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Person-Environment Fit: Everyday Conflict and Coparenting Conflict in Mexican-origin Teen Mother Families

Chelsea L. Derlan, Adriana J. Umaña-Taylor, Russell B. Toomey, Kimberly A. Updegraff, and Laudan B. Jahromi
Arizona State University

Abstract

The current study examined whether a match or mismatch between teen mothers' cultural orientation and the cultural context of the family (i.e., familial ethnic socialization) predicted mother-daughter everyday and coparenting conflict, and in turn, teen mothers' adjustment. Participants were 204 Mexican-origin teen mothers ($M_{age} = 16.81$ years; $SD = 1.00$). Consistent with a person-environment fit perspective, findings indicated that a *mismatch* between teen mothers' cultural orientation (i.e., high mainstream cultural involvement) and the cultural context of the family (i.e., higher levels of familial ethnic socialization) predicted greater mother-daughter everyday conflict and coparenting conflict one year later. However, when there was a match (i.e., high levels of familial ethnic socialization for teen mothers with high Mexican orientation), familial ethnic socialization was not associated with mother-daughter conflict. In addition, mother-daughter conflict was positively associated with depressive symptoms and engagement in risky behaviors one year later among all teen mothers.

Keywords

teen mothers; Mexican/Mexican-origin/Latino; familial ethnic socialization; cultural orientation; depressive symptoms; risky behaviors

Everyday conflict between adolescents and parents is a normative process for families from various ethnic backgrounds (Fuligni, 1998). Existing work further suggests that everyday conflict is associated with negative youth outcomes. For example, parent-adolescent conflict has been linked to adolescent conduct problems (Lau, McCabe, Yeh, Garland, Wood, & Hough, 2005), internalizing symptoms (Harker, 2001; Pasch, Deardorff, Tschann, Flores, Penilla, & Pantoja, 2006), and school misconduct and substance use (Pasch et al., 2006). An understanding of the processes associated with increased parent-adolescent conflict is especially relevant for adolescents already at-risk for negative outcomes, such as teen mothers. Not only do teen mothers experience normative conflict with their parents, but they also have to navigate conflict specific to the coparenting relationship with their mothers, who play an important role during teens' transition to motherhood (Brooks-Gunn & Chase-Lansdale, 1995). A focus on *Mexican-origin* teen mothers is warranted, given that Mexican-

origin females have the highest rates of teen births among all ethnic groups in the U.S. (Martin et al., 2011). Further, because of the strong emphasis on familism (i.e., strong identification with and attachment to the family) in Mexican culture (Knight et al., 2010), examining family processes among this group is particularly important.

Guided by a person-environment fit perspective (Eccles et al., 1993; Hunt, 1975), this study examined whether the match or mismatch between Mexican-origin teen mothers' cultural orientation and the cultural context of the family (i.e., familial ethnic socialization) predicted the frequency of mother-daughter conflict (i.e., everyday and coparenting). Additionally, we examined whether mother-daughter everyday and coparenting conflict, in turn, predicted teens' adjustment (i.e., depressive symptoms, risky behaviors).

Mother-Daughter Everyday Conflict and Teen Mothers' Adjustment

Conflict over everyday issues (e.g., chores, clothing, rules) is a normative aspect of life for families with adolescents (e.g., Almeida, Wethington, Chandler, 1999; Bámaca-Colbert, Umaña-Taylor, & Gayles, 2012; Chung, Flook, & Fuligni, 2009), and conflict is more frequent (e.g., Shanahan, McHale, Osgood, & Crouter, 2007) and intense (e.g., Scaramella & Conger, 2004) with mothers than with fathers. Furthermore, mother-adolescent conflict is associated with higher levels of youth maladjustment, such as anxiety, anger, depression, school misconduct, and substance use (Pasch et al., 2006) and both internalizing and externalizing symptoms (Crean, 2008).

