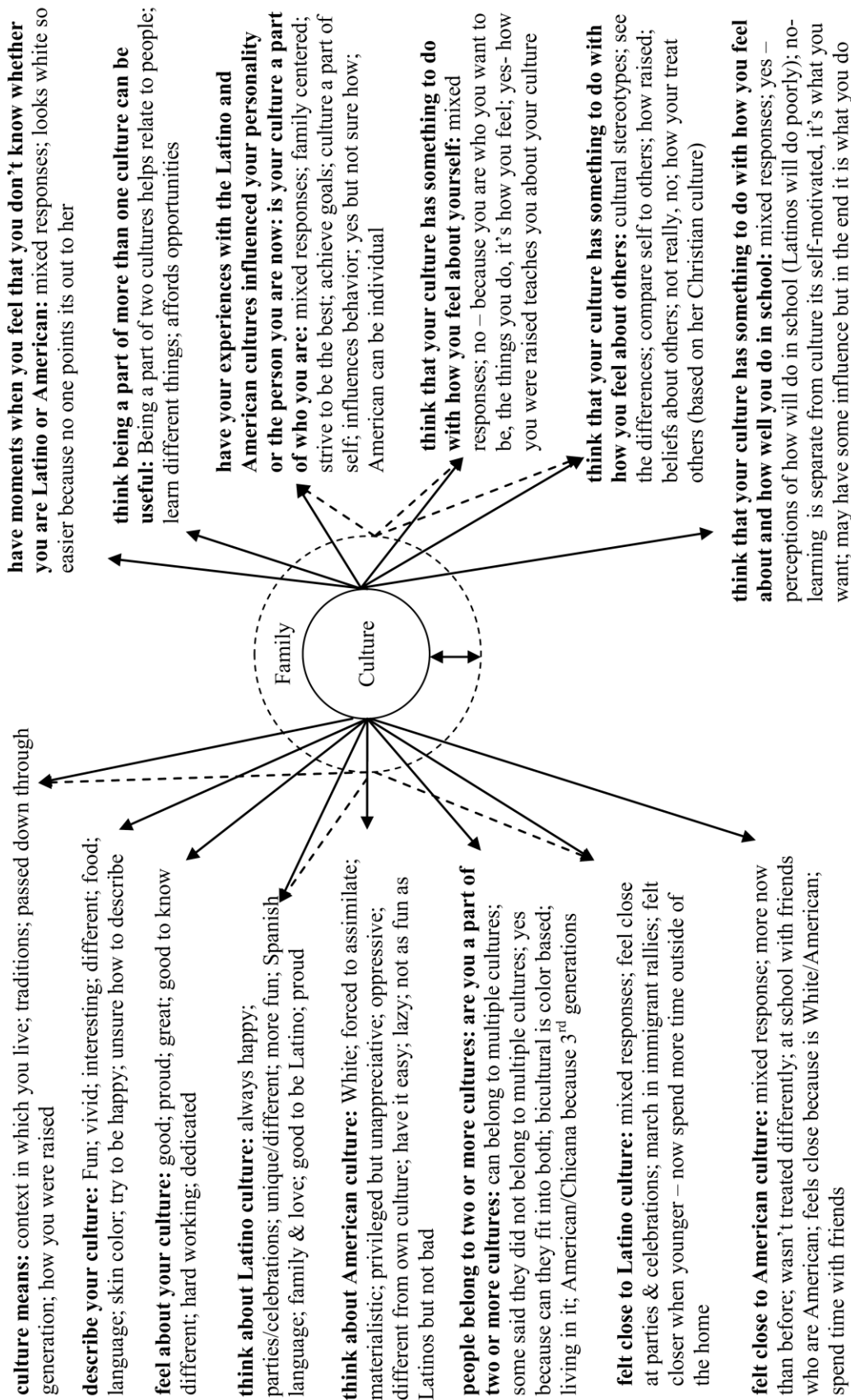




Figure 18. Themes for Latino Adolescent Girls



## **Theory, Conclusions, and Discussion**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to expand and explain the results of Study I. In this section, the results from the qualitative study are discussed; explanation and expansion of Study I results are presented in Chapter 6. Overall, the adolescents who participated in the group interviews showed an understanding of what culture is, what it meant to them personally, and how it is directly or indirectly associated to their adjustment. The definitions of culture provided by the adolescents were consistent with most textbook definitions; for example one boy stated that culture is a “group’s values or customs, language”. In terms of how youths felt about their culture, most of the adolescents had positive feelings about their culture (e.g., proud, good, happy). From the responses to many of the questions, it appears that there are direct and indirect associations between culture and family and that there are contextual factors that must be considered when trying to understand the influence culture has on an adolescent’s daily life.

Latino adolescents living in the U.S. are exposed to multiple cultures that influence them socially, emotionally, and developmentally. Adolescents perceived how culture contributed to their personal development and the perception of others (e.g., stereotypes, racism, and minority status). The current study provides support for the theory that culture informs family and family informs culture. In this case, culture refers to both adolescents’ native culture and the host cultures. Adolescents are presented with values and traditions within and outside of the home denoting the process of acculturation and enculturation and influencing the development of biculturalism and ethnic identity (Knight et al., 2011).

Adolescent responses were consistent with the model presented by Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco (2001) that explains adolescents' ethnic identity style. In this model, five factors influence ethnic identity styles: family factors, ethnic community, opportunity structure, social mirror, and individual factors. In the current study, respondents focused greatly on three of these factors: family factors, social mirroring, and opportunity structure.

From the themes that emerged from the qualitative study, it can be inferred that family is essential to the understanding and prosperity of the Latino culture and the development ethnic identity for Latino adolescents (as indicated by Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001). Adolescents' responses from the qualitative study indicated that culture informs family and family transmits culture (as seen in Figures 15 and 16 culture and family influence each other). This in turn is how adolescents inform their cultural understanding and ethnic identity. This is reflected in the youths' responses from the qualitative study: (e.g., "culture...comes mostly from your family and how they do things 'cause you see it, and you think that's the right way so then that's how you're gonna do things and act"). This is consistent with the theory that ethnic identity is conveyed through familial socialization (Knight et al., 1993). Through the process of enculturation, families teach cultural values, beliefs, traditions, and languages associated with the home culture (Gonzales et al., 2004), which is how adolescents in this qualitative study described culture. Latino adolescents stated that they felt closest to their culture when they attend large parties; which are likely to consist mainly of extended family members. Adolescents understand that how they were raised directly influences their values and that these values are attributed to their culture.

Adolescents imply that there are indirect links between culture and adjustment through social mirroring. *Social mirroring* is in reference to how an individual's self-concept is formed and impacted by the thoughts and actions of others (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001). For example, the youths in the study described that their teachers have negative expectations for Latino adolescents, going so far as to say that they would not go to college. Some of the youths explained that their success in school is associated with these negative expectations, stereotypes, and perceptions that their teachers have of Latinos. Instead of accepting, these negative stereotypes of Latinos, the adolescents saw the stereotypes as challenges that they must overcome.

Lastly, opportunity structure was addressed by biculturalism and educational opportunities. Biculturalism was described as a useful aspect of the joining of the adolescents' Latino culture and the American culture. The adolescents explained that being bicultural would increase their chances of finding employment because they could speak a second language. They also stated that biculturalism would allow them to see other people's perspectives, which can also be a benefit when seeking employment. In discussing academic success, respondents reported that there were familial expectations associated with their academic success, but that sometimes their parents were not able to help them.

Latino immigrant parents want their children to be successful in school but may not have the resources or understanding of how to navigate the U.S. educational system to support their children's success. Furthermore, some Latino immigrant parents themselves have limited schooling and are unable to provide the educational support their children need. Research indicates that children with more educated parents have access to

additional educational materials (e.g., books, computers, etc), are exposed to a wider arrange of books and vocabulary, and have more vocabulary driven interactions (e.g., reading books; Gaytán & Suárez-Orozco, 2011; Goldenberg, Rueda, & August, 2006).

