Ethnic Identity among Latina/o Adolescents in the U.S.:

Directions for Research and Practice

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Abstract

This study is a content analysis examining ethnic identity among Latina/o youth in research literature.The keywords ethnic identity, Latino, Latina, and Hispanic were searchedwith an age range of 13-17 years for published articles. 34 published articles were found following inclusion criteria and the results of the study were then organized into subsections based on the types ethnic identity measure and categories based on dependent outcomes. Overall the analysis revealed that there has been an increase in research on Latino/a youth with the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) as the most prevalent measure of ethnic identity and a majority of research focused on adverse variables. As well,analysis indicated that further exploration is needed for a better understanding of ethnic identity and its influences on positive youth development.

Introduction

Latinas/os are an increasingly important United States (U.S.) demographic group. By 2050, they are expected to account for more than 25% of the total U.S. population increasing from47.8 million in 2010 to 102.6 million (Gonzales, Fabrett, & Knight, 2009; U.S Census Bureau, 2006). Among U.S. Latinas/os, youth are particularly important. Over a quarter of Latinas/os currently living in the U.S. are under the age of 18 (Gonzales et al., 2009).Despite this increasing importance of the Latina/o population, Latinas/os in general—and Latina/o youth in particular—rarely have been included in psychosocial research.Liang, et al. (2009) found that out of 15,310 articles published in 7 non-ethnic specific journals, only 2% focused on Latinas/os.In a different review, Rodriguez and Morrobel (2004) examined the articles published in eight youth development and Latina/o focused journals between 1996 and 2001. Of 1,010 empirical articles published in this period, only 30% included Latina/o youth, 6% indicated results on Latina/o youth, and less than 3% focused specifically on Latina/o youth (Rodriguez &Morrobel, 2004). These patterns suggest a need for more research focused on Latinas/os in general and Latina/o youth in particular.

Ethnic identity is a particularly important variable to include in research efforts involving Latina/o youth**.** This is because ethnic identity is an essential aspect of psychosocial development among U.S. Latina/o youth, limiting risk factors and promoting positive growth (Gonzales et al., 2009).Defined as the way in which an individual integrates ethnicity into their self-identification (Quintana& Scull, 2009), existing research findings suggest that ethnic identity is associated with multiple positive outcomes including—but not limited to—reducedsubstance abuse, increasedpositive self-concept, countering discrimination, and increased self–esteem (Gonzales et al., 2009).

Because of the importance of ethnic identity in US on Latina/o youth, it is important for scholars to have a complete understanding of the available literature in this area. Therefore, the current studyexamined and organized the peer-reviewed published empirical literature examining ethnic identity among U.S. Latina/o teens and itsfindings guide future research.

Method

Identifying Articles

In order to conduct the content analysis, articles related to Latino/a youth and ethnic identity were identified using the search engine PsycINFO. Specifically, combinations of the key words ethnic identity, Latino, Latina and Hispanic were used in searches limited to peer-reviewed empirical articles focused on adolescents 13 to 17 years of age. This resulted in 184 unique citations. Each of these citations was then examined for its ability to meet inclusion criteria of which required to be peer-reviewed, measure ethnic identity, and focus on Latino/a youth. Only 34 articles met these criteria.

The 34articles meeting inclusion criteria were used as initial data for a content analysis following the procedures outlined by Graneheim and Lundman (2004). As a first step, meaning units were defined. Two types of meaning units were judged to be important in this literature: the approach used to measure ethnic identity and the dependent variable studied in relation to ethnic identity. As a second step, categories were developed to group units together meaningfully. Measures of ethnic identity were grouped into three categories based on the type of measure: Established measures, unique measures, and interviews. Dependent variables were also grouped into three categories based on outcomes: adverse variables, positive variables, and neutral variables. The ensuing presentation of results is organized according to the measure categories

such that each category as related to the type of measure used to assess ethnic identity is covered in a dedicated subsection. The discussion of each specific measurement approach is guided by the dependent variable categories, such that the relation of the examined approach to positive, negative and adverse variables as correlated with ethnic identity is addressed in each section.

Results

Of the 34 articles examine in the present study 14 specific measures were used to measure ethnic identity. The findings from each of the studies, along with the measures are reviewed below and organized into subsections defined by the type of measures used. Within each subsection, findings are presented according to the categories developed to organize the positive, negative, and neutral dependent variables used in each study.

Established Measures

Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure

The MultigroupEthnic Identity Measure (MEIM) is a scale designed to assess ethnic identity across different ethnic groups, providing scores regarding two important processes associated with ethnic identity, identification and exploration (Phinney&Ong, 2007). Designed by Phinney (1992) the MEIM was a 14-item measure assessing three aspects of ethnic identity: on positive attitudes and a sense of belonging (5 items), on ethnic identity achievement (7-items) and addressing ethnic identity behavior and practices (2-items) (Phinney, 1992). Phinney (1992) administered the MEIM to a diverse sample of 417 high school students and 136 college studentsand found reliability coefficients of .81 for high school students and .90 for college students (Phinney 1992). Factor analysis of the data suggested a single factor of ethnic identity (Phinney, 1992).

