A LONGITUDINAL STUDY EXAMINING PARENTAL BEHAVIORS, ADOLESCENT ROUTINE DISCLOSURE AND MEXICAN-ORIGIN ADOLESCENT GIRLS' ANXIETY, DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS, AND SELF-ESTEEM

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by

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Dr. Sarah Killoren, Dissertation Supervisor

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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the

dissertation entitled

A LONGITUDINAL STUDY EXAMINING PARENTAL BEHAVIORS, ADOLESCENT ROUTINE DISCLOSURE AND MEXICAN-ORIGIN ADOLESCENT GIRLS' ANXIETY, DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS, AND SELF-ESTEEM

presented by Avelina Rivero,

a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,

and hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

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Professor Sarah Killoren

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Professor Duane Rudy

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Professor Lisa Dorner

_____

Professor Nicole Campione-Barr

DEDICATION

To my beautiful parents:

mi má – Gloria Herrera

my dad – Jorge Rivero

To my beautiful sisters:

Mawe (“Maudi”) Rivero

Galilea (“Gali”) Rivero

Briseis (“Bridi”) Rivero

To my beautiful brother:

Jorge (“Tito”) Rivero

And lastly, to my younger self:

Avelina, you are intelligent, capable, resilient, driven, and *chingona*.

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ABSTRACT

The current study examined the direct and indirect associations between parental behavioral autonomy granting and parental support and Mexican-origin adolescent girls' anxiety, depressive symptoms, and self-esteem via adolescent routine disclosure utilizing longitudinal data. The data were collected from 338 adolescent girls of Mexican origin from 10 public schools in a large Southwestern metropolitan area in the United States (U.S.) (M_{age} = 13.73, *SD* = 1.55, Range = 11 to 17 years old). Participants at Wave 1 were either in seventh (*N* = 170) or 10th (*N* = 168) grade. The data were collected at three time points over four years (44.1% at Wave 2 and 43.2% at Wave 3 retention). Most of the participants reported that their parents were born in Mexico (>80%). To test the hypotheses, I conducted mediation analyses within a structural equation modeling framework. Findings revealed that parental behavioral autonomy granting and parental support at Wave 1 were positively associated with adolescent routine disclosure at Wave 2. Adolescent routine disclosure to mothers at Wave 2 was negatively associated with anxiety and positively associated with self-esteem at Wave 3. Additionally, W2 adolescent routine disclosure to fathers was negatively associated with W3 anxiety and positively associated with W3 self-esteem. Adolescent routine disclosure significantly mediated the associations between paternal behavioral autonomy granting (W1) and anxiety and self-esteem (W3), maternal support (W1) and anxiety (W3), and paternal support (W1) and anxiety (W3). These results indicate that maternal and paternal support is related to adolescent routine disclosure, which is, in turn, related to lower levels of anxiety. Moreover, paternal behavioral autonomy granting is related to adolescent routine disclosure, which is, in turn, related lower levels of anxiety but higher levels of self-esteem. Cultural values may help explain parental behaviors and this influences Mexican-origin adolescent girls' behavior and emotional adjustment.

keywords: Mexican parents, parenting, adolescence, routine disclosure, mental health outcomes

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

During adolescence, we see an increase in parent-adolescent conflict, and this may be due to level of behavioral autonomy granting and gender differences in surveillance (Collins & Laursen, 2004; Renk et al., 2005). Female adolescents report being granted less behavioral autonomy than male adolescents and parents report peer group issues (e.g., dating, activities with friends) as a main source of conflict for daughters compared to sons (Dowdy & Kliewer, 1998; Renk et al., 2005). To date, most of the parenting research has primarily focused on the experiences of U.S. born parents navigating adolescence and have failed to consider the experiences of immigrant parents. Thus, the current study extends the literature by utilizing a sample of U.S.-raised daughters who were raised primarily with immigrant (>80%) Mexican parents. This unique cultural context will help us better understand how culture shapes parental behaviors and how immigra3nt parents navigate the demands and changes of adolescence (Kuhlberg et al., 2010). It is also important to focus on Mexican-origin adolescent girls because depression is a prevalent concern in this ethnic group (Cruz et al., 2019).

Given the critical role parents play in influencing Mexican-origin adolescent girls' emotional adjustment (Bámaca-Colbert et al., 2012), learning more about whether parental behaviors promote adolescent routine disclosure is important. In particular, the current study considers adolescent routine disclosure (i.e., disclosure about daily activities and whereabouts; Tilton-Weaver et al., 2014) as a potential intervening mechanism between parental behavioral autonomy granting and parental support and emotional adjustment outcomes (i.e., anxiety, depressive symptoms, and self-esteem). Previous work has found that positive parental behaviors, such as parental behavioral autonomy granting and parental support, are associated with more adolescent routine disclosure (Garthe et al., 2015; Smetana & Metzger, 2008). Moreover, routine disclosure is important because it plays a crucial role in promoting Latinx adolescents' well-being (i.e., lower depressive symptoms) and bolstering parent-child relationships (Fernandez et al., 2018; Son et al., 2022).

Utilizing the cultural-ecological perspective to better understand Mexican-origin adolescent girls' emotional adjustment (i.e., anxiety, depressive symptoms, and self-esteem) using longitudinal data, the current study has three goals. First, I examined the associations between Mexican-origin adolescents' reports of parental behavioral autonomy granting and parental support at Wave 1 and Mexican-origin adolescent girls' emotional well-being at Wave 3. Second, I examined Mexican-origin adolescent girls' routine disclosure at Wave 2 as a potential intervening mechanism for the associations between adolescents' reports of parental behavioral autonomy granting and parental support at Wave 1 and Latina adolescent girls' emotional adjustment outcomes at Wave 3. Third, I examine developmental differences (i.e., early vs middle adolescence) in the associations between parental behavioral autonomy granting and parental support at Wave 1 and emotional adjustment outcomes at Wave 3 via adolescent routine disclosure (hereafter refered to as disclosure) at Wave 2. Examining the developmental differences is critical as parents' decision to grant behavioral autonomy may be dependent on their adolescent daughters' age and parental support may be more salient for early adolescent girls compared to late adolescent girls. Below I describe the theoretical model, parenting literature, and adolescent routine disclosure and emotional adjustment literature.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The current study is guided by the cultural-ecological perspective (García Coll et al., 1996) to explain how adolescent disclosure may mediate the associations between parental behavioral autonomy granting and parental support and Mexican-origin girls' emotional adjustment outcomes over time. At its core, the cultural-ecological perspective (García Coll et al., 1996) suggests that adolescents are embedded within their family context and the family context is embedded within a larger cultural context. Essentially, culture shapes parenting and parent-child interactions, and this in turn, influences youths' adjustment (Benito-Gomez et al., 2020). The cultural-ecological perspective allows for the examination of the cultural context in which parenting occurs (García Coll et al., 1996).

For instance, Mexican immigrant (i.e., born outside the U.S. but living in the U.S.) mothers are less likely to grant their daughters behavioral autonomy due to gender-related parenting and expectations that are informed by their cultural and religious beliefs (Romo & Mireles-Rios, 2014). To that end, we see that Latinx (gender inclusive term to describe those of Latin descent) parents (77.27% of Mexican origin) are more protective of their daughters compared to their sons (Killoren et al., 2022). Specifically, Mexican immigrant mothers tend to surveil their daughters' social activities with their peers and are less likely to allow their daughters to date (Romo & Mireles-Rios, 2014). The cultural value, marianismo, based on religious values of Catholicism, entails that adolescent girls should be pure and refrain from sex (Morales & Pérez, 2020). Marianismo is commonly endorsed by Latinx immigrant parents (Gil & Vazquez, 1996). Mexican parents' endorsement of marianismo may help explain why they are less likely to grant their daughters behavioral autonomy (Romo & Mireles-Rios, 2014).

While Mexican-origin adolescent girls are understanding and aware of their parents cultural demands, they still desire to fit in like their American peers and be granted behavioral autonomy (Romo & Mireles-Rios, 2014). When parents do not grant their daughters behavioral autonomy, this may encourage their daughters to engage in activities without parental knowledge

and less disclosure (Romo & Mireles-Rios, 2014). In a qualitative study with 20 Mexican immigrant mothers and their early adolescent daughters, the researchers found that a majority (i.e., half of the participants) reported having a boyfriend, but only two mothers reported knowing about it (Romo & Mireles-Rios, 2014). Female Mexican adolescents may not disclose about their whereabout to protect their relationship with their parents (e.g., prevent conflict, parental disappointment), especially in circumstances where low behavioral autonomy is granted (Romo & Mireles-Rios, 2014). However, not disclosing to parents may be problematic because Mexican-origin adolescents highly value open communication with their parents (Crockett et al., 2007). Mexican-origin adolescent girls may experience feelings of guilt or shame when they do not disclose to their parents because of their cultural value, *personalismo*, which stresses the belief of integrity and encourages honesty, and this may in turn, influence their emotional well-being (Cauce & Domenech-Rodríguez, 2002).

