

Ethnic Identity and Latino Youth: The Current State of the Research

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Abstract What is race? What is ethnicity? Although almost everyone has at least a basic understanding of what these concepts mean, the research on ethnic identity and Latino youth is relatively young making it hard to make consistent inferences on the topic and its impact. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the theoretical frameworks, definitions, and measurements used to explain ethnic identity development and to look at which environmental factors are currently being studied in relation to this concept. A systematic analysis of the literature was performed to assess how Latino ethnic identity was conceptualized and measured and whether any theoretical frameworks were used to center the concept. In addition, this study also looked at which environmental variables were currently being studied in relation to ethnic identity. The results showed that there was little agreement on how to conceptualize, theorize, and measure ethnic identity. The results revealed three major types of definitions, 13 theories, and 17 measures. The study found little to no mention of environmental variables (e.g., community and school) study in relation to ethnic identity development. The results suggest that the inconsistencies in measurements, conceptualization and how ethnic identity is defined affect study results and limit the interpretations drawn from them.

Keywords Ethnic identity · Latino youth · Identity development

Introduction

Given the increased presence of Latinos in the media, politics, and the national immigration debate, Latino youth ethnic identity is being shaped by experiences and realities not present decades ago. The core of healthy ethnic identity formation for Latino youth lies in overcoming the challenges of determining how to integrate one's ethnic identity with national identity during ongoing interactions with the US environment and the mainstream US culture (Fuller-Rowell et al. 2013).

During the process of ethnic identity formation, Latino youth and youth in general are exposed to and assigned different roles, some ascribed (e.g., gender) and some selected (e.g., husband or wife). Some roles and levels of individual identity may become permanent whereas others are transitory (Biddle 1979). A danger within this process is the risk of failing to construct a healthy and consistent sense of ethnic identity that includes different components of one's life.

Ethnic identity is a dynamic concept that develops and changes in response to environmental and developmental factors. It is a process of constant change in which individuals define their selves in a specific context by identifying as a group member. This identification can involve attitudes, evaluations, ethnic knowledge and commitment, behaviors, and practices (Cuéllar et al. 1997; Negy et al. 2003; Phinney 2000).

Social services, programs, and schools that conceptualize Latino youth ethnic identity as a strength play a positive role in youth educational and social achievement (Borrero et al. 2013; Denner et al. 2001). However, there is a lack of clear guidance to these institutions and the field about what exactly influences the development of ethnic identity in Latino youth. Understanding the processes that are involved in the development of positive Latino ethnic

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identity will benefit the Latino community, service providers, and researchers. Furthermore, it will help these institutions to protect youth from many of the negative effects of poverty (Arellano and Padilla 1996; Borrero et al. 2013; Phinney 1992, 1995; Phinney and Alipuria 1990; Phinney et al. 2001a).

It is difficult to identify the factors that impact Latino ethnic identity development because the research has been characterized by scattered theorizing and operationalizing as well as inconsistent data. Ethnic identity is a complex and dynamic process that is studied and interpreted in varying ways. For the purposes of this study, a systematic analysis was performed to assess how Latino ethnic identity was conceptualized and measured and whether any theoretical frameworks were used to center the concept. Finally, this study looked at which variables were currently being studied in relation to ethnic identity.

Conceptualization of Ethnic Identity

Traditionally, ethnic identity has been conceptualized using two main theories, Erickson's (1968) identity formation theory and Tajfel's (1981b) social identity theory. Erickson believed that identity formation occurred as a developmental process that did not stop at adolescence. His theory focused on the exploration and commitment of identity while being affected by socio, cultural, and historical contexts. Erickson's theory has been impactful in the area of human development, and he was one of the first theorists to introduce identity formation beyond adolescence.

Social identity theory, developed by Tajfel (1981b) provided one of the first leads to understanding ethnic identity development. The focus on intergroup relations and self-categorization refocused the way in which social psychologists were studying human development. Social identity theory evaluates individuals' development based on their perceptions of in-group and out-group characteristics. These characteristics greatly influenced the development of early ethnic identity theories, such as those by Cross (1971) and Phinney (1989).

Even though social identity theory has been widely used in the social psychology arena, many criticisms have been made of its claim of being nonreductionist. For instance, Farr (1996) argued that the development self-categorization was indeed an individual action because the focus was indeed on the *self*. Some have responded to these criticisms arguing that self-categorization and social identity theory may be two independent theories (Turner 1982).

