ETHNIC-RACIAL SOCIALIZATION MESSAGES IN MULTI-GENERATIONAL LATINX FAMILIES: HOW DO PARENTS' AND GRANDPARENTS' MESSAGES IMPACT EMERGING ADULTS?

by

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(Under the Direction of Anne Shaffer)

ABSTRACT

Ethnic-racial socialization (ERS) is a complex developmental process through which youth learn about racial discrimination, future biases, and gain strategies and coping mechanisms to address these challenges. While ERS is a necessary developmental process for families of color, the messages shared can serve to either mitigate or exacerbate the influence of discrimination on well-being. Although foundational ERS research is rooted in understanding how Black and African American parents socialize youth around discrimination, research on other minoritized families, such as Latinx families, is less developed. Further, within the existing ERS literature, little is known about the role of extended family members, such as grandparents, in this socialization process. The present study aimed to address these gaps by examining the types of ERS messages shared by parents and grandparents with emerging adults, how these messages may be related to depressive symptoms, and whether they moderate the association between emerging adults and their self-reported depressive symptoms. To this end, 92 Latinx emerging adults completed self-report measures on their experiences of discrimination, parental and grandparental ERS, and depressive symptoms. Results revealed that parents and

grandparents, on average, shared cultural socialization and egalitarian ERS messages more so than preparation for bias or promotion of mistrust. Parental and grandparental preparation for bias was related to participants' experiences of discrimination, and parental and grandparental egalitarian messages were negatively related to participants' depressive symptoms. Only parental cultural socialization was negatively related to participants' depressive symptoms. Interestingly, only parental promotion of mistrust moderated the association between discrimination and depressive symptoms, but only at very low levels. The present study's findings offer insights into the Latinx family dynamics of ERS. These findings highlight Latinx families' emphasis on cultural pride, ethnicity, and heritage with youth. Further, the findings suggest that the promotion of mistrust might be supportive under certain conditions. A novel contribution of this study was the quantitative assessment of ERS, extending existing ERS frameworks to extended family members. Together, these findings help broaden our understanding of ERS in Latinx families.

INDEX WORDS: ethnic-racial socialization, Latinx, youth, multi-generational, discrimination

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DEDICATION

For mami, Deborah, who taught and encouraged me to always be curious and ask questions about the world. For my grandmother Ana Luisa, who had dreams of being an academic. For my grandfather Jacques, who encouraged me to not have limits in life. And for my great-grandmother Carlita, who took the biggest risk in leaving our home country to plant seeds for a better future. We are blossoming.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Exposure to racial and ethnic discrimination is common within the Latinx community (Noe-Bustamante et al., 2021). Latinx individuals are disproportionately affected by exposure to racism and discrimination, and these experiences are linked to mental health problems. Discrimination can occur through various forms, including structural policies that are anti-immigrant in nature, promoting anti-Latinx rhetoric, and interpersonal discrimination in which individuals face biased treatment, prejudice, and exclusion (Benner et al., 2018; McCord et al., 2019; Williams et al., 2019). Among the Latinx community in the United States, discrimination has been associated with worsening depression and depressive symptoms (Benner et al., 2018; Paradies et al., 2015). The prevalence of experiences of discrimination and its detrimental consequences makes it crucial to understand how cultural processes, such as ethnic-racial socialization (ERS), may mitigate these adverse outcomes.

ERS is a necessary and complex process in minority youth development, during which they learn about race, discrimination, and how to cope with these negative interactions (Hughes et al., 2006). Prior research demonstrates that different types of ERS can influence associated outcomes differently, with some being protective and others amplifying the deleterious effects of discrimination (Ayon et al., 2020). These findings suggest that contextual factors surrounding ERS are essential for supporting well-being and advancing research on protective mechanisms against discrimination. However, less is known about how ERS messages are transmitted within

Latinx households, especially those with significant interactions between youth and their grandparents (e.g., co-residing or spending significant time with grandparents). Within the Latinx community, multigenerational household structures and co-caregiving practices are very common, with approximately one in seven Latinx families living in multigenerational homes (Chen & Guzman, 2022). In these households, Latinx grandparents often play a significant role in the upbringing of their grandchildren, providing support through caregiving, emotional guidance, and cultural transmission (Sadruddin et al., 2019).

It is crucial to understand what kind of ERS messages Latinx parents and grandparents share and, further, understand the extent to which these messages may shape the association between discrimination and adverse outcomes such as depressive symptoms. Historically, ERS frameworks have most often been examined within Black and African American families and have been limited to examining how parents socialize youth. Consequently, current ERS frameworks lack a comprehensive and culturally appropriate understanding of how ERS occurs within Latinx families which typically include extended family members such as grandparents.

Building on existing research and acknowledging the need for more comprehensive studies on familial ERS in Latinx families, this study aims to contribute to the literature by examining the types of ERS messages shared by parents and grandparents via retrospective self-reports of Latinx emerging adults. Additionally, this study seeks to understand how these different types of ERS messages shared by parents and grandparents may relate to the association between Latinx emerging adults' self-reported experiences of discrimination and their depressive symptoms.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Experiences of Discrimination for Latinx Individuals

Experiences of discrimination refer to prejudicial treatment based on an aspect of a person's identity, including their race, ethnicity, and immigrant status, among others (Andrade et al., 2021; Benner et al., 2018; Williams et al., 2019). Racism and discrimination are multilayered, impacting the Latinx community at the structural, institutional, and interpersonal levels (Benner et al., 2018; McCord et al., 2019; Williams et al., 2019). Structural discrimination refers to systematic inequalities in policies such as anti-immigrant laws. Institutional discrimination occurs within organizations that enforce biased policies, such as lack of funding for English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. Interpersonal discrimination refers to racial and discriminatory interactions with individuals, such as being told to speak English. A common misconception regarding discrimination is that it is always explicit and performed by strangers. In reality, racism and discrimination can be overt (explicit and openly displayed) or covert (subtle and hidden) and can be carried out by various people (Coates, 2011). When asked about their retrospective experiences of discrimination, Latinx adolescents and adults reported being discriminated against in public spaces by a combination of teachers and peers in addition to strangers (Pasco et al., 2022).

Experiences of discrimination are prevalent in the Latinx community, with 54% of Latinx individuals reporting some form of racism or discrimination (Noe-Bustamante et al., 2021).

These numbers are even more concerning when considering Latinx youth. A recent study in the U.S. Southwest indicated that 42% of Latinx girls experienced discrimination by age 12, with this number rising drastically to 68% to 70% for older girls and 87% to 94% of boys also reporting discrimination (Zeiders et al., 2020). These findings underscore the early onset and pervasiveness of discrimination that continues into emerging adulthood for Latinx people. It is important to note these findings were limited to a specific region of the U.S. and cannot be generalized to the U.S. as a nation. However, it is reasonable to assume such levels of discrimination may be consistent across other parts of the country such as the Deep South given the extensive and deep-rooted history of racism and discrimination across the nation. As indicated by McCord et al. (2019), discrimination is consistently increasing for the Latinx population in the U.S.

Racial and ethnic discrimination are consistently linked to adverse mental health outcomes, including depression and depressive symptoms in adolescents and emerging adults (Benner et al., 2018; Pichardo et al., 2021; Portillo et al., 2022), with increased frequency relating to increased psychological distress over time (Lei et al., 2021). In their systematic review and meta-analysis, Paradies et al. (2015) identify discrimination as a significant determinant of health, demonstrating that the association between discrimination and depression is as robust as the association with overall adverse mental health outcomes. These findings are supported by Andrade et al. (2021), whose recent systematic review also demonstrates a significant impact of discrimination on depression and depressive symptoms among Latinos. Further, McCord and colleagues (2019) found in their systematic review that discrimination was a major cultural stressor for Latinx youth, significantly related to increased depressive symptoms in most of the studies reviewed. Notably, McCord et al. (2019) emphasized that Latinx youth

face complex and persistent discrimination in various forms, including racial, ethnic, and immigrant-based discrimination, among others.

Qualitative research reveals that Latinx young adults who experienced or witnessed the impact of racialized immigration policies (a unique form of discrimination Latinx individuals encounter) report feelings of depression as a result (Walsdorf et al., 2023). These qualitative findings align with recent quantitative research, which demonstrates the detrimental impact of discriminatory racialized immigration policies on depressive symptoms in Latinx college students (Olguin-Aguirre et al., 2024). The pervasive nature of anti-immigrant rhetoric extends to all members of the Latinx community regardless of immigration status (Roche et al., 2020), further exacerbating feelings of depression within the Latinx community. Further, Stein et al. (2019) emphasize that high levels of discrimination from in-group and out-group peers are associated with worse depressive symptoms, underscoring the widespread and multifaceted impact of discrimination on Latinx individual's mental health. Together, these studies highlight the pervasive and significant impact discrimination has on Latinx emerging adults. Therefore, it is crucial to understand what developmental processes can support Latinx individuals in navigating and coping with the pervasive impact of discrimination.

