

Attitudinal Familism predicts Parenting Orientation in Adolescent Latina Mothers

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Abstract

Familism is a core Latino value hypothesized to influence behavior and adjustment across multiple domains among adolescents. Various operationalizations of familism exist and measures of attitudinal familism have been confounded with the quality of family relations. In addition, the association between attitudinal familism and psychological distress among adolescent Latina mothers has not been previously studied. The goals of the current study were to test the validity of a relatively new measure of attitudinal familism among Latina adolescent mothers, and examine its relations to parenting orientation and psychological distress.

170 adolescent Latina mothers were recruited from a large, midwestern city. Mothers' mean age was 19.50 years ($SD= 1.35$). Mothers completed self-reports of attitudinal familism (Lugo & Contreras, 2003); acculturation (Cortes et al, 1994); parenting orientation (Mylod et al., 1997); psychological distress (depression & anxiety SCL-90R); parenting competence (PSI, Abidin, 1990); economic strain (Pearlin et al., 1981); and life stress (Sarason et al., 1979).

Mothers with greater familistic beliefs were found to consider having children and parenting of higher importance in their lives ($\Delta R^2 = .04$, $p = .002$), after controlling for perceptions of parenting competence and Latino cultural orientation. Mothers' familistic beliefs were not significantly associated with psychological distress, after controlling for maternal age, life event stress, and economic strain. Thus, greater attitudinal familism is associated with a more positive orientation toward parenting, but not with lower psychological distress.