The MEIM was later reduced to a 12-item scale by Roberts et al. (1999), then to a 6-item scale by Phinney and Ong (2007). Roberts et al. (1999) used an exploratory factor analysis and a confirmatory factor analysis to ensure data obtained from a sample of 5,423 middle school students who completed the MEIMand other measures. Results of (5-items) and (7-items) indicated the MEIM consisted of two factors, commitment and exploration. The two subscales showed internal consistencies of .81 through .89(Roberts et al., 1999).

Phinney and Ong (2007) first conducted focus groups about the MEIM with 93 high-school students. Based on results additional changes were made to the 12-items reducing them to 10-items (Phinney&Ong, 2007). Through factor analysis of data provide by 19 students, Phinney and Ong (2007) identified a final list of 6-items containing 3-items for commitment and 3-items for exploration (Phinney&Ong, 2007).

The MEIM has been used in 18 of the studies meeting inclusion criteria in the present study. The findings of these studies are summarized below following the order of the categories developed to organize the dependent variables used in the studies.

Adverse variables. Six studies examined adverse variables using the MEIM. The adverse outcome examined most often in the literature is *substance and drug abuse,* which was examined in four of studies included in this review. Of the four studies James et al. (2000) and Zamboanga (2009) found positively correlated results between ethnic identity and drug use. In James et al. (2008) a sample of127 adolescents with 13 Latino/as, participated in a multiple of questionnaires that assessed their ethnic identity and drug use. Particularly the ethnic minority sample in the study indicated a higher ethnic identity while the results showed that high levels of ethnic identity were associated heavy drug use. Overall, findings in this study suggested that an achieved ethnic identity associated with membership in an ethnic minority group does not

diminish drug involvement. Similarly, Zamboanga (2009) analyzed the relationship between ethnic orientation and American orientation to drug and substance abuse, focusing specially on cigarettes, marijuana and alcohol. Using a sample of 347 Hispanic adolescents, ethnic identity (as measured with the 10-item MEIM) was positively related with marijuana usage, but negatively associated with cigarette usage.

In contrast with the previous studies, Schwartz et al. (2009) and Valdez et al. (2006) found no significant relationship between ethnic identity and substance use. In Schwartz et al. (2009) data was produced by 227 high-risk Hispanic youth along with their parents. Using the 12-Item MEIM (Roberts et al., 1999), results suggested that ethnic identity was not related to any of the variables including substance abuse. Similarly, Valdez et al. (2006) found that there was no relationship between ethnic identity and drug abuse. Valdez et al. (2006) recruited150 Mexican American gang-affiliated females, ages 14-18 who completed the 12-item MEIM and measures of drug use. In the sample ethnic identity and substance use were unrelated.

The adverse variable, *sexual risk taking* was examined in three studies. While Warren et al. (2007) found a significant correlation with ethnic identity, James et al. (2000) and Schwartz et al. (2009) did not. Warren et al. (2007) examined the relationship between ethnic identity and unprotected sex using a sample of 189 lesbian, gay and questioning youth, 68 of whom werer as self-identified Hispanic; Warren et al. (2007) examined sexual behavior such as unprotected sex. Results revealed that ethnic identity was positively correlated with unprotected sex among Hispanic youth. In contrast ethnic identity was unrelated to sexual risk taking in both Schwartz et al. (2009) and James et al. (2007)

Only one study included in this review examined the relation between ethnic identity and *suicides* using the MEIM. In O'Donnell et al's. (2004) study, a sample of 879 students from

three different public schools, 15% of whom were Latina/o completed 5-items assessing suicidal

attempts including depression and hopelessness, and the 12-item MEIM (Phinney, 1992). Results

suggested that ethnic identity and suicides were unrelated.

Neutral Variables. Nine studies examined the relation between ethnic identity and

variables that could be considered as neutral using the MIEM. Four of these examined *ethnic*

affirmation.

The study conducted by Branch et al. (2000) explored the effects of age, gender, and

ethnic groups membership on ethnic identity and ego status measures using a sample of 248

students,163 of which self identified as Latino/a, completed the14- item MEIM (Phinney 1992)

and the Extended Objective Measure of Identity (EOMIS) developed by Bennion and Adams

(1986). Results suggested that ethnic identity and ego status were significant relation among 13-

19 and 20-23 year olds.

In Gonzalez' (2009) study, 122 students self-identified as Mexican, Mexican American

or Chicano completed the 14-item MEIM (Phinney, 1992) and other measures. Results suggested

that positive racial and ethnic encounters led students to strengthen their ethnic identity in

various ways such as not having to hide their ethnic selves or justifying their same ethnicity

friendships, indicating relation between ethnic affirmation and ethnic identity.

 In the study by White et al. (2008) gathered data from 188 youth of various ethnic

backgrounds including 23.3% who were Hispanic. Participants completed the MEIM (Phinney,

1992), which was used to calculate pride and attitudes. Results suggested that self identified

Black and Hispanic youth in foster care had significantly higher scores than White youth on both

subscales while the overall score was not significantly different between Black and Hispanic

youth. Further results suggested that youth in a family-sanctioned placement had higher scores

on the subscale of ethnic affirmation, belonging and commitment (White et al., 2008).In contrast to these three previously described studies, the ethnic minorities sample in James et al. (2000) showed a low positive relationship ethnic behaviors and affirmation/ belonging.

