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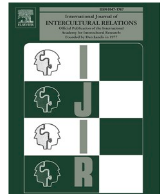

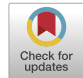

Cultural stress in the age of mass xenophobia: Perspectives from Latin/o adolescents

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A R T I C L E I N F O

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A B S T R A C T

During the last four years, xenophobic rhetoric directed toward Latino immigrants in U.S. media outlets and political forums has greatly increased. Using a general inductive approach, this qualitative study examined the forms of cultural stress, with a focus on discrimination and xenophobia, experienced by Latino adolescents in urban U.S. settings in 2018 and 2019. Six focus groups were conducted in Miami and Los Angeles (three groups per city) with first- and second-generation tenth-grade Latino students (n = 34). The following four themes emerged from the data: perceived discrimination from other Latino subgroups (in-group discrimination), perceived discrimination from non-Latino groups (out-group discrimination), internalization of stressors and discrimination experienced by participants' parents, and the current U.S. political rhetoric surrounding immigration. Understanding cultural stress among Latino adolescents provides valuable insight for future interventions to offset negative health outcomes associated with cultural stress.

Introduction

Latinos[2] are the most rapidly growing adolescent population in the United States (Lopez, Krogstad, & Flores, 2018). Currently, one in five adolescents living in the United States identify as Latino, and it is projected that this population will comprise one third of all adolescents in the United States by 2060 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018***)***. Major health disparities exist between high-school age U.S. Latinos and their non-Latino peers. According to the 2017 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey, when compared to their non-Hispanic White and non-Hispanic Black peers, Latino high school students are characterized by significantly higher prevalence of a number of

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[2] The term "Latino" is used throughout this article to refer to people who identify as Latino, Latina, Latinx, and Hispanic. We chose to use Latino because it is was the most widely used term in our focus groups. Further, in the Spanish language, the plural of a group with at least one male is always gendered male, despite the gender of other members (Noe-Bustamante, Mora, & Hugo Lopez, 2020; Rodriguez, 2019)

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problem outcomes such as early alcohol initiation, depressive symptoms, illicit drug use, and risky drinking (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), 2017). These disparities may be attributed, at least in part, to increased xenophobic attitudes from other racial/ethnic groups as well as from within one's own ethnic group (Basáñez, Sussman, Clark, & Unger, 2019; Meca et al., 2019). Accordingly, the aim of the present qualitative study was to provide an understanding of U.S. Latino adolescents' lived experiences of discrimination and xenophobia, alongside other pertinent cultural stressors.

Xenophobia affects the lives of Latino youth in a number of ways. One of these ways is through defensive measures adopted by non-Hispanic White and non-Hispanic Black Americans to reduce the perceived realistic (e.g., competition for jobs) and symbolic (e.g., fears that Spanish will overtake English as the dominant language) threat of Latinos (Chavez, 2013). Such defensive measures may lead Latino youth to perceive a negative context of reception and experience discrimination (Cano et al., 2015; Vega, Rodriguez, & Gruskin, 2009). *Negative context of reception* refers to the potentially hostile climate that receiving institutions, communities, and societies direct toward immigrants in general (Portes & Rumbaut, 2014; Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, & Szapocznik, 2010). *Perceived discrimination* refers to the individual's experience of unfair treatment because of ethnic or cultural differences (e.g., physical appearance, having a strong accent when speaking English; Meca et al., 2019; Portes & Rumbaut, 2014). Such perceptions differ from *actual discrimination*, which refers to instances where others witness the individual being discriminated against by others outside of their ethnic group (Seaton, Neblett, Cole, & Prinstein, 2013).

Many Latinos in the U.S., regardless of documentation status, are ridiculed, ostracized, and made to feel as though they are second-class citizens to their non-Hispanic White counterparts by both peers and teachers (Córdova & Cervantes, 2010; Lopez, Gonzalez-Barrera, & Krogstad, 2018). At the same time, Latinos may have discriminatory or xenophobic attitudes toward other Latino groups, leading to instances of within-group discrimination. Prior studies have found that discrimination and negative context of reception are both associated with elevated substance use, alcohol and drug use, depression, and antisocial/deviant behavior among Latino adolescents (Araújo & Borrell, 2006; Cano et al., 2015; Delgado, Updegraff, Roosa, & Umaña-Taylor, 2011; Lorenzo-Blanco, Unger, Ritt-Olson, Soto, & Baezconde-Garbanati, 2013; Okamoto, Ritt-Olson, Soto, Baezconde-Garbanati, & Unger, 2009; Romero, Martinez, & Carvajal, 2007; Schwartz et al., 2015). As a result, these stressors are especially pernicious and are essential to study further.

Defining cultural stress

Schwartz et al. (2015) have grouped discrimination and negative context of reception, along with other similar experiences, under the heading of *cultural stress*. Broadly, cultural stress represents difficulties experienced as a direct result of one's ethnic or national background – and many cultural stressors occur as a direct result of xenophobic and defensive attitudes and policies on the part of the dominant ethnic group in the destination country (e.g., non-Hispanic White Americans in the U.S.). It is important to note that cultural stress is not an indictment of someone's heritage culture; rather, it represents the stressors felt by immigrant ethnic minorities because of their treatment by the majority culture. A comprehensive understanding of the unique stressors faced by Latino immigrant youth is particularly necessary in light of the current anti-immigrant and xenophobic rhetoric that has pervaded politics and social media (e.g., Carlson, 2018; Gingrich, 2020; Shapiro, 2019).

Although Schwartz and colleagues (e.g., Schwartz et al., 2020) have enumerated a set of cultural stressors including discrimination and a negative context of reception, there are likely additional stressors that have not yet been included under the umbrella of cultural stress – but that are nonetheless essential to measure, study, and intervene into. Some of these other cultural stressors might include immigration-related stress, acculturation-gap stress (Cervantes, Fisher, Cordova, & Napper, 2012), and language brokering (see Weisskirch, 2017, for a collection of reviews), as well as bicultural stress (Romero & Roberts, 2003; Romero et al., 2007). Still other cultural stressors include worries surrounding documentation issues and fears of deportation (Lopez, Krogstad et al., 2018; Nguyen & Kebede, 2017; Roche, Vaquera, White, & Rivera, 2018). These fears may have increased during this time as a result of a rise in deportations occurring in the interior of the United States (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement(ICE) (2018)) and in hate crimes directed toward Latinos (e.g., El Paso shooting; Asad, 2020; Brooks, 2019).