Further support for the links between parent-adolescent conflict and adolescent adjustment problems comes from longitudinal data. For example, findings from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health revealed that parent-adolescent conflict was positively associated with depressive symptoms one year later among first-, second-, and third-generation immigrant youth (Harker, 2001). Moreover, a longitudinal study of Latino (61%) parent-adolescent dyads (90% mothers) indicated that adolescents who reported higher levels of parent-adolescent conflict displayed higher levels of internalizing symptoms and lower levels of self-esteem than adolescents reporting lower parent-adolescent conflict (Smokowski, Rose, & Bacallao, 2010). In addition, among Mexican-origin adolescents and a primary caregiver (94% mothers), conflict was positively associated with adolescents' conduct problems 2 years later (Lau et al., 2005). Collectively, this literature suggests that conflict with parents, particularly with mothers, is an important indicator of adolescents' adjustment. Specific to Mexican-origin adolescent females undergoing the transition to parenthood, a related but understudied type of conflict that may also be associated with adjustment is the conflict between mothers and daughters that occurs in the context of their coparenting relationship.

Mother-Daughter Coparenting Conflict and Teen Mothers' Adjustment

Identifying factors that are associated with negative outcomes for Mexican-origin teen mothers is important given the high birthrate in this population (Martin et al., 2011) and teen mothers' higher risk for poorer adjustment, such as decreased self-esteem and increased depressive symptoms (Whitman, Borowski, Keogh, & Weed, 2001). Thus, in addition to

understanding how everyday conflict may inform teen mothers' adjustment, an examination of conflict pertaining to the mother-daughter coparenting relationship is important.

Coparenting refers to the process of two or more adults together assuming responsibility for the care and upbringing of a child (McHale, Lauretti, Talbot, & Pouquette, 2002). Because mothers are often primary confidants for adolescents in general (Nomaguchi, 2008), and mothers are important to their adolescent daughters who become mothers themselves (Brooks-Gunn & Chase-Lansdale, 1995; Gee & Rhodes, 2003), high degrees of conflict in the mother-daughter coparenting relationship is likely to be related to negative outcomes. Although coparenting conflict is expected to have negative effects for all teen mothers in general, it may be especially salient among *Mexican-origin* teen mothers and their mothers given the cultural value of familism. Familism involves having close ties to family, including the expectation that grandparents will be involved in coparenting grandchildren, especially in times of crisis or transition (Williams & Torrez, 1998). Therefore, conflict in the coparenting relationship would be expected to be detrimental to Mexican-origin teen mothers' adjustment, given the expectation that grandmothers will be actively involved in coparenting.

Prior literature on the association between mother-daughter coparenting and adolescents' outcomes has been limited, and no studies to our knowledge have examined this relation among Mexican-origin families. However, similar work supports the notion that negative features of the coparenting relationship may be associated with poorer adjustment for teen mothers. For example, one study that examined coparenting between parental figures (i.e., first-time mothers and fathers) found that negative coparenting (i.e., undermining each other) was associated with mothers' increased depressive symptoms and parenting stress, and decreased parental efficacy (e.g., Solmeyer & Feinberg, 2011). In another study of Caucasian and African American teen mothers, teens' reports of mother-daughter conflict (which included general and parenting-related conflict) was positively associated with teens' depressive symptoms (Caldwell, Antonucci, & Jackson, 1998). The current study extends this work by examining whether mother-daughter everyday conflict and mother-daughter coparenting conflict are uniquely associated with Mexican-origin teen mothers' outcomes (i.e., depressive symptoms and engagement in risky behaviors).