Moreover, the cultural belief, *familismo* (i.e., prioritization of family ties and obligations; Cauce & Domenech-Rodríguez, 2002) entails that family members should be supportive of one another (Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007). Mexican parents are important sources of support for their adolescent children (Bámaca-Colbert et al., 2012). Although Latinx parents demonstrate high levels of monitoring and strictness with their adolescents, especially daughters, they highly value maintaining warm and supportive relationships with their children (Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007). When parents are warm and supportive this promotes open communication and disclosure from adolescents (Garthe et al., 2015; Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007). Moreover, several studies have found that supportive parenting is associated with lower depressive symptoms and higher self-esteem in Mexican-origin adolescent girls (Bámaca et al., 2005; Bámaca-Colbert et al., 2012).

In sum, the cultural-ecological perspective (García Coll et al., 1996) explains that cultural beliefs influence how families interact with each other. More specifically, cultural beliefs shape parent-adolescent relationship dynamics. Parents' willingness to grant behavioral autonomy and provide parental support is determined by their cultural values around child rearing practices

which influences adolescents' development (Romo & Mireles-Rios, 2014). Therefore, according to the cultural-ecological perspective, the levels of behavioral autonomy granting, and parental support may influence Mexican-origin adolescent girls' disclosure and emotional adjustment (i.e., anxiety, depressive symptoms, self-esteem) (García Coll et al., 1996).

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

Behavioral autonomy granting

Cognitive and social changes that occur during adolescence prompt Mexican-origin adolescent girls living in the U.S. to seek out opportunities to be more independent (Bámaca et al., 2012). Behavioral autonomy, or the ability to make your own decisions, is highly desired among adolescents living in the U.S. (Fuligni, 1998). Some examples of behavioral autonomy granting include choosing their friendships, romantic partner, leisure time activities, and clothing. Behavioral autonomy granting is important for adolescents because it promotes adolescents' psychosocial development and well-being (Eagleton et al., 2016). Through behavioral autonomy granting, adolescents demonstrate responsibility, self-sufficiency, and the ability to regulate their own behaviors (Zimmer-Gembeck & Collins, 2006).

Examining behavioral autonomy granting in the context of culture

While some researchers argue that behavioral autonomy is a Western belief and desire, cross-cultural studies have found that adolescents from different backgrounds (i.e., Mexican, Chinese, Filipino, European backgrounds) all desire to be granted some level of behavioral autonomy (Fuligni, 1998). However, different cultural contexts may influence the degree to which behavioral autonomy is granted to adolescents (Bámaca-Colbert et al., 2012; Romo et al., 2014). Specifically, cultural values influence parenting practices, such as parents' socialization efforts, parents' decision to grant autonomy and the amount of autonomy granted (Romo et al., 2014; Spear & Kulbok, 2004). Therefore, parents may differ in terms of the level of behavioral autonomy they decide to grant their adolescent daughters because of their own internalized cultural beliefs about raising their children, particularly for immigrant parents. Latinx parents are known for being protective of their daughters (Killoren et al., 2022). For instance, Latinx parents tend to limit their daughters' social activities, closely supervise their daughters, and grant their daughters less autonomy compared to their sons (McHale et al., 2005; Raffaelli & Ontai, 2004; Romo et al., 2014). In a study examining parental differential treatment with a sample of Mexican

American families, the researchers found that older sisters with younger brothers were granted relatively fewer privileges (such as going to a friend's house, staying out later) than their younger brothers (McHale et al., 2005).

Moreover, parental expectations may also influence parents' willingness to grant behavioral autonomy. To that end, Mexican immigrant mothers have different expectations for their children that are shaped by gender (Romo et al., 2014). For example, Mexican-origin parents may be less likely to grant their daughters behavioral autonomy because their daughters are expected to provide more help around the house, such as chores, compared to sons (McHale et al., 2005). Additionally, Latinx parents, especially immigrant parents, may also be less likely to grant behavioral autonomy to their daughters because they fear that their daughters will become too Americanized and lose their cultural identity and beliefs (Suárez-Orozco, 2000).

Behavioral autonomy granting and adolescents' emotional adjustment

Studies continue to find that parental behaviors can undermine or promote adolescents' emotional development (Kakihara & Tilton-Weaver, 2009; Tilton-Weaver et al., 2010). Indeed, when parents grant their adolescent behavioral autonomy, they are validating and supporting their adolescents' decision making, and promoting trust, which enhances adolescents' wellbeing (Spear & Kulbok, 2004). Several studies have found that behavioral autonomy granting is associated with Mexican-origin adolescents' emotional adjustment (Bámaca-Colbert et al., 2012; Blocklin et al., 2011). In a cross-sectional study with Mexican adolescents living in Mexico, the researchers found that behavioral autonomy granting was associated with higher levels of self-esteem in adolescent boys, but not girls (Bush et al., 2004). Moreover, in a cross-sectional study with Mexican American families, the researchers found that adolescent disclosure to mothers and fathers is negatively associated with depressive symptoms (Blocklin et al., 2011). In terms of anxiety, researchers have not explored the association between behavioral autonomy granting and adolescents' anxiety levels. Examining how behavioral autonomy granting is associated with adolescents' anxiety is important because anxiety increases during adolescence, especially among

girls (Cabral & Patel, 2020). To date, most of the studies have explored behavioral autonomy granting and adolescents' emotional adjustment cross-sectionally. The current study extends the literature by examining how behavioral autonomy granting is associated with Mexican-origin adolescent girls' emotional adjustment using longitudinal data. Utilizing longitudinal data is beneficial because temporal precedence can be inferred (Caruana et al., 2015).

Parental support

Another important factor that may impact adolescents' emotional adjustment is perceived parental support (Garthe et al., 2015). Parental support has been defined in many ways but essentially it occurs when parents provide their children with warmth, are understanding, and demonstrate loving and encouraging behaviors (Bean et al., 2006). Through parental support, children experience feeling loved and accepted, which explains why it has been found to be associated with adolescents' development and emotional adjustment (Garthe et al., 2015; Rohner et al., 2012). For example, Garthe et al. (2015) found that higher levels of parental acceptance predicted lower levels of depressive symptoms a year later in a sample of African American adolescents. Additionally, researchers have found that parental warmth predicts lower levels of anxiety over time in a sample of Puerto Rican children and early adolescents (Santesteban-Echarri et al., 2017). Parental support has also been associated with higher levels of self-esteem in Latinx youth (Plunkett et al., 2007). Receiving parental support is important for adolescents given the emotional turbulence and changes youth experience during this developmental period (Bhatia, 2012; Birkland et al., 2012; Cabral & Patel, 2020; Grossberg & Rice, 2023).

Moreover, parental support is important because it positively enhances the parent-adolescent relationship (Romo et al., 2023). Adolescents are more likely to disclose to their parents when their parents establish an environment where their adolescent feels loved and supported (Smetana & Metzger, 2008; Smetana et al., 2006). Adolescents seek support from their parents when they are comfortable (Smetana & Metzger, 2008). Parental disapproval or fear of punishment may influence Mexican-origin adolescent girls' disclosure (Romo et al., 2014; Yau et

al., 2009). Moreover, through parental support, trust is created and established (Smetana et al., 2006). Trust may also encourage disclosure among adolescents (Kerr et al., 1999; Smetana, 2010; Smetana et al., 2006). Therefore, parental support may act as a promotive factor for Mexican origin adolescent girls. Specifically, parental support may promote disclosure and positive emotional adjustment over time.

Parental behaviors and adolescent routine disclosure

Parental behaviors influence adolescents' willingness and decision to disclose (Smetana et al., 2006). Examining parental behaviors is important given that adolescents' disclosure is the primary method parents learn about their children's daily activities during adolescence (Kerr & Stattin, 2000). As adolescents are becoming more autonomous and seeking control over their personal life, adolescent disclosure to parents decreases (Smetana & Metzger, 2008). For instance, personal issues, such as what an adolescent does with their friends, are considered private matters that they perceive as optional, and not obligated to share to their parents (Smetana & Metzger, 2008). However, despite the private nature of personal issues, adolescents may disclose to their parents if their parents are warm, supportive, and not undermining their autonomy (Smetana & Metzger, 2008; Smetana et al., 2006). In fact, in a study conducted with 62 Latinx parent-adolescent dyads, the researchers found that parent and youth reports of parental warmth was positively associated with adolescents' disclosure (Zhao et al., 2021).