Ethnic Identity: Theoretical Frameworks

Ethnic identity is a relatively young concept. Social psychologists began to study ethnic identity around the 1970s,

and this research was solely based on the African American experience. One of the first ethnic identity theorists was Cross (1971), who developed the psychology of nigrance model to explore racial identity in African Americans. Cross's model has been used to explain ethnic identity in the Latino population based upon similar experiences between the two cultures. However, as widely used as this model is, it includes several discrepancies regarding how Latino youth ethnic identity develops. The model was created to explain ethnic identity in a linear continuum. It fails to mention the ways in which individuals go back and forth between stages. In other words, the model assumes that after an individual has passed one stage, there is no going back. Research has shown that recent immigrants question their established ethnic identity when faced with a new culture, traditions, customs, or system (Umaña-Taylor and Fine 2004). Also, discrimination and prejudice have proven to change how individuals see themselves, the world, and others.

Since the development of Cross's model, other theories have surfaced trying to explain ethnic identity development using stage-like as well as constructivist approaches (Helms 1995; Umaña-Taylor 2004). One of the most widely used theories to explore ethnic identity development in communities of color is the three-stage model (unexamined identity, ethnic identity search, and achieved ethnic identity) developed by Phinney (1989). This model differs from Cross's because it focuses on adolescent development and on multiple ethnic groups. Phinney's model was developed using the interaction of personal, societal, and historical changes first proposed by Erickson and Marcia (1968). It states that a person's identity formation includes both personal and group identity (Phinney 1990, 2000). Phinney (1989) takes into consideration experiences that are culturally specific and ethnic group realities. Also, her theory works under the assumption that individuals cannot develop independently from their environment.

Phinney's model was developed to understand ethnic identity processes in individuals of color, including US born Latinos. In her research studies Phinney has highlighted the significance that group identity development has for Latinos due to the community and cooperative orientation present in their daily life (Phinney 2000). However, the model does not include factors that impact Latinos, like immigration, generation in the US, and language, among other things.

The study of Latino ethnic identity development presents a unique complexity due to the nature of this population. Latinos are not one race, one culture, or one nationality. Latinos are a mix of races and nationalities, each with its own set of cultural norms, behaviors, and attitudes (Umaña-Taylor and Fine 2004). Different models have been developed to specifically explain Latinos' ethnic identity development. However, these models have not

been widely used in the field of ethnic identity when compared to the three-stage model.

Ruiz (1990) developed a five-stage model that explains how identity is developed when individuals are alienated from their ethnic group. Another model was developed by Umaña-Taylor et al. (2002), and their model establishes that Latinos' ethnic identity changes due to contact with the dominant culture. This model looks at ethnic identity development as a component of acculturation.

Ethnic Identity and Environment

In relation to Latino ethnic identity, this study defines the concept of environment as a group of entities and processes in and through which Latinos are raised and ethnically socialized. This environment, due to the collective nature of Latinos, plays an important role in their ethnic identity development (Torres 2003). The environment is composed of, but not limited to, family structure, government, media, neighborhood, power, school, social strata, and society.

Latino youth who attend heterogeneous schools are more likely to explore their ethnic identity and eventually attain a positive ethnic identity achievement. Torres (2003) found that Latinos who were reared in neighborhoods that were predominantly White tended to have low ethnic identity scores. In other words, the more diverse the social environment of Latinos, the higher their ethnic identity (Umaña-Taylor 2004).

Understanding what aspects construct and impact Latino youth ethnic identity provides valuable information for the development of research and programs. The findings of Umaña-Taylor (2004) and Torres (2003) support the idea that the environment for Latino youth is complex and undeniably important to their adjustment. Therefore, this study explored whether the inclusion of specific environmental variables (i.e., acculturation, community, discrimination, ethnic socialization, immigration/generation status, family, gender, government, language, mainstream culture, media, neighborhood, peers, power, prejudice, racism, religion, school, sexual orientation, society, socioeconomic status, and teacher) identified in the literature (Arciniega et al. 2008; Cuéllar et al. 1997; Hipolito-Delgado 2007; Mastro et al. 2008; Padilla and Perez 2003; Torres 2003; Umaña-Taylor 2004; Umaña-Taylor and Fine 2004), beyond psychological well-being, were studied in relation to ethnic identity development and Latino youth.