Person-Environment Fit

Both mother-daughter everyday conflict and coparenting conflict have been associated with poorer adjustment, which underscores the importance of examining factors that may inform these types of conflict. A person-environment fit perspective (Eccles et al., 1993; Hunt, 1975), which suggests that maladjustment occurs when there is a mismatch between individuals' characteristics and their environment, provides a useful framework for understanding how teen mothers' individual characteristics and features of the family context may interact to inform teen mothers' experiences of conflict with their own mothers. An important aspect of the family context among Mexican-origin families is familial ethnic socialization, which is the process through which families educate and expose youth to their heritage culture through activities such as cooking traditional foods and attending cultural celebrations (Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004). It is possible that a mismatch between families'

ethnic socialization efforts and adolescents' cultural orientation might be associated with poorer adjustment. For example, there would be a mismatch between teen mothers' characteristics and their environment when teen mothers are highly involved in the mainstream culture (i.e., *acculturated*) and their family engages in high levels of ethnic socialization. The incongruence between the teen mothers' more mainstream cultural orientation and their perceptions that their family is trying to socialize them about the Mexican culture could create tension in the mother-daughter relationship; thus, relationships characterized by such a pattern of mismatch may exhibit greater conflict. In contrast, a match would occur when teen mothers are highly engaged with their heritage culture (i.e., *enculturated or bicultural*), and their perceptions of their families' ethnic socialization efforts are high. Based on person-environment fit theory (Eccles et al., 1993; Hunt, 1975), the congruence between teen mothers' cultural orientation and the family context would reflect a better match and, therefore, greater family ethnic socialization would not be associated with increases in conflict.

To our knowledge, no studies have examined how this match or mismatch between teen mothers' cultural orientation and familial ethnic socialization relates to conflict and youth adjustment. However, related work that has examined the association between parent-adolescent cultural discrepancies and youth maladjustment provides support for this notion. Based on their work with Cuban immigrants, Szapocznik and Kurtines (1993) proposed that cultural orientation discrepancies between parents and adolescents add to the intergenerational differences that are already present at this developmental stage to create conflict within the family that results in poorer youth adjustment. Furthermore, a study including Asian and Latino (mostly Mexican-origin) undergraduate students found that students' reports of acculturative family distancing (i.e., breakdown in communication and discrepancies in cultural values between parents and youth) was positively associated with family conflict, which in turn was associated with clinical depression and psychological distress (Hwang & Wood, 2009). Additionally, results from a recent study of Mexican-origin early (12-14 year-old) and middle (14-17 year-old) adolescents and their mothers indicated that, among middle adolescents, cultural orientation discrepancies were associated with greater mother-daughter conflict, and mother-daughter conflict was positively associated with adolescent depressive symptoms (Bámaca-Colbert et al., 2012).

A Person-Oriented Approach to Understanding Cultural Orientation

Consistent with recommendations to examine cultural orientation in a bidimensional manner (e.g., Berry, 2005; Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, & Szapocznik, 2010), we used a person-oriented approach (Magnusson, 1999) to group teen mothers into a typology classification based on the combination of their levels of acculturation (i.e., engagement in mainstream culture) and enculturation (i.e., engagement in Mexican culture). We arrived at these classifications using cluster analysis (described in detail, below), and examined whether the associations among family ethnic socialization, mother-daughter everyday and coparenting conflict, and teen mother adjustment (i.e., depressive symptoms, risky behaviors) varied as a function of whether teen mothers were acculturated (high mainstream cultural orientation and low Mexican cultural orientation), enculturated (high Mexican cultural orientation and low mainstream cultural orientation), or bicultural (high on both cultural orientations). Using

cluster analysis to classify adolescents into cultural orientation typologies is a useful analytic technique, given our study goals. Specifically, simultaneously accounting for adolescents' engagement in Mexican culture and engagement in mainstream culture, enabled a bidimensional assessment of cultural orientation. Furthermore, rather than making a priori assumptions about existing combinations of engagement in Mexican and mainstream culture, we statistically identified *which* typologies of culture orientation existed among adolescents in this study. Then, by using adolescents' culture orientation classification as a grouping variable (i.e., acculturated, enculturated, or bicultural) we were able to test if the association between familial ethnic cultural socialization and adjustment varied as a function of the cultural orientation of the teen mother.