Although adolescents tend to disclose less to their parents, Mexican American youth highly value open communication because it demonstrates that they have a good relationship with their parents (Crockett et al., 2007). In Crockett and colleagues' (2007) study, open communication occurs when adolescents can disclose and talk to their parents about anything, such as school-related and personal issues. Many girls in the study described a good mother-adolescent relationship as having an open relationship, where one talks to their mothers about "anything without having to hold back" (Crockett et al., 2007, p. 648). It is essential to understand that open communication can only happen in an environment of trust. Trust is

established when parents provide support, and when adolescents feel that the information they disclose will not be used against them (Crockett et al., 2007). In addition, trust can be established when parents grant their adolescents behavioral autonomy (Smetana, 2010). Granting behavioral autonomy entails giving the adolescent the freedom to make choices about their daily activities (Peterson & Bush, 1999; Smetana, 2010). When behavioral autonomy is granted, this communicates to the adolescent that their decision-making is trusted by their parents, creates a sense of competence, which in turn, promotes adolescent disclosure (Kerr et al., 1999; Smetana, 2010). Therefore, Mexican-origin adolescent girls may be more likely to disclose if they receive high levels of parental support and less likely to disclose if they are experiencing low levels of behavioral autonomy granting.

Adolescent routine disclosure as a mediator

Disclosure is a key aspect of close-intimate relationships, especially among parent-adolescent relationships (Kerr & Stattin, 2000; Son et al., 2022). During early adolescence, individuals begin to establish privacy boundaries with their parents (Petronio, 2010). Adolescent routine disclosure is the act of voluntarily sharing information about daily activities and whereabouts with parents (Tilton-Weaver et al., 2014). Essentially, routine disclosure includes information parents need to know about their children. In the U.S., it is common during early adolescence for youth to increasingly spend less time with their parents and more time engaging in unsupervised activities, such as hanging out with friends (Kerr & Stattin, 2000). As a result, adolescent routine disclosure is the primary method by which parents gain information about their adolescents' daily activities (Kerr & Stattin, 2000).

When parents grant their adolescent behavioral autonomy and are supportive, adolescents feel more comfortable and more inclined to disclose to their parents (Smetana & Metzger, 2008). Moreover, when parents are granting behavioral autonomy and being supportive of their adolescents' decision making, parents are sending the message that they trust and believe that their adolescent is making the right decisions, and these subconscious messages may be

promoting adolescent routine disclosure. Furthermore, adolescent routine disclosure is beneficial for the parent-adolescent relationship because it enhances their relationship by making them feel closer to each other (Son et al., 2022).

Moreover, adolescent routine disclosure promotes Mexican-origin adolescents' emotional adjustment (Blocklin et al., 2011). In fact, researchers have found that adolescent routine disclosure to mothers and fathers is associated with lower depressive symptoms in a cross-sectional study with Mexican-origin youth (Blocklin et al., 2011). Additionally, in a different cross-sectional study the researchers found that adolescents who place greater value on intimate disclosures to parents reported fewer anxiety symptoms (Nowell et al., 2023). In terms of self-esteem, most studies have focused on how secrecy to parents, not disclosure to parents, negatively impacts adolescents' self-esteem (Frijns et al., 2005). Therefore, this current study will fill that gap by examining the links between adolescent disclosure and Mexican-origin adolescent girls' self-esteem over time.

Given the salient role parents play in shaping Mexican-origin adolescent girls' development, examining the mediating processes by which parental behaviors (i.e., behavioral autonomy granting and parental support) and adolescents' emotional adjustment (i.e., anxiety, depressive symptoms, self-esteem) are related is needed (García Coll et al., 1996). An important mediator to investigate is adolescent routine disclosure because it is the primary method parents can learn about what their adolescent is doing and with whom they are spending their time with. The cultural ecological perspective can be utilized to explain the process by which adolescent routine disclosure mediates the associations between parental behaviors and adolescents' emotional adjustment (García Coll et al., 1996). According to the cultural ecological perspective, cultural factors influence parental behaviors which influences adolescents' development (García Coll et al., 1996). Mexican-origin parents may engage in high levels of parental support which may encourage adolescent routine disclosure, and this, in turn, may promote positive emotional adjustment (i.e., lower anxiety and depressive symptoms and higher self-esteem) in Mexican-

origin adolescent girls. Mexican-origin parents may be less likely to grant behavioral autonomy because they are protective of their daughters, which may influence adolescent routine disclosure (Romo et al., 2014). If Mexican-origin adolescent girls are not disclosing to their parents, they may experience feelings of guilt or shame which may manifest into higher anxiety and depressive symptoms and lower self-esteem. Mexican-origin adolescent girls may experience feelings of guilt or shame for not disclosing because they may interpret this as lying or disrespecting their parents. Thus, adolescent routine disclosure may be an important mechanism by which parental behavioral autonomy and parental support and Mexican-origin adolescent girls' emotional adjustment operate. To my knowledge, researchers have not explored the mediating role of adolescent routine disclosure on the associations between parental behaviors and Mexican-origin adolescent girls' emotional adjustment using longitudinal data or have examined the developmental differences (7^{th} vs 10^{th} grade).

Developmental differences – Early vs middle adolescence

An important factor that influences parents' decision to grant behavioral autonomy is an adolescents' age (Romo et al., 2014). Early adolescents are less likely to be granted behavioral autonomy compared to middle adolescents (Zimmer-Gembeck & Collins, 2006). During middle adolescence in the U.S., individuals are engaging in activities (e.g., dating) that occur outside of the family context which provides middle adolescents more opportunities for self-governance (Dowdy & Kliewer, 1998). This change forces parents to adapt and grant more behavioral autonomy (Dowdy & Kliewer, 1998). When premature behavioral autonomy is granted during early adolescence, it is associated with heightened developmental risks, such as higher identity diffusion and deviant behavior (Haase et al., 2008). Additionally, greater behavioral autonomy over multifaceted issues (e.g., choosing their friends, choosing how late to stay out with friends) during early adolescence predicts more experiences of depressed mood 5 years later in a sample of African American adolescents (Smetana et al., 2004). Although, it is normative for early adolescents to be granted less behavioral autonomy, early adolescents strongly believe that they

should be granted more behavioral autonomy because they want to have control over issues related to their personal life (Daddis, 2011). However, researchers continue to find that less autonomy in early adolescence is associated with better adjustment outcomes for youth (Haase et al., 2008; Smetana et al., 2004). Therefore, the timing of behavioral autonomy is important (Pavlova et al., 2011).

Adolescents should be granted age-appropriate behavioral autonomy, that is, during early adolescence, youth should be granted less behavioral autonomy and during middle adolescence they should be granted more (Pavlova et al., 2011; Smetana et al., 2004). Given that the level of behavioral autonomy granted may vary by age, it is important to examine grade level (i.e., 7^{th} vs 10^{th} grade) differences among Mexican-origin adolescent girls. Behavioral autonomy may be more salient for middle adolescents (i.e., 10^{th} grade), given that behavioral autonomy increases with age and youth are typically spending more time outside the home during this time (Dowdy & Kliewer, 1998; Zimmer-Gembeck & Collins, 2006). Conversely, parental support may be more salient during early adolescence (i.e., 7^{th} grade) because this is the time when physical changes occur due to puberty which increases their emotional state and level of vulnerability (Sisk & Gee, 2022). Given the developmental differences that occur in early vs middle adolescence, I predict that the association between behavioral autonomy granting and emotional adjustment outcomes via adolescent disclosure will be stronger for middle adolescents compared to early adolescents. Moreover, the association between support and emotional adjustment outcomes via adolescent disclosure will be stronger for early adolescents compared to middle adolescents.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

Current study

The current study had three main goals. First, I examined the associations between maternal and paternal behavioral autonomy granting and support at Wave 1 and Mexican-origin adolescent girls' adjustment outcomes at Wave 3. Second, I examined the paths between parental behavioral autonomy granting and parental support at Wave 1, adolescent routine disclosure (Wave 2), and Mexican-origin adolescent girls adjustment outcomes at Wave 3, while controlling for adjustment outcomes at Wave 1. Third, I examined age group (i.e., 7^{th} vs 10^{th} grade) differences in the previous associations. In the current study, I included participants' Wave 1 emotional adjustment outcomes, grade level, and parents' nativity status as covariates.

Hypotheses

I. I predict that Mexican-origin adolescent girls who are granted higher levels of behavioral autonomy and receive more parental support from both parents at Wave 1, will report higher self-esteem and lower anxiety and depressive symptoms at Wave 3.

II. I predict that Mexican-origin adolescent girls who are granted higher levels of behavioral autonomy from parents and experience greater support at Wave 1, will disclose more with their parents at Wave 2, and in turn, will report higher self-esteem and lower anxiety and depressive symptoms at Wave 3.