The family context is vital in understanding the association between discrimination and mental health well-being. Lazarevic and colleagues (2021) underscore the importance of family support and positive family dynamics in mitigating the adverse effects of discrimination on Latinx adolescents, finding that a supportive family environment buffered against discrimination's adverse impact on mental health, while negative family dynamics exacerbated the association. Similarly, work by Ramos and colleagues (2022) demonstrated that family support and open communication were effective in mitigating the association between

discrimination and depression in Latinx adolescents. These findings illustrate the role of family dynamics in supporting youth in the face of discrimination. The interplay between family, discrimination, and depressive symptoms is complex and warrants better understanding. This includes understanding how cultural values and practices, often transmitted through parents and extended family members like grandparents, contribute to supporting Latinx youth. However, while most of the extant literature focuses on the immediate family, questions remain concerning how these effects may persist or change when considering extended family members like grandparents.

Ethnic-Racial Socialization

Ethnic-racial socialization (ERS) refers to the process by which racially and ethnically minoritized youth gain knowledge about race and discrimination and learn how to cope with such experiences. ERS includes embracing cultural values and racial-ethnic pride, appreciating spirituality as a form of coping, and valuing the support and involvement of extended family (Hughes et al., 2006; Stevenson, 1998, 2016). The foundations of ERS were based on understanding how Black and African American families navigated and supported their children regarding racism in the U.S. and has since grown to the study of ERS in families of different ethnic and racial backgrounds, including Latinx families. Hughes and colleagues' (2006) pivotal review of ERS highlights four distinct ERS strategies in the literature: cultural socialization, preparation for bias, promotion of mistrust, and egalitarianism. These four ERS strategies have since become foundational in the study of how families discuss and share messages about race (Anderson & Stevenson, 2019; Neblett et al., 2012; Umaña-Taylor & Hill, 2020). Hughes' work established the foundation for subsequent research, providing a framework widely examined in understanding the dynamics of racial and ethnic socialization in historically minoritized families.

ERS Strategies

Cultural socialization, the process by which youth learn about the values, norms, and traditions and gain pride in their cultural background. This process is especially prevalent among Latinx families (Ayon et al., 2020). The strong ties to heritage through cultural socialization are likely due to families that have migrated to the US and maintain a sense of cultural identity. Further, cultural socialization includes exposure to music, stories, food, and other aspects of culture. Cultural socialization is consistently linked to positive outcomes for youth such as improved self-esteem, buffering against substance use, and decreased psychological distress concerning discrimination and racism (Ayón et al., 2020; Nieri et al., 2022; Trang & Yates, 2023).

Another important ERS strategy is preparation for bias which is a complex form of ERS encapsulating awareness of racial and ethnic discrimination as well as coping strategies to navigate racism and discrimination (Bernard et al., 2024; Hughes et al., 2006; Scott et al., 2020). Contrary to the consistently positive outcomes associated with cultural socialization, preparation for bias has mixed findings in Latinx families. While some research has found that it buffers outcomes related to discrimination and racism, other findings show worsening outcomes (i.e., depression) when youth receive messages preparing them for bias (Ayón et al., 2020). Such findings reflect the multifaceted nature of ERS; while some aspects may promote positive youth development, others may amplify the stressors they face (Perez-Brena et al., 2018). These inhibiting and promotive effects may be based on other contextual factors in a child's environment such as kin support for stressful experiences (Garcia Coll et al., 1996; Perez-Brena et al., 2018).

The third ERS strategy often highlighted in the literature is the promotion of mistrust, which focuses on cultivating skepticism toward interracial interactions and acknowledging racial barriers that disproportionately restrict access to opportunities for minoritized groups (Hughes et al., 2006). Unlike preparation for bias, promotion of mistrust does not offer coping strategies to youth; instead, it emphasizes not trusting individuals from dominant groups (e.g., White Americans) and approaching interactions with people outside their racial group cautiously (Hughes et al., 2006). Across different ethnic and racial groups, messages regarding the promotion of mistrust tend to exacerbate the negative impacts of racism and discrimination (Ayon et al., 2020).

Egalitarianism refers to the belief that everyone should receive equal treatment regardless of race or ethnicity, emphasizing shared qualities among peers and minoritized racial groups (Hughes et al., 2006). According to a recent systematic review of ERS in Latinx youth and families (Ayón et al., 2020), egalitarianism has been the least explored ERS strategy in Latinx families. This underrepresentation raises questions regarding its potential impact, underscoring the need to investigate further how egalitarianism may function and serve Latinx families.

ERS Socializers

The experience of ERS can vary based on *who* the ERS socializing agent is. Previous work has identified differences between mothers' and fathers' ERS. For example, past work on African American families indicates that mothers socialize their older children differently than their younger children, likely due to the child's developmental stage (McHale et al., 2006). The same study found that fathers engaged in more ERS with their sons than their daughters (McHale et al., 2006). A parent's unique experiences with race, racism, and discrimination greatly influence the type of ERS they share. Cooper and colleagues highlight how Black fathers' racial

identity beliefs are related to the type of ERS they share (Cooper et al., 2015, 2019). ERS messages also vary across *who* the recipient is. A study examining how Black mothers and fathers socialize their sons versus their daughters regarding race found that mothers often integrate their daughters' physical features into their ERS (Skinner et al., 2024). Mothers likely relate to the gendered racism their daughters will experience and thus socialize them in ways fathers may not relate.

While extensive research over the years has enriched our understanding of ERS in Black families, there is still a pressing need for further exploration within Latinx families. Ayon and colleagues' (2020) review of ERS in Latinx families, which did not include a time constraint for published papers, yielded only 68 papers. This contrasts with a recent review examining family ERS across various ethnic and racial groups *within* the last decade, which yielded well over 250 publications (Umaña-Taylor & Hill, 2020). The difference in the number of available publications indicates how ERS in Latinx families is still growing, with questions remaining about the types of ERS messages Latinx parents share (e.g., promotion of mistrust and egalitarianism are especially understudied in Latinx families). There is also a significant gap in the literature regarding the roles of grandparents, who play significant roles in Latinx families, as ERS socializers. Further investigation could provide valuable and unique insights into how grandparents contribute to this critical developmental process.

Theoretical Framing

The current study of Latinx youth's experiences of ERS in multigenerational developmental contexts is informed by Garcia Coll and colleagues' (1996) integrative model for the study of developmental competencies in minority children. In particular, the integrative model's framework acknowledges the impact of racism and discrimination on youth's

development, emphasizing that racism and discrimination are facets of reality that youth will have to endure throughout their life (Garcia Coll et al., 1996). The distinct hurdles and obstacles stemming from racism and racial discrimination significantly shape the trajectory of youth's future, influencing long-term outcomes (Andrade et al., 2021; Benner et al., 2018; Garcia Coll et al., 1996). Therefore, interacting with a society that is deeply rooted in a history of racism and discrimination plays a significant role in youths' socialization.

The integrative model presents two significant and interconnected concepts that are applicable to the socialization of Latinx youth in their families: adaptive culture and kin networks (Garcia Coll et al., 1996). Adaptive culture is "a social system defined by sets of goals, values, and attitudes that differ from the dominant culture" (Garcia Coll et al., 1996, p. 1896). In the integrative model, adaptive cultures are a response to the environments minoritized families experience, including the sociohistorical and present political and social contexts and intersecting identities (e.g., societal impacts of their race, ethnicity, immigration status). Adaptive cultures also include cultural dimensions such as heritage, traditions, and values, which are continuously evolving to adapt to cultural changes and the constantly fluctuating sociopolitical environment (Garcia Coll et al., 1996; Perez-Brena et al., 2018). Specifically, as ethnically and racially minoritized families interact with the dominant culture (and its inequities, racism, and discrimination), minoritized families' adaptive cultures develop and evolve in response to their environment. Research shows that Latinx youth living in environments where they are minoritized experience a more pronounced impact of discrimination on their mental health compared to their counterparts living in environments in which they are the majority (Alegría et al., 2022). Adaptive cultures help create promotive and protective environments to empower

youth to succeed in the face of the discrimination and racism they will inevitably encounter (Garcia Coll et al., 1996).

Further, a family's adaptive culture is developed within the context of the family's goals in socialization and the structures and roles of family members (Garcia Coll et al., 1996; Perez-Brena et al., 2018; White et al., 2018), often incorporating practices such as ERS to help youth cope with and navigate experiences of discrimination. For instance, a recent review of the literature examining Latinx parental ERS revealed that parents who value cultural traditions engaged in ERS more frequently (Perez-Brena et al., 2024). Within adaptive cultures, parental ERS often must shift in response to the current events that might increase exposure to discrimination, such as discussing the meaning behind anti-immigrant rhetoric. For example, Latinx parents acknowledge the need to discuss navigating and coping with discrimination as an essential aspect of parenting their Latinx adolescents in the context of the recent political climate (Romero et al., 2015).