Current Study

Based on person-environment fit theory (Eccles et al., 1993; Hunt, 1975), we expected that familial ethnic socialization would be positively associated with mother-daughter conflict under conditions of a cultural mismatch (i.e., familial ethnic socialization high, but teen mothers classified as acculturated), but not under conditions that signified a match (i.e., familial ethnic socialization high and adolescent in enculturated or bicultural group). Second, we expected mother-daughter everyday conflict and mother-daughter coparenting conflict to be positively associated with depressive symptoms and engagement in risky behaviors regardless of cultural orientation. In addition, based on previous work that found mother-daughter conflict to significantly mediate the association between cultural incongruence and youth adjustment (Hwang & Wood, 2009), we expected that the relation between familial ethnic socialization and teen mothers' adjustment would be mediated by mother-daughter everyday and coparenting conflict. Finally, because previous work has shown that mother-daughter coresidency can introduce variability into the coparenting relationship (e.g., Kalil, Spencer, Spieker, & Gilchrist, 1998) and that parent-adolescent conflict can vary across the developmental period of adolescence (e.g., Laursen & Collins, 1994), coresidency and teen mothers' age were included as controls.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Data were from an ongoing longitudinal study (Updegraff, Perez-Brena, Umaña-Taylor, Jahromi, & Harvey-Mendoza, 2013) that included 204 Mexican-origin teen mothers. At Wave 1, teen mothers were an average of 16.81 years old ($SD = 1.00$, range = 15.02-19.00), and the majority reported being U.S. born (64%). A majority of adolescent mothers were attending school (58%), and most reported that they lived with their mothers (87%).

Participants were recruited from community agencies and high schools in a Southwestern metropolitan area. Eligibility criteria included that teens had to be of Mexican origin, 15 to 18 years old, currently pregnant, and not legally married. The current prospective longitudinal study includes data from interviews with teen mothers when they were in their first trimester of pregnancy (Wave 1; W1), 10 months postpartum (W2), and 24 months postpartum (W3). Interviews were conducted in participants' preferred language, and most participated in English (61%). Participants received \$25 for participation at W1, \$30 at W2,

and \$35 at W3. All procedures were approved by the university's Human Subjects Review Board.

Measures

Mother-daughter coresidency.—At W1, teen mothers were asked to report whether they lived with their mothers. The variable coresidency was coded as 0 = No, 1 = Yes.

Cultural orientation.—Teen mothers' responses to the 30-item Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans-II (ARSMA-II; Cuéllar, Arnold, & Maldonado, 1995) at W1 was used to create clusters to assess their involvement with Mexican culture (i.e., Mexican orientation subscale) and U.S.-mainstream culture (i.e., Anglo orientation subscale) simultaneously. Items for each subscale were scored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *Not at all* (1) to *Extremely often or almost always* (5). The 17-item Mexican orientation subscale was scored so that higher scores indicated higher engagement in Mexican-oriented behaviors (e.g., "I associate with Mexicans and/or Mexican Americans."). The 13-item Anglo orientation subscale was scored so that higher scores indicated higher engagement in U.S mainstream-oriented behaviors (e.g., "My friends now are of Anglo origin."). Support for the construct validity of this measure has been demonstrated in previous work with Latinos (i.e., Cuéllar & Roberts, 1997). In the current study, Cronbach's alphas for the Mexican orientation subscale were .87 (English version) and .76 (Spanish version). For the Anglo orientation subscale, Cronbach's alphas were .76 (English version) and .86 (Spanish version).

Familial ethnic socialization.—The 12-item Familial Ethnic Socialization Measure (FESM, Umaña-Taylor, 2001; Umaña-Taylor, Yazedjian, & Bámaca-Gómez, 2004) was used to assess adolescents' perceptions of the ethnic socialization provided by the family at W1. Items (e.g., "My family talks about how important it is to know about my ethnic/cultural background") were scored using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (1) *Not at all* to (5) *Very much*, and higher scores indicated greater familial ethnic socialization. The measure has been used extensively with Latino adolescent samples, and findings have provided support for its reliability and construct validity (e.g., Supple, Ghazarian, Frabutt, Plunkett, & Sands, 2006). In the current study, Cronbach's alphas were .89 (English version) and .90 (Spanish version).