Two studies used in the MEIM to examine the relation of ethnic identity and *acculturation.* Unger et al. (2007) compared the Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican-Americans II (ARSMA II; Cuellar et al., 1995), ARSMA (Unger, 2002) and the MEIM (Phinney, 1992). The ARSMA is an eight-item scale first developed to assess acculturation among adolescents, and was revised to the ARSMA II as a 30-item scale assessing cultural preferences on media, food, holidays, friends, and language. The sample consisted of 221 Hispanic/ Latino high school students who completed these measures. In results Unger et al. (2007) placed significant importance on Hispanic/Latino acculturation and ethnic identity as overall results indicated higher score of Hispanic/Latino orientation correlated with higher scores of ethnic identity.

On the other hand, Schwartz et al. (2007) collected data from a sample of 347 Hispanic students completion of the MEIM (Roberts et al., 1999) alongside measures of acculturation, academic achievement and self-esteem. Results suggested Hispanic orientation and ethnic identity were correlated, although the relationship was not strong. Although there were low levels of Hispanic orientation, ethnic identity was significantly high within the sample.

One study, examined *socialization* with ethnic identity using the MEIM as a measure of ethnic identity. In a study by Kalsner and Pistole (2003) using a sample of 255 students with 9.5% being Hispanic, the MEIM (Phinney, 1992) was compared alongside the Parental Attachment Questionnaire (PAQ)(Kenny, 1987), the Multigenerational Interconnectedness Scale (MIS) (Gavazzi & Sabatelli, 1988), and the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire

(SACQ) (Baker and Syrk, 1984). Results suggested ethnic identity was significantly related to social adjustment with other groups and goal commitment and that college adjustment was influenced by stronger ethnic identity within college students

Two studies focused on the examination of ethnic identity and *perceived awareness of discrimination and stereotyping* using the MEIM. The study of Martinez & Dukes (1997) collected data from 12,386 junior high students using seven items of the MEIM (Phinney, 1992).Results suggested that an achieved ethnic identity undermined social denigration and stereotypes (Martinez & Dukes, 1997). Likewise, in the results the Gonzalez (2009) study mentioned previously, youth indicated that when participating in events perceived to combat stereotypes, they felts a renewed commitment.

*Positive Variables.*11 studies using the MEIM focused on positive variables examining *self- esteem* in eight studies and *academic achievement* in four studies. The study by Carlson et al. (2000) examined a sample of 1,080 adolescent girls with 241 being Hispanic using a self-report questionnaire. Results further suggested that Hispanic girls overall had lower levels of self-esteem and ethnic identity was related a predictor of self-esteem in young adolescents girls.

Similarly, the study by Sieger and Renk (2007) used a sample of 166 females, with roughly 50 identifying as Latina. Participants completed the MEIM (Phinney, 1992) along with Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) and other measures. Results suggested indicated ethnic identity to be positively correlated with self-esteem.

As well, in the study by Phinney (1992) positively correlated results were identified between ethnic identity and self-esteem. The MEIM was administered to a sample of 417 high school students and 136 college students with 41 being Hispanic. Results from the study

suggested that ethnic identity was significantly higher among minority groups, but not significantly different within college students.

Similarly, Worrell (2007) examined data collected from 319 gifted students. Students completed the MIEM (Phinney, 1992). Results suggested that ethnic identity was predictive of self-esteem among Hispanics. Furthermore results from the study conducted by Martinez and Dukes, (1997) suggested that students who identified higher ethnic identity suggested higher self-esteem, purpose in life, and self-confidence.

In the study by Phinney (1993) 109 mostly Hispanic high school students were placed into two separate conditions watching negative and positive videos on ethnic identity. Results suggested that viewing negative information resulted in lower ethnic ratings but not in lower ethnic self-concept with self-esteem as a predictor of ethnic ratings. Overall, results suggested a relationship of ethnic identity and self-esteem mediating impact of threat in the negative condition (Phinney, 1993).

Furthermore, the study by Schwartz et al. (2007) suggested self-esteem as a mediator between ethnic identity and academic achievement and that identifying with an ethnic group seemed to increase positive feelings of self and positive social adjustment. Similarly, Zamboanga's (2009) study suggested that self- esteem mediated the relationships between ethnic identity and substance abuse while acting as a significant protective factor.

Academic achievement was examined in four studies using the MEIM. These studies individually revealed results relating specifically to academic achievement and ethnic identity. Chang and Le's (2010) study consisted of a sample of 280 whom participated in the MEIM (Phinney, 1992) and other measures of academic achievement. Results suggested that ethnic

identity did not mediate the relationship between multiculturalism and academic achievement, although ethnic identity was significantly predictive of academic achievement within Hispanics.

Similarly, Phinney's (1992) study suggested that ethnic identity was predictive of school GPA, although they suggested that predicting academic achievement differed among many minority groups in the school environment. Furthermore the study by Schwartz et al. (2007) suggested that the relationship between self-esteem and academic grades was mediated by the variable of self –esteem, identifying that ethnic identity was academic grades. While, Worrell's (2007) study found ethnic identity to be a predictor of schools GPA.

Ethnic Identity Measure of Pfeifer et al. (2007)

This scale was originally developed by Pfeifer et al. (2007) to measure ethnic identity in children. Although similar to the MEIM (Phinney, 1992) it includes six items three of which assess ethnic centrality and three of which assess private regard. Pfeifer et al. (2007) first tested the measure with 392 elementary school children. In this sample, the scale had an internal consistency Cronbach alpha of .65.