It is important to note that, although cultural stressors have primarily been studied as originating from other ethnic groups, *within-group* cultural stress and xenophobia are also important cultural stressors to study. For example, approximately 28 % of Latinos voted for Donald Trump in the 2016 presidential election and favored his anti-immigrant sentiments and policies (Pew Research Center, 2016); and in many cases, more established (e.g., US-born, longer-term immigrant) Latinos may disparage more recent immigrants (Córdova & Cervantes, 2010). Several studies have found that some Latino adolescents hold xenophobic beliefs about other Latinos based on country of origin, generation status, or skin color (Basáñez et al., 2019; Córdova & Cervantes, 2010; Uhlmann, Dasgupta, Elgueta, Greenwald, & Swanson, 2002).

The study of cultural stress intersects powerfully with political science, because cultural stress results – at least in part – from xenophobic attitudes and policies on the part of the destination society (Golash-Boza, 2015; Zayas, 2015). As political and social rhetoric surrounding immigration, especially Latino immigration, has grown increasingly more contentious, there is a need to understand how Latino youth experience cultural stress in an era of greater perceived discrimination and harsher immigration policies (Callister, Galbraith, & Galbraith, 2019). Although *scholars* have defined and studied cultural stress from an etic (outsider) perspective, far less is known about *youths' first-person views* (i.e., emic/insider perspective) regarding cultural stress. The present study represents a step in this direction.

In many cases, gaining an emic/insider understanding of cultural phenomena requires qualitative methods. Most quantitative studies use existing measures – often measures that were developed in "majority" cultural contexts (Buil, de Chernatony, & Martínez, 2012; Markee, 2013). Qualitative approaches allow for exploration of how youth define and view cultural stress without reducing their

experiences into items for standard self-report measures with traditional Likert-type scales (Ochieng, 2009). Most studies examining cultural stress use quantitative data analytic methods, which assumes the participant has full knowledge of the concepts of cultural stress. As noted earlier, the purpose of the present study was to gain a more emic approach of known components of cultural stress, centering around discrimination and xenophobia.

Cultural stress, xenophobia, and U.S. Latino adolescents

Prior work has examined and established relationships among stress, fear and macro-level stressors related to harsh immigration rhetoric vis-à-vis Latino parents and adolescents. A quantitative study by Zeiders, Nair, Hoyt, Pace, and Cruze (2020) found significant, positive relationships between early adolescents' diurnal cortisol levels and macro-level stressors during the week of the 2016 election. Their findings suggest that macro-level election-related stressors may produce anxiety and worry among Latino adolescents. Similar findings emerged in Eskenazi et al.'s (2019) study of US-born Latino adolescents. Specifically, adolescents who reported high anxiety surrounding immigration policy (e.g. fears of general immigration policy, deportation/family separation and being reported to immigration) experienced an increase in anxiety following the 2016 presidential election. In a 2017 mixed-methods study involving short answer data on high-school age Latinos' feelings about Donald Trump as president (Wray-Lake et al., 2018), 40 % of students mentioned feelings related to immigration in their responses, with 96 % of these critical of Donald Trump. Among these immigration-related responses, students reported feelings of fear, anxiety, anger, and disgust. These findings are consistent with qualitative work conducted with adults. Specifically, Roche et al. (2020) examined the impact of recent immigration actions and news on Latino immigrant parents. They found that many parents perceived increased discrimination against Latinos, increased fear because of political rhetoric, and had reduced their plans to travel because of these fears. However, no known published studies have adopted an insider/emic perspective to qualitatively explore how U.S. Latino adolescents define cultural stress – especially since the 2016 presidential election (see also Callister et al., 2019; Roche et al., 2018).

Data suggest high levels of anti-Latino discrimination and xenophobia in recent years. In 2018, 40 % of individuals polled in the National Survey of Latinos reported that they had experienced some of discrimination in the last year, including being criticized for speaking Spanish in public, being told to go back to their home country, or being called offensive names (Lopez, Gonzalez-Barrera et al., 2018). Although the gross number of deportations climaxed under the Obama administration in 2013 (Asad, 2020), the *fear* of deportation has increased steadily since, with sharp increases in fear since 2016. Indeed, rhetoric surrounding deportations may be more predictive of fear than deportation statistics (Street, Zepeda-Millán, & Jones-Correa, 2015). Latino immigrants who legally reside in the United States report higher prevalence of psychological distress if they know people who are undocumented (Roche et al., 2018). Additionally, across age and geographic groups, Latinos may perceive that discrimination has increased since the 2016 presidential election and as a result of subsequent immigration policies (Asad, 2020; Callister et al., 2019).

At the community level, there is evidence that classmates and teachers may represent key sources of cultural stress (Taggart & Crisp, 2011). Teachers may pay more attention to non-Hispanic White students than to Latino students, and students whose first language is not English may be implicitly (or explicitly) penalized for their relative inability to communicate effectively in English. Classmates may tease or bully immigrant youth, or youth from immigrant families, because of their accents, their families' living situations, or other realities of living in an immigrant family. A study by Ee and Gándara (2020) found that the recent changes in political rhetoric and immigration policy impacted students nationally—with significant increases in bullying, absenteeism, and declines in academic achievement. Further, the higher the representation of non-Hispanic White students in a school, the more that educators reported immigrant students being exposed to a hostile, anti-immigrant environment.

Even in majority Latino schools, some Latino subgroups – such as those born in the United States and those from specific countries of origin – may be favored over others. There is a dearth of research on within-group cultural stress and xenophobia among Latino youth (Basáñez et al., 2019; Córdova & Cervantes, 2010; Uhlmann et al., 2002). Further, the Internet represents a new platform where adolescents are experiencing and witnessing discrimination. As a developing field, there is little known of the impact of online discrimination on adolescents (Tynes, Seaton, & Zuckerman, 2015). In the present study, we examined both outgroup and ingroup cultural stressors in our focus groups with Latino youth in Los Angeles and Miami. In sum, understanding adolescents' response to xenophobia and discrimination as cultural stressors is critical in understanding the effects of these stressors on their mental health.

The present study

Therefore, the aim of the present qualitative study was to provide an understanding of U.S. Latino adolescents' lived experiences of cultural stressors. Although we used discrimination and xenophobia to introduce the concept of cultural stress, we encouraged youth to discuss other cultural stressors if they chose to. We conducted focus groups in both Los Angeles and Miami during the 2018–2019 school year, using the same question guide in both locations.