Mother-daughter everyday conflict.—A 16-item revised version of a measure created by Smetana (1988) was used to assess teen mothers' perceptions of everyday conflict with their mothers (e.g., "Please tell me how often you have disagreements or differences of opinion with your mother about chores.") at W2. Responses ranged from (1) *Not at all* to (6) *Several times a day*, and higher scores indicated greater conflict. The measure has been used with other samples of Mexican-origin adolescents, and this prior work has reported adequate reliability (i.e., .86) and support for the measure's construct validity (i.e., Bámaca-Colbert et al., 2012). In the current study, Cronbach's alphas were .76 (English version) and .87 (Spanish version).

Mother-daughter coparenting conflict.—The 4-item conflict subscale of the Co-Parental Communication Scale (Ahrons, 1981) was used to assess teen mothers' perceptions of conflict with their mothers regarding parenting issues at W2 (e.g., "Since the baby was born, when you and your mother discuss parenting issues, how often is there hostility and anger between you?"). Responses ranged from (1) *Never* to (5) *Always*, and higher scores indicated higher levels of coparenting conflict. In the current study, Cronbach's alphas were .87 (English version) and .84 (Spanish version).

Engagement in risky behaviors.—The 24-item revised version of Eccles and Barber's (1990) measure of risky behaviors was used to assess teen mothers' engagement in risky behaviors at W3 (e.g., "In the past year, how many times have you gotten drunk or high?"). Responses ranged from (1) *Never* to (5) *More than 10 times*, and higher scores indicated higher engagement in risky behaviors. Previous work has provided support for the reliability and validity of this measure with a diverse sample of ethnic minority adolescents (i.e., Updegraff, Umaña-Taylor, McHale, Wheeler, & Perez-Brena). In the current study, Cronbach's alphas were .89 (English version) and .77 (Spanish version).

Depressive symptoms.—At W3, the 20-item Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D; Radloff, 1977) was used to assess teen mothers' depressive symptoms during the past week (e.g., "My sleep was restless."). Responses ranged from (0) *Rarely or none of the time* to (3) *Most of the time*, and were coded so that higher scores indicated higher depressive symptoms ($\alpha = .89$). Previous work with Mexican-origin youth has provided support for the reliability and validity of this measure among a sample that included Mexican-origin youth (i.e., Crockett, Randall, Shen, Russell, & Driscoll, 2005). Cronbach's alphas in the current study were .91 (English version) and .89 (Spanish version).

Results

Analytic Approach

The current study used cluster analysis to identify cultural orientation classifications using the Anglo and Mexican orientation subscales of the ARSMA. Ward's hierarchical method with squared Euclidian distances for estimation (Aldenderfer & Blashfield, 1984) was used to classify the participants, and the resultant dendrogram and cluster distances were examined to identify the most appropriate cluster solution. After an acceptable number of clusters were identified, ANOVAs were conducted to assess statistical differences between the identified clusters on the Anglo and Mexican orientation subscales of the ARSMA. Further, ARSMA subscale means of each cluster were compared to the overall sample mean to determine the conceptual adequacy of the solution.

Consistent with the main goal of the study, a multiple group structural equation model in *Mplus* version 6.1 (Muthén & Muthén, 2010), with cultural orientation typology as the grouping variable, was used to examine the indirect associations between familial ethnic socialization at W1 and teen mothers' depressive symptoms and engagement in risky behaviors at W3 via teen mothers' reports of mother-daughter everyday conflict and mother-daughter coparenting conflict at W2. Mother-daughter everyday conflict and coparenting

conflict were correlated in the model. In addition, teen mothers' age and mother-daughter coresidency at W1 were included as controls.