Neutral Variables. Only one study has examined ethnic identity using the scale developed by Pfeifer et al. (2007). Brown et al. (2011) used data provided by a sample of 350 elementary and middle school students including 163 Hispanic students. Results identified a relation between ethnic identity and *ethnic affirmation.* Scores on the scale ranged from 1 to 4 as high scores indicated more positive and important sense of ethnic identity, with a Cronbach alpha of .72 in this specific study (Brown et al., 2011).

Brown et al. (2011) exhibited correlated results on the relationship between ethnic identity and ethnic affirmation, examining the strength of ethnic identity compared to gender and salience. In a sample of 350 elementary and middle school students consisting of 163 Hispanic

students, Brown et al. (2011) examined the awareness of gender, ethnic bias, and ethnic identity. The study focused on three aspects analyzing biases most salient to the individual with measures and components of ethnic identity and gender. Ethnic identity assessed using the developed scale consisting of six items assessing the positive affects associated with individual's ethnicity and importance of ethnicity to self-concept. Scores on the scale ranged from 1 to 4 as high scores indicated more positive and important sense of ethnic identity, with a Cronbach alpha of .72 in this specific study (Brown et al., 2011).

Results from Brown et al. (2011) yielded four clusters of comparison between measures of salience, gender and ethnic identity, and positivity of identity. The first group which displayed salience and central gender and ethnic identity, indicated positivity about ethnicity and gender, while the group indicating neither salient nor central gender and ethnic identity, indicated ethnicity to be unimportant. The third group identified as being only salient and central gender indicated ethnicity as being unimportant to the self. The final group of which identified salient and central ethnicity only indicated ethnicity as both positive and important. Results suggested a relationship between ethnic identity and ethnic affirmation within minority youth.

Similarly Brown et al's. (2011) study examined *perceived awareness of discrimination* and biases. Results suggested that minority youth compared to White/European youth were more likely to be aware of ethnic biases, while those with higher gender identity and less ethnic identity were less likely to perceive ethnic bias.

Mexican American Attitude Scale

The Mexican American Attitude Scale was developed to measure acculturation of one's Mexican and American culture (Lopez, 1970). Previously, the scale was redeveloped to 33-items through the investigation of patterns, language, food habits and other factors of acculturation,

focusing specifically on the function of ethnicity in Mexican culture the scale (Lopez, 1970). The scale was tested on a sample of 67 subjects with 49 being self- identified Mexican. 19 of the 33 items tested significant in analysis, reducing the scale to 19-items with half the items being pro Mexican identifiers and the other half Pro Anglo identifiers (Lopez, 1970).

One study found under inclusion criteria measured ethnic identity used the Mexican American Attitude Scale.

Neutral Variables. The study by Andujo (1988) investigated ethnic identity and the dependent variable *family and background influence* of categorized as a neutral variable. Andujo's (1988) study examined Hispanic adoptees from transracial-adopted families collecting data from 60 families of who completed the Mexican American Attitude Scale (Lopez, 1970) Results suggested that adoptees associated their ethnic identity with that of their parents. As well, high-income Hispanics were less connected to their culture more so than Hispanics of the middle-income. Overall results suggested that the socialization experiences of adoptees were important in determining ethnic identity development.

Racial-Ethnic Self-Schemas (RES)

The RES contains the four subscales of aschematic RES, in-group RES, dual RES and minority RES used Oyserman et al., (2003).Aschematic RES identification includes lacking an RES, as responses focus more so on the individual and less on the group or identify the group to be unimportant. Identification of In-group RES focuses only an individual's in-group without membership to larger society while responses focuses on behavior and practices of the in-group. Minority RES examines when an individual within an in-group works to overcome obstacles to maintain large society resources, and dual RES examines an individual identification with both in-group and the larger society (Oyserman et al.,2003).

One study measured ethnic identity using the Racial-Ethnic Self-Schemas (RES) as a measure for ethnic identity with results summarized according to category and variables

Positive Variables. The study of Altschul et al. (2008) examined ethnic identity and *academic achievement* using the RESAltschul et al's. (2008) consisted of 185 Lationo/a students who were surveyed on the RES (Oyserman et al., 2003). Following analysis results suggested that ethnic identity was a better predictor of grades. Associated with academic success, racial ethnic identity was predictive of positive effects of bicultural identities on academic outcomes in the presences of negative stereotypes.

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Unique Measures
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Ethnic Labels and Ethnic Identity

In the study developed by Marsiglia et al. (2001) the scale consist of a twenty-item questionnaire assessing ethnic label and ethnic identity of adolescents consisting of the two dimensions. The scale focuses on ethnic behavior, speech, and looks, with ethnic pride. Ethnic identity is assessed based on participant response to twenty-items on individual connectedness to selected ethnic group. Eight items focus on ethnic behavior, speech and looks addressing the level in which participants feel their behavior, speech, and looks are consistent with those of their ethnic group along with the level in which friends come from selected ethnic group with a Cronbach alpha of .82. Seven items on ethnic pride assess ethnic affiliation, and ethnic attachment including response on the importance of selected ethnic group, interactions with ethnic group, and attitudes and feeling towards and about ethnic group with a Cronbach alpha of .76. The last five items measure negative perceptions about ethnic group.

This measure was used in one study to assessed ethnic identity along sided dependent variables.