Adolescents may be particularly affected by cultural stressors for several reasons. First, the cognitive capabilities emerging in adolescence allow youth to understand complex and abstract events and concepts for the first time (Krettenauer, 2005). Whereas younger children may not understand xenophobic rhetoric, adolescents are likely to be able to recognize how they, and other members of their ethnic group, are viewed by other Americans (both Latino and non-Latino) and within the national discourse as a whole (Rivas-Drake & Stein, 2017). Second, adolescence is the time when youth begin to develop a sense of identity, both personal and cultural (Meca et al., 2017; Schwartz, Zamboanga, Luyckx, Meca, & Ritchie, 2013). Knowing that one, and groups to which one belongs, are stigmatized and scapegoated for the country's problems may interfere with adolescents' ability to view themselves and their ethnic group positively (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). Third, and relatedly, as youth develop and establish their cultural identity,

they may establish a more nuanced and abstract understanding of their groups' history, the reality of ethnic–racial stratification, and the stigma against their ethnic group (Gonzales-Backen et al., 2018; Meca et al., 2020). Fourth, adolescents are especially aware of, and affected by, how others see them (Harter, 2012). Social rejection may be more harmful for adolescents than for adults (Bolling, Pelphrey, & Vander Wyk, 2016). Put together, these factors suggest that studying cultural stressors in adolescence represents an especially important research direction. We selected tenth graders because we sought to recruit a sample that was old enough to understand the abstract concepts of cultural stress, but where the generalizability of a school-based sample would not be compromised by school dropout.

Method

Study design and measures

The present study utilized a qualitative approach which allows for a holistic inquiry into the complex and unique social experience of discrimination and xenophobia as cultural stressors (Morgan & Krueger, 1993). Among qualitative approaches, we chose the focus group discussion as this method provides utility in evaluating under-researched populations (e.g., adolescent first- and second-generation Latinos living in urban US settings) and obtaining in-depth information about a specific topic or social issue (Morgan, 1996; Morgan & Krueger, 1993; Stewart & Shamdasani, 2014). Focus groups may be a better approach than one-on-one interviews when working with adolescents because they help avoid power imbalances that may occur between a researcher and a youth in a one-on-one interview (Daley, 2013). Further, focus groups can elicit many different perspectives on a topic raised by participants. For example, in a focus group setting, a participant may bring up an experience or point that facilitates extensive discussion with other participants and that may have been missed in a one-on-one interview.

However, there are some limitations to the use of focus groups. Focus groups, by nature, do not permit full confidentiality between participant and researcher. Further, the group setting may hamper more hesitant participants from speaking up as much as other participants. To address concerns that focus group participants may be hesitant to share their perspectives with others in the group, care was taken to ensure that all participants were given equal opportunities to contribute (Adler, Salanterä, & Zumstein-Shaha, 2019; Creswell & Poth, 2016).

We developed a semi-structured interview guide by collaborating with investigators who have expertise in adolescence and acculturation using previously studied components of cultural stress as an outline for question domains. We first consulted with a team of expert researchers in Latino adolescent cultural stress and adolescent development to determine what types of cultural stressors and question domains we should use to develop our question guide. Expert panel members were selected by reviewing literature on Latino adolescent cultural stressors and inviting prominent contributors to that literature to serve on the panel. The panel consisted of two individuals who previously created cultural stress measures, one qualitatively oriented cultural anthropologist, one expert in Latino acculturation and family dynamics, and one quantitative methodologist with expertise in Latino acculturation and cultural stress.

The focus group guide included the following question domains – belongingness, family dynamics, language, discrimination and xenophobia, migration issues, future plans, and emotional coping with several questions per domain. Question domains were created by pooling different cultural stressors into discussion questions. Acculturation-gap stress acculturative stress, and bicultural stress were used to inform the belonginess, language, and family dynamics domains (Cervantes et al., 2012; Romero & Roberts, 2003; Romero et al., 2007); discrimination and negative context of reception formed the discrimination and xenophobia domain (Meca et al., 2019; Portes & Rumbaut, 2014; Schwartz et al., 2010); and immigration-related stress informed the migration issues domain (Cervantes et al., 2012). Future plans and emotional coping were included as part of the guide to end the conversation with a discussion of the students' strengths. The focus group guide was then reviewed by the external panel of experts for question clarity and appropriateness vis-à-vis cultural stressors. Furthermore, an external expert in qualitative methods was consulted to refine and revise questions for appropriateness in a focus group setting.

Participants and setting

In recruiting for qualitative studies, researchers can choose from several nonprobability sampling techniques; two frequently used techniques are convenience and purposive sampling. Although most qualitative work is conducted to gain an in-depth understanding of specific issues in certain populations, some qualitative research questions call for greater breadth in participant characteristics (e.g., to gauge public opinion about a community issue). In these cases, convenience sampling is useful because it allows researchers to recruit participants from a wide variety of life experiences and backgrounds. Potential participants need only to meet practical criteria, such as availability to be part of the study, geographical proximity to researcher, and willingness to participate (Dörnyei, 2007). In contrast, purposive sampling is used when researchers want participants to share specific experiences and backgrounds. Within purposive sampling, participants need to meet specific criteria reflecting shared common knowledge and life experiences. We chose to use a purposive sampling technique over convenience sampling because we wanted to gain in-depth understanding of cultural stressors in first- and second-generation Latino adolescents (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016).

Participants were first and second generation (either foreign-born or having one or both parents who are foreign-born) Latino adolescents living in Miami or Los Angeles (LA). Recruitment methods differed slightly between the Miami and LA samples due to school administration preferences. For the Miami sample, high school guidance counselors from two schools were asked to recruit 14–20 Latino tenth-grade students. Guidance counselors were instructed to use a purposive sampling technique to identify and recruit participants who met the study's eligibility criteria. For the LA sample, a study researcher visited classrooms identified by school

principals in two high schools to introduce the study to students and to distribute parental consent and adolescent assent forms to students. Students who were interested were asked to contact the research team, who then screened potential participants for study eligibility. Informed consent and assent were obtained after eligibility was determined.

Study eligibility criteria included: (a) self-reporting or identifying as Latino/Hispanic; (b) being born, or having at least one parent born, in a Spanish speaking country in the Caribbean, Mexico, Central America, or South America; (c) being in tenth grade, and (d) speaking either English or Spanish fluently. A total of 10 boys and 24 girls participated in six focus group discussions of four to seven participants each in either Miami or Los Angeles. Additional demographic details are provided in Table 1.