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

There are certain study limitations that should be considered when evaluating study results. First the interviews were conducted with a small sample of Latinos living in the Midwestern region of the U.S. Results may be limited to the Midwestern region, therefore future research should be conducted with Latino groups across the U.S. Furthermore, the Midwestern region where the study was conduct does not have an established Latino community. Future research should consider comparing responses from adolescents who live in established Latino communities versus those from new communities (e.g., schools from established Latino communities may not have teachers with the same negative expectation of Latino adolescents as were expressed in this study).

Additionally, the sample was predominately Mexican, and as noted by one of the boys in the study Latinos come from various ethnic groups. Therefore, future research would benefit from conducting similar interviews with other Latino subgroups. For example, other qualitative studies conducted with adolescents by Latino subgroups have found variations in responses to questions regarding parenting (Crockett, Brown, Shen, & Russell, 2007; Crockett, Brown, Iturbide, Russell, & Wilkinson-Lee, 2009). Given variations in how adolescents discuss the parenting construct, it can be inferred that other constructs (i.e., ethnic identity and biculturalism) may have similar variations in responses by Latino subgroup.

Despite these limitations, qualitative methods provide rich data and allow the researchers to immerse themselves in the data to identify all of the nuances and intricate details that can be identified using this methodology (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Qualitative research provides the opportunity for participants to explain their responses to questions, which is not afforded to them when they participate in quantitative research alone.

## Chapter 6: General Discussion and Integration

Second generation Latino adolescents comprise over half (52%) of all U.S. Latinos under the age of 18. Latinos are also one of the largest ethnic minority groups in the U.S. and one of the fastest growing (Ennis et al., 2011; Fry & Passel, 2009). Latinos experience stressors and strains that are associated with negative outcomes (Balls Organista et al., 2003; Cuellar, 2000; Gonzales et al., 2004). A review of the literature suggests that a likely avenue to explore in this endeavor is the Latino culture itself. Various factors have been identified as strengths of the Latino culture (e.g., ethnic identity), while others (e.g., fatalism) are viewed as a disadvantage to the positive development of Latino adolescents. Ethnic identity and biculturalism are cultural factors that are positively associated with adjustment. Previous work has examined ethnic identity as a protective factor for stress and adjustment, but little empirical work has been conducted to test the protective effects of biculturalism (theoretically associated with positive adjustment). The purpose of this dissertation was to evaluate the protective nature of ethnic identity and biculturalism using quantitative and qualitative methods.

The general discussion is organized into five sections. The first two sections integrate and discuss the quantitative and qualitative results from Study I and Study II separately for biculturalism and ethnic identity achievement. The third section is a review of overarching study limitations, the fourth section describes future direction, and lastly study implications are presented.

### **Biculturalism**

Biculturalism is defined as the integration or blending of two cultures and an individual who is bicultural will retain some aspects of each culture (Barrera et al., 2004;

Buriel, 1993; Gonzales et al., 2002; Gonzales et al., 2004). There has been theoretical speculation that being bicultural is adaptive and associated with positive outcomes for individuals from ethnic minority groups, although relatively few empirical studies have been conducted (Barrera et al., 2004; Gonzales et al., 2002; Rogler et al., 1991). The quantitative analyses conducted in Study I provided only partial support for this claim (see Chapter 3 discussion). These results may be explained in part by adolescents' responses in Study II. Although all the adolescents felt that there are benefits to being bicultural, the specific benefits they described would typically occur later in their lives. For example, adolescents reported that being bicultural would help them find a job because they could speak Spanish. However, the study respondents were all still in school (high school or college), and work-related outcomes were not assessed in the quantitative data. This may explain why the benefits of biculturalism were not seen in most of the analyses conducted in Study I. Furthermore, when adolescents were asked about the usefulness of biculturalism they were not given a specific time reference. That is to say, they were not asked "do you think being a part of two cultures is useful to you now in the current moment?" Had the question been posed with a time reference, perhaps adolescents could have articulated a different set of benefits to biculturalism other than the future oriented benefits that they described.

An interesting finding from the qualitative study that seems contrary to what the literature reports may also help explain the lack of evidence for the positive aspects of biculturalism in the quantitative data. Although adolescents identified positive aspects of biculturalism during the group interview, girls in particular had negative views of the American culture -- one of the very cultures that contributes to their biculturalism. This



introduces a paradoxical dynamic in their self-concept: while appreciating the benefits provided to them by integrating both Latino and American culture, the girls must reconcile accepting some of the negative aspects of the American culture as a part of their daily repertoire. Perhaps this is a part of the bicultural stress reported by researchers (e.g., Romero, Carvajal, Volle, & Orduña, 2007; Romero, Martinez, & Carvajal, 2007; Romero & Roberts, 2003). The stress experienced by the adolescents may not be solely from the burdens associated with demands placed on them because they are bicultural (e.g., language brokering, perceived discrimination, or negative stereotypes), but rather the act of reconciling the negative aspects of American culture (or Latino culture) that an adolescent must engage in to form a bicultural identity.

### **Ethnic Identity**

To reiterate, ethnic identity is the commitment and sense of belonging that ethnic minorities experience, which involves interest in and participation within their particular ethnic group (Phinney, 1990). Results from the quantitative study identified that ethnic identity ameliorated the relationship between acculturation strains and adjustment for depression, self-esteem and English self-efficacy. Additionally, quantitative results indicated positive associations between ethnic identity achievement, self-esteem, and English self-efficacy, and a negative association between ethnic identity and depression. Study I results are explained by the qualitative results where Latino adolescents reported ethnic pride and positive evaluations of their culture. Along with a strong sense of ethnic pride, Latino adolescents reported no confusion in their Latino identification. This follows suit with researchers who find that ethnic identity and a strong sense of ethnic pride serve as protective factors against negative outcomes in ethnic minority adolescents

who are often considered an at-risk population (e.g., Iturbide et al., 2009; Kiang et al., 2006; Phinney, 1995; Porter & Washington, 1993).

Qualitative results indicate that cultural values associated with an adolescent's sense of self may not be based solely on their own perceptions of their culture but rather societal perceptions of their culture. In the qualitative study, adolescents described using the negative stereotypes attributed to their Latino culture as motivators to pursue academic success. In particular, the adolescents discussed the negative stereotypes held by their teachers. Adolescents are motivated to prove negative stereotypes about them incorrect, such as doing well in school or going to college. This thought process falls in line with the practice of *conformist resistance* or *positive resistance*, in which students concurrently accept and reject cultural norms (Cammarota, 2004) as well as the resistant aspect of social mirroring (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001). The resistance demonstrated by the students centers on using education as a means to "counter societal inequalities without challenging the systemic oppressions of schooling" (Cammarota, 2004, p. 56). Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco (2001) explain that youths who sustain a sense of hope in the face of negative social mirroring as these adolescents do, are "better able to maintain a sense of pride and healthy self-esteem" (p. 191). This supports the results that a strong sense of ethnic pride is associated with a positive self-esteem found in both the quantitative and qualitative studies. It should also be noted that family members served as role models for academic achievement and, for some of the adolescents, these role models may also serve as sources of resilience and positive resistance against negative stereotypes that adolescents are subjected to at school and from school personnel. One boy described that both his parents have doctorate degrees so

he feels that it is expected that he will go to college, while another boy described how his grandfather overcame several obstacles to become a lawyer, eventually becoming a diplomat. In the latter case, the grandfather's accomplishment is a demonstration of how adolescents can overcome obstacles and achieve success. Positive resistance and role models can also be viewed as sources of coping for Latino youth. Adolescents use both of these to handle situations that they consider challenging (negative stereotypes about Latino youth); and to reduce the negative feelings that they themselves may be experiencing because of these situations (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

### **Limitations**

The current study has limitations that allow identification of future research directions. Limitations centered on measurement issues and differences between the quantitative and qualitative phases samples.