The Present Study

What is race? What is ethnicity? Although almost everyone has at least a basic understanding of what these concepts mean, the research on ethnic identity and Latino youth is

relatively young. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the theoretical frameworks, definitions, measurements, and variables that have been used to study ethnic identity development in Latino youth. This study aims to answer the following question: How is Latino youth ethnic identity conceptualized, measured, and theorized? Ethnic identity is complex and multidimensional. Therefore, it is expected to find that due to this concept's dynamic and multidimensional nature, the research in the field would be disconnected and not built upon a foundation of previous research.

Method

Research Design

This study is a systematic review of the literature. "A systematic review is a review of a clearly formulated question that uses systematic and explicit methods to identify, select, and critically appraise relevant research, and to collect and analyze data from the studies that are included in the review" (Moher et al. 2009, p. 1006). Consistent with Moher et al. (2009) PRISMA guidelines for systematic reviews, a search of the literature using ethnic identity as a keyword was conducted. The population was defined by a search of all published and unpublished (i.e., dissertations) studies that looked at ethnic identity and Latino youth. Lipsey and Wilson (2001) found that even though published studies are more likely to provide statistical soundness and validity, those that are unpublished also provide information that is valid and empirical.

The searched included electronic databases such as EBSCO, Psych Info, Google Scholar, and ProQuest Education (n = 11,670). The articles were organized using RefWorks which eliminated duplicates at the time of searching. In addition to electronic databases, request for unpublished articles and work, and consultation from experts was obtained via APA Division 45 Society for the Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnic and Race list serve (n = 4).

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The search was conducted with no date constraint. However, the studies ranged from 1988 to 2015. Table 1 shows the year distribution for studies included in the final analysis. The records identified through the electronic database search resulted in 11,670 studies and through Division 45 resulted in 4 studies for a total of 11,674. After doing a screening of each record abstract a total of 8491 records

Table 1 Distribution of studies by year

	Frequency	Percentage
Pre-2000	36	15
2001–2005	52	22
2006–2010	79	34
2011–2015	69	29

N = 236 studies

were removed from further analysis due to one of the following reasons: (a) the study was conducted outside of the US, (b) studies used a qualitative research design, or (c) Latinos/Hispanics were not included in the sample. The first screening of records resulted in a total of 3183 of studies for full text analysis.

After a full text analysis, 236 records were included in the final analysis. The records eliminated in this second round of screening were removed for at least one of the following reasons: (a) the study was conducted outside of the US and concepts of ethnic identity and Latino ethnicity are conceptualized differently around the world, (b) the study used a qualitative research design and quantitative analyses were needed to record the measurement methods for ethnic identity, (c) the study grouped Latinos/Hispanics under people of color and a separate sample size for Latinos was not provided, (d) the study only mentioned the construct of ethnic identity but did not measure it, (e) the study sample size was smaller than 25 subjects, and (f) the study sample mean age was not between 10 and 25 years-old. Studies have shown that individuals' peak moment of identity development is during their adolescent and young adult years (Tajfel and Turner 1979). Thus, understanding the processes during this stage may provide more accurate information about ethnic identity.

Coding Method

Coding Form

A coding form was developed using principles from Lipsey and Wilson (2001) and Yang (2002). The coding form was divided into three categories (theory, methodology, and results), which captured the different areas of ethnic identity development. The theory section included basic information about the work (e.g., source, title, year, and author), focus of the study, conceptualization of ethnic identity (e.g., definition of ethnic identity, if included), and theoretical framework (e.g., theory mentioned, guided by theory, or theory used).

The methodology section included information about sample composition (e.g., sample size, age, gender, ethnic

group, and area where study was conducted) and instrument used to measure ethnic identity. Finally, the results section included information about the environmental variables (e.g., community, peers and school) studied in relation to ethnic identity development.

Intercoder Reliability

In order to measure agreement among multiple coders, intercoder reliability was calculated. Two researchers coded 25 % of the studies using the same coding form and after obtaining the same training. Agreement was more than 95 %.