Social support is a critical aspect of adaptive cultures. Within the context of Latinx families, this often includes the value of *familismo,* which emphasizes strong family loyalty, interconnectedness, and support networks intending to contribute to the well-being of the family (Ayón & Aisenberg, 2010). For example, Latinx extended family members have reported taking on the childcare of youth due to their commitment and duty to their families (Aquino & Schultz, 2022). This critical cultural value manifests in the structure of Latinx households, which are often multigenerational. Multigenerational homes often go against the norms of the dominant cultural group within the context of the U.S., which primarily focuses on nuclear families (e.g., two parents and their children living in a single household), while many cultural and ethnic groups typically have multiple generations living together and caring for children (Dunifon et al.,

2014; Mendez et al., 2020; Reyes-Santos & Lara, 2018). Considering the emphasis of multigenerational families and social support in adaptive culture, it is essential to study both parents and grandparents ERS as forms of social support within Latinx families.

In the integrative model, Garcia Coll and colleagues (1996) also refer to "kin networks," which are family relationships youth have with individuals beyond their parents. Typically, kin networks include parents, extended family members, such as grandparents, aunts, and uncles, and fictive kin (e.g., close family friends), all of whom support the child in some capacity (Mair, 2020). Moreover, kin network members, including extended family members, shape the child's adaptive culture by contributing their values, which can complement and enhance the collective family's goals for the child's growth. A fundamental aspect of this support includes cultural practices, such as ERS. A qualitative systematic review by Perez-Brena and colleagues (2018) found that kin support in adaptive culture was associated with positive adjustment outcomes for youth. Considering the structure of many ethnically and racially minoritized families and the influence of extended family members, it is likely that such extended family members (such as grandparents) significantly participate in youths' lives and, therefore, socialization alongside the socialization provided by parents.

Latinx grandparents often provide support and care for their growing families (Leahy-Warren et al., 2012). These roles may begin before the grandchild even arrives; for instance, the emotional support pregnant Latinx women received from their mothers alleviated the discriminatory stress they experienced during their pregnancy (Knorr & Fox, 2024), illustrating grandmothers supporting their expanding family, particularly in the context of discrimination and racism. In Jalapa and colleagues' (2023) longitudinal work, the authors found that living in multigenerational homes buffered against the negative impact of Latinx mothers' depressive

symptoms on their children's behavior problems compared to Latinx mothers who did not live in multigenerational homes. Within Latinx families, the extant literature indicates that the presence of grandparents in multigenerational homes and children's engagement with grandparents is associated with better cognitive and language outcomes (Grau et al., 2015; Mollborn et al., 2011; Pilkauskas, 2014), lower risk of child internalizing problems (Kang et al., 2021), lower risk of child externalizing problems (Hernandez, 2020), and greater prosocial behaviors (Cortes Barragan et al., 2024).

Grandparental Involvement

There is emerging research on grandparents' involvement in multigenerational households. A recent systematic review which examined families globally found that grandparents' presence in multigenerational homes and involvement in their grandchildren's care can have beneficial and adverse effects on their grandchildren's development (Sadruddin et al., 2019). For example, living in multigenerational homes predicted behavioral problems for children in a primarily Latinx sample of families living in low socioeconomic status neighborhoods (Kang, 2019). However, the presence of extended family members in the home also moderated neighborhood effects on children's behavioral problems, demonstrating a protective buffer for youth (Kang, 2019). Further, grandparents' involvement can vary. Xu and colleagues (2024) identified four distinct patterns of grandparent involvement in Chinese families with the "high-involvement and high quality" profile predicting better social skills and the least behavioral problems in grandchildren compared to grandparents in the low-involvement profile. While this is specific to Chinese families, these findings contribute to a broader understanding of grandparental involvement, which is likely relevant across various cultural contexts, including Latinx families.

The influence of grandparents in the home on youth may depend on factors such as immigration status. Kang et al. (2021) examined the interaction between Latinx mothers' various immigrant statuses (e.g., U.S.-born, documented. or undocumented) and Latinx grandparents newly residing in the home on youth behavior. For U.S.-born and undocumented Latina mothers, newly co-residing grandparents were associated with increased internalizing and externalizing behaviors in youth. However, for documented Latina mothers, consistent grandparent presence in the home was associated with decreased internalizing and externalizing behaviors. These findings illustrate that grandparents' presence impacts youth differently, influenced by immigration and generational status. While sudden grandparent presence (and possibly a novel authority figure to answer to) can negatively impact children's behavior, their role in cultural transmission and preparing youth to face racial and ethnic injustices is equally significant.

Grandparents play an instrumental role in sharing culture, heritage, and traditions with their grandchildren (Calzada et al., 2010). This influence may be especially present in multigenerational relationships. For instance, Williams et al. (2020) revealed that in Latinx families, the intergenerational transmission of cultural socialization messages from grandmothers to mothers and then from mothers to children had positive outcomes on child language and social development. Further, qualitative work by Jackson and colleagues (2020) highlighted how Latinx grandparents played vital roles as "beacons of cultural socialization" and "monocentric gatekeepers," in which grandparents provided a significant connection to their Mexican ancestry (p. 80). Of note, participants emphasized that their grandparents' roles in cultural socialization extended beyond childhood and adolescence, with grandparents maintaining these roles throughout their adult lives (Jackson et al., 2020). Similarly, Morales's (2021) qualitative work highlighted the cultural socialization provided by Mexican *abuelas* (grandmothers), who

reported seeing themselves as cultural gatekeepers in maintaining their culture alive through their grandchildren.

Despite the minimal research on Latinx grandparents as non-parental ERS figures, whether explicit or not, the few existing studies consistently highlight grandparents' role in cultural socialization. In contrast, research on Black grandparents as non-parental ERS agents, which is also extremely limited, suggests that in addition to cultural socialization messages, preparation for bias is another common ERS strategy conveyed by Black grandparents (Chancler et al., 2017). Given the ongoing challenges of racism and discrimination faced by Latinx youth, it is plausible that grandparents employ other ERS strategies, such as preparation for bias or promotion of mistrust. However, the paucity of research in this area suggests that grandparents' ERS strategies remain largely unexplored. To fully understand the dynamics of ERS in Latinx families, it is essential to understand the contributions of both parents and grandparents, as each plays a unique role in socialization.

The Current Study

In summary, the extant literature clearly demonstrates that Latinx youth experiences of discrimination can negatively impact their mental health (McCord et al., 2019; Paradies et al., 2015). ERS is an important cultural process that can help mitigate these effects. However, the effect of ERS on mental health outcomes appears to be complex. In some instances, some ERS strategies have been linked to better coping and well-being, while others have demonstrated mixed or even negative effects (Ayon et al., 2020; Umaña-Taylor & Hill, 2020). Specifically, while cultural socialization and egalitarianism have been associated with better coping and well-being (Gonzales-Backen et al., 2017; Jiménez & Glover, 2023, 2023; L. L. Liu & Lau, 2013; Salcido & Stein, 2023; Wang, Henry, et al., 2020), the current literature on preparation for bias is

mixed, with some studies indicating exacerbating effects (Liu & Lau, 2013), mitigating effects of discrimination on well-being (Hrapczynski & Leslie, 2019), and yet others demonstrating no significant findings (Ayon et al., 2020; Umaña-Taylor & Hill, 2020). In contrast, while understudied, the limited research on the promotion of mistrust suggests that it may exacerbate the impact of discrimination on depressive symptoms (L. L. Liu & Lau, 2013; Park et al., 2018, 2020). These important findings in the current literature lay the groundwork to understand how to best leverage ERS to support youth development; however, important gaps still remain in the literature.

Though research on ERS has grown considerably over the years, there are still important gaps in the literature that deserve attention. For instance, while the extant ERS literature has primarily focused on Black and African American parents and their children, it has left Latinx families underrepresented, as highlighted by recent review papers (Ayon et al., 2020; Umaña-Taylor & Hill, 2020). Further, ERS research has predominantly focused on the contributions of parents as the primary agents of ERS, leaving a gap in understanding the role of extended family members such as grandparents. Despite the significant role of grandparents in Latinx families, including their participation as members of their families' kin networks, adaptive cultures, and cultural gatekeepers, there is a significant lack of research on how they contribute to ERS. Given the ongoing challenges of racism and discrimination that the Latinx community faces, it is necessary to explore parental and grandparental ERS as avenues of potential support within Latinx families. Thus, the aims of this project are twofold.

Aim 1: This study will investigate the role of parents' ERS messages on the development of Latinx emerging adults by examining the frequency of specific types of ERS messages, their association with emerging adults' self-reported depressive symptoms, and the moderating effect

of parents' ERS messages on the association between Latinx emerging adults' experiences of discrimination and their self-reported depressive symptoms.

1a. Describe the frequency of parents' use of specific ERS messages (cultural socialization, preparation for bias, egalitarianism, and promotion of mistrust) as reported by Latinx emerging adults.

Hypothesis 1a. Parents are expected to primarily provide cultural socialization, followed by preparation for bias above egalitarianism and promotion of mistrust messages.

1b. Examine the associations among parents' ERS messages, emerging adults reported experiences of discrimination, and emerging adults' self-reported depressive symptoms.

Hypothesis 1b. It is expected that there will be a significant negative correlation between parental preparation for bias, cultural socialization, and egalitarian messages and emerging adults self-reported depressive symptoms, while promotion of mistrust will have a positive correlation.