III. I predict that because during middle adolescence (10^{th} graders), youth are more likely to be granted behavioral autonomy, behavioral autonomy granting may be a more salient predictor of routine disclosure for 10^{th} graders than parental support, which in turn, will predict lower anxiety and depressive symptoms and higher self-esteem at Wave 3. Conversely, because early adolescents (7^{th} graders) are expected to be granted less behavioral autonomy than middle adolescents (10^{th} graders), parental support may be a more salient predictor of routine disclosure than behavioral autonomy granting for 7^{th}

graders, which in turn, will predict lower anxiety and depressive symptoms and higher self-esteem at Wave 3.

Methods

Procedures

The data used for this study comes from a longitudinal study that examined cultural and developmental processes in Mexican-origin adolescent girls. The original study collected data from both adolescents and their mothers, however, for this current study, I am only utilizing data from Mexican-origin adolescent girls. Participants reported on their experiences with both parents. Participants did not need to speak English fluently to be able to participate. A total of 338 Mexican origin-adolescent girls and their mothers were recruited from 10 public schools from a large Southwestern metropolitan area in the United States.

Prior to recruiting participants, the researchers obtained approval from school districts and principals. Mexican-origin adolescent girls were eligible to participate if they were enrolled in 7th or 10th grade and had parents who were both of Mexican descent (i.e., both parents had to identify as Mexican, but they did not need to be born in Mexico). Teachers shared the study details with their students and distributed the recruitment letters. All documents were available in English and Spanish. Documents that were not originally in Spanish were translated by a researcher of Mexican origin and back-translated by a different researcher of Mexican origin (Bámaca-Colbert & Gayles, 2010). The translators were of Mexican descent because it is important that the Spanish dialect is consistent with the specific Spanish dialect the participants speak (Umaña-Taylor & Bámaca, 2004). Everyone interested in participating received recruitment letters that explained the purpose of the study, information about the incentives ($10 for participants and $15 for daughter and mother participation) and specified that the study required both the adolescent and the mother to participate. Adolescent girls who indicated interest in the study, attended an informational meeting at the school where they learned about the purpose of the study, data collection date and time, and received packets with consent and assent

forms. Adolescent girls who returned signed consent and assent forms completed the survey in a group setting which took approximately one hour to complete. While the adolescent girls completed the surveys, the research team was present to help students if they needed clarification on either the Spanish or English surveys. Mothers completed the survey via a phone call which took approximately 40 minutes. Mothers also received a packet in the mail that included the survey they would complete during the phone call. Wave 1 was collected in 2006, Wave 2 was collected in 2009, and Wave 3 was collected in 2010. For the follow-up data collection at Wave 2 and Wave 3, the research team called the participants to get their consent via phone and asked them about their language preferences for the survey, and the survey was mailed. Loss of contact with participants attributed to the attrition in this study. The retention rate was 44.1% (seventh grade N = 76, 10th grade N = 73) at Wave 2 and 43.2% (seventh grade N = 76, 10th grade N = 70) at Wave 3.

Participants

At baseline (Wave 1), Mexican origin adolescent girls were either in seventh (N = 170) or 10th (N = 168) grade. Participants ages ranged from 11 to 17 years old with a mean age of 13.73 years (SD = 1.55). At Wave 1, the seventh-grade cohort was on average 12.27 years old (SD = 0.48; *Range* = 11 – 14 years), 68.8% were born in the U.S., 79.4% of mothers and 87% of fathers were born in Mexico, 60% lived with both biological parents, and 67.5% were middle class. Additionally, a majority of seventh graders reported living with both birth mother and birth father (60%), birth father and stepmother (1.8%), birth mother and stepfather (13.5%), birth mother only (24.1%), and one participant reported other (0.6%). At Wave 1, the 10th-grade cohort was on average 15.21 years old (SD = 0.46; *Range* = 14 – 17 years), 62.5% were born in the U.S., 85.7% of mothers and 87% of fathers were born in Mexico, 59.5% lived with both biological parents, and 69.5% were middle class. Most of the participants (N = 272; 80.5%) completed the survey in English. Additionally, a majority of tenth graders reported living with both birth mother and birth father (59.5%), birth father and stepmother (1.2%), birth mother and stepfather (19%), birth

mother only (18.5%), and three participants reported other (1.8%). Participants were given the choice to complete the survey in English or Spanish. Most of the participants (*N* = 272; 80.5%) completed the survey in English.

Measures

Anxiety

Mexican origin adolescent girls' experiences of anxiety were assessed at Wave 1 and 3 using the 20-item State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children-Trait Version (STAIC-T) measure (Spielberger et al., 1973). Mexican origin adolescent girls self-reported on the frequency and experiences of various anxiety states using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *hardly ever* to 4 = *often*. Example items include: "I worry about making mistakes." and, "I worry about things that might happen.". Items were summed with higher scores indicating more instances of anxiety. The STAIC-T measure has been utilized with a sample of Mexican adolescents (Espinosa-Hernández & Vasilenko, 2015). Cronbach's alpha was acceptable at Wave 1 in English (α = 0.86) and Spanish (α = 0.82) and Wave 3 in English (α = 0.90) and Spanish (α = 0.79)

Depressive symptoms

Mexican origin adolescent girls' experiences of depressive symptoms were assessed at Wave 1 and 3 using the 20-item Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression (CES-D) scale (Radloff, 1977). Mexican origin adolescent girls reported on how often each statement has described them in the past week using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 0 = *rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)* and 3 = *mostly or almost all the time*. Example items include: "I did not feel like eating; my appetite was poor." and, "I felt that I was just as good as other people.". Positive items were reverse coded, and all items were averaged with higher scores indicating greater frequency of depressive symptoms. The CES-D scale has been widely used as a measure to examine depressive symptoms among Latinx adolescents (Sasser et al., 2023). Cronbach's alpha was acceptable at Wave 1 in English (α = 0.90) and Spanish (α = 0.90) and Wave 3 in English (α = 0.92) and Spanish (α = 0.93).

Self-Esteem

Mexican origin adolescent girls' global self-esteem was assessed at Waves 1 and 3 using the 10-item Rosenberg Self-Esteem (RSE) scale (Rosenberg, 1979). Mexican origin adolescent girls self-reported the extent to which they agreed with each statement using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* and 4 = *strongly agree*. Example items include: "I certainly feel useless at times." and, "I feel that I have a number of good qualities.". Items were averaged and negatively worded items were reverse scored with lower scores indicating low self-esteem and higher scores indicating high self-esteem. The RSE scale has been utilized in a study with Latinx adolescents (Salcido & Stein, 2023). Cronbach's alpha was acceptable at Wave 1 in English (α = 0.75) and Spanish (α = 0.84) and Wave 3 in English (α = 0.89) and Spanish (α = 0.88).

Adolescent behavioral autonomy granting

Mexican origin adolescent girls' behavioral autonomy granting was assessed at Wave 1 separately for mothers and fathers using a revised version of the 10-item Behavioral Autonomy Scale (Peterson & Bush, 1999). Mexican origin adolescent girls self-reported the extent to which they agreed with each statement using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* and 4 = *strongly agree*. Example items include: "I feel that this parent (Mother/Father) gives me enough freedom." and, "This parent (Mother/Father) allows me to decide what clothes I should wear without interfering too much.". Items were averaged with higher scores indicating higher levels of behavioral autonomy from mothers and fathers. The Behavioral Autonomy Scale has been utilized with Mexican origin female adolescents (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2015). Cronbach's alphas were acceptable for mothers in English (α = 0.85) and Spanish (α = 0.79) and fathers in English (α = 0.85) and Spanish (α = 0.77).

Parental support

Mexican origin adolescent girls' perceived support from mothers and fathers was assessed at Wave 1 separately using a reduced 9-item version of the Inventory of Parent and Peer

Attachment scale (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987). Mexican origin adolescent girls self-reported the extent to which they agreed with each statement using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *almost never or never* and 4 = *almost always or always*. Example items include: "I can count on my mother/father when I need to talk." and, "I trust my mother/father.". Items were averaged with higher scores indicating higher levels of perceived parent support from mothers and fathers. The Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment scale has been utilized with a sample of Latinx adolescents (Hoskins et al., 2023). Cronbach's alphas were acceptable for mothers in English (α = 0.94) and Spanish (α = 0.93) and fathers in English (α = 0.93) and Spanish (α = 0.93).