**Measurement issues.** As noted in the introduction and in the limitations of Study I there are limitations to the language acculturation method of assessing acculturative change (and stress) among Latino youth (and other ethnic groups). Language is only one of many domains associated with acculturation, and thus language-based measures may not capture the complexity of acculturation. Moreover, a proficiency in English is not an indication of a lack of acculturation strain; on the contrary, it could be that the Latino youth becomes proficient in English there is an increase in the acculturation gap between parent and child. This gap could result in acculturation strains that are behaviorally and attitudinally expressed, which would not be captured by the language domain of acculturation.

The same can be said of the assessment of biculturalism. The index utilized in

Study 1 is more likely a measurement of bicultural identity and not a measure of the adaptive nature of biculturalism. To assess adaptability, questions would focus on how and when biculturalism is help and useful to a Latino adolescent (e.g., does being a part of two cultures help you in school?). Other measures that have assessed biculturalism focus on how involved the adolescent is in multiple cultures using language or behavioral preferences (e.g., Marin & Gamba, 1996; Szapocznik, Kurtines, & Fernandez, 1980) not how being bicultural is adaptive. Moreover, some researchers have reported that being bicultural stressful (e.g., Romero, Carvajal, Volle, et al., 2007; Romero et al., 2007; Romero & Roberts, 2003); therefore, potentially deleterious aspects of biculturalism should be disentangled. Again as with acculturation, the researcher was unable to capture the complex nature of biculturalism and therefore may have been unable to identify the potentially protective aspects associated with biculturalism

**Differences between quantitative and qualitative phases.** The samples for Study I and Study II differed in age. The quantitative study consisted of Latinos 10 – 24 years of age while the qualitative study consisted of adolescents 13-19 years of age (only one 19 year old; participant was 18 when recruited but had a birthday before her interview was scheduled). Future research would benefit from having similar age groups for both quantitative and qualitative studies to allow direct comparability and integration.

There were also regional differences between the two studies. The qualitative study data were obtained from Latino adolescents living in a medium sized Midwestern town with a relatively small and newly established Latino community. In contrast, the quantitative study data were obtained not only from the same Midwestern town but also from areas of the Southwestern and Western regions of the U.S. with established Latino

communities. Future research would also benefit from exploring differences attributable to region and the presence of an established Latino communities, which may provide support systems to families or adolescents may not experience the same cultural stereotypes.

### **Future Directions**

Each of the two studies conducted for this dissertation offer suggestions for future directions. As noted in the Study I discussion, additional research is needed that utilizes stronger measures of key constructs, examines the relations of interest within a longitudinal framework, and includes a larger sample that allows exploration of age and Latino subgroup differences. Future research can also build on Study II by examining how adolescents growing up in different parts of the U.S. think about issues of culture and identity.

Future research that uses mixed methods designs would be particularly fruitful. In the current study, the mixed method research design gave the researcher the ability to expand and explain the results from the quantitative study with the qualitative study (Creswell, & Plano Clark, 2007), providing a more comprehensive understanding of the research question. With this methodology, the researcher was able to explore the importance of biculturalism and ethnic identity to Latino adolescents' well being. The design provided insight into nonsignificant findings in Study I, and allowed identification of future research directions. Future studies would benefit from using other mixed methods designs. For example, an exploratory mixed method design (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007) would conduct a qualitative phase and than a quantitative phase; the rationale for this design (especially in retrospect of this study) is the need to develop and

test measures and instruments that are not available to capture the complexities of acculturation and biculturalism. These issues would be explored in the qualitative phase with Latino adolescents and in the quantitative phase, findings from the qualitative phase would be utilized to develop and test new measures of acculturation and biculturalism. In the qualitative phase of this study, adolescents indicated that being bicultural was useful later in adulthood – in an exploratory mixed methods this idea could be explored further. Questions could center not only on the usefulness of biculturalism but also on in what when and where biculturalism is useful. This would allow researchers to identify the nuances of biculturalism – if there are contextual variations to being a bicultural. Responses to these questions would allow researchers to then develop and test questionnaire items that could be used to create a bicultural measure that assesses how biculturalism is adaptive.

### **Implications**

Results have implications for theory, research and practice. Cultural factors such as biculturalism and ethnic identity serve as protective factors but the complexity of their associations with adjustment should be further identified and developed. The protective nature of these cultural factors was found to be dependent upon the level of acculturative strains; these types of intricate relationships should be examined further. Additionally, there are contextual factors that should be considered when deciding if cultural values will operate as buffers. Findings have implication for research especially in the area of measurement. There is a need for greater specificity and clarity when determining the operational definition of acculturation and other cultural values. These constructs are complex and (as illustrated by the results of Study II) there is a need to identify ways of

creating measures that can capture adolescents' complex views of culture. Finally, practitioners developing intervention and prevention programs that are culturally based should be cautious when considering research that does not fully capture the complexities of acculturation and biculturalism. Empirical research that is comprehensive should be utilized to develop more effective programs that address the negative outcomes (e.g., high school dropout rates) experienced by Latino adolescents when acculturating.

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A12. How much education did your father (or other adult man you lived with) complete?

- 1 = Elementary or junior high school
- 2 = High school
- 3 = Some college or technical school
- 4 = Graduated from a 2-year college or technical school
- 5 = Graduated from a 4-year college
- 6 = Some school beyond 4-year college
- 7 = Professional or graduate degree (Ph.D., M.D., M.A., law degree, etc.)
- 8 = Don't know
- 9 = No father or other adult man lives with me

A13. Does your father (or other adult man you lived with) have a job?

- 1 = No
- 2 = Yes (Go to A13a)

A13a. What is his job? \_\_\_\_\_)

A14. How much education did your mother (or other adult woman you lived with) complete?

- 1 = Elementary or junior high school
- 2 = High school
- 3 = Some college or technical school
- 4 = Graduated from a 2-year college or technical school
- 5 = Graduated from a 4-year college
- 6 = Some school beyond 4-year college
- 7 = Professional or graduate degree (Ph.D., M.D., M.A., law degree, etc.)
- 8 = Don't know
- 9 = No mother or other adult woman lives with me

A15. Does your mother (or other adult woman you lived with) have a job?

- 1 = No
- 2 = Yes (Go to A15a)

A15a. What is her job? \_\_\_\_\_)

A16. Where do you currently live?

- 1 = Dorm
- 2 = Apartment/House
- 3 = Greek House
- 4 = At home with parents
- 5 = Other (describe \_\_\_\_\_)

A17. What is your religious affiliation?

- 1 = None
- 2 = Catholic
- 3 = Christian
- 4 = Islam
- 5 = Jewish
- 6 = Other (what? \_\_\_\_\_)

A18. How important is religion in your life?

- 1 = Not at all important
- 2 = A little important
- 3 = Somewhat important
- 4 = Quite important

5 = Very important

A19. How often do you go to church?

1 = Never go to church

2 = Less than once a month (e.g., on holidays)

3 = At least once a month but less than once a week

4 = Once a week

5 = More than once a week

A20. Where were your father's parents (your grandparents) born?

Grandfather: \_\_\_\_\_ (country)

Grandmother: \_\_\_\_\_ (country)

A21. Where were your mother's parents (your grandparents) born?

Grandfather: \_\_\_\_\_ (country)

Grandmother: \_\_\_\_\_ (country)

A22. Did your father ever go to school in the U.S.?      Yes                      No (circle one)

A22. Did your mother ever go to school in the U.S.?      Yes                      No (circle one)

### SECTION C.

**Please indicate if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following items:**

STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
1	2	3	4

\_\_\_\_ C14. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.