1c. Assess whether each type of parental ERS message moderates the association between emerging adults' discrimination and their self-reported depressive symptoms.

Hypothesis 1c1. Parental cultural socialization messages are predicted to mitigate the association between discrimination and depressive symptoms.

Hypothesis 1c2. Parental preparation for bias messages are expected to mitigate the association between discrimination and self-reported depressive symptoms.

Hypothesis 1c3. Egalitarian messages from parents are expected to mitigate the association between experiences of discrimination on self-reported depressive symptoms.

Hypothesis 1c4. Parental promotion of mistrust messages will exacerbate the negative impact of discrimination on self-reported depressive symptoms.

Aim 2: This study will investigate the role of grandparents' ERS messages in Latinx emerging adults' development by characterizing the frequencies across the different types of ERS messages and the moderating effects of these messages on Latinx emerging adults' self-reported depressive symptoms.

2a. Describe the frequencies across the different types of ERS messages (cultural socialization, preparation for bias, egalitarianism, and promotion of mistrust) that Latinx emerging adults receive from their grandparents.

Hypothesis 2a. Grandparents will predominantly provide cultural socialization messages, with less emphasis on preparation for bias, egalitarianism, and promotion of mistrust, as reported by Latinx emerging adults.

2b. Examine the associations among grandparents' ERS messages, emerging adults' experiences of discrimination, and Latinx emerging adults' self-reported depressive symptoms.

Hypothesis 2b. Grandparents' preparation for bias, cultural socialization, and egalitarian messages are expected to be negatively correlated with depressive symptoms. In contrast, promotion of mistrust is expected to be positively correlated with depressive symptoms.

2c. To explore how the different forms of ERS messages received from Latinx grandparents may moderate the association between Latinx emerging adults' self-reported experiences of discrimination and self-reported depressive symptoms.

Hypothesis 2c1. Cultural socialization messages are expected to mitigate the negative impact of discrimination on emerging adults self-reported depressive symptoms.

Hypothesis 2c2. Preparation for bias messages are expected to mitigate the negative impact of discrimination on emerging adults self-reported depressive symptoms.

Hypothesis 2c3. Egalitarian messages are also expected to mitigate the association between discrimination and emerging adults self-reported depressive symptoms.

Hypothesis 2c4. Promotion of mistrust messages are expected to exacerbate the adverse impact of discrimination on depressive symptoms.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Procedure

Participants were recruited in the Southeastern United States via a combination of local community flyers, virtual ads, and local Latinx undergraduate organizations. Participant inclusion criteria was comprised of self-identifying as Latinx/Hispanic, 18 years of age or older in order to provide informed consent, currently enrolled as an undergraduate student, and either (a) had lived with a Latinx grandparent and parent or (b) indicated a close relationship with their Latinx grandparent as determined by a screener to assess participant eligibility. Participants who met eligibility criteria first completed informed consent prior to completing the self-administered battery of self-report surveys to assess their experiences of discrimination, ERS messages received from their parents and grandparents, and their self-reported depressive symptoms. All data were collected via Qualtrics, an online data collection and management software program. All participants received $30 in compensation for their time. The University of Georgia Institutional Review Board approved all study procedures.

Participants

A total of 92 Latinx undergraduate students were included in this study. Participants had a mean age of 20.8 (*SD* = 1.83), with 75.7% identifying as female and 24.3% as male. Most participants reported identifying racially as White (53.3%), followed by Other (23.9%), Black/Afro-Latino (12%), Bi-racial (9.8%) and Asian (1.1%). The majority of participants were seniors (32.6%), and most participants also reported holding part-time employment in addition to

being students (62%). Participants also reported on their own, parents', and grandparents' generational status. Most participants identified as first-generation (54.1%). Of these, 17% reported having first-generation parents, 31.9% reported second-generation parents, and the remaining reported "Other" (25.5%) or indicated they did not know (25.5%). This pattern reflects some possible variation in how participants interpreted generational status. Among participants who identified as second generation (21.7%), 50% reported their parents were first generation, 25% selected "Other," and 25% indicated they did not know. Of those who identified as third generation (10.9%), the majority (70%) reported second-generation parents, while 20% selected "other and 10% indicated they did not know. Regarding grandparents' generational status, 21.3% of first-generation participants reported third-generation grandparents, while 27.7% reported selecting "Other," and 40.4% indicated they did not know. Among second-generation participants, 45% selected "Other," and 35% reported they did not know their grandparents' generational status. . See Table 1 for detailed demographic information.

Measures

Adolescent Discrimination Distress Index (ADDI)

The Adolescent Discrimination Distress Index (ADDI; Fisher et al., 2000) is a 15-item measure utilized to assess an individual's distress regarding their experiences of discrimination in three distinct contexts, including educational discrimination (*"You were given a lower grade than you deserved"),* institutional discrimination *("You were hassled by police"),* and peer discrimination ("*People assumed your English was poor")* in addition to the total sum score. The ADDI first asks if an individual experienced an event with a yes or no response to assess the frequency of these experiences. This is followed by asking participants how much the experience upset the individual, with responses on a Likert scale ranging from a 0, meaning never, to 5,

meaning extremely. For the purpose of this study, participant frequency of experiences was used. Further, the ADDI has been validated in multi-ethnic populations (Fisher et al., 2000) and was previously used to assess discrimination distress in undergraduate students (Perkins et al., 2022) and Latinx samples (Cardoso et al., 2021). The ADDI measure demonstrated strong internal consistency (α = .82).

Center for Epidemiological Studies – Depression

The Center for Epidemiological Studies – Depression scale (CES-D; Radloff, 1977) is a 20-item measure and was used to assess symptoms of depression. Participants were asked if they felt any of the items of feelings in the past two weeks, and if so, to respond on a 5-point scale ranging from "Not at all or at less than one day" to "Nearly every day for two weeks." A total score was created by summing participants' responses, and higher scores indicate greater symptoms of depression. The scale has previously been used in samples of Latinx undergraduates (Herman et al., 2011; Morales & Wang, 2018). The CES-D total score demonstrated excellent internal consistency (α = .94)

Racial Socialization Scale

The Racial Socialization Scale (Hughes & Chen, 1997) is a 19-item measure designed to assess ethnic-racial socialization. Participants retrospectively reflected on the ethnic-racial socialization messages shared by their parents and grandparents and responded using a 6-point scale ranging from 1, meaning "Never," to 6, meaning "A lot of times." The measure comprehensively addresses the four tenets outlined in the Hughes et al. (2006) ERS framework. Preparation for bias messages focus on the potential of future experiences of racial bias and discrimination, teaching them to recognize and cope with these challenges (*"You may have hard times being accepted in this society because of your race"*). Egalitarian messages emphasize

equality and promote the idea that race should not be a factor that influences how individuals should be treated ("*People are equal, regardless of their race*"). Cultural socialization messages highlight the importance of learning about and valuing an individual's ethnic and racial identity and the significance of their ethnic and racial heritage ("*Learning about your race is an important part of who you are.*"). Promotion of mistrust messages emphasizes being cautious of interactions with individuals from different ethnic and racial backgrounds in an effort against potential prejudice from these individuals (*"It is a bad idea to date someone who is a different race than you are").* Responses were averaged, with higher responses indicating greater ethnic-racial socialization messages. The racial socialization scale has also previously been used in Latinx samples (Ayón et al., 2020). In this sample, the ERS measure demonstrated strong internal consistency for both parents (preparation for bias α = .93, cultural socialization α = .86, promotion of mistrust α = .77, and egalitarianism α = .76) and grandparents (preparation for bias α = .90, cultural socialization alpha =.87, promotion of mistrust α = .84, and egalitarianism α = .85).

Data Analytic Plan

All analyses were conducted using SPSS v. 29 and the PROCESS macro by Hayes (2017). Preliminary analyses were conducted to evaluate whether the study variables met normality assumptions, confirming that assumptions were satisfied. The data were examined for extreme values and true outliers. Little's test for Missing Completely at Random (MCAR) was conducted to assess and determine any potential missing data for the variables. Specifically, Little's test is a statistical tool used to evaluate whether the missing data in the variables occurred entirely at random, a crucial assumption for moderation analysis (Little, 1988).

Descriptive statistics were conducted to identify and understand the frequency of different types of ERS messages that emerging adults reported receiving from their parents (Aim 1a) and grandparents (Aim 2a). Frequencies were calculated for each type of ERS message (cultural socialization, preparation for bias, egalitarianism, and promotion of mistrust) to examine their prevalence. Next, bivariate correlations were calculated separately for parents' (Aim 1b) and grandparents' (Aim 2b) to examine associations among ERS, emerging adults' experiences of discrimination, and their self-reported depressive symptoms.