Routine disclosure

Mexican origin adolescent girls' routine disclosure with their mothers and fathers was assessed at Wave 2 separately using an adapted 4-item Child Disclosure subscale (Stattin & Kerr, 2000). Two items from the original measure were dropped because they measure secrecy (Frijns et al., 2010). Mexican origin adolescent girls self-reported on their willingness to disclose information to their mothers and fathers about their daily activities using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *almost never* and 4 = *almost always*. Example items include: "Do you tell your mother/father about what you've been doing with friends without being asked?" and, "Do you hold back information from your mother/father about what you do on evenings and weekends?". Negatively worded items were reverse coded, and items were averaged with higher scores indicating more disclosure to mothers and fathers. The Child Disclosure subscale has been utilized with a Mexican origin adolescent sample (Son et al., 2022). Cronbach's alphas were acceptable for mothers (α = 0.84) and fathers (α = 0.77). Because this measure was adapted (i.e., dropped two items; Frijns et al., 2010), confirmatory factor analyses were conducted. Results revealed that the models had adequate fit regarding routine disclosure to mothers, χ^2 (2) = 10.77, p < .05, RMSEA = 0.17 (90 % CI =0.08,0.28), CFI = 0.96, SRMR = 0.04 (standardized factor loadings ranged from .58 to .87) and routine disclosure to fathers, χ^2 (2) = 8.83, p < .05, RMSEA = 0.16 (90 % CI =0.07,0.28), CFI = 0.96, SRMR = 0.04 (standardized

factor loadings ranged from .62 to .85). Researchers have found that RMSEA tends to over-reject true models and is not preferred for smaller sample sizes (<250), which can explain why RMSEA is relatively high (Hu & Bentler, 1998, 1999). Cronbach's alphas were acceptable for mothers in English (α = 0.83) and Spanish (α = 0.85) and fathers in English (α = 0.80) and Spanish (α = 0.86).

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

Analyses were conducted using SPSS statistical analysis program and R using the lavaan package (Rosseel, 2012) version 4.2.1 (R Core Team, 2021). First, bivariate correlations and descriptive statistics (e.g., mean, standard deviation, variance, skewness) were conducted in SPSS to check for normality (see Table 1). Second, to determine if data is Missing Completely at Random (MCAR), I conducted Little's MCAR test (Little, 1988) for Wave 2 and Wave 3 variables. The results revealed that the data is missing completely at random at Wave 2, χ^2 (2) = 1.47, p = .48, and Wave 3, χ^2 (2) = 1.60, p = .45. Thus, to handle missing data, I utilized Full Information Maximum Likelihood (FIML) to estimate the models (Enders & Bandalos, 2001). Researchers have utilized FIML and found that FIML is an efficient method to handle missing data (Enders & Bandalos, 2001).

Third, I conducted mediation analysis using a structural equation modeling framework in R to examine the direct and indirect associations between parental behavioral autonomy granting and parental support at Wave 1 and Mexican-origin adolescent girls' anxiety, depressive symptoms, and self-esteem at Wave 3 via adolescent routine disclosure at Wave 2. Mothers and fathers were in separate models and parental behavioral autonomy granting, and parental support were also in separate models (see Figure 1). To determine adequate fit, several indices were utilized such as a nonsignificant chi-square, values of the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) less than .08, and a Comparative Fit Index (CFI) greater than .90 (Hu & Bentler, 1998, 1999).

Parental behavioral autonomy granting models

Maternal behavioral autonomy granting model

The model examining maternal behavioral autonomy granting had adequate fit, χ^2 (13) = 36.35, $p < .05$, RMSEA = 0.07, SRMR = 0.08, CFI = 0.92. Results (see Figure 2) indicated that maternal behavioral autonomy granting at Wave 1 was associated with higher levels of adolescent routine disclosure at Wave 2. Further, adolescent routine disclosure at Wave 2 was related to

lower levels of anxiety but higher levels of self-esteem at Wave 3. Moreover, grade level (i.e., 7th and 10th grade) was associated with adolescent routine disclosure. That is, 10th graders were more likely to engage in routine disclosure with their mothers compared to 7th graders. There were no significant indirect effects in this model.

Paternal behavioral autonomy granting model

The model examining paternal behavioral autonomy had adequate fit, χ^2 (13) = 32.83, p < .05, RMSEA = 0.07, SRMR = 0.06, CFI = 0.93. Results (see Figure 3) indicated that paternal behavioral autonomy granting at Wave 1 was positively associated with self-esteem at Wave 3. Moreover, paternal behavioral autonomy granting at Wave 1 was associated with higher levels of adolescent routine disclosure at Wave 2. Further, adolescent routine disclosure at Wave 2 was related to lower levels of anxiety but higher levels of self-esteem at Wave 3. There were two significant indirect effects. The indirect effect between paternal behavioral autonomy granting at Wave 1 and anxiety at Wave 3 via adolescent routine disclosure at Wave 2 was significant, ß= -0.09, SE = 0.63, p = 0.02, 95% CI = -2.639, -0.188). Additionally, the indirect effect between paternal behavioral autonomy granting at Wave 1 and self-esteem at Wave 3 via adolescent routine disclosure at Wave 2 was significant, ß= 0.09, SE = 0.05, p = 0.04, 95% CI = 0.007, -0.183).

Parental support models

Maternal support

The model examining maternal support had adequate fit, χ^2 (13) = 33.54, p < .05, RMSEA = 0.07, SRMR = 0.08, CFI = 0.93. Results (see Figure 4) indicated that maternal support at Wave 1 was associated with higher levels of adolescent routine disclosure at Wave 2. Furthermore, adolescent routine disclosure at Wave 2 was related to lower levels of anxiety at Wave 3. Additionally, grade level (i.e., 7th and 10th grade) was associated with adolescent routine disclosure. That is, 10th graders were more likely to engage in routine disclosure with their mothers compared to 7th graders. There was one significant indirect effect. The indirect

effect between maternal support at Wave 1 and anxiety at Wave 3 via adolescent routine disclosure at Wave 2 was significant, ß = -0.06, SE = 0.30, p = 0.04, 95% CI = -1.179, -0.025. It is important to note that although there was no significant direct effect (maternal support (Wave 1) → anxiety (Wave 3)), which has been argued is a requirement for mediation (see Baron & Kenny, 1986). Zhao et al. (2010) argue that mediation should be determined by measuring the strength of the mediation to examine the size of the indirect effect, not the lack of the direct effect. Moreover, they argue that the only requirement for mediation to exist is that the indirect effect is significant.

Paternal support

The model examining paternal support had adequate fit, χ^2 (13) = 29.69, $p < .05$, RMSEA = 0.06, SRMR = 0.06, and CFI = 0.94. Results (see Figure 5) indicated that paternal support at Wave 1 was associated with higher levels of adolescent routine disclosure at Wave 2. Further, adolescent routine disclosure at Wave 2 was related to lower levels of anxiety but higher levels of self-esteem at Wave 3. Paternal support at Wave 1 was also associated with higher levels of self-esteem at Wave 3. Moreover, grade level (i.e., 7th and 10th grade) was associated with adolescent routine disclosure. That is, 10th graders were more likely to engage in routine disclosure with their fathers compared to 7th graders. There was one significant indirect effect. The indirect effect between paternal support at Wave 1 and anxiety at Wave 3 via adolescent routine disclosure at Wave 2 was significant, ß = -0.10, SE = 0.40, p = 0.03, 95% CI = -1.657, -0.100).

Multigroup path analyses

Lastly, I conducted multigroup path analyses to examine the associations between parental behavioral autonomy granting and parental support at Wave 1 and Mexican-origin adolescent girls' anxiety, depressive symptoms, and self-esteem at Wave 3 via adolescent routine disclosure at Wave 2, and to examine if these paths varied between 7th and 10th graders. I tested an unconstrained model (i.e., all paths were freely estimated). I then tested a fully constrained model (i.e., all paths were constrained to be equal) between 7th and 10th graders. A chi-square

difference test was conducted to examine significant change between the unconstrained and constrained model to determine if the constrained model has significantly poorer fit and paths need to be freely estimated.

Parental behavioral autonomy granting models

Maternal behavioral autonomy granting. For the model examining maternal behavioral autonomy granting, the unconstrained model (χ^2 (20) = 46.57, $p < .05$, CFI = .91, RMSEA = 0.09, SRMR = 0.10) and the constrained model (χ^2 (39) = 60.61, $p = .02$, CFI = .92, RMSEA = 0.06, SRMR = 0.10) were not significantly different, $\Delta\chi^2$ (19) = 14.04, $p = .78$. These results suggest that the model should not be considered separately for 7th and 10th graders.

Paternal behavioral autonomy granting. For the model examining paternal behavioral autonomy granting, the unconstrained model (χ^2 (20) = 39.73, $p < .05$, CFI = 0.93, RMSEA = 0.08, SRMR = 0.07) and the constrained model (χ^2 (39) = 53.77, $p = .06$, CFI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.05, SRMR = 0.10) were not significantly different, $\Delta\chi^2$ (19) = 14.05, $p = .78$. These results suggest that the model should not be considered separately for 7th and 10th graders.

Parental support models

Maternal support model. For the model examining maternal support, the unconstrained model (χ^2 (20) = 40.62, $p < .05$, CFI = .93, RMSEA = 0.08, SRMR = 0.09) and the constrained model (χ^2 (39) = 53.49, $p = .06$, CFI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.05, SRMR = 0.10) were not significantly different, $\Delta\chi^2$ (19) = 12.88, $p = .84$. These results suggest that the model should not be considered separately for 7th and 10th graders.