Results

Description of Studies

The current analysis was based on a total of 236 studies conducted between 1988 and 2015 and reflected a population mean age of 17.4. The majority of studies that included Latinos in their sample were conducted between 2006 and 2010 ($n = 79$). Over the past 10 years new measurements (e.g., Ethnic Identity Scale) have been developed to measure Latino youth ethnic identity development. The studies were acquired from a total of 79 different journals and dissertations.¹

The study of ethnic identity was coded by assigning 0 or 1 for each of the five categories: ethnic identity as the main research objective, ethnic identity and acculturation, social identity theory, racial identity, and ethnic identity as a component (see Table 2). The categories were not mutually exclusive. For example, a study could research ethnic identity as the main research objective while focusing on the development of social identity. Table 2 shows that the majority of the studies that included Latinos in their sample studied ethnic identity as the main research objective. However, in contrast to other findings (e.g., Cokley 2002), the results showed that only 14 studies focused on racial identity. Over the past few decades, researchers have separated the constructs of ethnic identity and racial identity, which may explain these results.

Conceptualization of Ethnic Identity

The majority of studies (73 %) included a definition for ethnic identity development, which also means that approximately 1 in 4 studies did not define ethnic identity. Of the 142 studies that researched ethnic identity as the main research objective, 26 did not define the construct.

¹ List of studies available upon request.

Table 2 Study of ethnic identity

	EI main research objective	EI and acculturation	Social identity	Racial identity	EI as a component
No	93	195	207	220	159
Yes	142	40	28	14	76

$N = 236$ studies

EI ethnic identity

Moreover, of the 76 studies that researched ethnic identity as a component, 32 did not define the construct.

Ethnic identity was found to be defined in many ways in those studies that did define the concept. The definitions provided in the search of the literature reflected different understandings of the same construct. Some ($n = 28$) focused on ethnic identity as a component of social identity (see Table 3). In other words, ethnic identity was considered a component of intergroup relations and discussed when comparing two groups (Tajfel 1981a).

Other authors ($n = 30$) defined ethnic identity in terms of culture, customs, language, traditions, religious beliefs, or ethnic knowledge (see Table 3). These authors emphasized the impact experiences with cultural norms and symbols had on individuals' ethnic identity development.

The majority of studies ($n = 102$) concentrated their conceptualization on the individuals' sense of belonging, attitudes, behaviors, feelings, thoughts, and practices (see Table 3). The authors presented ethnic identity as an interaction between how individuals felt toward themselves and their group, and how they included those feelings and thoughts in their actions.

Tests of independence were conducted to determine if the characteristics, such as research focus, of the study demonstrated any significant relationship in terms of whether ethnic identity was defined. Authors that studied ethnic identity as the main research objective reported a definition for ethnic identity 82 % of the time. Authors that did not study ethnic identity as the main research objective included a definition for ethnic identity 58 % of the time. The χ^2 test of independence was significant, indicating a

Table 3 Studies that defined EI as a component of SIT, cultural values, or sense of belonging

	Frequency	Percentage
No definition	76	32
SIT	28	12
Cultural values	30	13
Sense of belonging	102	43

$N = 236$ studies

SIT social identity theory

significant relationship between ethnic identity as a main research purpose and inclusion of a definition for ethnic identity [$\chi^2 (1, N = 236) = 13.21, p = .001$].

A test of independence was conducted to determine if the characteristics of the ethnic identity definitions (e.g., social identity theory, cultural values, and sense of belonging) demonstrated any significant relationships with the type of instruments used to measure ethnic identity. The χ^2 test of independence was significant, indicating a significant relationship existed between the characteristics of the ethnic identity definitions and the instruments used [$\chi^2 (60, N = 236) = 84.99, p = .01$].

Theoretical Framework of Ethnic Identity

This study evaluated the theories used by the authors in the sample to guide the understanding, measurement, and discussion of ethnic identity development in Latino youth. The results showed that 65 % of the studies were guided by a specific theory while 25 % suggested no theoretical framework. Of the 142 studies that researched ethnic identity as the main research objective, 22 did not mention a theoretical framework. Of the 76 studies researching ethnic identity as a component, 33 of them did not mention a theoretical framework.

Most of the studies that were guided by a theory were based on three perspectives (see Table 4): three-stage model (26 %); social identity theory (14); and acculturation model (11 %). There was a great deal of overlap between the theoretical frameworks and how they were utilized in the different studies. Some of the most used theories were combinations of ego identity theory and the three-stage model (9 %), social identity theory and the three-stage model (6 %), and ego identity and social identity theory (5 %).

There were other theories that were discussed and that overlapped with the main ones. For instance, the three-stage model was discussed in partnership with the nigrescence model (Cross 1971) and social cognitive career model (Lent et al. 1994). Social identity theory was presented with the acculturation model and multidimensional theory. However, none of these combinations were mentioned in more than a few studies.