The two high schools in Miami had student populations of 1949 and 2845 adolescents, respectively, during the 2018–2019 school year, with 82.8 % and 75.7 % of their student bodies eligible for free and reduced lunch, respectively. The Miami schools' student bodies were both comprised primarily of students identifying as Latino/Hispanic: with 91 % of students at school one and 93 % of students at school two identifying at Latino/Hispanic (Miami-Dade Public Schools, 2020). In Los Angeles, the two schools had student populations of 1347 and 1738 pupils, with 93.1 % and 94.7 % of their student bodies eligible for free or reduced lunch. The LA schools' student bodies were also majority Latino/Hispanic, with 93.2 % of students at school one and 86 % of students at school two identifying as Latino/Hispanic (California Department of Education, 2020; Marquez, 2019; Torres, 2019).

Procedures

Data were collected between November 2018 and April 2019 in private meeting spaces in each school's administrative office or spare classroom. Focus groups lasted approximately 40−90 min each and were audio recorded with written and verbal parental consent and youth assent. In both Miami and LA, one focus group was conducted in Spanish and two were conducted in English, for a combined total of six focus group discussions. The lead author (S.V.), who previously received qualitative focus group training from a qualitative methods expert, moderated both Miami English-speaking focus groups and served as an assistant moderator to the Miami Spanish-speaking focus group. A bilingual facilitator, who was trained by the lead author, moderated the Spanish-speaking focus group and served as assistant moderator to the English-speaking focus groups. For the LA sample, I.Z., who is bilingual in English and Spanish and trained in focus group data collection, moderated all focus groups with the assistance of a bilingual graduate research assistant moderator from the community.

Participants provided written assent, and at least one parent provided written consent. Participants were informed of the purpose of the research prior to the start of each focus group. During the focus groups, a diagram of where each participant was seated was drawn to help identify participants during the transcription process. Field notes were taken by both the moderator and assistant moderators during the focus groups. Focus groups conducted in English were transcribed verbatim by the study staff, and each transcript was checked for accuracy by the first author, who listened to the recording and simultaneously read the English transcripts. Focus groups conducted in Spanish were transcribed verbatim in Spanish and then translated to English by certified bilingual translators and transcribers. A bilingual study team member then assessed the quality of transcriptions by listening to the Spanish audio recording while reading the English transcript. Transcripts were not returned to participants for review, and additional or repeat interviews were not conducted due to time constraints. All eligible study participants took part in the focus groups. Upon completion, participants were compensated $15 for their time.

Table 1
Participant Demographics.

Focus Group #	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Location	Miami	Miami	Miami	LA	LA	LA	
Language	English	Spanish	English	English	English	Spanish	
Number of participants	4	7	7	6	4	6	34
Country of birth							
US-born	1	1	5	5	4	0	16
Foreign-born	3	6	2	1	0	6	18
Sex							
Male	1	1	1	1	2	4	10
Female	3	6	6	5	2	2	24
Country of origin/family							
Argentina	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Cuba	1	2	6	0	0	0	9
Dominican Republic	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
El Salvador	0	1	0	0	0	4	5
Guatemala	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Honduras	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
Mexico	0	0	0	6	4	0	10
Nicaragua	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Peru	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Venezuela	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	4	7	7	6	4	6	34

Ethical review

The [BLINDED INSTITUTION] provided institutional research board approval for this study. A National Institutes of Health Certificate of Confidentiality was obtained for the study.

Data analysis

To establish links between the raw data and the study objective of understanding components of cultural stress specific to Latino adolescents in urban U.S. settings, the present study utilized a general inductive approach (Thomas, 2006). This approach condensed raw data from the six focus groups into larger codes and themes. Four graduate students with training in qualitative research methods (S.V., C.S., V.A., and I.Z.) coded English translations of the transcripts. Three of the coders were based in Miami (S.V., C.S., V.A.) and one was based in Los Angeles (I.Z.). All coders were women, 50 % identified as Latina, 25 % identified as non-Hispanic White, and 25 % identified as non-Hispanic biracial. Two coders at the Miami site (S.V. and C.S.) performed a close reading of the English versions of all six transcripts to develop the initial codebook, which included 121 codes. Codes were then collapsed based on relatedness and further revised through group meetings between S.V. and C.S. The final codebook consisted of 31 codes. Highly endorsed codes were based on *a priori* study objectives (e.g. discrimination, meaning of culture) and emergent codes from the raw data (e.g. colorism, language as discrimination).

Using the final codebook, S.V. and C.S. coded all six transcripts, V.A. coded the three Miami transcripts, and I.Z. coded the three Los Angeles transcripts. Dedoose, a qualitative data management and coding software, was used to code and analyze the data (Dedoose Version 8.2.14, 2019).

Thematic data saturation was met, as no new codes emerged after the first three transcripts were coded using the final codebook (Guest, Namey, & McKenna, 2017). To calculate percentage agreement, 10 lines from each transcript were randomly selected and analyzed for coding overlap. There was 83 % agreement in code application among the three coders for the Miami-based transcripts (i.e. C.S., V.A, & S.V.), 96 % agreement among the three coders for the LA-based transcripts (i.e., C.S., I.Z., & S.V.), and 97 % agreement among the two coders who coded all six transcripts. Codes, themes, and subthemes were discussed and checked with an expert panel of experts in Latino adolescent cultural stress for validity, in accordance with Creswell and Poth (2016). Researchers utilized the Consolidated Criteria for Reporting Qualitative Research (COREQ) checklist to guide the reporting of study methods and findings (Tong, Sainsbury, & Craig, 2007).

Results

Summary

A total of 34 participants (mean age 15 years; 18 in Miami and 16 in Los Angeles) participated in six focus groups. Additional demographic information is provided in Table 1. We identified four main themes corresponding to types of discrimination and xenophobia: perceived discrimination from other Latino sub-groups (in-group discrimination), perceived discrimination from non-Latino groups (out-group discrimination), internalization of stressors and discrimination experienced by participants' parents, and the current U.S. political rhetoric surrounding immigration. Themes are described in detail below and include illustrative quotes and participant pseudonym, sex ("M" for male and "F" for female), city, and focus group number the first time a participant is quoted. For the second and subsequent times a participant is referenced, only that person's pseudonym is used.