Paternal support model. For the model examining paternal support, the unconstrained model (χ^2 (20) = 38.61, $p < .05$, CFI = 0.94, RMSEA = 0.07, SRMR = 0.07) and the constrained model (χ^2 (39) = 50.80, $p = .10$, CFI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.04, SRMR = 0.09) were not significantly different, $\Delta\chi^2$ (19) = 12.20, $p = .88$. These results suggest that the model should not be considered separately for 7th and 10th graders.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

Adolescence is a time of growth and change, as such, we see an increase in anxiety and depressive symptoms and a decrease in self-esteem (Barnawi et al., 2023; Birkland et al., 2012; Cabral & Patel, 2020; Grossberg & Rice, 2023). To better understand adolescents' emotional adjustment (i.e., anxiety, depressive symptoms, self-esteem), considering parental influence, including parental behavioral autonomy granting and parental support, is critical (Garthe et al., 2015). Additionally, it is also important to consider an adolescent's cultural context because children do not develop in isolation. More specifically, culture influences childrearing practices and values that Mexican parents utilize when raising their children (Halgunseth et al., 2006). Thus, using the cultural-ecological perspective (García Coll et al., 1996), I examined how mothers' and fathers' behavioral autonomy granting and support were associated with Mexican-origin adolescent girls' emotional adjustment four years later via adolescent routine disclosure. Moreover, I examined whether these associations were different based on adolescent developmental period (i.e., 7th vs 10th graders). In general, the results from the current study indicate that when parents are supportive and grant behavioral autonomy to their adolescent daughters, it encourages their daughters to disclose to their parents, which in turn, reduces negative outcomes and increases positive outcomes. Although researchers have found evidence that Mexican parents are protective and stricter with their daughters due to cultural values (García Coll et al., 1996), the study results suggest that Mexican parents are supportive and grant their daughters some level of behavioral autonomy during adolescence (Perez-Brena et al., 2012; Romo et al., 2014). Moreover, findings further reinforce that positive parental behaviors encourage routine disclosure (Smetana, 2010).

Maternal behavioral autonomy granting and support

I examined the associations between maternal behavioral autonomy granting and maternal support at Wave 1 and Mexican-origin adolescent girls' anxiety, depressive symptoms, and self-esteem at Wave 3 via adolescent routine disclosure at Wave 2. Moreover, I examined

developmental differences (i.e., 7th vs 10th grade) in the associations. I found that maternal behavioral autonomy granting and maternal support at Wave 1 were associated with higher levels of adolescent routine disclosure at Wave 2. These findings align with previous research, suggesting that when adolescents perceive that their mothers are not being over-controlling by granting them autonomy, this facilitates mother-daughter communication evidenced by adolescents' engagement in routine disclosure (Lippold et al., 2015). The findings also highlight that when mothers create an environment where adolescents feel supported, adolescents are more likely to engage in routine disclosure (Smetana & Metzger, 2008; Smetana et al., 2006). Further, consistent with the cultural-ecological perspective (García Coll et al., 1996), these findings demonstrate that parenting practices can influence children's behavior (i.e., routine disclosure) and emotional adjustment. More specifically, maternal support predicted lower levels of anxiety through adolescent routine disclosure. Additionally, routine disclosure at Wave 2 was associated with lower anxiety and higher self-esteem one year later. It may be that sharing information without being asked is important for anxiety and self-esteem because they are both affective states that may be improved when girls voluntarily share with their parents about how their day went at school and their whereabouts with their friends (Kubzansky et al., 2014). This finding extends the current literature because researchers have primarily examined the associations between routine disclosure and depressive symptoms and externalizing behaviors such as delinquency (Blocklin et al., 2011; Padilla-Walker & Son, 2019; Son et al., 2021).

Paternal behavioral autonomy granting and support

In addition to Mexican-origin adolescent girls' relationships with mothers, I also examined the same associations with fathers. Paternal behavioral autonomy granting was associated with lower levels of anxiety but higher levels of self-esteem via greater adolescent routine disclosure. When Mexican fathers grant their daughters behavioral autonomy, it communicates to daughters that fathers trust that they can make good decisions on their own, which encourages daughters to engage in routine disclosure because they do not feel the need to

hide information from their fathers and feel more inclined to share information about their whereabouts without being asked. Mexican-origin female adolescents who feel they need to engage in secrecy may experience anxiety because of the worry that their fathers might find out they are not being honest (Kapetanovic et al., 2020), which goes against their cultural values of personalismo and respeto (i.e., obedience and respect for elders, especially parents) (Cauce & Domenech-Rodríguez, 2002; Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007). Lying to parents is a form of disrespect, and this may explain why researchers have found that secrecy is associated with internalizing problems two years later for Colombian adolescents (Kapetanovic et al., 2020). Moreover, paternal behavioral autonomy granting may have led to higher levels of self-esteem via routine disclosure because Mexican fathers are known for being more strict and less lenient than Mexican mothers (Crockett et al., 2007). Mexican adolescents also tend to report having a more open relationship with their mothers, such as being able to talk about anything (e.g., intimate topics) with their mothers compared to their fathers (Crockett et al., 2007). Therefore, paternal behavioral autonomy granting may be especially salient to Mexican-origin adolescent girls.

Turning to paternal support, I found that support was longitudinally associated with lower levels of anxiety via adolescent routine disclosure. When fathers are supportive, they are communicating to their child that they are understanding and respect their feelings, which makes adolescents feel safe to communicate about what's going on in their lives, which removes the barrier of having to lie to their fathers (Crockett et al., 2007). As previously mentioned, Mexican-origin adolescent girls may experience anxiety if they feel like they need to engage in secrecy because lying may be perceived by fathers as being disobedient and bringing shame to the family (Stein et al., 2014). This may explain why paternal support was associated with lower anxiety via adolescent routine disclosure.

Moreover, I found paternal support at Wave 1 (but not maternal support) was associated with higher levels of self-esteem at Wave 3. In this context, paternal support may be more salient

because Mexican fathers are known for not being expressive with their emotions due to gender expectations stemming from their cultural values (Mogro-Wilson & Cifuentes, 2021). Mexican fathers tend to show they care for their children through their actions, for instance, by being the provider (e.g., instrumental and financial support) and protector, as opposed to mothers who regularly engage in emotionally supportive behaviors (Crockett et al., 2007). When Mexican fathers are emotionally supportive (e.g., being understanding), they are engaging in positive machismo, *caballerismo*, which occurs when fathers are involved in their child's life and demonstrate caring behaviors (Mogro-Wilson & Cifuentes, 2021). Moreover, paternal supportive behaviors also align with the Latinx core cultural value of *simpatía* – being respectful of one another, which creates a warm and mutually responsive relationship, and this may explain why Latinas reported higher self-esteem (Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007). This study emphasizes the critical role fathers play in their adolescent's development, demonstrating the need to include fathers when examining Mexican-origin adolescent girls' development.

Developmental differences in routine disclosure frequency

I also found that girls in middle adolescence (10th graders) were more likely to engage in routine disclosure with their parents than girls in early adolescence (7th graders). Although I did not find developmental differences in the level of parental behavioral autonomy granted and parental support, it may be that girls in middle adolescence are engaging in more routine disclosure because they are older and may be spending more time outside the family context. Therefore, they may feel more obligated to disclose to their parents about their whereabouts. *Personalismo* is a fundamental Latinx cultural value that stresses integrity and honesty, which may encourage adolescent girls to engage in routine disclosure with their parents (Cauce & Domenech-Rodríguez, 2002; Mogro-Wilson & Cifuentes Jr, 2021).

Parental behavioral autonomy granting and support and depressive symptoms

Interestingly, and inconsistent with previous work, mothers' and fathers' behavioral autonomy granting and support, as well as adolescent routine disclosure, did not predict later

depressive symptoms. This finding was unexpected, given that a previous study found that routine disclosure predicted lower levels of depressive symptoms a year later in a sample of non-Hispanic white and Hispanic early adolescents (Fernandez et al., 2018). Additionally, in a cross-sectional study of Mexican American adolescents, the researchers found that adolescent routine disclosure was associated with lower depressive symptoms (Blocklin et al., 2011). However, I may not have found a significant association because the measure I used only assessed routine disclosure (i.e., disclosure regarding whereabouts), not self-disclosure (i.e., voluntarily sharing private information), so it may be that self-disclosing about personal things is more closely related to depressive symptoms (Smetana et al., 2009; Tilton-Weaver et al., 2014). Moreover, it may be that by mid-to-late adolescence, depression is affected more by relational domains such as peer (e.g., problems with friends) and romantic relationships (e.g., dating, breakups) and less so by the lack of sharing daily routine activities with parents. Although parent-adolescent relationships continue to be salient for adolescents' development, during adolescence, peer and romantic relationships become increasingly important and desired (Romo et al., 2014; Scholte & Van Aken, 2020).