\_\_\_\_ C15. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

\_\_\_\_ C16. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.

\_\_\_\_ C17. I am able to do things as well as most other people.

\_\_\_\_ C18. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.

\_\_\_\_ C19. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

\_\_\_\_ C20. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.

\_\_\_\_ C21. I wish I could have more respect for myself.

\_\_\_\_ C22. I certainly feel useless at times.

\_\_\_\_ C23. At times, I think I am no good at all.

## SECTION E.

Below is a list of the ways you might have felt or behaved. Using the scale below, please tell me how often you have felt this way DURING THE PAST WEEK.

Rarely or none of the time (< 1 day)	Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)	Occasionally or a moderate amount of the time (3-4 days)	Most of all of the time (5-7 days)
0	1	2	3

During the past week:

- E1. \_\_\_\_\_ I was bothered by things that usually don't bother me.
- E2. \_\_\_\_\_ I did not feel like eating: my appetite was poor.
- E3. \_\_\_\_\_ I felt that I could not shake off the blues even with the help of my family and friends.
- E4. \_\_\_\_\_ I felt that I was just as good as other people
- E5. \_\_\_\_\_ I had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing.
- E6. \_\_\_\_\_ I felt depressed.
- E7. \_\_\_\_\_ I felt that everything I did was an effort.
- E8. \_\_\_\_\_ I felt hopeful about the future.
- E9. \_\_\_\_\_ I thought my life had been a failure.
- E10. \_\_\_\_\_ I felt fearful.
- E11. \_\_\_\_\_ My sleep was restless.
- E12. \_\_\_\_\_ I was happy.
- E13. \_\_\_\_\_ I talked less than usual.
- E14. \_\_\_\_\_ I felt lonely.
- E15. \_\_\_\_\_ People were unfriendly.
- E16. \_\_\_\_\_ I enjoyed life.
- E17. \_\_\_\_\_ I had crying spells.
- E18. \_\_\_\_\_ I felt sad.
- E19. \_\_\_\_\_ I felt that people disliked me.
- E20. \_\_\_\_\_ I could not get "going"

## SECTION F.

F1. What is your approximate Grade Point Average in your **last year** of school (college or H.S.)?  
\_\_\_\_\_

F2. What was your approximate score on the SAT? \_\_\_\_\_

F3. What was your approximate score on the ACT? \_\_\_\_\_

**Please circle the number that answers each question best.**

F4. How good are you at math?

Not very good            1        2        3        4        5            Very good

F5. Compared to other students how good are you at math?

One of the worst        1        2        3        4        5            One of the best

F6. How well do you expect to do in math this year?

Not very well            1        2        3        4        5            Very well

F7. How good would you be at learning something new in math?

Not very good            1        2        3        4        5            Very good

F8. How good are you at English?

Not very good            1        2        3        4        5            Very good

F9. Compared to other students how good are you at English?

One of the worst        1        2        3        4        5            One of the best

F10. How well do you expect to do in English this year?

Not very well            1        2        3        4        5            Very well

F11. How good would you be at learning something new in English?

Not very good            1        2        3        4        5            Very good

## SECTION G.

**In this country, people come from many different cultures and there are lots of different words to describe the backgrounds or ethnic groups that people come from (for example, Mexican-American, Cuban-American, African-American, American Indian, Caucasian or White). Every person is born into an ethnic group, or sometimes 2 groups, but people differ on how important their ethnicity is to them, how they feel about it, and how much their behavior is affected by it. These questions are about your ethnicity or your ethnic group and how you feel about it or react to it.**

**Please complete the following sentence:**

In terms of ethnic group, I consider myself to be \_\_\_\_\_

**For each statement, please indicate how much you agree or disagree using the following response scale. (Write the number in the space to the left of each statement)**

STRONGLY DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
1	2	3	4

- \_\_\_\_ G1. I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group.
- \_\_\_\_ G2. I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.
- \_\_\_\_ G3. I like meeting and getting to know people from ethnic groups other than my own.
- \_\_\_\_ G4. I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership.
- \_\_\_\_ G5. I sometimes feel it would be better if different ethnic groups didn't try to mix together.
- \_\_\_\_ G6. I am not very clear about the role of ethnicity in my life.
- \_\_\_\_ G7. I often spend time with people from ethnic groups other than my own.
- \_\_\_\_ G8. I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.
- \_\_\_\_ G9. I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me, in terms of how to relate to my own group and to other groups.
- \_\_\_\_ G10. In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group.
- \_\_\_\_ G11. I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group and its accomplishments.
- \_\_\_\_ G12. I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs.
- \_\_\_\_ G13. I am involved in activities with people from other ethnic groups.
- \_\_\_\_ G14. I enjoy being around people from ethnic groups other than my own.
- \_\_\_\_ G15. I have spent time trying to find out more about my own ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.
- \_\_\_\_ G16. I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.
- \_\_\_\_ G17. I really have not spent much time trying to learn more about the culture and history of my ethnic group.
- \_\_\_\_ G18. I don't try to become friends with people from other ethnic groups.
- \_\_\_\_ G19. I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.
- \_\_\_\_ G20. I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background.

**What is your native language?** \_\_\_\_\_

**This is the language you should think of when we ask about your language use for items G21-G29. Please use this scale for these items.**

NATIVE LANGUAGE ONLY	NATIVE LANGUAGE MORE THAN ENGLISH	BOTH THE SAME	ENGLISH MORE THAN NATIVE LANGUAGE	ENGLISH ONLY
1	2	3	4	5

- \_\_\_\_ G21. In general, what language do you read?  
 \_\_\_\_ G22. In general, what language do you speak?  
 \_\_\_\_ G23. What language do you speak at home?  
 \_\_\_\_ G24. What language do you think in?  
 \_\_\_\_ G25. What language do you speak with friends?  
 \_\_\_\_ G26. What language did you speak as a child?  
 \_\_\_\_ G27. What language are the television programs you usually watch in?  
 \_\_\_\_ G28. What language are the radio programs you usually listen to?  
 \_\_\_\_ G29. In general, in what language are the movies, T.V., and radio programs you prefer to watch and listen to?

**BASC ITEMS HAVE BEEN OMITTED BECAUSE OF COPYRIGHTS.**

## APPENDIX B: RECRUITMENT LETTER IN ENGLISH



DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

July 2010

**Latino Adolescent Perspectives Study Recruitment Letter**

Dear Parent:

We are inviting your adolescent to participate in the Latino Adolescent Perspectives Study that we will be conducting during June of 2009 so we can learn more about how Latino adolescent's attitudes, behaviors, and experiences are related to their mental and behavioral outcomes. This questionnaire interview is part of a research project that is being conducted by members of the Department of Psychology at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

For the project, we will ask your child to complete a questionnaire and participate in a group interview. For your child's participation in this project, the family will receive \$20 compensation. There are no known risks or discomforts that your child will be exposed to while completing the questionnaire or participating in the group interview.

While there will not be any immediate or direct benefits from participation for your child, we hope that the information we collect will help improve our understanding of Latino adolescent's successful development in Nebraska and similar communities. All of the information we gather will be kept confidential.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please call Maria I. Iturbide (phone: 402-419-8722 or Dr. Gustavo Carlo (phone: 402-472-6931). If you have questions about your rights as a research participant that have not been answered by the investigator, you may contact the University of Nebraska – Lincoln Institutional Review Board (phone: 402-472-6965).

Please indicate whether or not you are interested in participating in this study by filling out your name, phone number, and best days and times to reach you below so we can contact you to schedule an interview with your adolescent. Everyone who returns a recruitment letter will receive a University of Nebraska – Lincoln pen.