Table 4 EI conceptual frameworks

Conceptual framework	Frequency	Percentage
Three stage model	45	26
Social identity theory	25	14
Acculturation theory	19	11
Ego identity and three stage model	15	9
Ego identity	11	6
Social identity model and three stage model	10	6
Ego identity and social identity theory	8	5
Ecological model	4	2
Social identity theory and acculturation theory	3	2
Contact theory	2	1
Niegrescence model and three stage model	2	1
Perspective taking	2	1
Pfeifer et al.	2	1
Multidimensional model of racial identity	2	1
Ego identity and centrality	2	1
Niegrescence model	1	.6
Niegrescence model and ego identity	1	.6
Social cognitive career theory	1	.6
Three stage model and social cognitive career theory	1	.6
Multidimensional theory and social identity theory	1	.6
Cultural awareness and ethnic loyalty	1	.6
Cooperative, competitive, and individualistic resource allocation	1	.6
Social identity theory and self-categorization theory	1	.6
Social identity theory and system justifying ideology	1	.6
Phenomenological variant of ecological systems theory	1	.6
Self-categorization theory	1	.6
The rejection-identification model	1	.6
Ego identity and ecological model	1	.6
Three stage model, ego identity and affective theory	1	.6
Ecological model and affirmation theory	1	.6
Social identity theory and affirmation theory	1	.6
Compensatory model	1	.6
Cultural-ecological-transactional theory of resilience	1	.6
Social identity theory, three stage model and acculturation theory	1	.6
Ego identity, three stage model, affirmation theory and ecological model	1	.6
Total	172	73
Missing	64	27

Tests of independence were conducted to determine if the characteristics, such as research focus, of the article demonstrated any significant relationship in terms of how the theoretical frameworks in the studies were included. Articles that studied ethnic identity as the main research objective reported being guided by a theory 71 % of the time. Articles that did not study ethnic identity as the main research objective reported being guided by a theory 24 % of the time. The χ^2 test of independence was significant, indicating a significant relationship between ethnic identity

as a main research purpose and inclusion of a theory for ethnic identity [$\chi^2 (2, N = 236) 22.26, p = .001$].

Measurement of Ethnic Identity

The instruments were dated from 1960 to 2015. The results showed an overwhelming number ($n = 143$) of studies using the instrument Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measurement developed by Phinney (1992). The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measurement was one of the first instruments that

took into consideration different ethnic and age groups. The instrument was validated and translated into Spanish as well as English. It has been used with African Americans, Asian Americans, European Americans, and Latinos.

The studies had a normal distribution throughout the years starting in 1992, and the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measurement was used widely for over 15 years. Even though the instrument was developed by Phinney (1992) following the three-stage model, studies that used the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measurement were guided by a variety of conceptual frameworks.

In recent years (2011–2015), the Ethnic Identity Scale has become another instrument of preference to measure ethnic identity with Latinos ($n = 29$). Umaña-Taylor et al. (2004) developed the Ethnic Identity Scale using Erickson's ego identity and Tajfel's social identity theories. This 17-item scale consists of an interpretation of Erickson's ego identity development: exploration, resolution, and affirmation. Instead of the individuals receiving an overall ethnic identity score, they receive scores on each typology (Umaña-Taylor et al. 2004).

In addition to the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measurement and Ethnic Identity Scale, there were 21 other instruments used to measure ethnic identity (see Table 5). Some of the most used instruments were the following:

- Researcher developed—instruments that were developed by the authors of the studies. These instruments ranged from 1990 to 2015.
- Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity—the instrument was developed by Sellers et al. (1997). The instrument measures the extent to which the individuals' ethnic label was central to their definition of themselves.
- Collective Self Esteem Scale—the instrument was developed by Luhtanen and Crocker (1992). The scale consists of four components: private CSE, public CSE, importance to identity, and membership CSE.
- Cultural Awareness and Ethnic Loyal Scale—developed by Keefe and Padilla (1987). It measures ethnic awareness across six dimensions: language familiarity and usage, cultural heritage, ethnic interaction, ethnic pride and identity, ethnic distance and perceived discrimination, and generational proximity to Mexico.
- Cultural Identity Scale for Latino Adolescents—it was developed by Felix-Ortiz et al. (1994). The instrument is based on several existing acculturation scales to assess multiple cultural identity and biculturalism.