Nested model comparisons were used to examine whether associations among model constructs varied as a function of teen mothers' cultural orientation. In this approach, a less constrained model was compared to a more constrained model (i.e., one additional path was constrained), and a chi-square difference test was performed. If the chi-square difference test was significant, it suggested that there were significant differences based on teen mothers' cultural orientation. If the chi square difference was not significant, it indicated that associations among constructs were similar across groups. This process was repeated until all paths in the model were tested. Three primary fit indices were used to examine overall model fit: the comparative fit index (CFI), the root-mean-square-error of approximation (RMSEA), and the standardized root-mean-square residual (SRMR). Model fit was considered to be good (acceptable) if the CFI was greater than or equal to .95 (.90), the RMSEA was less than or equal to .05 (.08), and the SRMR was less than or equal to .05 (.08; Hu & Bentler, 1999). Missing data were handled using full information maximum likelihood (FIML; Arbuckle, 1996).

Cluster Analysis of Teen Mothers' Cultural Orientation

A three-group solution was retained from the cluster analysis of the two subscales of the ARSMA: an acculturated cluster ($n = 56$; 27%), an enculturated cluster ($n = 65$; 32%), and a bicultural cluster ($n = 83$; 41%). Means, standard deviations, and pairwise comparisons of mean differences between each of the clusters on all study variables, including Anglo orientation and Mexican orientation, are presented in Table 1. Post-hoc ANOVAs revealed that all three clusters were significantly different from one another on mean levels of Mexican orientation ($F = 230.04$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .70$). Further, the enculturated cluster reported significantly lower levels of Anglo orientation compared to the other two clusters ($F = 166.21$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .62$); however, the difference in means between the acculturated and bicultural clusters on Anglo orientation was not significant. An eta-squared effect size (η^2) of greater than or equal to .26 is considered large (Cohen, 1988). Tests of mean differences provided support for the validity of the identified cluster solution, and effect sizes for these tests were large in magnitude.

The overall sample mean for the Anglo orientation subscale was 3.61 ($SD = .73$), whereas the sample mean for the Mexican orientation subscale was 3.89 ($SD = .70$). On average, the acculturated cluster reported higher Anglo orientation scores ($M = 3.99$, $SD = .39$) and lower Mexican orientation scores ($M = 2.96$, $SD = .41$), compared to the overall sample. On the other hand, the enculturated cluster reported higher Mexican orientation scores ($M = 4.40$, $SD = .34$) and lower Anglo orientation scores ($M = 2.77$, $SD = .59$). Finally, the bicultural cluster had higher means on Anglo ($M = 4.01$, $SD = .33$) and Mexican ($M = 4.12$, $SD = .41$) orientation scores compared to the overall sample means.

Test of the Hypothesized Model

Prior to testing our hypothesized model, correlations, means, and standard deviations were computed for all study variables for the full sample (Table 2). The hypothesized model

examined whether familial ethnic socialization was related to teen mothers' depressive symptoms and risky behaviors via teen mothers' reports of mother-daughter everyday conflict and mother-daughter coparenting conflict (see Figure 1). To examine our hypotheses regarding match/mismatch we tested whether teen mothers' cultural orientation moderated the hypothesized associations by comparing nested models using a chi-square difference test. The initial model allowed all estimates to vary across groups (i.e., an unconstrained model), which demonstrated good fit: $\chi^2 (df = 18) = 20.24, p > .05$; CFI = .99; RMSEA = .04 (90% C.I.: .00 - .12); SRMR = .05. Next, all estimates were constrained to be equal across groups (i.e., a fully constrained model), and this model resulted in poor fit: $\chi^2 (df = 40) = 61.12, p < .05$; CFI = .89; RMSEA = .09 (.04 - .13); SRMR = .10. Then, the unconstrained model was compared to the fully constrained model, and the chi-square difference test comparing these two models was significant [$\chi^2 (df = 22) = 40.88, p < .01$], suggesting that one or more paths in the model significantly differed by teen mothers' cultural orientation. To determine which paths in the model were moderated by teen mothers' cultural orientation, a series of constrained models were tested in which each individual association was constrained to be equal across groups and the chi-square statistic was compared to the unconstrained model. Given that there were three groups, any significant difference was followed up by a second series of constraints to identify where the difference existed (e.g., between all three groups, or just two groups). The results from non-significant model comparisons are available upon request.