The final step in the primary analysis was to examine the potential moderating role of parents' (Aim 1c) and grandparents' (Aim 2c) ERS messages on the association between emerging adults' experiences of discrimination and their self-reported depressive symptoms. These analyses were conducted using the PROCESS macro by Hayes for SPSS with mean centering applied to prevent multicollinearity and bootstrapping set to 5,000 to determine the 95% confidence levels, as recommended by Hayes (2017). Results were considered statistically significant if the 95% CI did not include zero, indicating a significant moderation effect. When significant interactions were detected for an ERS message type (Hypothesis 1c1-1c4 and 2c1-2c4), the conditional effects of discrimination on depressive symptoms at low, average, and high levels of ERS messages were probed and interpreted.

A post hoc power analysis was completed using G*Power 3.1 (Faul et al., 2007) to evaluate the statistical power of the moderation analysis. G*Power was set to detect a medium effect size ($f^2 = .15$) with an alpha level of .05. The statistical test was set to use Linear multiple regression: Fixed model, R^2 increase, which was necessary to test the interaction term in the moderation model. The model included three predictors: the independent variable, the moderator variable, and their interaction term. Results of the power analysis indicated that with a total

sample size of 77 participants, the achieved power was .80, which meets the threshold for sufficient power.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Preliminary Analysis

Results of the Little's MCAR test indicated no missing values for key variables including experiences of discrimination, self-reported depressive symptoms, or ERS messages from parents or grandparents. Therefore, no further handling of missing data was necessary. Multicollinearity was not a concern, as variance inflation factors (VIFs) ranged from 1.54 - 3.52, and tolerance ranged from .28 - .64 (Daoud, 2017; Hayes, 2017). The assumption of independence of residuals was also met as indicated by a Durbin-Watson value of 1.59, falling within the acceptable range (Durbin & Watson, 1971; Hayes, 2017). Finally, normality of residuals was evaluated through skewness (.84) and kurtosis (.35), both of which fell within an acceptable range, suggesting that residuals were approximately normally distributed (Hayes, 2017).

Primary Analysis

On average, participants reported experiencing low to moderate levels of discrimination (M = 5.80, SD = 3.48), suggesting that while discrimination was present, it was not frequently encountered by emerging adults in this sample. Participants' self-reported depressive symptoms were in the moderate range (M = 18.54, SD = 13.84). Bivariate correlation analysis revealed that experiences of discrimination and depressive symptoms were not significantly related (r = .07, p = .50).

Aim 1a: Descriptive Statistics of Parental ERS

To examine the frequency of parental ERS messages, descriptives statistics were calculated for each type of ERS message: preparation for bias, cultural socialization, promotion of mistrust, and egalitarianism. Mean scores, standard deviations, and ranges were used to assess the extent to which emerging adults reported receiving these ERS messages.

Emerging adults reported receiving cultural socialization messages most frequently from their parents (M = 5.21, SD = 1.11), followed by egalitarian messages (M = 4.05, SD = .91), and preparation for bias messages (M = 3.77, SD = 1.16). The least-frequently reported ERS messages were those of promotion of mistrust (M = 2.89, SD = 1.32). For detailed descriptive findings, see Table 2.

Aim 2a: Descriptive Statistics of Grandparental ERS

Similar to parental ERS, grandparental cultural socialization messages were the most frequently reported form of ERS as reported by emerging adults (M = 5.02 SD = 1.24). This was followed by egalitarianism (M = 3.66, SD = 1.11), preparation for bias (M = 3.51, SD = 1.43) and promotion of mistrust being the least-frequently reported type of ERS received from grandparents (M = 3.05, SD = 1.62). A full summary of descriptive statistics is provided in Table 3.

Aim 1b: Parental ERS Bivariate Correlations

Bivariate correlations were conducted to assess the associations among experiences of discrimination, self-reported depressive symptoms and parental ERS. Participant experiences of discrimination were significantly and positively related to parental preparation for bias messages (r = .48, p < .001), but not to other dimensions of parental ERS. Self-reported depressive symptoms were negatively associated with parental cultural socialization messages (r = -.27, p =

.009), and egalitarian messages (r = -.32, p = .002). Among the dimensions of ERS, parental preparation for bias was significantly and positively associated with cultural socialization (r = .37, p < .001), promotion of mistrust (r = .21, p = .05), and egalitarian messages (r = .29, p = .01). Parental cultural socialization was also significantly and positively associated with promotion of mistrust (r = .26, p = .01) and egalitarianism (r = .47, p < .001). For detailed parental correlations, see Table 4.

Aim 2b: Grandparental ERS Bivariate Correlations

Bivariate correlations among experiences of discrimination, self-reported depressive symptoms, and grandparental ERS revealed a significant and positive association between experiences of discrimination and grandparental preparation for bias (r = .45, p < .001). There was a significant negative association between self-reported depressive symptoms and grandparental egalitarian messages (r = -.24, p = .02). Associations across grandparental dimensions of ERS revealed significant positive associations between grandparental preparation for bias and cultural socialization (r = .45, p < .001), promotion of mistrust (r = .22, p = .04) and egalitarian messages (r = .54, p < .001). Cultural socialization was significantly and positively associated with egalitarian messages (r = .61, p < .001). For detailed grandparental correlations, see Table 5.

Aim 1c: Parental Ethnic-Racial Socialization as a Moderator Between Experiences of Discrimination and Depressive Symptoms

The first set of moderation models tested parental ERS messages as moderators of the association between experiences of discrimination and emerging adults' self-reported depressive symptoms. Moderation effects were not significant for preparation for bias, cultural socialization, or egalitarian messages (see Table 6).

For parental promotion of mistrust messages, while the overall model was not significant (R^2 = .05, F(3, 88) = 1.58, p = .19), a significant interaction effect emerged, b = -.67, se(b) = .33, t(88) = -2.02, p = .04, 95% CI [-1.32, -.01], ΔR^2 = .04. See Figure 1 for a visual representation of the moderation effect. Probing the interaction via simple slopes analysis revealed that the effect of discrimination on depressive symptoms was not significant at low (b = 1.05, p = .06), average (b = .16, p = .69), or high (b = -.71, p = .27) levels of parental promotion of mistrust. Given these non-significant simple slopes, a Johnson-Neyman analysis was conducted to identify the specific values at which the effect of discrimination on depressive symptoms was significant. Johnson-Neyman analysis identifies the specific values of the moderator variable (i.e., promotion of mistrust) at which the association between the independent (i.e., experiences of discrimination) and dependent variables (i.e., depressive symptoms) transitioned between significance and non-significance (Hayes, 2017; Johnson & Neyman, 1936). Johnson-Neyman analysis revealed that the association was significant only when parental promotion of mistrust was below -1.64 (below 10.87% of the sample). Specifically, at values below this threshold, discrimination had a significant positive association with depressive symptoms, indicating that emerging adults who received very low levels of parental promotion of mistrust experienced a stronger negative impact of discrimination on their self-reported depressive symptoms. See Table 7 for detailed results of the Johnson-Neyman findings.

Aim 2c: Grandparental Ethnic-Racial Socialization as a Moderator Between Experiences of Discrimination and Depressive Symptoms

The second set of moderation models tested grandparental ERS messages as moderators of the association between emerging adults' experiences of discrimination and their self-reported

depressive symptoms. The moderation effects were not significant for grandparental preparation for bias, cultural socialization, promotion of mistrust, or egalitarian messages (see Table 8).

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Ethnic-Racial Socialization (ERS) is a vital developmental process for Latinx youth, in which families communicate messages about race, discrimination, and cultural pride in order to prepare them for navigating a social world where their racial and ethnic identities may be challenged. This study investigated the frequency of Latinx parental and grandparental ERS messages and examined whether parents or grandparents' ERS messages had a moderating effect on the association between Latinx emerging adults' experiences of discrimination and their self-reported depressive symptoms. The findings from this study contribute meaningfully to the extant literature in two primary ways. First, the extant literature on Latinx parental ERS messages is still in its early stages, with gaps in understanding the use and impact of specific ERS dimensions (i.e., egalitarianism and promotion of mistrust). Secondly, a novel aspect of this study is quantitatively assessing participants' report of their grandparents' ERS.

In alignment with our first hypothesis, we found that participants reported receiving cultural socialization messages most frequently from parents and grandparents, and that promotion of mistrust was the least frequently reported form of ERS. However, in contrast with our hypothesis, egalitarianism was the second most utilized forms of ERS followed by preparation for bias. When considering our second hypothesis, the bivariate correlations supported some, but not all, of our hypotheses. Specifically, the results revealed that emerging adults' experiences of discrimination were positively and significantly related to parental and grandparental preparation for bias messages with a medium effect size. In line with our

hypothesis, participants' self-reported depressive symptoms were negatively associated with both parental and grandparental egalitarian messages, however only parental cultural socialization had a negative association with depressive symptoms. Finally, when exploring the moderating effect of ERS on the association between participants' experiences of discrimination and depressive symptoms, we did not find any significant results across any of the grandparental ERS dimensions. Of the parental dimensions of ERS, only promotion of mistrust indicated a moderating effect, but only at very low levels of mistrust. Notably, participants' experiences of discrimination were not significantly associated with depressive symptoms at the bivariate level, which is inconsistent with previous findings in the literature.

The findings from the current study can be contextualized within the broader literature on ERS. Below, the results for each type of ERS are considered by domain.