Tests of independence were conducted to determine if the characteristics, such as research focus, ethnic identity conceptualization, and theoretical framework, of the studies demonstrated any significant relationships with the

instruments used to measure ethnic identity. Articles that studied ethnic identity as the main research objective reported using the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measurement to measure ethnic identity 62 % of the time. Articles that studied ethnic identity as the main research component reported using the Ethnic Identity Scale to measure ethnic identity 72 % of the time. The χ^2 test of independence between research focus and instrument used was not significant, indicating that there was no significant relationship between ethnic identity as a main research purpose and the instruments used to measure ethnic identity [χ^2 (20, $N = 223$) 24.44, $p = .22$].

Articles that measured ethnic identity with the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measurement reported a definition for ethnic identity 77 % of the time. Articles that measured ethnic identity with the Ethnic Identity Scale included a definition for ethnic identity 86 % of the time. The χ^2 test of independence was significant, indicating a significant relationship between instrument used to measure ethnic identity and inclusion of a definition for ethnic identity [χ^2 (20, $N = 223$) 37.12, $p = .01$].

Articles that used Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measurement to measure ethnic identity reported being guided by theory 63 % of the time. Articles that used the Ethnic Identity Scale to measure ethnic identity reported being guided by theory 86 % of the time. The χ^2 test of independence was significant, indicating a significant relationship between instrument used to measure ethnic identity and inclusion of a theory for ethnic identity [χ^2 (40, $N = 222$) 73.95, $p = .001$].

Variables Studied in Relation to Ethnic Identity

In order to understand what variables were studied in relation to ethnic identity development, they were coded by assigning 0 to variables not mentioned, 1 to variables mentioned in the study literature review, and 2 to variables studied. Ethnic identity was mostly studied in relation to psychological well-being and not necessarily in relation to environmental factors. Therefore, this study explored which variables from a preselected list of environmental factors (i.e., acculturation, community, discrimination, ethnic socialization, immigration/generation status, family, gender, government, language, mainstream culture, media, neighborhood, peers, power, prejudice, racism, religion, school, sexual orientation, society, socioeconomic status, and teacher) were studied in relation to ethnic identity.

The results showed a low concentration of the variables were studied in relation to Latino youth ethnic identity (see Table 6). The majority of the studies did not study or even mention any of the variables in relation to ethnic identity development. The percentage of studies that did not mention any variable ranged from 47 to 96 % depending on the

Table 5 Instrument used to measure EI and the year of publication

	Years of study				Total
	Pre-2000	2001–2005	2006–2010	2011–2015	
MEIM	18	38	49	38	143
Researcher developed	5	4	5	4	18
The Mexican-American value attitude scale	1	0	0	0	1
EIS	1	3	8	17	29
Multidimensional inventory of black identity	0	1	5	4	10
Cultural awareness and ethnic loyalty scale	2	0	0	0	2
Implicit association test	0	0	1	0	1
Scale of ethnic experience	0	1	0	0	1
Collective self-esteem scale	1	0	1	3	5
Bernal	1	0	0	0	1
Ethnic attitudes	1	0	0	0	1
Latino and American identity scale	1	0	0	0	1
Behavioral acculturation scale	1	0	0	0	1
Ethnic consciousness	1	0	0	0	1
Intergroup marginalization inventory	0	0	1	0	1
Cultural identity scale for Latino adolescents	1	1	0	0	2
Children EI questionnaire	0	1	0	0	1
Centrality subscale of Luthanen and Crocker	0	0	0	1	1
TAM	0	0	1	0	1
The extended objective measure of ego identity status-II	0	0	0	1	1
Total	34	49	71	69	223

variable. The variables that were most often mentioned in the studies were discrimination (17 %), school (14 %), family (12 %), immigration/generation status (12 %), and mainstream culture (12 %). Variables that were most often studied were gender (18 %), acculturation (18 %), family (18 %), school (17 %), discrimination (15 %), immigration/generation status (12 %), and ethnic socialization (11 %). In addition to the variables included in the preselected list of environmental factors, researchers studied or mentioned other variables in their studies (30 %).

Discussion

The current analysis of the literature focused on understanding how the field of ethnic identity development and Latino youth defined, theorized, and measured this concept. The result of this analysis supports the main prediction that there was very little agreement on how to conceptualize, theorize, and measure ethnic identity. The results showed three major types of definitions, 35 different theories, and 23 different measures. Furthermore, many studies did not follow one framework throughout the entire study. For instance, there were studies in which ethnic identity was

operationalized using a cultural approach, theorized following social identity theory, and measured using the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measurement.