Do you allow your adolescent to participate in this project? (Check one)

Yes, my child can participate in your study: \_\_\_\_\_

No, I do not want my child to participate in your study: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Your Adolescent (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Parent)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number

Best day(s) and time(s) to contact me are:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please send UNL pen to this address: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C: RECRUITMENT LETTER IN SPANISH



DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Julio 2010

## Estudio Sobre La Perspectiva del Adolescente Latino

Estimado Padre:

Estamos invitando su adolescente a que participe en el estudio Sobre la Perspectiva del Adolescente Latino que vamos a conducir durante junio 2009 para aprender más sobre como las actitudes, comportamientos, y experiencias de los adolescentes Latinos están relacionadas a su salud mental y conductual. Esta entrevista de cuestionario es parte de un proyecto de investigación que se está conduciendo con miembros del Departamento de Psicología en la Universidad de Nebraska – Lincoln.

Para el proyecto le vamos a pedir a su hijo/a que llene un cuestionario y participen en una entrevista en grupo. Para la participación de su niño/a en el proyecto la familia recibirá \$20 para compensación. No hay ningún riesgo o incomodidad del cual sabemos, expuesto a su hijo/hija, mientras completa el cuestionario o participa en la entrevista de grupo.

Aunque no hay beneficios inmediato o directo para su hijo/a por su participación, esperamos que la información que nosotros recogemos sea de ayuda para mejorar nuestro entendimiento sobre el desarrollo exitoso de los adolescentes Latinos en Nebraska y otras comunidades parecidas. Toda la información que recogemos será mantenida en confidencialidad.

Si tienes algunas preguntas o le gustaria más información, favor de llamar a Maria I. Iturbide (teléfono: 402-419-8722 o Dr. Gustavo Carlo (teléfono: 402-472-6931). Si tienes preguntas sobre sus derechos como participante de estudio que no han sido contestadas por el investigador, puede ponerse en contacto con la Universidad de Nebraska – Lincoln Institutional Review Board (teléfono: 402-472-6965).

Favor de indicar abajo si está o no está interesado/a en participar en este estudio con llenar su nombre, número de teléfono, y los días y horas mejores para ponernos en contacto con usted para fijar una hora y lugar conveniente para que su hijo/a adolescente llenen el cuestionario. Todos los que devuelvan la carta de reclutamiento recibirá un bolígrafo de la Universidad de Nebraska – Lincoln.

¿Da permiso para que su hijo/a adolescente participe en este proyecto? (Escriba una)

Sí, mi hijo/a puede participar en su estudio: \_\_\_\_\_

No, yo no quiero que mi hijo/a participe en su estudio: \_\_\_\_\_

Nombre de su adolescente (Favor imprimir): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nombre (Padre)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Numero de teléfono.

Mejores días y tiempo para ponerse en contacto conmigo:  
\_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX D: PARENTAL CONSENT FORM IN ENGLISH



DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

July 2010

**PARENT INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

Title of the Project: Latino Adolescent Perspectives Study

Purpose of the project: Your adolescent is invited to participate in a research project that is designed to examine how adolescent's behaviors and experiences relate to their cultural values and attitudes. Participants for this project will be Latino adolescents between 10 to 18 years of age.

Description of procedures: Your adolescent will be asked to complete a questionnaire and participate in a group interview. The interview will take place at the University of Nebraska Lincoln. The questionnaire will be completed when he/she arrives at the University. Group interviews will consist of 4-6 other adolescents. An interviewer will be present to facilitate the adolescents conversation about their behaviors and experiences related to their cultural values and attitudes. The interview will be videotaped to allow the researchers the opportunity to review the interviews to assure that they fully understand what the adolescents discuss during the interview. If you or your child would prefer not to be videotaped but your child still wishes to participate, his/her back will be to the camera. All of the children's responses will be confidential and only the researchers will have access to the videotapes of the interviews.

Risks and/or Discomforts: There are no physical risks or discomforts expected as a result of your child's participation in this project. Some of the questions on the interviews may be sensitive or embarrassing to your adolescent. However, your child may skip any questions he/she does not want to answer, or withdraw from the project if your child decides to no longer want to participate. If your adolescent becomes upset as a result of participating, the interviewer will give your child information about where he/she can go to seek help (e.g., Psychology Department's Psychological Consultation Center).

Benefits: Although this study is not designed to help you or your adolescent directly, your child will be providing information that could benefit society by generating important information about the experiences of Latino adolescents. You and your will also have the opportunity to learn about the research and, if you or your child choose, you will be given a report of the findings.

Confidentiality: Your family's privacy is very important to us, and we will take steps to protect your family's privacy. Your child will be assigned an ID number that will be used to identify the data. Only senior project staff will have access to the list linking your child's name and ID number. Information collected during the project will be kept in a secure location that is only accessible to the project staff. Family members will not be allowed to see each other's interview responses, and interviewers will not share any information obtained during the interviews. When study findings are reported, only aggregated (group) data will be reported, and individuals will not be identified.

Compensation: We value your participation, and will compensate your child for his/her time. Families will receive a total payment of \$20 for completing the group interview. All participants will be entered into a drawing for an MP3 player.

Right to Ask Questions: You or your child may ask questions before or during the project or for more information, you or your child can contact Maria I. Iturbide at ((402) 419-8722 or Dr. Gustavo Carlo at (402) 472-6931. If you have any questions about your child's rights as a research participant that have not been answered by the investigator or to report any concerns about the study, you may contact the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board, telephone (402) 472-6965.



**Freedom to withdraw:** You are free to withdraw your child from the study he/she decides not to participate in this project or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with the investigators, the University of Nebraska or any other participating agent. Your child's decision will not result in any loss of benefits to which he/she is otherwise entitled.

YOU ARE VOLUNTARILY MAKING A DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROJECT. YOUR SIGNATURE CERTIFIES THAT YOU HAVE DECIDED TO ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE HAVING READ AND UNDERSTOOD THE INFORMATION PRESENTED. YOU WILL RECEIVE A COPY OF THIS FORM TO KEEP.

Do you allow your adolescent to be videotaped for the project? (Check one)

Yes, my child can videotaped for the project: \_\_\_\_\_

No, I would prefer my child **not** be videotaped: \_\_\_\_\_

**All adolescents that participate in this study will be in a drawing for a MP3 player.**

**Name of Your Adolescent (Please Print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Parent (Please Print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Parent:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Investigator: Maria I. Iturbide, M.A.  
 402-419-8722; iturbide@huskers.unl.edu (English and Spanish)  
 Dr. Gustavo Carlo, Professor of Psychology  
 402-472-6931; gcarlo1@unl.edu (English and Spanish)

## APPENDIX E: PARENTAL CONSENT FORM IN SPANISH



IRB# 2009078324-EP  
Date Approved: 06/30/2010  
Valid Until: 07/19/2011

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Julio 2010

### FORMA DE CONSENTIMIENTO DE PADRES

**Título del Proyecto:** Estudio Sobre la Perspectiva del Adolescente Latino

**Propósito del Proyecto:** Su adolescente está invitado a que participe en un proyecto de estudio que está diseñado para examinar como los comportamientos y experiencias de los adolescentes están relacionadas con los valores y actitudes culturales. Participantes de este proyecto serán adolescentes Latino entre las edades 10 – 18 años.

**Descripción del Proceso:** Se le va a pedir a su adolescente que llene un cuestionario y que participe en una entrevista de grupo. La entrevista tomara lugar en la Universidad de Nebraska – Lincoln. El cuestionario será completado cuando él/ella llegue a la universidad. Las entrevistas en grupo tendrán 4-6 adolescentes. Un entrevistador estará presente para facilitar la conversación de los adolescentes sobre sus comportamientos y experiencias de los adolescentes están relacionadas con los valores y actitudes culturales. La entrevista será grabada en video para que los investigadores puedan revisar la entrevista y asegurar que ellos entienden completamente lo que los adolescentes discuten durante la entrevista. Si usted o su hijo/a prefieren no ser grabado, pero su hijo quiere aun participar, su espalda estará hacia la cámara. Todas las repuestas de los niños serán confidencial y solamente los que hacen la investigación tendrán acceso a las grabaciones de las entrevistas.