Limitations and future directions

Although the current study made novel contributions, some limitations need to be addressed. First, the data were collected from 2006 to 2010. There have been dramatic political shifts and social changes that have occurred since the data were collected. For instance, there has been a dramatic rise in anti-immigrant rhetoric due to the Trump administration (Finley & Esposito, 2020). As such, Mexican parents, especially those who are undocumented, may be more protective of their children and reluctant to grant their children behavioral autonomy because of the fear associated with the anti-immigrant climate (Walsdorf et al., 2022). Second, the study only utilized data from the adolescent, which may bias the results. Future research should aim to collect data from parents, as adolescents' perceptions of the amount of behavioral autonomy and routine disclosure may differ from those of their parents. Collecting data from parents would also

provide more insight into this developmental process. Moreover, utilizing additional methodologies, such as observations or in-depth interviews, may provide unique information.

Future work should consider the role of birth order because the level of behavioral autonomy granted may differ for the oldest vs. youngest child. For instance, researchers have found that parents tend to be more lenient with their younger children compared to their oldest (Killoren et al., 2022). Therefore, parents may grant their youngest daughter more behavioral autonomy than their oldest daughter. This is particularly important to explore in Mexican-origin families because they typically have more than one child (McHale et al., 2012). Moreover, it may be beneficial for researchers to examine how gender dynamics may influence these processes in Mexican families because of their traditional patriarchal structures where male family members like sons are granted more freedom (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2012; Killoren et al., 2022). Therefore, examining these processes with sons is important. Furthermore, it may be beneficial for researchers to examine secrecy as a mediator because during adolescence it is common for youth to withhold information from their parents, and youth may engage in more secrecy if their parents are not granting behavioral autonomy or being supportive, and this may have important implications for youths' adjustment (Tilton-Weaver, 2014). Lastly, examining this process within Latinx populations is important given that there is a lot of variability in this ethnic group, and parenting processes may differ (Harwood et al., 2002).

Conclusion

Mexican-origin adolescent girls disproportionately struggle with their mental health (Cruz et al., 2019). Therefore, it is critical to examine the factors contributing to this issue. For instance, focusing on the role of parents is imperative, given Mexican-origin adolescent girls' cultural values that emphasize family closeness, honesty, and parental respect (Cahill et al., 2021). Overall, my findings revealed that positive parental behaviors, such as parental support and parental behavioral autonomy granting, act as promotive factors by encouraging adolescent routine disclosure. When adolescents feel safe to engage in routine disclosure with their parents,

this is associated with better outcomes (i.e., lower anxiety and higher self-esteem) one year later. I also found that girls in middle adolescence (10th graders) were more likely to engage in routine disclosure with their parents than those in early adolescence (7th graders) because they are spending more time away from home and have more information to share. The current study added to the literature by exploring longitudinally how parental behaviors shape developmental processes and adolescents' emotional adjustment using a sample of U.S.-raised Mexican-origin adolescent girls with immigrant Mexican parents (>80%). Most adolescent disclosure studies have examined these associations cross-sectionally with a white middle-class sample, which is a significant oversight given that family processes vary across cultures. In sum, the findings highlight the importance of parents continuing to be supportive and granting their daughters age-appropriate autonomy during adolescence.

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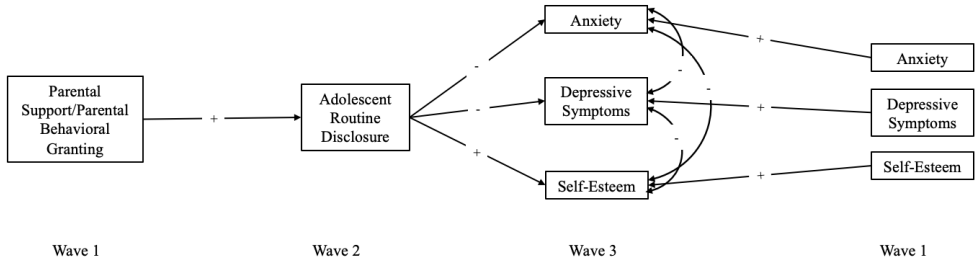
Appendix A

Figure 1.
Conceptual Models.



Notes. Direct path from parental behavior variables (Maternal/Paternal Support and Maternal/Paternal Behavioral Autonomy Granting) at Wave 1 to emotional adjustment outcome variables (Anxiety, Depressive Symptoms, and Self-Esteem) at Wave 3. Parental nativity status was included as a control variable.

Appendix B

Table 1.

Correlations and Descriptives of Main Study Variables.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Maternal Behavioral Autonomy Granting	---											
2. Paternal Behavioral Autonomy Granting	.75**	---										
3. Maternal Support	.34**	.14*	---									
4. Paternal Support	.15*	.32**	.56**	---								
5. Mom Routine Disclosure	.25**	.15	.27**	.23**	---							
6. Dad Routine Disclosure	.13	.35**	-.06	.34**	.50**	---						
7. Anxiety Wave 1	-.17**	-.25**	-.22**	-.28**	-.17*	-.04	---					
8. Anxiety Wave 3	-.01	-.10	-.07	-.21*	-.23*	-.24*	.46**	---				
9. Depressive Symptoms Wave 1	-.21**	-.22**	-.36**	-.38**	-.14	.08	.52**	.15	---			
10. Depressive Symptoms Wave 3	-.08	-.07	-.15	-.22*	-.20*	-.16	.38**	.70**	.34**	---		
11. Self-Esteem Wave 1	.22**	.25**	.23**	.27**	.17*	.08	-.37**	-.16	-.50**	-.38**	---	
12. Self-Esteem Wave 3	-.00	.15	.11	.27**	.19*	.27**	-.32**	-.64**	-.25**	-.71**	.35**	---
Mean	3.06	2.97	3.26	2.87	3.04	2.21	34.42	37.81	16.89	17.04	3.02	3.16
SD	0.51	0.50	0.80	0.84	1.11	1.02	6.81	7.96	11.35	11.44	0.49	0.56

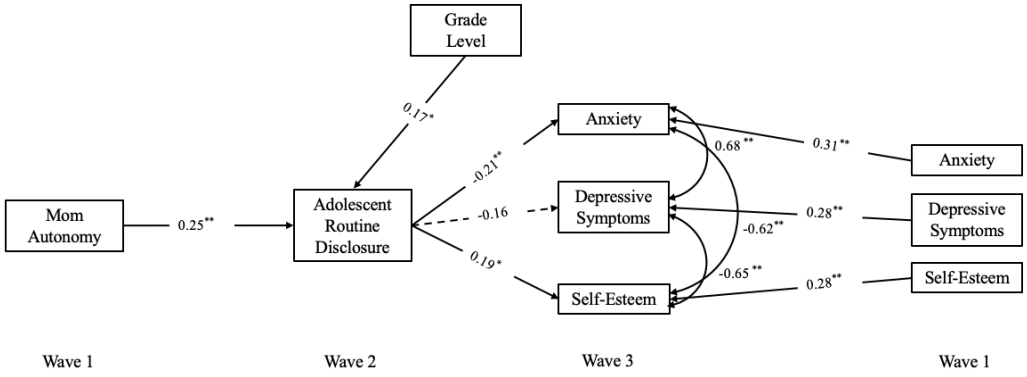
Notes. $^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$.

Appendix C

Models

Figure 2.

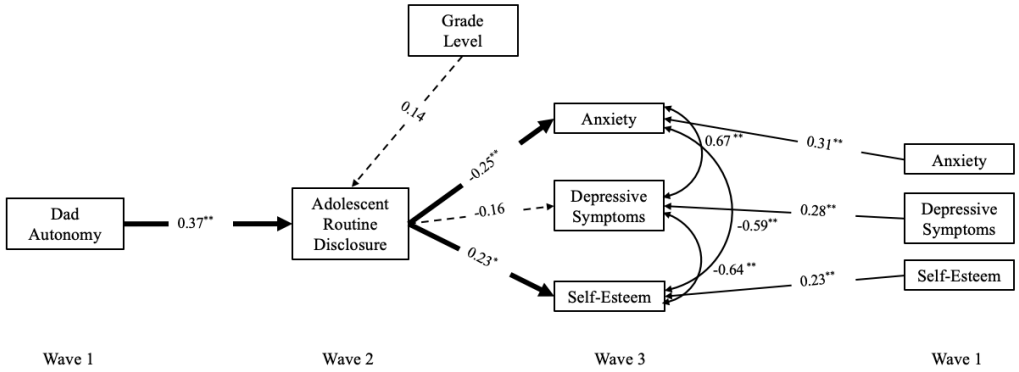
Maternal Behavioral Autonomy Granting Model.