The range of definitions, conceptual frameworks, and measurements provides evidence about the variability in the field with regard to ethnic identity. The results showed that the inclusion of a definition for ethnic identity and theoretical framework were related to the research focus and instrument used to measure ethnic identity. In other words, studies that included a definition for ethnic identity and were guided by a theoretical framework were more likely to study ethnic identity as the main research objective.

This analysis found that the majority of the studies defined ethnic identity based on social identity theory, cultural models, or attitudes and beliefs. Consequently, the top theories guiding the studies were social identity theory, the three-stage model, and acculturation theory. However, the instruments used to measure ethnic identity varied and many times were not consistent with the conceptual framework mentioned by the researchers.

In an earlier analysis of the literature, Phinney (1990) found that the majority of the research was conducted within a social psychological framework, more specifically based on the work of Tajfel (1981b) and their social identity theory.

Table 6 Percentages of EI variables that were not mentioned, mentioned, or studied

EI variable	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Studied
Acculturation	75	7	18
Community	92	4	4
Discrimination	69	17	15
Ethnic socialization	80	9	11
Family	71	12	18
Gender	76	6	18
Government	96	3	1
Immigration/generation status	75	12	12
Language	80	11	9
Mainstream culture	81	12	7
Media	95	5	0
Neighborhood	95	3	1
Peers	83	9	8
Power	98	1	1
Prejudice	90	8	2
Racism	94	6	0
Religion	96	3	1
School	69	14	17
Sexual orientation	97	3	0
Society	92	7	1
Socioeconomic status	86	5	9
Teacher	96	2	2
Other	47	7.7	30.0

N = 236

The theory states that if the majority group holds minority groups at a lower level, the members of the minority group are more likely to develop a negative ethnic identity (Hogg and Williams 2000). However, other research has found that the preceding statement is not always true (Farr 1996). Ethnic minorities, specifically Latinos, do not develop their ethnic identity based only on group comparisons. Results have shown that there are other components that play a role besides the mainstream culture (Parham 1989).

In response to social identity theory, the three-stage model developed by Phinney (1990) has been leading the research in ethnic identity for the last 12 years. The three-stage model explores ethnic identity development at the individual level and not necessarily as intergroup relations. One of the main differences among Phinney's ethnic identity model, social identity theory, and the acculturation model is that ethnic identity achievement does not necessarily mean that the individual adopts traditions, customs, and behaviors from his or her culture.

In addition to creating the three-stage model, Phinney developed in 1992 an instrument (Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure) that measures all the main components in her theory, including the Tajfel and Turner "other group orientation" approach. The results showed that the Multigroup

Ethnic Identity Measurement was the instrument of preference among the 236 studies ($n = 143$). The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measurement was revised and adapted to be used with multiple ethnic groups, which makes it attractive for researchers. The holistic approach of the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measurement may explain why many studies used this instrument regardless of how they operationalized and theorized ethnic identity development.

The introduction of the three-stage model and Phinney's development of the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measurement shifted the direction that ethnic identity research has taken. The results showed that the majority of the studies that included Latinos in the sample were conducted after 1992. Before the development of Phinney's instrument, very few scales to measure Latino ethnic identity had been developed. After 1992, however, the research around Latino ethnic identity development increased, and other instruments and theories were developed.

In addition to social identity theory and the three-stage model, the other theory widely used in this sample was acculturation theory. Acculturation theory is among the youngest theories developed to explain ethnic identity development in Latino youth. This theory states that ethnic identity development only occurs when two cultures come

in contact with one another and conflict occurs (Berry et al. 1986). Acculturation focuses on cultural values and practices resulting from the interaction of the cultures. Many researchers treat acculturation and ethnic identity as synonymous.

This analysis found that acculturation was the third most used construct to guide the research even though many of these researchers used the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measurement to measure ethnic identity development. This inconsistency in ethnic identity conceptualization and measurement altered the interpretation given to the data. Also, error was introduced since the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measurement does not measure cultural affiliations to the degree it is described by acculturation theory.