Final partially constrained model.—The final partially constrained model, which included some paths that were constrained to be equal across groups and some paths that were freely estimated, had excellent model fit: $\chi^2 (df = 34) = 26.64, p > .05$; CFI = 1.0; RMSEA = 0.00 (90% C.I.: .00 - .06); SRMR = .06. Consistent with hypotheses based on person-environment fit perspective (Eccles et al., 1993; Hunt, 1975) regarding mismatches, results of the final model indicated that familial ethnic socialization at W1 was positively associated with mother-daughter everyday conflict ($\beta = .44, p < .001$) and mother-daughter coparenting conflict ($\beta = .37, p < .01$) at W2 for acculturated teen mothers (i.e., mismatch), but was not associated with either type of conflict for enculturated teen mothers (i.e., match). Associations for bicultural teen mothers indicated that familial ethnic socialization at W1 was positively associated with mother-daughter coparenting conflict ($\beta = .23, p < .05$) at W2, but not mother-daughter everyday conflict.

In terms of the associations between mother-daughter conflict (i.e., everyday and coparenting conflict) and teen mothers' depressive symptoms and risky behaviors, hypotheses were partially supported. As expected, mother-daughter everyday conflict at W2 was positively associated with depressive symptoms at W3 for all teen mothers regardless of their cultural orientation (β 's = .28 - .39, $p < .001$); however, mother-daughter everyday conflict at W2 was not significantly associated with teen mothers' engagement in risky behaviors at W3. Additionally, as expected, mother-daughter coparenting conflict at W2 was positively associated with engagement in risky behaviors at W3 for all teen mothers (β 's = .20 - .21, $p < .05$), and was positively associated with depressive symptoms at W3 for bicultural teen mothers ($\beta = .35, p < .001$), but was not associated with depressive symptoms at W3 for acculturated or enculturated teen mothers.

Test of Mediation

To formally test for mediation, the RMediation web application was utilized to compute confidence intervals for the mediated effects (Tofighi & MacKinnon, 2011). Using this method, mediation is significant if the confidence interval does not contain zero. Results indicated that all four mediational processes were significant. First, for acculturated teen mothers, the association between familial ethnic socialization and teen mothers' depressive symptoms was mediated by mother-daughter everyday conflict (95% confidence interval for the mediated effect = .043, .228). Additionally, for acculturated teen mothers, the association between familial ethnic socialization and teen mothers' engagement in risky behaviors was mediated by mother-daughter coparenting conflict (95% confidence interval for the mediated effect = .008, .170). Second, for bicultural teen mothers, the association between familial ethnic socialization and teen mothers' depressive symptoms was mediated by mother-daughter coparenting conflict (95% confidence interval for the mediated effect = .011, .173). Furthermore, for bicultural teen mothers, the association between familial ethnic socialization and teen mothers' engagement in risky behaviors was mediated by mother-daughter coparenting conflict (95% confidence interval for the mediated effect = .001, .112).

Discussion

Grounded in a person-environment fit perspective (Eccles et al., 1993; Hunt, 1975), we examined whether a mismatch between Mexican-origin teen mothers' individual characteristics (i.e., cultural orientation) and cultural context of the family (i.e., familial ethnic socialization) was associated with mother-daughter conflict (i.e., everyday and coparenting conflict) and, in turn, with teen mothers' adjustment. Consistent with our expectations, findings documented circumstances under which the association between familial ethnic socialization and teen mothers' adjustment was mediated by mother-daughter everyday conflict and mother-daughter coparenting conflict. First, among acculturated and bicultural teen mothers, familial ethnic socialization was positively associated with mother-daughter coparenting conflict and, in turn, with teen mothers' engagement in risky behaviors. Second, among acculturated teen mothers, familial ethnic socialization was associated with mother-daughter everyday conflict and, in turn, with teen mothers' depressive symptoms. Finally, among bicultural teen mothers, familial ethnic socialization was associated with mother-daughter coparenting conflict and, in turn, with teen mothers' depressive symptoms.