**Riesgos y/o Descomodidades:** No se esperan riegos o incomodidades físicas como resultado de la participación de su hijo/a en este proyecto. Algunas de las preguntas en la entrevista pueden ser sensible o para avergonzar su adolescente. Sin embargo, su hijo/a puede dejar cualquier pregunta él/ella no quiera contestar, o dejar el proyecto si su hijo decide no participar. Si su adolescente se molesta como resultado de su participación, él/la entrevistado/a le dará información a su hijo de cómo recibir ayuda (e.g. agencias locales o un numero hotline).

**Beneficios:** Aunque este estudio no está diseñado para ayuda inmediata a usted o su adolescente, su hijo/a proveerá información que puede ser de beneficio a la sociedad por medio de generar información importante sobre las experiencias de los adolescentes Latinos. Usted y su hijo/a también tendrán la oportunidad de aprender sobre el estudio y, si usted y su hijo/a desean, se le dará un reporte sobre el estudio.

**Confidencialidad:** La privacidad de su familia es muy importante para nosotros, y tomaremos pasos para proteger la privacidad de su familia. Se le asignara un número de identificación a su hijo que se usara para identificar la información. Solamente oficiales de responsabilidad tendrán acceso a la lista que hace conexión entre el nombre de su hijo/a y el número de identificación. La información colectada durante el proyecto será mantenida en un lugar con seguridad que solamente será accesible al los que trabajan con el proyecto. Miembros de la familia no podrán ver las repuestas de otros and las entrevistas no compartirán información obtenida durante la entrevista. Cuando los resultados del estudio son reportados, solamente información agrupado será reportado y los individuos no serán identificados.

**Compensación:** Estimamos su participación, y le haremos indemnización a su hijo/a por su tiempo. Familias recibirán un total de \$20 para completar la entrevista de grupo. Todos los participantes participaran en un sorteo para una tocadora MP3.

**Derecho de Hacer Preguntas:** Usted o su hijo/a pueden hacer preguntas antes o durante el proyecto o para mas información, usted y su hijo/a pueden contactar a Maria I. Iturbide al (402) 419-8722. Si tiene algunas preguntas sobre los derechos de su hijo/a como participante en el estudio que no han sido contestadas por el investigador o a reportar alguna preocupación sobre el estudio, puede contactar a la Universidad de Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board, teléfono (402) 472-6965.



Libertad de Retirarse: Usted tiene la libertad de retirar su hijo/a del estudio si él/ella decide no participar en este proyecto o retirarse a cualquier hora sin afectar en una manera adversamente su relación con los investigadores, la Universidad de Nebraska, o cualquier otro agente participando. La decisión de su hijo/a no resultara en pérdidas de beneficios de cuales él/ella tiene derechos.

USTED ESTÁ TOMANDO UNA DECISIÓN VOLUNTARIA EN CUANTO A QUE SI SU NIÑO/A PARTICIPARA EN EL PROYECTO. SU FIRMA CERTIFICA QUE HA DECIDIDO QUE SU NIÑO/A PARTICIPE DESPUES DE HABER LEIDO Y ENTENDIDO LA INFORMACIÓN PRESENTADA.

¿Usted permite a su adolescente participar en este proyecto? (Escoja Una)

Sí, mi hijo/a puede participar en su estudio: \_\_\_\_\_

Sí, mi hijo/a puede participar, pero prefiero que **no** sea grabado por video: \_\_\_\_\_

**Todos los adolescentes que participen en el estudio serán entrados en un sorteo para un MP3.**

**Nombre de su Adolescente (Favor Imprimir):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Nombre del Padre (Favor Imprimir):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Firma del Padre:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Fecha:** \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Investigator: Maria I. Iturbide, M.A.  
402- 419-8722; iturbide@huskers.unl.edu (English and Spanish)  
Dr. Gustavo Carlo, Professor of Psychology  
402-472-6931; gcarlo1@unl.edu (English and Spanish)

## APPENDIX F: YOUTH ASSENT FORM IN ENGLISH



DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

July 2010

## YOUTH ASSENT FORM

Title of the Project: Latino Adolescent Perspectives Study

Purpose of the project: We invite you to participate in a research project that is designed to examine how adolescent's behaviors and experiences relate to their cultural values and attitudes. Participants for this project will be Latino adolescent between 10 to 18 years of age.

Description of procedures: You will be asked to complete a survey and participate in a group interview. The interview will take place at the University of Nebraska Lincoln. The questionnaire will be completed when you arrive at the University. Group interviews will consist of 4-6 other adolescents. An interviewer will be present to help the conversation about adolescent behaviors and experiences related to your cultural values and attitudes. The interview will be videotaped to allow the researchers the opportunity to review the interviews to assure that they fully understand what you and other adolescents said during the interview. If you would prefer not to be videotaped but you still wish to participate, you will be in the room but not in front of the camera. All of your responses will be confidential and only the researchers will have access to the videotapes of the interviews.

Risks and/or Discomforts: There are no physical risks or discomforts expected as a result of your participation in this project. Some of the questions on the interviews may be sensitive or embarrassing to you (e.g., experiences with discrimination). However, you may skip any questions you do not want to answer, or withdraw from the project if you decided to no longer want to participate. If you become upset as a result of participating, the interviewer will give you and your parent information about where you can go to talk to someone about it (e.g., Psychology Department's Psychological Consultation Center).

Benefits: Although this study is not designed to help you directly, you will be providing information that could benefit society by generating important information about the experiences of Latino adolescents. You will also have the opportunity to learn about the research and, if you choose, you will be given a report of the findings.

Confidentiality: Your privacy is very important to us, and we will take steps to protect your privacy. You will be assigned an ID number that will be used to identify the data. Only senior project staff will have access to the list linking your name and ID number. Information collected during the project will be kept in a secure location that is only accessible to the project staff. Family members will not be allowed to see each other's interview responses, and interviewers will not share any information obtained during the interviews. When study findings are reported, only group data will be reported, and individuals will not be identified.

Compensation: We value your participation, and will compensate you for time. Families will receive a total payment of \$20 for completing the group interview. All participants will be entered into a drawing for an MP3 player.

Right to Ask Questions: You may ask questions before or during the project or for more information, you can contact Maria I. Inurbide at (402) 419-8722 or Dr. Gustavo Carlo at (402) 472-6931. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant that have not been answered by the investigator or to report any concerns about the study, you may contact the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board, telephone (402) 472-6965.

Freedom to withdraw: You are free to withdraw from the study if you decide not to participate in this project or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with the investigators, the University of



Nebraska or any other participating agent. Your decision will not result in any loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

YOU ARE VOLUNTARILY MAKING A DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROJECT. YOUR SIGNATURE CERTIFIES THAT YOU HAVE DECIDED TO PARTICIPATE HAVING READ AND UNDERSTOOD THE INFORMATION PRESENTED. YOU WILL RECEIVE A COPY OF THIS FORM TO KEEP.

Yes, you can videotape me for the project: \_\_\_\_\_

No, I would prefer not be videotaped: \_\_\_\_\_

All adolescents that participate in this study will be in a drawing for a MP3 player.