Theme 1: Perception of discrimination from other Latino sub-groups

Across all six focus groups, participants discussed the perception of discrimination among Latino sub-groups, based on country of origin. Generally, participants believed that "*different Hispanics avoid…different Hispanics*" (Alyssa, F, Miami, FG1) and that *"[Latinos discriminate against other Latinos] for not being how they are*" (Maya, F, LA, FG6). Participants discussed perceived conflict between and among Latin American national groups, demonstrated by the following quotes: "*Mexicans hate Cubans*," (Alejandro, M, Miami, FG2), "*There are many Venezuelans that are resentful toward Cubans…and when a Cuban defends themselves against a Venezuelan, the Venezuelan is even more infuriated*" (Carolina, F, Miami, FG2), and "*my [Cuban] mom, she tends to, like, avoid people from Nicaragua*" (Hana, F, Miami, FG1).

Discussions of in-group discrimination mainly surrounded language discrimination, country of origin, intergenerational discrimination, colorism, and level of acculturation. "Level of acculturation" included discussions of length of time in the US, differing cultural practices, and attachment to homeland. Participants expressed their own biases and prejudices towards their own and other countries of origin. Participants also discussed other Latinos telling them to "*Speak in Spanish! [Your Cuban accent] is so weird*" (Ramona, F, Miami, FG3) when speaking Spanish, indicating the hostility towards Cubans among some groups by using language and accents to discriminate against them. Students also discussed how other Latinos "*laugh at our accents, how we speak*" or tell them "*insults…bad words"* (Luis, M, LA, FG6; Maya, F, LA, FG6). Further, students discussed mixed views of favorable and unfavorable stereotypes based on country of origin. Students also described examples of country-specific in-group Latino discrimination that they had experienced or felt about other countries.

> "And they [Cubans] are crazy. They're pretty crazy. But mainly loud. Cuz like there's like some specific, there are a lot of like different groups of Cubans. Like there's like the (points at skin) this color, and then the loud one and the quiet one, and then the like, I dunno, some other ones. And then like yeah, sometimes I'm like hmm. I don't want to be rude but sometimes like-….. [This] sounds so racist but like the loud *loud* ones are just like so annoying". (Mabel, F, Miami, FG2)

Participants reported feeling stress from intergenerational discrimination, which often included older family members teasing or mocking younger family members who were unable to speak Spanish with native fluency. Discrimination occurred as teasing, mocking, and name-calling, such as the Spanish term "*gringo*," a slightly deprecatory slang typically used to describe a non-Hispanic White, English-speaking foreigner (Sayers, 2009). For example, one participant shared how her mother called her *"muy Americana gringa*" (Mabel) as an insult during an argument; she was visibly embarrassed about this discussion with her parent. Adolescents perceived, experienced, and witnessed discrimination surrounding Spanish language abilities, and they felt stressed as a result of these derogatory remarks Students reported feeling "*intimidated*" and "*bad*" after receiving "*weird looks*" from strangers as a result of discrimination due to their physical appearances (Lola, F, Miami, FG2; Carlos, M, Miami, FG3). Another participant, when asked about discrimination replied "*This is definitely a sensitive topic to me, just because… Never mind. I'm gonna start crying*" (Maria, F, LA, FG4).

Another component of within-Latino discrimination was appearance based on skin color and hair type, also known as colorism (Hunter, 2007). Participants discussed how they witnessed other Latinos, including their parents, use derogatory remarks and comments when describing non-White Latinos. For example, one focus group shared their distaste of the term "*Indios*," a derogatory term describing Native Mexican, Central American, and South American-heritage Latinos. Participants defined this as "*…. like tanner skin so like Native American background"* and *"Indios. Like Indians"* (Lola). Following Hunter (2007), we identified colorism as differing from racism, as it does not have to do with someone's racial/ethnic identification, only the tone of their skin or hair qualities. Participants described colorism as being directed toward darker skinned individuals. Colorism was discussed primarily when participants shared witnessing their parents' prejudices and concerns regarding romantic partners who had darker skin or coarser hair texture.

> "I told my mom, sometimes, like I'm there, I'm like I'm gonna get with a Black person. (imitates mother's voice and says) 'Well then you guys are not coming in the house.' (laughs) But yeah, she was like, 'I don't have a problem with them being friends or whatever but dating-wise: no.' And then she…what do you say… 'penar pasa.' [embarassed]." (Mabel)

Within-Latino discrimination also occurred based on length of time in the United States and based on level of acculturation. Participants discussed how more Americanized Latinos experience discrimination from less Americanized Latinos and vice versa. For example, students discussed how they felt discrimination from other Latino students for not being "*Latino enough*," As one participant stated,

> "This girl was like trying to confrontate [*sic*] with me because I don't know how to speak Spanish. And she kept saying 'Oh my parents are from here' and 'My mom, she makes tamales' and all this traditional stuff. I feel like she was trying to make me feel less Hispanic or not Hispanic which is like my problem mostly for me so I get stressed with that." (Nina, F, LA, FG4)

Students in Los Angeles also discussed how they believed that for "*the ones who just got here [to the US from Mexico]*," it is "*hard to fit in because [recently arrived immigrants] stand out*," (Juan, M, LA, FG5). This type of discrimination against Latinos born outside of the United States, or newly arrived in the United States, was common in Miami via name-calling. For example, one participant discussed how "*I get called 'ref' in the hallway all the time*" (Mabel). When probed about what "ref" means, participants responded, *"[refs] are Cuban-like refugiada*" (translated to "refugee;" (Lola). Participants then debated whether the term "*ref*" was an insult, or normalized teasing. They concluded that, although some peers believed it was normalized, it was ultimately a derogatory term.

Theme 2: Perception of discrimination from non-Latino groups

Almost all participants reported experiencing discrimination from non-Latinos. When asked whether students have ever experienced discrimination, one student rhetorically replied, "*Like if [non-Latinos] are watching your every move to not do something fishy like a Mexican would do?*" (Rosa, F, LA, FG4). Participants generally discussed how others in the United States perceived them as a monolithic "other" and that Latino immigrants were judged by language differences and appearances. Participants specifically reported experiencing language discrimination, colorism/racism, and discrimination across a variety of settings including in-person (e.g. shops, schools, etc.) and online environments.

Participants across most focus groups discussed how they, or someone they knew, experienced negative treatment from non-Latino strangers in public settings when speaking Spanish. Some participants reported feeling negatively targeted when speaking in Spanish. One participant discussed an experience she had with a friend while shopping.