Notes. Model results (standardized coefficients) for path analysis. Bold lines indicate significant indirect effects ($^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$). Dashed lines represent nonsignificant paths. Maternal nativity status was not significant. Model fit indices: χ^2 (13) = 36.35, $p < .05$, RMSEA = 0.07, SRMR = 0.08, CFI = 0.92.

Figure 3.

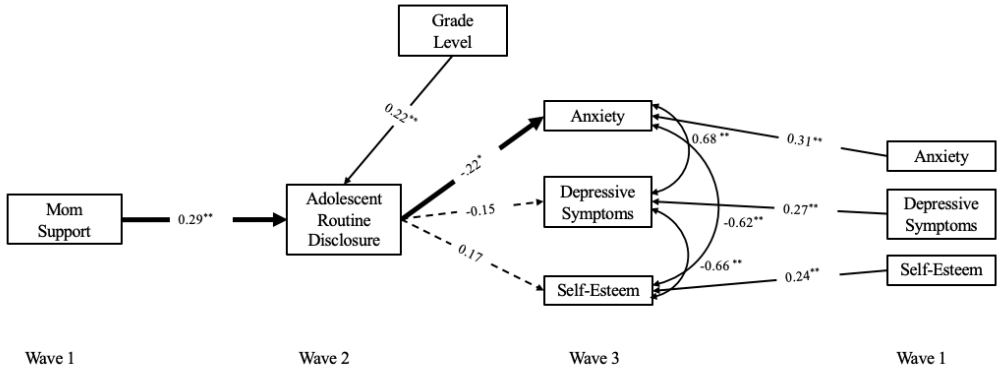
Paternal Behavioral Autonomy Granting Model.



Notes. Model results (standardized coefficients) for path analysis. Bold lines indicate significant indirect effects ($^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$). Dashed lines represent nonsignificant paths. Paternal nativity status was not significant. Model fit indices: χ^2 (13) = 32.83, $p < .05$, RMSEA = 0.07, SRMR = 0.06, CFI = 0.93.

Figure 4.

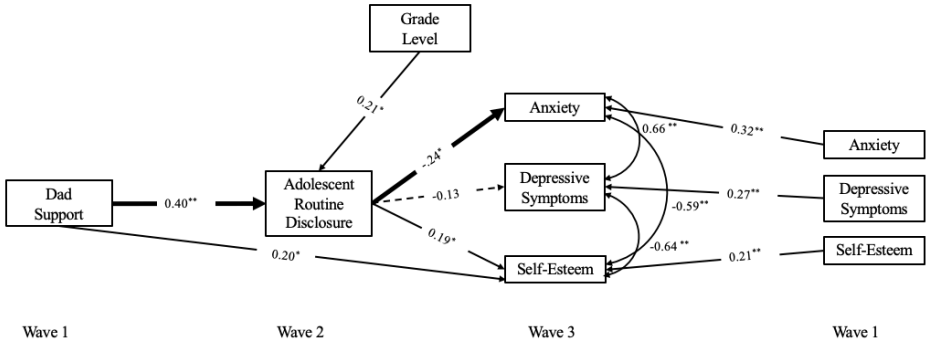
Maternal Support Model.



Notes. Model results (standardized coefficients) for path analysis. Bold lines indicate significant paths ($^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$). Dashed lines represent nonsignificant paths. Maternal nativity status was not significant. Model fit indices: χ^2 (13) = 33.54, $p < .05$, RMSEA = 0.07, SRMR = 0.08, CFI = 0.93.

Figure 5.

Paternal Support Model.



Notes. Model results (standardized coefficients) for path analysis. Bold lines indicate significant indirect effects ($^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$). Dashed lines represent nonsignificant paths. Paternal nativity status was not significant. fit, χ^2 (13) = 29.69, $p < .05$, RMSEA = 0.06, SRMR = 0.06, and CFI = 0.94.

Appendix D

Measures

State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children-Trait Version (STAIC-T) Measure

1. I worry about making mistakes.
2. I feel like crying.
3. I feel unhappy.
4. I have trouble making up my mind.
5. It is difficult for me to face my problems.
6. I worry too much.
7. I get upset at home.
8. I am shy.
9. I feel troubled.
10. Unimportant thoughts run through my mind and bother me.
11. I worry about school.
12. I have trouble deciding what to do.
13. I notice my heart beats fast.
14. I am secretly afraid.
15. I worry about my parents.
16. My hands get sweaty.
17. I worry about things that may happen.
18. It is hard for me to fall asleep at night.
19. I get a funny feeling in my stomach.
20. I worry about what others thing of me.

Note. Response options are: 1 = Hardly Ever, 2 = Sometimes, and 3 = Often. Items were summed with higher scores indicating more instances of anxiety.

Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression (CES-D) Scale

1. I was bothered by things that usually don't bother me.
2. I did not feel like eating; my appetite was poor.
3. I felt that I could not shake off the sadness, even with help from family and friends.
4. I felt that I was just as good as other people. (*R*)
5. I had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing.
6. I felt depressed.
7. I felt that everything I did took a lot of effort.
8. I felt hopeful about the future. (*R*)
9. I thought my life had been a failure.
10. I felt fearful.
11. My sleep was restless.
12. I was happy. (*R*)
13. I talked less than usual.
14. I felt lonely.
15. People were unfriendly.
16. I enjoyed life. (*R*)
17. I had crying spells.
18. I felt sad.
19. I felt that people dislike me.
20. I could not get "going".

Note. Response options are: 0 = Rarely or None of the Time (less than 1), 2 = Some or Little of the Time (1-2 days), and 3 = Mostly or Almost all the Time (5-7 days). (*R*) items should be reverse scored so that lower scores indicate fewer depressive symptoms. Items were summed for a total depressive symptoms score.

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale
1. I certainly feel useless at time. (*R*)
2. At times I think I am no good at all. (*R*)
3. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
5. I wish I could have more respect for myself. (*R*)
6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.
7. I feel that I am a person of worth at least on an equal plane with others.
8. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
9. I feel I do not have much to be proud of. (*R*)
10. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. (*R*)

Note. Response options are: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree , 3 = Agree, and 4 = Strongly Agree. (*R*) items should be reverse scored so that lower scores indicate low self-esteem. Items were averaged for a total self-esteem score.

Behavioral Autonomy Scale
1. I feel that this parent gives me enough freedom.
2. This parent allows me to choose my own friends without interfering too much.
3. This parent allows me to decide what is right and wrong without interfering too much.
4. This parent allows me to decide what clothes I should wear without interfering too much.
5. This parent allows me to choose my own dating partner without interfering too much.
6. This parent has confidence in my ability to make my own decisions.
7. This parent encourages me to help in making decisions about family matters.
8. This parent allows me to make my own decisions about career goals without interfering too much.
9. This parent allows me to make my own decisions about educational goals without interfering too much.
10. This parent lets me be my "own person" in enough situations.

Note. Response options are: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, and 4 = Strongly Agree. Items were averaged with higher scores indicating that adolescents perceive higher levels of behavioral autonomy granting.

Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment
1. I feel that this parent respects my feelings.
2. This parent helps me understand myself better.
3. I tell this parent about my worries and problems.
4. This parent has helped me talk about problems and difficulties.
5. This parent shows me that she/he understands me.
6. If this parent knew something bothered me, he/she would about it.
7. I trust this parent.
8. I can count on this parent when I need to talk about my problems.
9. This parent tries to be understanding when I am angry.

Note. Response options are: 1 = Almost Never or Never True, 2 = Sometimes True, 3 = Often True, and 4 = Almost Always or Always True. Items were averaged with higher scores indicating higher levels of perceived parental support.

Child Disclosure
1. Do you talk to your mother/father about how you are doing in different subjects at school?
2. Do you tell your mother/father about how your day went without being asked?
3. Do you tell your mother/father about what you've been doing with friends without being asked?
4. Do you tell your mother/father what's on your mind without being asked?

Note. Response options are: 1 = Almost Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, and 4 = Frequently. Items were averaged with higher scores indicating higher levels of routine disclosure score.

VITA

Avelina Rivero was born in Phoenix, Arizona, and was raised in Peoria, Arizona, with her four siblings. After graduating from Centennial High School in 2015, she earned a Bachelor of Science in Family Studies and Human Development from the University of Arizona, where she learned that she could conduct research that would help her gain a deeper understanding of her lived experiences. As an undergraduate, she volunteered her time as a Spanish translator for doctors in Puerto Peñasco, México, mentored youth at a local Boys & Girls Club, and worked as an undergraduate research assistant before beginning her graduate work. After receiving her bachelor's degree, Avelina started her doctoral education at the University of Missouri-Columbia in 2019. She received her Master of Science in Human Environmental Sciences in 2021, completed her comprehensive exams for her doctoral degree in 2023, and is graduating with a Doctor of Philosophy in Human Environmental Sciences with an emphasis in Human Development and Family Science and a Quantitative Research Certificate in May 2024.