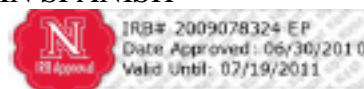
Your Name (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Your Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Investigator: Maria I. Iturbide, M.A.  
402-419-8722; iturbide@huskers.unl.edu (English and Spanish)

Dr. Gustavo Carlo, Professor of Psychology  
402-472-6931; gcarlo1@unl.edu (English and Spanish)

## APPENDIX G: YOUTH ASSENT FORM IN SPANISH



DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Julio 2010

**FORMA DE ASENTIMIENTO JUVENIL**

**Título del Proyecto:** Estudio Sobre la Perspectiva del Adolescente Latino

**Propósito del Proyecto:** Usted está invitado a que participe en un proyecto de estudio que está diseñado para examinar como los comportamientos y experiencias de adolescentes están relacionadas con los valores y actitudes culturales. Participantes de este proyecto serán adolescentes Latino entre las edades 10 – 18 años.

**Descripción del Proceso:** Se le va a pedir a que llene un cuestionario y que participe en una entrevista de grupo. La entrevista tomara lugar en la Universidad de Nebraska – Lincoln. El cuestionario será completado cuando llegue a la universidad. Las entrevistas en grupo tendrán 4-6 adolescentes. Un entrevistador estará presente para facilitar la conversación de los adolescentes sobre sus comportamientos y experiencias de los adolescentes están relacionadas con los valores y actitudes culturales. La entrevista será grabada en video para que los investigadores puedan revisar la entrevista y asegurar que ellos entienden completamente lo que los adolescentes discuten durante la entrevista. Si prefiere no ser grabado, pero aun quiere participar, su espalda estará hacia la cámara. Todas las repuestas serán confidencial y solamente los que hacen la investigación tendrán acceso a las grabaciones de las entrevistas.

**Riesgos y/o Descomodidades:** No se esperan riesgos o incomodidades físicas como resultado de la participación de en este proyecto. Algunas de las preguntas en la entrevista pueden ser sensible o avergonzar. Sin embargo, usted puede dejar cualquier pregunta que no quiera contestar, o dejar el proyecto si decide no participar. Si se molesta, como resultado de su participación, el/la entrevistado/ra le dará información de cómo recibir ayuda (e.g. agencias locales o un numero hotline).

**Beneficios:** Aunque este estudio no está diseñado para ayuda inmediata, usted proveerá información que puede ser de beneficio a la sociedad por medio de generar información importante sobre las experiencias de los adolescentes Latinos. También tendrán la oportunidad de aprender sobre el estudio y, si desean, se le dará un reporte sobre el estudio.

**Confidencialidad:** Su privacidad es muy importante para nosotros, y tomaremos pasos para proteger su privacidad. Se le asignara un número de identificación que se usara para identificar la información. Solamente oficiales de responsabilidad tendrán acceso a la lista que hace conexión entre su nombre y el número de identificación. La información colectada durante el proyecto será mantenida en un lugar con seguridad que solamente será accesible al los que trabajan con el proyecto. Miembros de la familia no podrán ver las repuestas de otros and las entrevistas no compartirán información obtenida durante la entrevista. Cuando los resultados del estudio son reportados, solamente información agrupado será reportado y los individuos no serán identificados.

**Compensación:** Estimamos su participación, y le haremos indemnización por su tiempo. Familias recibirán un total de \$20 para completar la entrevista de grupo. Todos los participantes participaran en un sorteo para una tocadora MP3.

**Derecho de Hacer Preguntas:** Usted puede hacer preguntas antes o durante el proyecto o para más información, usted puede contactar a Maria I. Iturbide, al (402) 419-8722. Si tiene algunas preguntas sobre sus derechos como participante en el estudio que no han sido contestadas por el investigador o a reportar alguna preocupación sobre el estudio, puede contactar a la Universidad de Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board, teléfono (402) 472-6965.



**Libertad de Retirarse:** Usted tiene la libertad de retirarse del estudio si decide no participar en este proyecto o retirarse a cualquier hora sin afectar de ninguna manera adversamente su relación con los investigadores, la Universidad de Nebraska, o cualquier otro agente participando. Su decisión no resultará en pérdidas de beneficios de cuales tiene derechos.

**USTED ESTÁ TOMANDO UNA DECISIÓN VOLUNTARIA EN CUANTO A PARTICIPAR EN EL PROYECTO. SU FIRMA CERTIFICA QUE HA DECIDIDO PARTICIPAR DESPUES DE HABER LEIDO Y ENTENDIDO LA INFORMACIÓN PRESENTADA.**

Si, pueden hacer video de mi para el proyecto: \_\_\_\_\_

No, prefiero no ser reconocida/o en el video: \_\_\_\_\_

**Todos los adolescentes que participan en este video tomara(n) parte en un sorteo para una tocadora MP3.**

**Su Nombre (Favor Imprimir):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Su Firma:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Fecha:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary Investigator:** Maria I. Inurbide, M.A.  
(402) 419-8722; inurbide@huskers.unl.edu (English and Spanish)

Dr. Gustavo Carlo, Professor of Psychology  
402-472-6931; gcarlo1@unl.edu (English and Spanish)



APPENDIX H: SURVEY ITEMS FOR STUDY II  
**Demographic Background**

- A1. What is your sex?      1 = male      2 = female
- A2. How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_
- A3. To what racial or ethnic group do you belong?  
 1 = Native American Indian  
 2 = Black/African American  
 3 = White (Not Hispanic)  
 4 = Asian  
 5 = Hispanic (Please circle below)  
     a) Cuban/Cuban American  
     b) Central American (Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_)  
     c) South American (Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_)  
     d) Mexican/Mexican American  
     e) Puerto Rican  
 6 = Other (Please specify \_\_\_\_\_)
- A4. Where were you born?    City: \_\_\_\_\_      State/Country: \_\_\_\_\_
- A5. If you were born outside the U.S., how long have you lived in the U.S.? \_\_\_\_\_ year(s)
- A6. What year (grade) are you in school? \_\_\_\_\_
- A7. Which best describes your parents' marital status?  
 1 = Never married to each other                      6 = Divorced, mother remarried  
 2 = Married -- Never divorced or separated        7 = Divorced, father remarried  
 3 = Father deceased (dead)                            8 = Divorced, both remarried  
 4 = Mother deceased                                    9 = Other (Describe: \_\_\_\_\_)  
 5 = Separated
- A8. Who do you live with **most** of the time?  
 1 = Two parents (biological or adoptive)    7 = With parent and other adult (non-relative)  
 2 = Mother and stepfather                            8 = Group home or foster home  
 3 = Father and stepmother                            9 = With a relative (aunt, grandparents, etc.)  
 4 = With mother only                                    10 = I live alone or with friends  
 5 = With father only                                    11 = Other (Describe: \_\_\_\_\_)  
 6 = Half the time with my mother, half  
 the time with my father (shared custody)
- A9. Do any of these people now live in your household?
- |   | No | Yes | <b>If yes,<br/>How many?</b> |
|---|----|-----|------------------------------|
| a. Brothers   | 1  | 2   | _____                        |
| b. Sisters  | 1  | 2   | _____                        |
| c. Stepbrothers or half-brothers                        | 1  | 2   | _____                        |
| d. Stepsisters or half-sisters                          | 1  | 2   | _____                        |
| e. Grandparents   | 1  | 2   | _____                        |
| f. Anyone else? (e.g., adult<br>relative, adult friend) | 1  | 2   | _____                        |

**The next questions ask about the people you live with. If you live with someone other than your biological parents (e.g., stepparents, foster parents) please answer the questions for them.**

A10. Where was your father born?

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State/Country: \_\_\_\_\_

A10a. If your father was born outside the U.S., approximately how long has your father lived in this country? \_\_\_\_\_year(s)

A11. Where were your father's parents (your grandparents) born?

Grandfather: \_\_\_\_\_ (country)

Grandmother: \_\_\_\_\_(country)

A12. Did your father ever go to school in the U.S.? (circle one)      Yes      No

A13. How much education did your father (or other adult man you live with) complete?