*Adverse Variable.*One study examined ethnic identity with the ethnic label and ethnic

identity scale and its relationship to *drug abuse.* The study conducted by Marsiglia et al. (2001)

examined 408 students with 52% being Mexican American with data collected questionnaire

using the ethnic labels and ethnic identity scale. This particular study excluded the five items

assessing negative perceptions of ethnic groups, as pattern of the factor analysis were not related

to drug abuse.

Results from Marsiglia et al's (2001) study suggested that ethnic factors were

significantly correlated with drug exposure, relating more with ethnic group behavior, speech

and looks. Responses indicated that minorities with a strong sense of ethnic pride reported less

drug use and exposure. Although ethnic identity by itself was not a strong predictor of frequency

of drug use as ethnic labels along with ethnic identity indicated the difference in drug us more so

that ethnic identity did alone.

Ethnic Identity Measure (Herman, 2004)

The study of Herman (2004) assessed the importance of ethnic identity. Using a measure

with theCronbach of .76. the scale consisted of three items addressing the importance of

respondent's ethnic identity and ethnic background being known to others, two, overall rating

and feelings about their ethnic identity, and perceptions of discriminations received from peers,

teachers, and other adults.

One study examined the correlation of ethnic identity using the scale.

Neutral Variable. Herman's (2004) study assessed the variables of *perceived discrimination and*

cultural values with ethnic identity using this scale. The study by Herman (2004) consisted of

sample of 1,496 high school students expressing the importance of ethnic identity and perception

of ethnic discrimination. Using a categorization method of ten biracial categories, student results

analyzed ethnic identity and affiliation, demographic characteristics and self-esteem. Results

suggest those who identified as Hispanic and Hispanic-Whites perceived more amounts of ethnic

discrimination than monoracial Whites (Herman, 2004).

Furthermore, comparisons indicated that feelings about ethnic background were similar

across racial groups, while racial identification was not related to feelings about ethnic

background. Specifically within Hispanic groups, feelings about ethnic identity were identified

to be more important than in White identifiers.

Reference Group Orientation

The Reference Group Orientation was produced in the study by Rotheram-Borus

(1990)with items on ethnic attitudes, values, use of English, cross-ethnic contact, and cross-

ethnic conflict. Items focused on endorsement of attitudes about dating within the same ethnic

group, degree of stereotyping, ethnic pride, the power of one's ethnic group, dimensions of

orientation towards groups' rights and individual's rights, authority, competitiveness,

cooperation within interpersonal relationships, and examining the amount of English used by

participants at home, with friends and in schools. The scale revealed a Cronbach alpha

of .78.Furthermore cross-ethnic contact items assessed rating on weekly cross-ethnic contact in

the context of sports activates, hanging out, spending time with friends, work, dating,

participating in parties, studying and going to church with component of cross- ethnic conflicted

measuring the level of tension respondents felt within their schools and neighborhood.

One study used the components for reference group orientation to assess ethnic identity

Neutral Variable. The study conducted by Rotheram-Borus (1990) assessed the neutral

variables of *acculturation*, and *self-esteem* with ethnic identity. In Rotheram-Borus's (1990)

study, 330 students, 30% being Hispanic, completed three sessions of the study, which composed

of filling out a questionnaire assessing their components of reference group orientation as a measure for ethnic identity. Results on acculturation and ethnic identity were significantly related, with mainstream self-labeling being associated with factors of ethnic attitude, speaking English, cross-ethnic contact and cross-ethnic conflict. Students who were highly ethnically identified were less likely to partake in cross-ethnic contact and perceived greater ethnic conflict. Hispanic students specifically used English less outside of school. Overall, results suggested that that minority students identified both with their own ethnic group and that of mainstream culture. As well, Rotheram-Borus' (1990) study examined self-esteem finding that self-esteem was not significantly related to reference group labeling.

     Positive Variable. Rotheram-Borus' (1990) further examined academic achievement in relation to ethnic identity.

     Results in the study by Rotheram-Borus (1990) suggested that within minority groups academic achievement was not related to reference group labeling and ethnicity.

Ethnic Loyalty and Cultural Awareness Measure

     Snyder (1982) used the structured from Padilla's (1980) conceptualization of ethnic loyalty and cultural awareness in a study, which measured ethnic loyalty in the context of Mexican-origin identity, preference of Mexican cultural events, and social networks including Mexican-origin individuals. The instrument assessing ethnic identity found in Synder (1982) consisted of a 56 item questionnaire about ethnic identity, ethnic pride, language usage, ethnic social networks, familiarity with the Mexican culture, ethnic preferences, and the disadvantages and advantages of mixed parentage.

One used ethnic loyalty and cultural awareness to assessed ethnic identity specifically, in relation to a dependent variable are further summarized and organized under categories and dependent variables.

Neutral Variable. The study by Synder (1982) study assessed ethnic pride in relation to ethnic identity. Ethnic identity within individuals with one parent of Mexican origin and one Non-Hispanic parent was investigated in Synder (1982) within a sample of 63 children, from 36 different couples. Participants participated in a 56-item questionnaire measuring ethnic loyalty and cultural awareness. Analysis suggested that ethnic identity was correlated with ethnic pride and loyalty. In the study, 69.8% of participants identified themselves as Mexican- origin, especially within the females, who emphasized being proud of their Mexican heritage. As well, 84% of participants indicated being familiar with Mexican social events, although the relationship was slightly more evident within females. Data suggested that most participants expressed ethnic pride in their heritage.