Cultural Socialization

Among all the ERS literature in Latinx families, cultural socialization has emerged as the most extensively studied dimension, with a robust body of research consistently demonstrating its positive impact on youth development (Ayón et al., 2020). Therefore, it is not surprising that our current study revealed cultural socialization to be the most frequently reported form of ERS received as reported by participants. The emphasis of parental and grandparental cultural socialization suggests it plays a foundational role in Latinx families, regardless of generational status, aligning with prior established research emphasizing its significance as a central component of Latinx ERS (Ayón et al., 2020; Cross et al., 2020; Wang, et al., 2020a). For instance, longitudinal work with Mexican American youth found that maternal cultural socialization predicted increases in ethnic-racial pride, which in turn helped counteract the negative impact of discrimination across adolescence (Stein et al., 2023).

Though there is little quantitative research on grandparents ERS, qualitative research has identified grandparents as "cultural beacons" for their grandchildren, maintaining direct ties to their ancestry, cultures, and countries of familial origin (Chancler et al., 2017; Jackson et al., 2020). The findings in this study extend the literature by providing quantitative evidence to support what was only previously qualitative findings, demonstrating that grandparents' perceptions of themselves as gatekeepers of their culture and heritage via cultural socialization are also experienced and reported by their grandchildren.

Egalitarianism

We had hypothesized that egalitarian messages would be less utilized than preparation for bias in Latinx families due to previous systematic reviews that have highlighted the underutilization of egalitarianism. Specifically, the extant literature consistently reports egalitarianism as understudied across ethnically and racially diverse samples (Umaña-Taylor & Hill, 2020; Wang, et al., 2020a; Wang, et al., 2020b), particularly in Latinx populations (Ayón et al., 2020). Therefore, caution must be exerted when interpreting findings regarding egalitarianism. Our findings indicated that egalitarianism was the second most utilized type of ERS. The higher-than-expected frequency of egalitarian messages by both parents and grandparents suggests that this form of ERS may actually be utilized more frequently than the extant literature has previously observed. It may be that Latinx emerging adults attending a Primarily White Institution (PWI) find egalitarian messages particularly salient as they navigate predominantly white spaces and seek ways to foster a sense of belonging (Liu et al., 2019; Moore, 2008). Additionally, a systematic review by Priest and colleagues (2014) found that college students across racial and ethnic backgrounds recalled ethnic-racial pride and egalitarian messages more than preparation for bias or promotion of mistrust messages. Our findings on the

usage of egalitarianism aligns closely with the Priest and colleagues' findings. It may be that Latinx families prefer to prioritize messages of equity over explicit conversations on discrimination.

Moreover, the limited research that has examined egalitarian messages posits that it may lend itself to positive psychological well-being (Ayón et al., 2020), which may explain the negative association between parental and grandparental egalitarianism and self-reported depressive symptoms as reported by participants. It is possible that egalitarian messages may help foster a positive self-concept and sense of optimism in emerging adults, thereby contributing to the association with lower self-reported depressive symptoms (Ayón et al., 2020; Umaña-Taylor & Hill, 2020; Villegas-Gold & Tran, 2018).

Preparation for Bias

The current literature on preparation for bias in Latinx families has relatively consistently found that youth who receive preparation for bias messages may be better attuned with recognizing discriminatory experiences (Ayón et al., 2020; Perry et al., 2025). For example, work by Kulish and colleagues (2019) found that Latinx youth who reported receiving more preparation for bias messages from their mothers were more likely to report experiences of discrimination. Our findings are consistent with that of Kulish, by indicating that preparation for bias and experiences of discrimination were closely related for both parental and grandparental preparation for bias. Together, these findings suggest that preparation for bias messages may heighten Latinx youths' awareness of bias in their daily lives. Further, Latinx individuals who receive preparation for bias messages may be better equipped respond to discrimination, as these messages provide tools to navigate these detrimental experiences (Ayón et al., 2019; Sanchez et al., 2018). This is especially important given that preparation for bias includes coping strategies,

which can help individuals manage and respond to discriminatory experiences. For example, work by Ayón and colleagues (2019) found that Latinx parents engage in both avoidant and active coping strategies as part of preparation for bias, highlighting its role in helping youth navigate discrimination.

Regarding the preparation for bias's role in relation to depressive symptoms, the findings relating to Black (Umaña-Taylor & Hill, 2020) and Latinx populations (Ayón et al., 2020) are mixed. Our findings indicated no association between parental or grandparental preparation for bias messages and their emerging adults' depressive symptoms, in alignment with the some of the extant literature. It could be that there are other contextual factors at play, since past work suggests that the association between preparation for bias and mental health outcomes may be dependent on parental emotion socialization (Dunbar et al., 2015), quality of mother-child relationships (Lambert et al., 2015), and even parents own experiences of discrimination (Brown et al., 2022).

Promotion of Mistrust

Though promotion of mistrust is understudied in Latinx populations, some studies suggest that it is also underutilized in Latinx families (Ayón et al., 2019), in alignment with our findings, where promotion of mistrust was the least frequently reported ERS dimension by parents and grandparents. Compared to the other dimensions of ERS, participants' report of parental promotion of mistrust had the highest standard deviation, suggesting that the extent to which emerging adults received these messages varied more across the sample. Future research should explore if variability in promotion of mistrust messages is related to specific family experiences with discrimination or differing attitudes toward trust and safety. Although there was

not a significant correlation, our moderation analyses revealed an association for participants who experienced particularly low levels of promotion of mistrust messages.

Our moderation analyses revealed that only parental promotion of mistrust moderated the association between discrimination and depressive symptoms, and only at very low levels of promotion of mistrust. In contrast, the association was no longer significant at higher levels of parental promotion of mistrust. These findings suggest that low socialization around the promotion of mistrust may leave individuals more vulnerable to the negative effects of discrimination. For example, an individual who has received little to no messaging about promotion of mistrust may interact with majority group members unaware of subtle discriminatory behaviors. Without the tools to recognize these experiences as forms of discrimination, they may instead internalize negative feelings, resulting in greater feelings of distress. This distress may stem from feelings of self-doubt, confusion regarding the experience, or an inability to attribute unfair treatment to external biases, leading individuals to internalize the situation rather than recognize the systematic discrimination as the root cause.

While prior research has primarily associated promotion of mistrust with poorer mental health outcomes among ethnically and racially marginalized youth (Kwon et al., 2022; Liu & Lau, 2013; Saleem et al., 2023; Umaña-Taylor & Hill, 2020), others have found mixed (Park et al., 2020), and null findings (Huynh & Fuligni, 2010). This emerging research suggests that its effect may be more complex and dependent on other contextual factors. For example, prior work has found that ERS messages, including promotion of mistrust, may be emphasized and potentially function differently across childhood, adolescence, and emerging adulthood (Priest et al., 2014; Wang, et al., 2020b), reflecting shifts in developmental needs and social environments. Further, because promotion of mistrust has been less studied when compared to other ERS

tenants, Ayón and colleagues (2020) highlight the need for longitudinal research to understand the evolving nature of ERS. They posit that while the promotion of mistrust may be related to negative outcomes for children and adolescents, it may have a different effect at later developmental stages.

Building on this call, recent research has begun to highlight some of the more nuanced effects of promotion of mistrust, which suggests that its impact may vary across ethnic-racial groups (Philip, 2024). Specifically, Philip (2024), found that for Black and Latinx emerging adults, promotion of mistrust buffered against the association between race-based stressors and mental health outcomes, such that at high levels, this association became non-significant. Our findings align with this pattern, as we found that at low levels of parental promotion of mistrust, discrimination was strongly related with depressive symptoms. However, at higher levels of promotion of mistrust the association was no longer significant. This finding suggests that under certain conditions, promotion of mistrust may have a potential protective effect for Black and Latinx populations. Future research should explore whether the effects of promotion of mistrust observed in these studies also apply to emerging adults within different social contexts.

This study also informs future work on ERS across generations. Guided by Garcia Coll's (1996) integrative model for child development, this study shed light on how both parents and non-parental agents of ERS, specifically grandparents, participate in transmitting ERS strategies within Latinx families. The integrative model posits that families from historically marginalized backgrounds utilize socialization processes such as ERS as part of their adaptive cultures. These current findings support this framework, demonstrating that parents and grandparents reinforce cultural pride and connection to their family’s ancestry and prepare youth for the realities of discrimination they will encounter (Hughes et al., 2006).

Perry and colleagues (2025) posit in their recent review of racial socialization that extended family, including grandparents, may, in fact, serve to complement parental ERS. However, while our descriptive findings suggest some differences between parents and grandparents, these patterns were not directly tested for statistical significance. Future research should empirically examine whether grandparents' ERS messages are meaningfully distinct from parental ERS and how they might contribute uniquely to youth well-being. Parents, typically a child's primary socializer, appear to balance messages of cultural pride with preparation for bias, equipping their children with the tools to recognize and navigate discrimination (Ayón et al., 2020; Hughes et al., 2006). Our findings revealed that grandparents utilized cultural socialization and egalitarianism frequently, reinforcing ethnic pride and equality.