1 = Elementary or junior high school

2 = High school

3 = Some college or technical school

4 = Graduated from a 2-year college or technical school

5 = Graduated from a 4-year college

6 = Some school beyond 4-year college

7 = Professional or graduate degree (Ph.D., M.D., M.A., law degree, etc.)

8 = Don't know

9 = No father or other adult man lives with me

A14. Does your father (or other adult man you live with) have a job?

1 = No      2 = Yes (Go to A14a)

A14a. What is his job? \_\_\_\_\_)

A15. Where was your mother born?

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State/Country: \_\_\_\_\_

A15a. If your mother was born outside the U.S., approximately how long has your mother lived in this country? \_\_\_\_\_year(s)

A16. Where were your mother's parents (your grandparents) born?

Grandfather: \_\_\_\_\_ (country)

Grandmother: \_\_\_\_\_(country)

A17. Did your mother ever go to school in the U.S.? (circle one)      Yes                      No

A18. How much education did your mother (or other adult woman you live with) complete?

- 1 = Elementary or junior high school
- 2 = High school
- 3 = Some college or technical school
- 4 = Graduated from a 2-year college or technical school
- 5 = Graduated from a 4-year college
- 6 = Some school beyond 4-year college
- 7 = Professional or graduate degree (Ph.D., M.D., M.A., law degree, etc.)
- 8 = Don't know
- 9 = No mother or other adult woman lives with me

A19. Does your mother (or other adult woman you live with) have a job?

- 1 = No                      2 = Yes (Go to A19a)

A19a. What is her job? \_\_\_\_\_)

A20. Which of the following best describes your work situation:

- 1 = Do not work
- 2 = Working full-time (40 hrs/week) for wages while going to school
- 3 = Working part-time while going to school
- 4 = Other (describe \_\_\_\_\_)

A21. Since the time you began school (1st grade), how many times have you changed schools because your family moved?

- 1 = None                      4 = 3 times
- 2 = Once                      5 = 4 times
- 3 = Twice                      6 = 5 or more times

B1. What is your native language? \_\_\_\_\_

**This is the language you should think of when we ask about your language use for items B2-B10. Please use the following scale for these items:**

Native Language Only	Native Language More Than English	Both The Same	English More Than Native Language	English Only
1	2	3	4	5

- \_\_\_\_\_ B2. In general, what language do you read?
- \_\_\_\_\_ B3. In general, what language do you speak?
- \_\_\_\_\_ B4. What language do you speak at home?
- \_\_\_\_\_ B5. What language do you think in?
- \_\_\_\_\_ B6. What language do you speak with friends?
- \_\_\_\_\_ B7. What language did you speak as a child?
- \_\_\_\_\_ B8. What language are the television programs you usually watch in?
- \_\_\_\_\_ B9. What language are the radio programs you usually listen to?
- \_\_\_\_\_ B10. In general, in what language are the movies, TV, and radio programs you prefer to watch and listen to?

**In this country, people come from many different cultures and there are lots of different words to describe the backgrounds or ethnic groups that people come from (for example, Mexican-American, Cuban-American, African-American, American Indian, Caucasian or White). Every person is born into an ethnic group, or sometimes 2 groups, but people differ on how important their ethnicity is to them, how they feel about it, and how much their behavior is affected by it. These questions are about your ethnicity or your ethnic group and how you feel about it or react to it.**

**Please complete the following sentence:**

In terms of ethnic group, I consider myself to be \_\_\_\_\_

**For each statement, please indicate how much you agree or disagree using the following response scale. (Write the number in the space to the left of each statement)**

STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE 2	SOMEWHAT AGREE 3	STRONGLY AGREE 4
---------------------------	---------------------------	------------------------	------------------------

- \_\_\_ C1. I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group.
- \_\_\_ C2. I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.
- \_\_\_ C3. I like meeting and getting to know people from ethnic groups other than my own.
- \_\_\_ C4. I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership.
- \_\_\_ C5. I sometimes feel it would be better if different ethnic groups didn't try to mix together.
- \_\_\_ C6. I am not very clear about the role of ethnicity in my life.
- \_\_\_ C7. I often spend time with people from ethnic groups other than my own.
- \_\_\_ C8. I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.
- \_\_\_ C9. I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me, in terms of how to relate to my own group and to other groups.
- \_\_\_ C10. In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group.
- \_\_\_ C11. I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group and its accomplishments.
- \_\_\_ C12. I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs.
- \_\_\_ C13. I am involved in activities with people from other ethnic groups.
- \_\_\_ C14. I enjoy being around people from ethnic groups other than my own.
- \_\_\_ C15. I have spent time trying to find out more about my own ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.
- \_\_\_ C16. I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.
- \_\_\_ C17. I really have not spent much time trying to learn more about the culture and history of my ethnic group.
- \_\_\_ C18. I don't try to become friends with people from other ethnic groups.
- \_\_\_ C19. I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.
- \_\_\_ C20. I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background.

D1. What is your Mother's native language: \_\_\_\_\_

D2. What is your Father's native language: \_\_\_\_\_

**This is the language of your parents you should think of when we ask about your parents language use for items D3-D11. Please use the following scale for these items:**

Native Language Only	Native Language More Than English	Both The Same	English More Than Native Language	English Only
1	2	3	4	5

	Mother	Father
D3. In general, what language do your parents read?		
D4. In general, what language do your parents speak?		
D5. What language do your parents speak at home?		
D6. What language do your parents think in?		
D7. What language do your parents speak with friends?		
D8. What language did your parents speak as a child?		
D9. What language are the television programs your parents usually watch in?		
D10. What language are the radio programs your parents usually listen to?		
D11. In general, in what language are the movies, TV, and radio programs your parents prefer to watch and listen to?		

E1. Use five adjectives or words to describe your personal experience with **Latino** culture. Please use words related to your own stories with the Latino culture rather than just general descriptions of Latino culture.

1.

---

2.

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3.

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4.

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5.

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E2. What adjectives would you use to describe the **Latino** culture in general? Are they different from the ones you have already listed?

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E3. Use five adjectives or words to describe your personal experience with **American** culture. Please use words related to your own stories with the American culture rather than just general descriptions of American culture.

1.

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2.

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3.

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4.

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5.

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E4. What adjectives would you use to describe the **American** culture in general? Are they different from the ones you have already listed?

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E5. Have you ever felt discriminated within or rejected from **Latino** culture? When did it happen? Can you tell me one incident/time/memory when you felt being discriminated/rejected?

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E7. Have you ever felt discriminated within or rejected from **American** culture? When did it happen (ask if response is yes to previous question)? Can you tell me one incident/time/memory when you felt being discriminated/rejected?

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## APPENDIX I: GROUP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

## Modified Cultural Attachment Interview

In the following conversation, we would like to get your views about Latino and American cultures. We are interested especially in your personal experiences with the two cultures.

- \*1. What do you think culture means?
- \*2. How do you feel about your culture?
- \*3. What do you think about Latino culture?
4. What do you think about American culture?
5. Do you think people can belong to two or more cultures? Are you a part of two or more cultures? If so which cultures? Why?
- \*6. Have you ever felt close to Latino culture? Can you tell me about an experience when you felt close to Latino culture?
7. Have you ever felt close to American culture? Can you tell me about an experience when you felt close to American culture?
8. Do you have moments when you feel that you don't know whether you are Latino or American? (If yes, have you resolved these issues? How?)
9. Do you think being a part of more than one culture can be useful? Why?
- \*10. How have your experiences with the Latino and American cultures influenced your personality or the person you are now? Is your culture a part of who you are?
11. Do you think that your culture has something to do with how you feel about yourself?
- \*12. Do you think that your culture has something to do with how you feel about others?
- \*13. Do you think that your culture has something to do with how you feel about and how well you do in school?
- \*14. Is there anything else you would like to add?