Model of Oppositional Culture

The model of oppositional cultured structured in the study by Herman (2009) was based on the central concepts of Ogbu's theory (Ogbu and Davis, 2003) which included the positivity of one's feelings about ethnic identity. The Obgu's theory suggests that having a strong ethnic identity within an involuntary minority group decreases academic performance, while identifying with a voluntary white group or a minority increases academic performance. Herman (2009) adapted this model into the measure assessing items on educational expectations and school engagement, individual perceptions of ethnic discrimination, minority peer group membership and the positivity of feeling about ethnic identity. Items on the model that focused on ethnic identity included the importance of ethnic background measures assessing the importance of

others knowing about one's ethnic background. Perceptions of ethnic discrimination measured responses to how often respondents felt peers, teacher and other adults were unfair due to their ethnicity, with a Cronbach alpha of .76 while group membership measure asked respondents to indicate whether not they would categorize as a member of an ethnic minority crowd.

One study established these components into the measure of ethnic identity in relation to a dependent variable.

Positive Variable. The study of Herman (2009) assessed a positive dependent variable while examining ethnic identity. Herman's (2009) study adapted the three theories of status attainment, oppositional culture, and educational attitudes on academic achievement into the assessment. Using a sample of 5, 117 student, 376 being self- identified Hispanics, a total of four surveys were completed over a two-year time span from the 1988 to 1990. The survey was adapted based on the components of the three theories measuring academic orientation of peers, school deviance and academic performance, the components of ethnic identity, effort in school, and peer academic values. Results suggested that ethnic identity was not a strong factor in analyzing the differences in academic performance among multiracial and monoracial students.

CDC Prevention Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System Ethnic Identity Measure

The questionnaire taken from the CDC Prevention Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System applied in the study by Sanderson et al. (2004) consisted of variables assessing dating victimizations while exploring ethnic identity and acculturation. Items included questions about Latino origin, place of birth for youth, parents' language use, salience of ethnicity, and one's perceived discrimination.

One study examined ethnic identity using the CDC prevention youth risk behavior surveillance system ethnic identity measure.

Adverse Variables. Sanderson et al's (2004) study examined *dating violence* correlated with ethnic identity revealing significant results. Investigating dating violence as correlated with ethnic identity Sanderson et al's (2004) study used a sample of 4,525 self-identified Hispanic students, who completed a questionnaire of the CDC Prevention Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System. Measures concentrated on assessing dating violence, drug use, physical fights, ethnic identity and acculturation. Findings from the study indicated significant results between dating violence and ethnic identity. Specifically females were more like to report dating violence, with females who indicated their ethnicity to be very important at a reduced dating victimization.

<div align="center">*Interviews*</div>

Four Section Interview

Originally, the qualitative interview conducted in the studyby Fergus (2009), was structured in four sections assessing (1) familial, socioeconomic, and migratory background, (2) ethnic Identity and (3) academic orientation, and (4) interpretation of constraints and opportunity. Protocol of this interview consisted of open ended questions, closed ended questions, and a one page survey related to the student success in life analyzing education, luck, and skin color.

Familial, socioeconomic, and migratory background focused on capturing components within each student for frame working responses. Section two on ethnic identification and construct gauged expression on ethnic and racial self-identification with perception of racial and identification of others. The third section focused on academic orientation, analyzed respondents self reports of educational and occupational aspirations with questions about perception of the utility of schools, accommodation to school norms, opportunity and differential treatment in school, and school group affiliation. The final section explored student perception of opportunity,

outlining students' responses of interpretation on social equity and inequity, status attainment and mobility, and views of advantages and disadvantages of self-identified group and other ethnic group.

The Four-Section Interview structure was used in one study found meeting inclusion criteria.

Neutral Variable. This measure was used to examine *ethnic affirmation* and *perceived discrimination and stereotyping*, indicating significant results with ethnic identity.

The study by Fergus (2009) used a sample of 17 self- identified Mexican and Puerto Rican high. The interview was conducted using the Four-Section Interview Structure along with a one-page survey for assessment in the study. Results from the study suggested three significant factors related to ethnic affirmation. Skin color acted as a significant factor in identification of students. Students discussed the use of skin color as a type of racial affiliation, involving an external interpretation of behavior. Significantly within students identified as Mexican/Hispanic looking and Black/biracial looking external factors such as skin color and self- identification influenced how other situated them racially and ethnically.

Furthermore, results on perceived discrimination and stereotyping suggest a significant relationship between perceive discrimination and stereotyping with ethnic identity. Students identified as Mexican/ Hispanic looking and Black/biracial looking indicated experiencing discrimination different from those identified as White looking. Responses showed that students perceived discrimination to be part of their everyday life in school, limiting their opportunity of engagement. Similarly, Black/biracial looking students indicated experiences of dual discrimination and social acceptance. Indicated both being discriminated against and accepted by African American students.

Ethnic Label Meaning Interview

The ethnic label meaning interview was conducted in the study by Mallot et al. (2009) in which interview questions examined the process of label selection and meaning and the significance of influences in the process. Taken from Mallot (2009) interview questions consisted of eleven items of which include (1) What label of labels do you use when you talk about yourself? (2) What does "X" [labels] mean to you? (3) In which situations do you use which labels? (4) Can you think of times or situations when you chose to use certain labels? (5) Can you think of times or situations when you chose not to used certain labels? (6) How did you pick you labels? (7) Who or what influenced your choice to use "X" [the labels]? (8) What did you call your self in the past? (9) If your label has changed since the past, what prompted the change [what age were you]? (10) How old were you when you first started thinking about your label? (11) Who/what made you first start thinking about your label?