This generational difference may reflect how families adjust their socialization strategies based on their lived experiences. For example, Umaña-Taylor and Yazedjian (2006) found generational differences in maternal ERS messages, mothers who had recently immigrated to the US primarily focused on cultural socialization while mothers who had been in the US longer focused on preparation for bias messages. A similar pattern may be present among grandparents, who, depending on their immigration experiences and generational status, may lean toward reinforcing cultural identity over discussing discrimination. In this study, most participants self-identified as first-generation immigrants, and while there was variation in their parents' and grandparents' generational status, many were also unsure about their grandparents or parents' immigration status, presenting a methodological challenge when attempting to understand how immigration history might influence ERS across generations. However, the specific ways in which generational status might influence ERS remains largely understudied to our knowledge, leaving room for speculation until it can be empirically tested. Migration history, experiences

with discrimination, and generational proximity to immigration may all shape how Latinx families engage in ERS. Together, these findings illustrate the use of adaptive cultures, specifically how different Latinx family members may adjust their ERS practices based on their history.

This study also reinforces the importance of kin networks as important non-parental agents of ERS and youth development. Consistent with prior qualitative research, the results indicate that grandparents likely do serve as "cultural gatekeepers" (Jackson et al., 2020), aligning with our findings as participants study reported that their grandparents engaged in cultural socialization messages, which focus on fostering cultural pride and connection to ancestral heritage, underscoring their role in maintaining familial ties. The role of kin networks in ERS may actually be more generalizable across other ethnic-racial families. In Indian Asian American families living in multigenerational homes, Subramaniam and Carolan (2022) found that grandparents played a significant role in cultivating their grandchildren's cultural connection and maintaining ties to their heritage. Similarly, Charity-Parker and Adams-Bass (2023) found that racial socialization messages from extended family members significantly shape Black youths' beliefs and coping mechanisms. The current study extends this understanding to Latinx families, demonstrating that grandparents contribute to ERS, by reinforcing cultural pride and maintaining connections to cultural heritage.

However, grandparents' role in preparing youth for future racial bias appears to be more limited, potentially reflecting generational differences on race and discrimination. While some grandparents may acknowledge discrimination, others might prefer an assimilationist perspective, emphasizing hard work and perseverance over discussing inequities. Some older Latinx individuals might adhere to the American Dream ideology and believe in a meritocratic

society, where success is supposedly attainable through individual effort (Krogstad, 2018). This ideology may shape some older generations framing around discrimination. In contrast, parents today may be raising children in what feels like a particularly hostile racial and xenophobic climate where anti-Latinx rhetoric remains prevalent. These parents may feel a greater urgency to help prepare their children for future racial and ethnic bias against them. This pattern underscores the need for research to examine how intergenerational and the evolving sociopolitical climate shapes ERS.

Limitations & Future Directions

While this study contributes new insights into ERS, including the extension of ERS research to include the measurement of grandparental ERS, it is important to discuss its various limitations and future areas of research to expand the understanding of this area.

First, the nature of this study utilized cross-sectional data collection. Though this method was appropriate for the aims of this study, cross-sectional data limits the ability to interpret these findings. In the case of this study, a novel aspect was to understand the types of ERS messages shared by grandparents. However, making causal inferences would require longitudinal data to examine how grandparental messages impact youth over time. The need for further longitudinal ERS research broadly has been noted in various ERS review papers (Ayón et al., 2020; Hughes et al., 2006; Priest et al., 2014; Umaña-Taylor & Hill, 2020). Longitudinal studies are especially pertinent, considering that prior research states that parents share different messages based on youths' developmental stages (Hughes et al., 2006). Might grandparents follow a similar pattern to parents based on youths' developmental stages and how might these messages be related to different outcomes of youth psychosocial well-being? Future work can address these gaps by implementing more longitudinal research. The ERS data collected in this study are retrospective.

Because the measure was not bound by a specific time frame, participants essentially reflect on their parents and grandparents ERS messages across their lifespan. Because of this limitation, participants may only be reporting on the most salient socialization practices or the most recent messages that stood out to them.

Further, the developmental stage of participants, being emerging adults, is an additional limitation to consider. Because all participants in this study were college students, this may limit the generalizability of findings to emerging adults who are not seeking postsecondary education. These findings may also not be generalizable to younger groups (i.e., early childhood, adolescents) who are still actively shaping their ethnic-racial identities and perceptions of discrimination. Unlike emerging adults, younger children likely receive direct ERS messages from their family in response to current experiences of discrimination, while emerging adults have had time to reflect on their socialization. Further, extant research on ERS in populations of young children have mostly relied on parental report of ERS (Priest et al., 2014), suggesting that ERS may be captured differently depending on the reporter. Conducting similar research with younger participants still living within their family environments and are actively receiving ERS messages may be a solution to address some of these limitations and increase our understanding of ERS in multigenerational homes. Additionally, directly assessing parental and grandparental ERS via observational methods or interviews could help create a more comprehensive picture of ERS transmission.

Additionally, over half of the participants in this study self-identified as first-generation, suggesting a large proportion of the sample likely immigrated to the United States. Past research has noted that immigrant families may approach discrimination and ERS differently than families that have lived in the U.S. for longer periods of time (Meca & Schwartz, 2024). Such

differences include immigrant families prioritizing assimilation or not recognizing discrimination experiences (Ayón et al., 2018; Ayón & García, 2019). Future research should aim to understand how immigration history, experiences of discrimination, and cultural stress intersect to shape how ERS is utilized among immigrant families.

Another limitation of this study was the use of self-report measures, especially regarding grandparental ERS, a newly developing area of research. The use of survey measures does not provide additional insights into the contexts of how, when or why specific ERS messages are being shared. For example, survey measures do not necessarily capture the nuanced interactions between family members during the socialization process or the circumstances that prompt the transmission of specific ERS messages. Future directions should consider the use of qualitative methodologies to help capture the rich context in which family members share ERS. Research on grandparents ERS would especially benefit from qualitative methods as this is a novel area of ERS research and would greatly benefit from more descriptive and contextual understanding. Observational methods can also help illuminate how parents and grandparents engage in specific situations that would elicit conversations on race and discrimination. For example, the Racial Socialization Observation Task (RSOT; Smith-Bynum et al., 2016) provides racially charged vignettes and asks dyads to discuss how they would handle these scenarios. This methodological approach provides insight into how socializers may explain their reasoning and strategies for responding to the event while simultaneously providing youth the chance to discuss their perspective and captures the dynamic real-time interactions between family members. The RSOT has successfully captured ERS in parent-child dyads (La Barrie, 2022; Osborne & Caughy, 2023) and could potentially be extended to include grandparental interactions or other non-parental ERS agents.

Finally, the lack of familial proximity is another limitation of this study. Participants in this study were emerging adults, many of whom, in theory, have not been living in the same home with their families who may have moved away to college, navigating new environments without their families for the first time. This change in proximity to family may influence the way ERS is recalled and experienced. It could be that parental and grandparental ERS may function differently during when they are youth are living with family versus being emerging adults with less proximity and more independence. For instance, parental ERS might occur more frequently during childhood and adolescence through regular conversations and reactions to real time experiences of discrimination. However, as youth begin to transition into emerging adulthood and move away to college, these interactions would become less frequent. Similarly, grandparental ERS might become less consistent as emerging adults begin to spend less time with their grandparents. Further, this study did not require living in a multigenerational home with grandparents as an inclusion criteria. Therefore, grandparental ERS might differ based on how often youth interacted with their grandparents. Future research should examine grandparental ERS in multigenerational homes to create a holistic perspective of ERS in multigenerational households. It may be that youth living in multigenerational households might have more regular, day-to-day interactions with their grandparents, providing more opportunities to share grandparental ERS. Longitudinal research of multigenerational homes can also provide important insights into how parents and grandparents ERS evolves over time.

Conclusions

Despite the current study's limitations, our findings make necessary contributions to the ERS literature. First, by assessing understudied dimensions of ERS (i.e., egalitarianism, promotion of mistrust) in Latinx families. Our findings revealed that egalitarianism was a

regularly utilized dimension of ERS as reported by participants, suggesting that Latinx families may regularly incorporate egalitarian messages as part of their broader ERS strategies. Second, our quantitative assessment of grandparental ERS represents a novel contribution to the literature, responding to calls for applying ERS frameworks to multigenerational family dynamics. This is especially important for Latinx families, where grandparent relationships play a foundational role in cultural transmission. Without understanding how these multigenerational relationships shape ERS, an essential piece of the puzzle remains missing to develop a cohesive picture of ERS in Latinx families.

Together, these results help provide insight into the role of both parental and grandparental ERS, demonstrating that ERS is a multigenerational process that extends across family roles and contexts. Our findings align with Garcia Coll's integrative model, specifically by highlighting the role of kin networks as key ERS agents within Latinx families. However, the paucity of research on grandparental ERS merits the need for future studies to explore how grandparental ERS messages may evolve across generations, how they compare to parental messages, and their impact on youth well-being. Expanding ERS literature parental agents is essential to create a more holistic understanding of ERS. As Latinx families navigate an ever-changing sociopolitical landscape, deepening our understanding of ERS across generations will be crucial for fostering resilience, cultural identity, and psychosocial well-being in Latinx youth.

