The Perils Facing U.S. Latinx Adolescents in an Increasingly Restrictive Immigrant Environment

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Raising Children Under Threat
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U.S. Latinx Adolescents & Parents: A Research Agenda

Survey & focus group data collected since late 2017

❖ How parents and adolescents from diverse national origins and immigrant statuses are experiencing today’s immigrant environment

❖ How vulnerabilities tied to family immigrant status matter for the adjustment of primarily citizen adolescents
Funding & Collaborators

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**Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development**
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**William T. Grant Foundation, 182878 (PI: White)**
Significance & Background

- Rise in anti-immigrant policies, xenophobia, uncertainty raise questions about how Latinx families are faring
  - Expanded targets for detention and deportation
  - End of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program
  - Separation migrant children from parents at U.S.-Mexico border
  - End of Temporary Protected Status Program **Nielsen v. Ramos, Nov. 1, 2019**
  - Regulatory changes to public charge definition **Blocked by federal courts, October 2019**
  - Hate crimes against Latinx population in 2018 highest level since 2010

Anti-immigrant stressors
Immigrant stressors related to poor family functioning, parent psychological distress, & compromised adolescent outcomes

Stressors
- Discrimination
- Fear
- Deportation
- Family separation
- Non-citizen status

Parent outcomes
- Psychological distress
- Withdrawal & avoidance
- Limit use public services

Adolescent outcomes
- Poor mental health
- Risk behaviors

Aranda et al., 2014; Cavazos-Rehg et al., 2007; Dreby, 2015; Enriquez, 2015; Garcini et al. 2017; Gulbas et al., 2016; Hainmueller et al., 2017; Quiroga et al., 2014; Rojas-Flores et al., 2017; Siemons et al., 2017; Zapata Roblyer et al. 2017; Zayas et al. 2015
How the immigrant environment matters: Critical gaps in research

- Understanding contemporary (post 2016) immigration environment
- Attention to array of residency statuses beyond documented vs. undocumented
- Systematic attention to different indicators of adolescent adjustment and to more representative samples
## Data Sources

**Small grants & pilot awards (CTSI-CN, GWU)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Washington D.C. metro area</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mostly Central American</td>
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<td>Convenience samples</td>
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- **2017 Surveys & Focus groups**
  - 213 Parents of 12-18 y.o.

- **2018–19 Semi-structured surveys**
  - 340 Adolescents 15-18 y.o.

**NICHD, R01**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suburban Atlanta, Georgia</th>
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<tr>
<td>2/3 Mexican, 1/3 Central American</td>
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<tr>
<td>Representative sample</td>
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- **2018 – 2022 Biannual Surveys**
  - 547 Adolescents 11-15 y.o.
  - 271 Mothers
“As you know, there have been stories in the news about immigrants and immigration, and there have been official actions affecting immigrants and other people. We would like to know whether these news stories and official actions have affected you or your family over past few months. How often in the past few months have you or your family...”

1 = almost never/never to 5 = almost always/always

Roche, Vaquera, White & Rivera, 2018. *Journal of Adolescent Health*
2018 Study of U.S. Latinx Parents

- 40% - 50% parents “very often” or “always”...
  - Worried hard for child to finish school and get a job;
  - Warn teenagers to stay away from authorities and change behaviors
  - Believed harder to get or keep a job

- 30%-40% parents “very often” or “always”...
  - Changed daily routines
  - Avoid medical care, help from police, or support from social services
  - Worried about contact with authorities and police

Roche, Vaquera, White & Rivera, 2018
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very often or Always…</th>
<th>Odds Ratio</th>
<th>95% Confidence Int</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worried will be hard for child to get job</td>
<td>3.19**</td>
<td>(1.49-6.81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warned child to stay away from authorities</td>
<td>4.06**</td>
<td>(1.75-9.45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worried family members will get separated</td>
<td>3.52*</td>
<td>(1.28-9.67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoided medical care, police, services</td>
<td>5.30***</td>
<td>(2.45-11.47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child has been negatively affected</td>
<td>10.39***</td>
<td>(4.01-26.92)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worried will be hard for child finish school</td>
<td>9.85***</td>
<td>(3.81-25.42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child has been affected at school</td>
<td>7.65***</td>
<td>(3.33-17.53)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent been negatively affected</td>
<td>7.78***</td>
<td>(3.33-18.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoided contact with police, authorities</td>
<td>2.18*</td>
<td>(1.03-4.60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considered leaving U.S.</td>
<td>4.13**</td>
<td>(1.71-9.96)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Been stopped, questioned, harassed</td>
<td>8.03***</td>
<td>(2.68-24.05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talked to child about changing behavior</td>
<td>8.74***</td>
<td>(3.42-22.39)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Model Controls:** Parent gender, education, residency status, family mem deported

Roche, Vaquera, et al., 2018
2019 Study: Adolescent Responses to Immigration Environment

- Undocumented
- TPS
- Permanent Resident
- Citizen

Responses to immigration actions and news

- Alcohol use
- Depressive symptoms

Washington, DC

- 1st generation
- 2nd generation
- 3rd+ generation

Responses to immigration actions and news

- Suicidal ideation
- E-cigarette use
- Alcohol use
- Internalizing
- Externalizing

Suburban, Atlanta GA
Responses to Immigration Actions & News

Internalizing
1st Gen Indirect: ♀ .06* ♂ .04*

2nd Gen Indirect: ♀ .09** ♂ .13***

Responses to Immigration Actions & News

Internalizing Symptoms

1st Gen Indirect: ♂ .46***

2nd Gen Indirect: ♂ .36***

Responses to Immigration Actions & News

Externalizing
1st Gen Indirect: E-cig .16***

2nd Gen Indirect: E-cig .15**

Internalizing - χ² (9) = 4.754, p = .855; CFI = 1.000; RMSEA = .000; SRMR = .016.