In recent years, other instruments have been developed to measure ethnic identity. Among those instruments we can find the Ethnic Identity Scale. The Ethnic Identity Scale has been gaining popularity in the field of ethnic identity during the last 5 years. The Ethnic Identity Scale was developed using Ericksonian and social identity perspectives (Umaña-Taylor et al. 2004). This instrument assesses three components of ethnic identity (exploration, resolution, and affirmation) and in contrast to the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measurement, lends itself to classify individuals into one of these three typologies versus receiving an overall ethnic identity score (Umaña-Taylor et al. 2004). The studies using the Ethnic Identity Scale as the instrument of choice showed greater inclusion of ethnic identity definitions and conceptual frameworks. A deeper look at this instrument and the characteristics of the studies using it is needed to understand whether ethnic identity is conceptualized and researched differently than when using the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measurement.

In addition to looking at theoretical frameworks, ethnic identity conceptualization, and measurement, this study explored the variables studied in relation to Latino youth ethnic identity development. This research found a low concentration of environmental variables studied in relation to Latino youth ethnic identity development. The majority of the studies did not mention or study the preselected variables proposed in this study. These results pose an interesting question because they support the premise that research on Latino youth ethnic identity development is being conducted without including its relationship to aspects such as community, religion, language, and family among others.

Recommendations

The results of this systematic analysis suggest that authors who want to provide data on ethnic identity development in Latino youth that informs practice and education need to include specific characteristics in the development of their

studies. First, authors need to include a clearly defined conceptual framework that guides the study on the operationalization, theorizing, and measurement of ethnic identity development. Second, authors need to define ethnic identity development in a way that clearly distinguishes it from other concepts. Finally, ethnic identity needs to be studied in relation to variables that go beyond psychological well-being.

Research on Latino youth ethnic identity development is characterized by scattered theorizing and operationalizing as well as inconsistent data. Some articles have used one theory as a foundation, another for measurement, and a different one for definition and interpretation. In other words, the information that has been presented is disconnected. There is a need for research that goes beyond exploration and is set on a specific conceptual framework from the definition to measurement to interpretation.

This study's second recommendation was developed in response to the number of studies that claimed to research ethnic identity as the main component, but a definition of the construct was not present. Ethnic identity development is a relatively young field and, as this study showed, there is no one definition. Thus, it is important that future research defines this construct so it is not confused with other concepts that have been used interchangeably with ethnic identity.

The final recommendation is based on the lack of variables, beyond psychological well-being, studied in relation to ethnic identity development. Ethnic identity development has been found to be a protective factor for youth of color; however, not much attention has been given to the components that help develop or strengthen youth positive ethnic identity development. There is a gap in the literature that limits the understanding of the impact environmental factors such as language, immigration and family, have on the development of Latino ethnic identity.

Limitations

The data included in this systematic analysis were based entirely on samples that only separated Latinos from other ethnic groups. Even though these studies evaluated ethnic identity development in Latino youth, the results grouped Latinos under people of color. It is possible that the exclusion of these studies could have significantly altered the results of this systematic analysis.

Specific inclusion criteria were used to screen the studies. However, a significant number of studies, specifically books, did not report any results on ethnic identity development. Thus, these studies were removed from the final sample set. This may have specifically impacted the results.

Finally, qualitative studies were excluded from the analysis since they did not report measurement methods for ethnic identity. Therefore, this study excluded a specific group of records that may have studied ethnic identity development in Latino youth in a different way. This could have impacted the results, especially the areas of definitions and theories used to conceptualize ethnic identity.

Conclusions

This article provides one of the first and most recent reviews of the research on ethnic identity development that focuses on Latino youth (Santos and Umaña-Taylor 2015). Even though Latinos have been immigrating to the United States for generations, the study of Latino youth ethnic identity development has proved to still be a relatively young field. The mix of races, nationalities, and cultures make this group very unique. Also, it makes the study of ethnic identity development complex and impacted by multiple components (Phinney et al. 2001b; Umaña-Taylor and Fine 2004). Due to the complexity and uniqueness of Latino youth ethnic identity development, research in the field is inconsistent and sometimes contradictory. This article identifies major gaps in the literature in how ethnic identity and Latino youth is being studied and the implications to future research and practice. There is an immediate need for research that focuses on how Latino youth develop their ethnic identity and not only on the impact this construct has on individuals' psychological well-being. Future research on Latino youth and ethnic identity would benefit from having a consistent approach when studying ethnic identity from defining to theorizing and measuring the concept. Understanding the elements that relate to ethnic identity provides a better picture of positive Latino youth social, psychological and emotional development. Therefore, it will provide guidance to service providers, educators, and other researchers in areas such as curriculum and program development.

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