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Table 1

Demographics

Sample demographic details	Total Sample (*n* = 92)
Age	
Range	18-25
M (SD)	20.8 (*1.83*)
Gender %	
Female	75.7
Male	24.3
Race %	
Asian	1.1
Black/African American/Afro-Latino	12.0
White	53.3
Bi-Racial	9.8
Other	23.9
Education %	
Freshman	18.5
Sophomore	18.5
Junior	22.8
Senior	32.6
Other	7.6
Employment %	
Full time job in addition to school	7.6
Part time job in addition to school	62.0
No job in addition to school	30.4
Participant Generational Status %	
First Generation	51.1
Second Generation	21.7
Third Generation	10.9
Other	16.3
Parental Generational Status %	
First Generation	21.7
Second Generation	23.9
Third Generation	1.1
Other	34.8
Not Sure	18.5
Grandparental Generational Status %	

First Generation	12.0
Second Generation	3.3
Third Generation	10.9
Other	42.4
Not Sure	31.5

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Parental ERS Messages

ERS Message Type	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Preparation for bias	3.77	1.46	1	6
Cultural Socialization	5.21	1.11	2	6
Promotion of Mistrust	2.89	1.32	1	6
Egalitarianism	4.05	0.91	1.5	6

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics of Grandparental ERS Messages

ERS Message Type	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Preparation for bias	3.51	1.43	1	6
Cultural Socialization	5.02	1.24	1	6
Promotion of Mistrust	3.05	1.62	1	6
Egalitarianism	3.66	1.11	1	6

Table 4

Bivariate Correlations Among Study Variables - Parental ERS

	1	2	3	4	5
1. ADDI Frequency	–				
2. CES-D Total Score	.07				
3. Parent Preparation for Bias	.48**	.01			
4. Parent Cultural Socialization	.08	-.27**	.37**		
5. Parent Promotion of Mistrust	-.04	.04	.21*	.26*	
6. Parent Egalitarianism	-.01	-.32**	.29**	.47**	.16

Note. ADDI = Adolescent Discrimination Distress Index; CES-D = Center for Epidemiological Studies – Depression. *Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5

Bivariate Correlations Among Study Variables - Grandparental ERS

	1	2	3	4	5
1. ADDI Frequency	–				
2. CES-D Total Score	.07				
3. Grandparent Preparation for Bias	.45**	-.06			
4. Grandparent Cultural Socialization	.16	-.14	.45**		
5. Grandparent Promotion of Mistrust	.17	.05	.22*	.20	
6. Grandparent Egalitarianism	.01	-.24*	.54**	.61**	-.00

Note. ADDI = Adolescent Discrimination Distress Index; CES-D = Center for Epidemiological Studies – Depression. * Correlation is significant at the.05 level (2-tailed). ** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6

Moderation Summary and Conditional Effects - Parental ERS

	b	SE	*t*	*p*	95%CI	Conditional Effects Based on ERS			
Preparation for Bias									
Discrimination	3.6	0.47	0.76	.45	-.58, 1.30				
Preparation for Bias	-0.41	1.13	-0.37	.71	-2.66, 1.83				
PB x Discrimination	-0.46	0.26	-1.76	.08	-.98. .06				
Cultural Socialization									
Discrimination	0.33	0.41	0.82	.41	-.48, 1.14				
Cultural Socialization	-3.57	1.27	-2.8	.00	-6.10, -1.03				
CS x Discrimination	0.35	0.39	0.91	.36	-.41, 1.11				
Promotion of Mistrust						PM	Effect	95% CI	*p*
Discrimination	0.16	0.42	0.39	.69	-.66, .99	-1 SD	1.05	-.06, 2.16	.06
Promotion of Mistrust	0.45	1.09	0.41	.68	-1.72, 2.60	Mean	0.16	-.66, .99	.69
PM x Discrimination	-0.66	0.33	-2.02	.05	-1.32, -.01	+1 SD	-0.72	-2.00, .57	.27
Egalitarianism									
Discrimination	0.31	0.4	0.78	.44	-.48, 1.11				
Egalitarianism	-4.9	1.52	-3.22	.00	-7.93. -1.87				
EG x Discrimination	-0.43	0.44	-0.97	.33	-1.31, .44				

PB = Preparation for Bis, CS = Cultural Socialization, PM = Promotion of Mistrust, EG = Egalitarianism

Table 7

Moderator Values defining Johnson-Neyman Regions of Significance

Parental PM	Effect	SE	*t*	*p*	95% CI
-1.89	1.43	0.70	2.04	.04	.04, 2.84
-1.64	1.26	0.63	1.99	.04	.00, 2.52
-1.64	1.26	0.63	1.99	.05	.00, 2.51
-1.39	1.09	0.57	1.91	.06	-.05, 2.23

Table 8

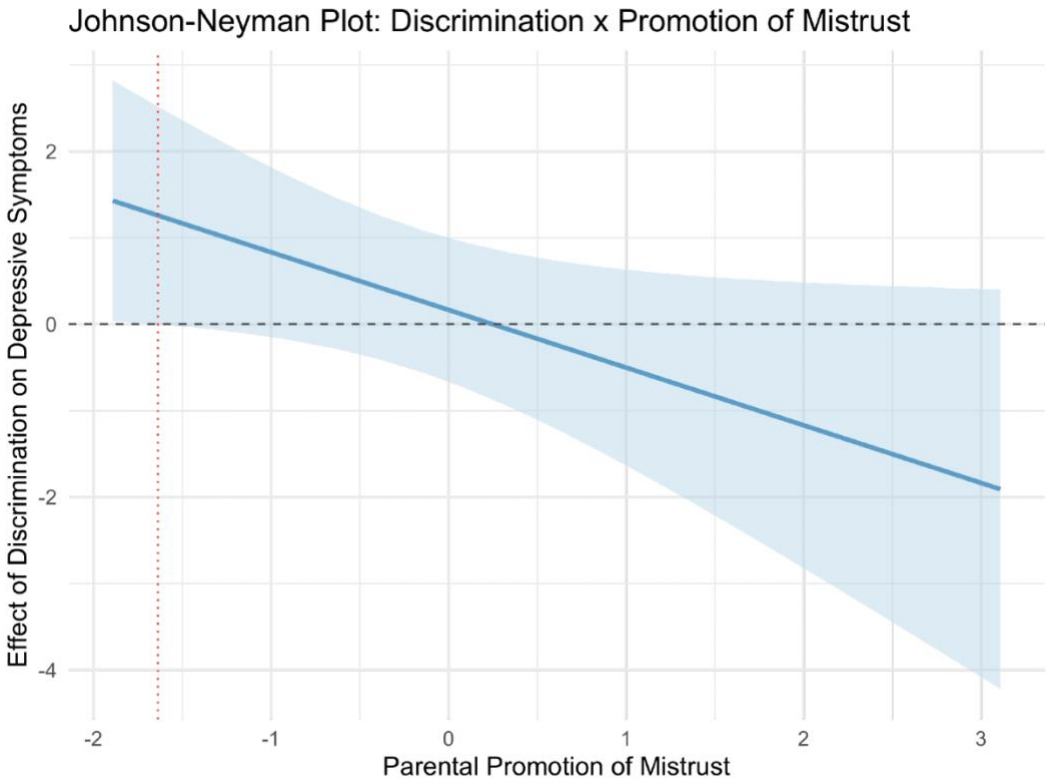
Moderation Summary - Grandparental ERS

	b	SE	*t*	*p*	95%CI
Preparation for Bias					
Discrimination	0.52	0.47	1.1	.27	-.42, 1.45
Preparation for Bias	-1.21	1.15	-1.05	.30	-3.48, 1.07
PB x Discrimination	-0.23	0.3	-0.77	.44	-.84, .37
Cultural Socialization					
Discrimination	0.35	0.43	0.83	.41	-.50, 1.20
Cultural Socialization	-1.69	1.19	-1.42	.16	-4.06, .67
CS x Discrimination	0.15	0.35	0.44	.66	-.54, .84
Promotion of Mistrust					
Discrimination	0.04	0.44	0.09	.93	-.84, .91
Promotion of Mistrust	0.57	0.92	0.62	.54	-1.25, 2.39
PM x Discrimination	-0.48	0.28	-1.69	.09	-1.03, .08
Egalitarianism					
Discrimination	0.37	0.42	0.86	.39	-.48, 1.21
Egalitarianism	-3.06	1.28	-2.38	.02	-5.61, -.51
EG x Discrimination	-0.26	0.38	-0.63	.50	-1.02, .50

PB = Preparation for Bis, CS = Cultural Socialization, PM = Promotion of Mistrust, EG = Egalitarianism

Figure 1

Johnson Neyman plot illustrating the conditional effect of discrimination on depressive symptoms at varying levels of parental promotion of mistrust.



*Note: The shaded region indicates the range where the association between discrimination experiences and depressive symptoms were statistically significant.