One study found with inclusion criteria, used this interview structure to identify ethnic label meaning with ethnic identity.

Neutral Variable. The study by Mallot et al. (2009) examined a *ethnic labeling* using this interview structure showing significant results with ethnic identity. Malllot et al's (2009) study to examined influences using a sample of 20 youth of Mexican Origin. Students participated in a structured interview process, consisting of eleven questions taken from (Mallot, 2009). Results suggested that, participants felt their label meaning exhibited Mexican traits such as food, values, dress, history, traditions, and Spanish language. Findings suggest that the meaning of ethnic labels was different among participants, while one's origin was identified to be an important aspect of label meaning. Findings suggest that ethnic identity was significant with ethnic labeling among youth.

Ethnic Identity Development Interview

The interview process consisted of 20-items assessing participant's level of ethnic exploration, ethnic identity commitment, and attitudes about ethnicity. The interview structure was taken from Phinney and Tarver (1989) focusing on ethnicity, was revised by Phinney (1989) and used to assess the stages of identity development within minority youth. The interview items used in Phinney's (1989) study focused on the three factors in ethnic identity of ethnic exploration, commitment and attitudes. Items assessing ethnic exploration including participants' discussion of ethnic background with parents and other adults, and feelings about influences of their background in adult life. Furthermore, items investigating ethnic identity commitment focused on the importance of culture to participants. The third component on attitudes about ethnic identity assessed feelings about ethnic background, such as enjoying factors and strengths of within one's culture.

One study within inclusion criteria used this interview process to identify ethnic identity

Neutral Variable. The study of Phinney (1989) examined *ethnic affirmation* revealing results related to ethnic identity. Phinney's (1989) study assessed 91 students of which 22.3 % were Hispanic, who partook in an interview investigating their ethnic exploration, ethnic identity commitment and attitudes about ethnic identity. Following the interview participants were assigned to one of three stages of ethnic identity, which included, the diffusion/foreclosure stage, the moratorium stage, and the achieved ethnic identity stage. Results suggested that there was no significant difference among ethnic groups within the different stages of ethnic identity development. Although results indicated that subjects who had achieved ethnic identity scored the highest on the measure of ego identity and psychological adjustment.

MexiRican Ethnic Identity (Potowski & Matts, 2008)

The study conducted by Potowski and Matts (2008) developed this interview structure to analyzed ethnic identity and the factors of a dual ethnic identity with youth who biracial identify as Mexican and Puerto Rican. Interview items address the factors that included home language use, family relationships, friend's ethnicity, and participation in cultural events.

One study examined MexiRican ethnic identity with interviews in relation to a dependent variable.

Neutral Variable. The study by Potowski and Matts (2008) assessed *ethnic affirmation* and *perceived discrimination and stereotypes* while examining ethnic identity. Potowski and Matts (2008) conducted a study using 24 youth with parents from both Mexican and Puerto Rican descent who identified as MexiRican. Interviews were conducted among participants assessing cultural influences, followed by three tasks identifying Spanish dialect. Of the three tasks, two focus on vocabulary identification, and the third on listening and interpretation in which participants were asked to listen and interpret a story in Spanish. Findings from Potowksi and Matts (2009) suggested self-labels and cultural practices as dominant themes. One third of participants identified with an ethnic label that recognized their mixed ethnic background specifically acknowledging their mixture of identities. Similarly most participants stated to partake in cultural practices such eating food, listening to music and attending parades related to culture, revealing significant results in ethnic affirmation and ethnic identity.

Furthermore, findings on perceived awareness and discrimination suggested participants were able to identify both negative and positive stereotypes heard about their cultures, although the mentions stereotypes did not seem to present challenges their development of a dual ethnic identity.

Interview Procedure Gonzalez (2009)

The study of Gonzalez (2009) developed an interview protocol based on the level of academic engagement, experiences and racial/ethnic encounters of students. Dividing interviewees into four groups based on scores from a previously administered questionnaire, Gonzalez (2009) categorized participants into identified groups labeled resilient (high academic engagement/ high discrimination), ideal (high academic engagement/low discrimination), academically at risk (low engagement/low discrimination), and multiple risk (low academic engagement/ high discrimination). Consisting of 50-items, the interview questions focused on participants multiple identifiers, relationships to school, and their school identity, of which questions included, what are you proud of? What is school like for you? In what ways are you a good student?

Further questions in Gonzalez (2009) assessed ethnicity encounters, participant relationship to academic outcomes, suggestions for teachers, salience of race/ethnicity in schools, and perceptions of race or ethnicity. Questions ranged from asking about the effects of race/ethnicity within school for example to discuss the difference in experiences in school of different races compared to a school of just one race.