> "[My best friend, who is Latina, and I] went into the little jewelry market and, you know, we started speaking Spanish like, 'Oh! We like this one and this one,' and the guy just started following us around. And like, does he think we're gonna [*sic*] steal or anything? He literally followed us out of the store – and he, like, made us feel uncomfortable. I was like, 'What's his problem?' Like we're not gonna [*sic*] steal. Like that's the thing – all Hispanics – it's normalized for [non-Latino] people to think all Hispanics steal or something so I think that's why he was on us the entire time which we just end up leaving after like five minutes." (Elisa, F, LA, FG4)

Participants described being targeted as "*non-American*" for not looking non-Hispanic White. One participant described her experience with this type of discrimination from her mother's coworker.

> "I used to have blonde hair, so I went to my Mom's work, and then like the lady is like *American American*. And she's like 'Oh, why do you let your [daughter have] blonde hair? [Your daughter is] not like White,' or like that. And my mom just like got mad and went off." (Analia, F, Miami, FG1)

Other students experienced people tell them "*oh, you're not Hispanic cause you don't look like one*" because their physical appearance did not match stereotypes of what a Latino should look like (Rosa).

Participants also discussed the experiences of friends whose ethnic/racial identification was misidentified due to physical features. Although some of these instances were low consequence, such as being assumed to not speak Spanish due to their "*American American*" appearance, one participant described a situation in which her classmate and her family were stopped at the airport by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) returning from Cuba because she had lighter skin than her family members.

> "No, [TSA] thought they [Cynthia's] parents robbed her (kidnapped her). [Cynthia's] parents, her mom, her sister, and her dad are like, darker than her. Cynthia's like pale with blue eyes and her mom is like is darker and black hair. So yeah, just I don't know and then like the people like they were like before coming to Cuba… [TSA] were like, 'We're going to investigate you.' They stopped [Cynthia's family] and like, are like, 'Come over here.' And then they asked her, they're like, 'So where are your parents?' And she goes, 'Over there!'…Yeah, but [TSA] thought [her parents] robbed [kidnapped] her, and they were like okay after like a couple hours, 'Okay we'll let you go." (Sophia, F, Miami, FG2)

Students also recounted experiencing discrimination at schools and by teachers. When speaking about their experiences of discrimination at school, one Cuban participant described how, "*Our teachers would be like 'Oh so loud, like Cubans' this that and that. Like for Cubans it was like really bad*" (Sophia). In Los Angeles, a student discussed her experience with discrimination from a teacher.

> "The teacher will just start being more rude to us because like we have a group … [The teacher] likes to call us out more [in comparison to the Korean group] and be rude to us, because we speak a different language. But [the teacher] won't make it known, it's because of our language or ethnicity. But we all know. Everybody knows what's going on. [The teacher] won't tell [the other groups of students of another ethnicity] anything, but [the teacher] will tell us something. And we're, 'Oh, if you have a problem with where we come from, why don't you tell us? Why don't you tell them too?' You know, it kind of makes us feel bad but at the same time we just shrug it off. Like 'Okay, we go through this on the daily. What's new?" (Rosa)

Although students did not discuss personally experiencing discrimination online, they reported witnessing discrimination via social and online media through viral videos and posts. Generally, the videos discussed include Latinos and non-English speakers being harassed by non-Hispanic White Americans. The videos included non-Hispanic White Americans yelling or screaming at Latinos "*this is America, start speaking English!*". One student recounted the following:

> "I haven't seen it [discrimination] in person but I do see it a lot in videos, all the viral videos I go, that are on like Twitter, and are people discriminating others for the way they speak, usually it's Hispanics. Like when they speak Spanish in the supermarket, like that …. and they're just yelling at them saying they're gonna call the cops… One that recently went on, it was a White male, he was wearing a "Make America Great Again" cap, I'm not sure [if] it was a Native American who was just minding his own business and he just came up and just like, to him for no reason but yeah I haven't seen it in person though." (Maria)

Another student responded to this description with how viewing discrimination online affected them.

> "I feel like with older people like they're accustomed to certain things so when they see certain things not to their norm or not normal to them, they just point it out very harshly and I guess you could excuse it cause they're old but it still like hurts. Like, *just yeah*, it hurts." (Elisa)

Some students mentioned not experiencing discrimination in person, but witnessing it only online. When asked about discriminatory experiences, one student mentioned "*[I only see it] on social media. You don't see it with like your friends*" (Alyssa).

Theme 3: internalizing stressors and discrimination experienced by their parents

Students reported a variety of stressors experienced by their parents. Students often then internalized their parents' stressors as personal stressors. An adolescent expressed her feelings about her parents.

> "Well, since they're your parents, you really care about them and you get stressed too because you…can hear them talking and they're like super stressed. And you want to do something, but you really can't because, you're, you have school, you do sports, you're doing all of these things. You're trying to help them, but sometimes you can't." (Ramona)

Stressors internalized by adolescents included discrimination in the workplace leading to unlawful job termination (and resulting financial stress), the current immigration policy, and discrimination in daily life (e.g., when shopping). Almost all focus groups included discussions of parents being paid less and/or terminated unlawfully/denied employment due to their non-American accents or Latino ethnicity. For example, one participant discussed how her mother was unjustly fired.

> "[She was] too slow. Like [she] can't speak English to the customers and that's what [they] need…I was a little kid [when it happened] and I was baffled… you give the Americans like 10 chances, and then us [Latinos], we're slow once, and like [we're fired]." (Lola)

Another participant discussed how some employers, "*they pay Hispanics less. My dad is paid less than everybody [who is not Latino]. [Including] the newcomers that are American*" (Sophia). In addition, some participants also believed that among Latinos, "*the people who have a green card get better pay*" (Patricia, F, LA, FG6). Participants generally felt strong emotions towards the stress their parents experienced and felt unprepared to respond to it.

"One like, one is prepared for your parents to console you, not the other way around. And you see your parents falling apart. And you're like, 'damn.' The weight of the house doesn't fall on me, it's on them. I don't pay debts, I don't pay taxes, I don't pay anything. They do. And when I see that small worry, it makes me feel like – something. And it's like, well, something *strong*." (Lola)

Although it may not represent a form of discrimination, the vast majority of jobs in the US require English language competency. Participants discussed their parents' stress from not meeting these competencies and the youth's own resulting stress, as demonstrated by the following quote: "*Something that stresses out my mom is that um, sometimes she applies at jobs but she doesn't get accepted because she doesn't have, she has a work permit but they need someone that speaks English, you know?*" (Alma, F, LA, FG5).

Theme 4: Fear of consequences of immigration and the current US political climate

All focus groups discussed immigration policies and personal narratives in which either they, or someone they know, was affected by the changing immigration policies. Participants reported feeling "*fear*" and "*stress*" as a result of the current political rhetoric, changing immigration policies, and uncertainties surrounding these changes. Students further believed that U.S. immigration policy had become more restrictive for foreign-born Latinos. Further, students believed that the U.S. President Donald Trump is responsible for influencing the American public's sentiments towards Latinos to be more negative.