Externalizing - χ² (4) = 4.060, p = .397; CFI = .999; RMSEA = .005; SRMR = .014.

Atlanta, GA N = 547

1st Gen Ind: E-cig: .25* Alcohol: .17* Suicidal: .23*

2nd Gen Ind: E-cig: .37* Alcohol: .24* Suicidal: .34*

Roche, White, Rivera, Safa, Newman, & Falusi, in press
Undocumented\textsuperscript{a} \quad -.195**
\hspace{1cm} \text{TPS} \quad .453***
\hspace{1cm} .383***
\hspace{1cm} Responses to Immigration Actions & News \quad .617***
\hspace{1cm} Depressive symptoms

Permanent Resident\textsuperscript{a} \quad -1.008* (OR: .37)
\hspace{1cm} \text{TPS} \quad .460***
\hspace{1cm} .398***
\hspace{1cm} Responses to Immigration Actions & News \quad .165 (OR: 1.18)
\hspace{1cm} Alcohol use

\textit{Indirect effects:} Undocumented: .28*** TPS: .24*** Permanent Resident: .16***

Models controlled for youth’s age, sex, and household structure. Model fit: χ² (7) = 12.299, p = .091; CFI = .973; RMSEA = .047; SRMR=.025. * p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001. Fit statistics not available for models with binary outcomes because we used numerical integration.

Roche, White, Rivera, Safa, Newman, & Falusi, in press

\textbf{Washington, D.C. N = 340}
When compared to adolescents with more secure family immigrant statuses, adolescents with a foreign-born or non-citizen parent reported greater harms from recent immigration actions and news by way of worry and behavioral withdrawal.

These responses, in turn, are associated with worse adolescent adjustment.

Roche, White, Rivera, Safa, Newman, & Falusi, in press
2018 Qualitative Inquiry

*Research Questions:*
(1) How do U.S. Latinx parents raising adolescents perceive their lives have been affected by recent immigration actions and news?
(2) How do perceptions differ by parents’ residency status?

*Universal Experiences*
- By virtue of shared ethnicity, Latinx parents across residency statuses may experience consequences of immigration actions and news similarly

*Residency-Status Specific Experiences*
- Differences rooted in varying levels of vulnerability tied to social position

Roche, Vaquera, Kuperminc, delBasso & Rivera, 2020. *Journal of Family Issues*
Methods

- Washington, D.C. Many Central Americans, particularly Salvadorans
- 50 Parents, 6 Focus Groups (Undocumented, TPS, Resident, Citizen)
- Guiding Question: “Let’s talk about how these changes around immigration have affected you, your family, and people you know. What changes have you noticed?”

Roche, Vaquera, Kuperminc, delBasso & Rivera, 2020. *Journal of Family Issues*
Findings: Three Themes

(1) Worries and concerns

(2) Withdrawal from services, Avoid authorities

(3) Daily adversity tied to immigration environment
Daily adversities tied to immigration environment

**Discrimination** The single dominant daily adversity experienced by parents across all residency statuses due to Spanish and/or looking Hispanic

- Customers and drivers on buses
- Employers at workplaces
- Authorities at airports
- Teachers and peers at schools
- Strangers in stores and restaurants

Often, perpetrator justified actions based on President Trump’s views

Roche, Vaquera, Kuperminc, delBasso & Rivera, 2020. *Journal of Family Issues*
“My nephew, as soon as the thing [election] with the president happened, that he was named president, they were in class telling him: 'Well, you,' he says they were saying: 'You know what's going to happen. Go get your clothes ready, your bags, because you are going to leave this country at any time.' And they kept repeating that and repeated that, and the teacher [was] all 'Amen, Amen.' She did not say anything.” ~ Permanent Resident

“I was with a friend in [name of location] and my friend doesn’t speak any English, so I was talking to her in Spanish. We were on the bus talking and, suddenly, when we were almost at our stop, we were two stops away, an older, white American man says to us ‘Why don’t you speak English? Why are you speaking in Spanish? This is not your country and you do not have...’ He began to insult us, and I ignored him... I replied to him in English and I said, [after explaining to the group that she was brought to the U.S. undocumented at age 5] 'For your information, I was born here. Don’t you hear how I am talking to you? I speak English’ I said, ‘And if I want to speak in Spanish it's because I feel like it. I am bilingual. And, if I want to learn another language, I don’t have to speak in English only. You, on the other hand, only speak one language and I speak more than one, and I have the right to speak however I want.’”

~ Undocumented

Summary of Key Findings

- Qualitative findings largely support key findings from quantitative analyses
- *Discrimination*: Single, universal impact of today’s immigration environment on Latinx families from diverse residency status backgrounds

Roche, Vaquera, Kuperminc, delBasso & Rivera, 2020. *Journal of Family Issues*
Associations between less positive parenting & adolescent externalizing behaviors stronger when mothers report more worries & behavioral withdrawal tied to immigration changes

Calzada et al., under re-review

Immigration enforcement targeting family members related to increased risk of severe mental health problems and risky behaviors for citizen youth

Roche et al., forthcoming March 2020

Adolescent future orientations characterized by (a) fear, (b) blocked opportunities for achieving the “American Dream,” (c) marginalization, esp. if non-citizen parent

Roche et al., forthcoming SRA
In Closing

“Critical to document whether major violations of public health principles are compromising the public’s health & ensure this information is disseminated in ways that inform policy.”

Morey, 2018
In Gratitude

The many adolescents and parents willing to share their experiences with our research team

Those committed to helping improve and protect the rights of immigrants and Latinx families living in the U.S.

@TPS_Alliance
@MDCASA
@NILC
@WeAreUnidosUS