One study examine ethnic identity using the interview structure in relation to a dependent variable

Neutral Variable. The study by Gonzalez (2009) assessed *ethnic affirmation* while examining ethnic identity using an interview structure. Gonzalez (2009) examined identity development as affected by discrimination and positive racial/ethnic encounters. The study consisted 122 Mexican identified youth who completed a questionnaire and an interview of 12 youth. The selected 12 students participated in a 50-item interview designed to assess identity

and racial/ethnic experiences. Results suggested a significant relationship between ethnic identity and ethnic affirmations as the resilient group showed the highest score of ethnic affirmation, while the multiple risk group showed the lowest. Coding of the interview indicated themes revealing more than half of the interviewees identified a positive racial/ethnic encounter occurred in school. Furthermore the effects of the positive racial/ethnic encounters led students to strengthen their ethnic identity in multiple ways.

Discussion

Results from the content analysis identify numerous approaches used to assess ethnic identity. In published research with U.S. Latino/a adolescents, the most prevalent among these is the MEIM, which was used in 18 published studies. Although the MEIM stands as a strong scale of ethnic, specific scales were found to focus on other factors of ethnic identity such as cultural values and awareness, family background, racial/ethnic identity, ethnic labeling, language and acculturation, ethnic pride/affirmation and perception of discrimination. Since further measures were found focusing on different aspects of ethnic identity, results suggest a need for the comparison of scales used to measure ethnic identity, specifically to examine the different factors used to assess ethnic identity such as those not included in the MEIM. Furthermore, reports on reliability and validity of specific scales are pertinent for proper assessment of ethnic identity in research.

Furthermore ethnic identity has been examined with plethora of variables affecting identity development within adolescents. The most commonly examine adverse outcomes included substance and drug use and sexual risk taking, correlating with previous research that usually indicates the association between Latino/a youth and high drug use and dating practices involving hazardous sexual behavior (Liang et al., 2009; Kuperminc et al., 2009). Neutral

outcomes predominantly explored alongside ethnic identity consisted of ethnic affirmation, and one's perceived awareness of discrimination and stereotypes with such external factors identified as highly influential in ethnic identity (Rodriguez and Morrobel 2004). Due to the high rates of school dropouts and academic failure within Latino/a youth, academic achievement has been highly examine in research (Laing et al, 2004). Of the positive outcomes explore, academic achievement identified to be the most prevalently investigated alongside ethnic identity. With the variety of factors investigated along side ethnic identity within youth, the examination of repeated variables exhibited in the content analysis indicate that research on ethnic identity is often narrowed toward the same constructs.

Similarly, of research primarily focused on adverse variables within youth ethnic identity the most common factor consisted of drug and substance abuse. The importance of research on adverse outcomes can be associated with the constant trend identifying Latino/a youth as an at risk population. Along with drug and alcohol abuse, Latino/as have the highest risk or attempted suicides, and mental health (Rodriguez and Morrobel, 2004). Likewise sexual behavior and suicides were identified in half of the articles that examined adverse variables. Paralleling the awareness of prevailing risk behaviors and dropout rates, self-esteem and academic achievement showed to be the only positive variables examined alongside ethnic identity. The focus of research on merely these factors suggests an attention for research less concentrated on adverse variables and more concentrated on the positive.

Furthermore in the exploratory work conducted on ethnic identity, there is range of other constructs primarily focused on as important factors, particularly the neutral variables, which are emphasized as increasing ethnic stability leading to positive development (Rodriguez and Morrobel, 2004). The content analysis revealed an emphasis on acculturation, ethnic affirmation

and cultural awareness in strengthen ethnic identity development although other frameworks are indicated in various research. Positive development has been attributed to the importance of family, religion, community, cultural values and ancestry according to Kuperminc et al. (2009), though they are investigated as most of these factors were lightly examined

Furthermore, the lack of emphasis in the theoretical foundation for understanding Latino/a youth development can explain the current inconsistent findings in research. Such examples include the specific descriptors used to identify variables such as racial and ethnic identity. Results identified the association of these factors used within the same context in various studies. While previous research has linked the two variables together, it also suggest that the dual examination of race and ethnicity limit the context in which ethnic identity is studied (Rodriguez and Morrobel, 2004). Furthermore, other factors linked to prevailing outcomes such as academic achievement and sexual risk taking include socioeconomic status and traditional cultural values which possibly contribute them to ethnic identity (Kuperminc et al., 2009). The varied associations between the factors and perceived outcomes of ethnic identity could explain some current inconsistencies in results.

Limitations

There are several limitations to content analysis. Firstly the study was conducted using only PsychINFO, although the most popular search engine in the field it does not account for other articles the would have otherwise been revealed by using other search engines. Despite the subsequent number of articles discovered in the exploratory search, others could have been excluded from this singular source. As well the use of a qualitative review of articles, pose a certain degree of subjectivity within the analysis of results and variables examined. Finally, though a quantitative review was sufficient for the study, a meta- analysis might further

compliment the current findings, displaying the significance in results and relationships among variables associated with ethnic identity.

Conclusion

Overall, results show that research conducted on ethnic identity among Latino/a youth has increased in recent years. Compared to Liang et al. (2008) in which only 2 % of articles related to Latino youth, 18% of the articles in exploratory search indicated results on ethnic identity focus on Latino/a youth. Particularly research has emphasized the importance of ethnic identity as a protecting risk factor within the increasing Latino/a population, with the focus of positive youth development as a resilient means of prevention negative factors within Latino/a youth (Rodriguez and Morrobel 2004). The main purpose of the content analysis was to identify directions for further research in the area of ethnic identity among Latina/o youth. This account can provide important direction for future research outlining the prevalent variable associated with ethnic identity, the most valid and reliable scales and current areas in need of further examination.

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