"I think that Donald Trump has like suppressed the Latino community a lot, because like with the things that he said about um that there's a lot of Mexicans that are rapists and um this and that. You know I think even if he didn't mean it that way, he put Mexicans in a group and now everybody, all the Americans that don't really know any Mexicans, they see them like that." (Ramona)

Students also discussed their awareness of ICE and potential deportation. Students felt that "*with Trump being president and ICE being stronger, it's scary because you don't know what's going to happen, anything could happen and just the thought of it is just really scary*" (Alma). In response to this fear, students felt additional pressure to help their parents, as best articulated by a student.

"I wanna [*sic*] finish school in order for me to be able to make [my parents] citizens and make them like not feel like they're not from here or I mean I just don't want them to leave me alone here, and while they're over there because it's not gonna [*sic*] be the same [without my parents]." (Maria)

However, students felt restrained by U.S. state and federal policies in deciding where they could attend college.

"Sometimes you can't attend a certain, let's say for example a university if it's out of state but you can't go visit the university or wherever you wanna [*sic*] study because your parents don't have either a passport or they're scared immigration is gonna [*sic*] get them and I mean there's other transportation but you never know where immigration is also gonna[*sic*] be and I mean you can't just move out to wherever you would like." (Elisa)

Participants reported that privileges given to American citizens but not to undocumented Latinos were both tangible (e.g. health insurance, social security benefits, employment, equal pay) and non-tangible (e.g. more freedom, opportunities). Almost all participants described a story of how either they or their parents immigrated to the United States. Personal narratives of immigration included traveling to Mexico and crossing over the border, or taking a boat to reach the U.S. coast. Some participants shared that they came with a family member but did not give specific details. Students in Los Angeles expressed more fear of parental deportation than students in Miami did. Students in Miami expressed more concern surrounding ICE detention camps and the separation of families, based on what they have seen in the media. Participants with parents who did not have legal U.S. documentation believed that ICE could "*barge in and get [my parents] and you just have to watch them get taken away*" (Rosa). Other students stated that "*ICE is the worst thing ever …. I've seen so many stories lately of them people like abusing like the immigrants*" (Mabel).

Another participant described how he felt the U.S. population treated Latino immigrants, and his worries about his parents potentially being taken away.

"I don't know why many of us [Latinos] have to be like discriminated by other people when we really didn't do anything. I understand that if you commit a crime or something then you're like able to discriminate them however you like, but, us and my parents that don't do anything- I mean why? Why do you guys [the general American public] have to like do something to them? Like for example, if immigration takes them away from me, what am I supposed to do? What are my parents supposed to do? Yeah." (Carlos)

The cumulative stressors experienced by families left the adolescents with pervasive feelings of uncertainty regarding their future in the United States. One participant discussed the mounting stress of living in the United States as a migrant.

"Here, I'm alone with my mom. It's complicated getting here and not having a job- not having your house. And here, you have to be every single month paying the house, paying insurance, paying taxes, the problems with immigration and all these things starting [*sic*] combining. And everything is a small grain of sand but in the ends it's a giant mountain of stress." (Luisa, F, Miami, FG2)

Participants reported feeling as if they were stuck in limbo waiting for residency status updates.

"You know, the efforts of trying not to think about [the immigration process]. You say, 'Okay, I'm going to try to not think about it because if not, I'm going to drive myself crazy.' And it's a stress. It's a stress that's way too big and a worry. For example, in my case, you in Venezuela left nothing behind because you sold everything to come here. And that you have to be scared that they're going to take you out of the country. And you say, 'Aha, now what? Now where do I go?" (Carolina)

While in the process of requesting residency, participants expressed worry regarding the final decision and fear of having nowhere to return.

Discussion

It is important to reaffirm or potentially adapt definitions of cultural stress as the types and intensity of such stressors change for Latino adolescents in the United States. Our findings reiterate many of the themes found in the cultural stress literature, especially those of discrimination and xenophobia (Araújo & Borrell, 2006; Cano et al., 2015; Cervantes et al., 2012; Delgado et al., 2011; Lorenzo-Blanco et al., 2013; Okamoto et al., 2009; Romero et al., 2007; Schwartz et al., 2015). Our findings also contribute to the growing literature on the health impacts of changing national immigration dialogue on Latino youth living in the United States (Ayón, 2020; Roche et al., 2018; Zayas, 2015). We accomplish this by qualitatively exploring the indirect and direct impacts of macro and community-level discrimination, xenophobia, and other cultural stressors on teens' emotions and experiences. Students and their families feel more uncertain and afraid for the future due to xenophobic rhetoric and immigration crackdowns, and youth feel more responsible for their parents' wellbeing, especially those who are undocumented.

Although our study reaffirms much of what is known about cultural stress and the impact of discriminatory policies on Latinos, our findings also extend existing literature in at least two ways. First, discussions about within-group discrimination and xenophobia directed toward other Latinos were largely present in our focus groups. Secondly, we found that adolescents can be negatively impacted by witnessing discrimination online, even if it is not personally directed toward them.

Generally, participants described their Latino identity, as perceived by others, on a spectrum, with individuals with more native Spanish fluency being seen as more "Latino" compared to those who did not speak fluent Spanish or spoke no Spanish at all. Participants also identified specific physical traits as being "more Latino," such as physical traits commonly associated with Latinos (e.g. brown hair, brown eyes, indigenous features), including a vaccination scar (or a "*birthmark*" as referred to by participants) that occurs as a result of receiving numerous vaccinations shortly after birth and is indicative of being born in a Latin American country.

Discussions surrounding within-group discrimination were as frequent as discussions about out-group discrimination across the six focus groups. Within-group discrimination is often based on one's level of language proficiency and degree to which one practices customs from their cultural heritage. However, within-group discrimination is not a well-studied phenomenon in the cultural stress literature, with only a handful of studies published in recent years focusing on within-group xenophobia (Basáñez et al., 2019; Castillo, Conoley, Brossart, & Quiros, 2007; Córdova & Cervantes, 2010). Within-Latino intergenerational discrimination was mentioned most frequently in our focus groups. For example, family members may criticize youth for "*not being Hispanic enough*", whereas peers may criticize youth for speaking Spanish or practicing Latino cultural customs. Additionally, differences across cultural backgrounds, nationality, skin color, and length of time in the United States seemed to correspond with discrimination. Participants reported that individuals from certain countries have aversions toward others from different Latin American countries (e.g., the discussion about Cubans versus Venezuelans). This within-group xenophobia exemplifies that the U.S. Latino community is not a monolith, but rather that Latinos experience complex intragroup relationships.

Outgroup discrimination, xenophobia, and documentation issues may have limited parents' ability to find a job and maintain a steady source of income. Lower incomes or fewer opportunities for work may potentially have created financial stress for families. Financial stressors appeared to impact students' well-being, as they expressed concerns about their parents' stress and were conflicted because they were unable to financially contribute to their family. Financial stress on families was a major theme in the focus groups and influenced the way participants thought about their future. Many wanted to get a job immediately after high school or go to college to make enough money to support their parents. We interpreted the students' discussion as their believing that higher education could be the solution to providing financially for their families. Some participants believed that financial stability could provide the necessary resources for parents to be able to become documented. However, students also acknowledged the conflict between pursuing higher education and meeting immediate familial financial needs. Students putting their family needs above their own exemplify the concept of *familismo*, a Latino cultural value emphasizing dedication, loyalty, and interdependence among family members. Familismo has also been shown to protect against components of cultural stress (Piña-Watson, Ojeda, Castellon, & Dornhecker, 2013).

Latino adolescents generally viewed college as unattainable if not supplemented by scholarships or financial assistance, but also seemed to lack knowledge regarding how to apply for financial aid. There is a large disparity in the number of Latino students who enroll in and complete higher educational degrees, including Associate's degrees, compared to non-Hispanic Whites (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). According to the 2015 American Community Survey, 16 percent of Latino adults in the United States, compared to 35.8 percent of non-Hispanic Whites, reported having a bachelor's degree or higher (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). Research has indicated that this disparity exists in part because of documentation issues and lack of government-supported financial aid for undocumented immigrants (Nguyen & Kebede, 2017). Other reasons for this disparity may include lack of guidance for college preparation in high school, lower expectations for Latino students, and hostile K-12 school environments toward immigrants (Ee & Gándara, 2020; Rodriguez, Rhodes, & Aguirre, 2015). Students in both Miami and LA experienced discrimination from their teachers based on Spanish language use or Latino culture.

A unique finding from our study reflects the impact that negative social media and political rhetoric exert on Latino adolescents. Youth in our in sample reported watching videos online in which Latino immigrants are targeted and harassed for speaking Spanish in public and are further denigrated through insults like "*This is America. Start speaking English*." To the best of our knowledge, no research has examined the potential impact of these experiences, which we label as "remote discrimination". As a whole, our qualitative findings indicated that students felt distressed by viewing these videos, and that the videos adversely impacted the degree to which the Latino students in our sample felt welcomed within the United States. These findings underscore the importance for future work to

further explore remote discrimination and develop measures that can capture how these experiences impact youths' psychosocial functioning.

Our findings also add to literature on the impact of xenophobic federal level policies on individual and family level stressors. Federal government not only influences family and individual wellbeing, but also impacts community and institutional attitudes (Ayers, Hofstetter, Schnakenberg, & Kolody, 2009; Ee & Gándara, 2020; Roche et al., 2018). Government policy also plays a direct role in creating stress for families and individuals, because they may be uncertain of their future in the U.S. and have little power to create change in their own lives. Over half (21 out of 34 participants) of respondents and/or their parents came from the countries with the five highest deportation rates (U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement(ICE), 2018) – Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and the Dominican Republic. Perceptions of discrimination and lower social standing can lead to adverse stress responses (Dickerson, Gruenewald, & Kemeny, 2004). Perceptions of outgroup discrimination, along with internalizing parents' stress, leads to poor academic outcomes and decreases in socioeconomic mobility among youth – and these effects are mediated by anxiety, depression and maladaptive coping (Brietzke & Perreira, 2017; Hwang & Goto, 2008).

Limitations

The present findings should be interpreted in light of several limitations. First, despite our attempts to recruit both boys and girls, the focus groups were disproportionately comprised of girls. Therefore, stressors unique to males may not have been discussed. Additionally, with more equal distribution between boys and girls, we would have been better able to draw comparisons between the two sexes. Another potential limitation to this study was lack of inclusion of Latinos from non-urban areas, or from urban areas without dense Latino populations. Additionally, the themes that emerged in our study may not be generalizable to Latinos from geographic locations where pan-Latino identity is more salient than country-specific identity, such as the Midwest or Southern US (Brietzke & Perreira, 2017). Likewise, Latinos living in areas with fewer ICE agents may be less concerned about raids and deportations. Lastly, no quantitative data were collected as part of this study. A mixed methods approach may have added complimentary data that would make results more generalizable and robust (Creswell & Clark, 2017).

By nature, focus groups have limitations in which issues of confidentiality, unequal speaking time among participants, or discomfort may occur. However, we feel that we mitigated issues of confidentiality, uneven participant time, and safety by setting basic ground rules before each focus group. Students understood that nothing said at the focus group was to leave the room after the discussion, that everyone should be allowed equal time to speak, and that they should reach out to the research team immediately if they believed that confidentiality had been breached or felt uncomfortable in any way after the focus group. During the focus group discussion, moderators ensured that participants stayed on topic and that every participant was given an opportunity to speak. It may also be important for future studies to conduct individual interviews to obtain adolescents' specific experiences or beliefs they may not feel comfortable sharing in a group setting.

Future directions

Our findings support the need for more research surrounding adolescent cultural stress. These findings reaffirm previously known cultural stressors (e.g., ingroup and outgroup discrimination), but also highlight the effects of immigration policy changes on Latino youth from diverse nationalities. Although our study was designed to identify stressors that were pervasive across nationalities, there is need for research that focuses on the differences among Latino nationalities (Asbury, 1995). As the U.S. Latino population continues to grow at a rapid rate, and as current Latino immigration becomes increasingly non-Mexican, there will most likely be more prominent pockets of immigrants from different countries. Research on Latino health needs to become more aware of nuanced cultural differences between and among countries of origin, as there is potential for differing cultural values and stressors. It is critical that health researchers fully understand Latino cultural stress, as such stress may represent a pathway to higher risks and lower quality of health. Although some of the stressors discussed by our participants may be manageable, this population is subject to many unique stressors. As one participant stated, "*everything is a small grain of sand, but in the end it's a giant mountain of stress.*" We need to address these "grains of sand" before they become unmanageable.

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