These findings support Szapocznik and Kurtines' (1993) contention that cultural orientation discrepancies between parents and teen mothers are associated with conflict within the family and, in turn, with youth adjustment problems. This builds on previous work in two important ways. First, we implemented a more refined assessment in which we examined the fit between teen mothers' cultural orientation and the *active* ethnic socialization processes provided by their families. Second, we used temporally ordered variables to examine these associations using a longitudinal design. Thus, we provided a more rigorous test of these associations to demonstrate that teen mothers' cultural orientation interacted with their reports of familial ethnic socialization to predict mother-daughter conflict a year later, and in turn, teen mothers' adjustment problems an additional year later. Below, we outline specific

results concerning how cultural orientation interacted with familial ethnic socialization to inform mother-daughter conflict, as well as the links between mother-daughter conflict and teen mothers' adjustment.

Conflict Informed by the Interaction between Cultural Orientation and Ethnic Socialization

Consistent with expectations of a person-environment fit perspective (Eccles et al., 1993; Hunt, 1975), results indicated that the relation between familial ethnic socialization and conflict varied by adolescents' cultural orientation. In other words, a *mismatch* between teen mothers' cultural orientation and the familial cultural context was associated with increased mother-daughter conflict. In particular, among *acculturated* teen mothers, experiencing familial ethnic socialization (i.e., a mismatch) was positively associated with higher levels of mother-daughter everyday conflict and coparenting conflict one year later. Furthermore, among *enculturated* teen mothers, familial ethnic socialization (i.e., a match) was not significantly associated with either form of mother-daughter conflict over time. Contrary to our hypothesis, however, results indicated that among *bicultural* teen mothers, familial ethnic socialization was associated with higher levels of coparenting conflict over time. Together, these findings suggest that high levels of teen mother involvement in U.S. mainstream culture, regardless of whether it was paired with high involvement in Mexican culture (i.e., bicultural teen mothers) or not (i.e., acculturated teen mothers), is associated with mother-daughter conflict (i.e., everyday conflict among bicultural and acculturated teen mothers, and coparenting conflict among acculturated teen mothers) when teen mothers report high levels of familial ethnic socialization. Thus, when families socialize teen mothers about their Mexican heritage culture, teen mothers' high involvement in U.S. mainstream culture may serve as a risk factor for conflict.

The Association between Mother-Daughter Conflict and Adjustment

Another goal of the current study was to examine whether mother-daughter everyday conflict and coparenting conflict were related to teen mothers' adjustment. Based on prior work (e.g., Pasch et al., 2006), we expected that both everyday and coparenting conflict would be associated with depressive symptoms and engagement in risky behaviors for all (i.e., acculturated, bicultural, and enculturated) teen mothers, but our hypotheses were only partially supported. In terms of mother-daughter *everyday conflict*, findings indicated that it was positively associated with depressive symptoms, but it was not significantly associated with engagement in risky behaviors. In addition, with respect to mother-daughter *coparenting conflict*, it was positively associated with engagement in risky behaviors for all teen mothers, however, it was positively associated with depressive symptoms only for bicultural teen mothers.

It is possible that mother-daughter everyday conflict and coparenting conflict were not associated with *both* indicators of maladjustment because when both types of conflict are tested simultaneously, one type of conflict is more predictive of *either* internalizing or externalizing symptoms. For example, given that everyday conflict refers to issues involving the adolescent directly (e.g., chores, the way she looks), the psychosocial response that may be most relevant to this stressor is for adolescent mothers to internalize their feelings and experience depressive symptoms, rather than to engage in risky taking behaviors. On the

other hand, adolescent mothers may turn more toward support outside the family (e.g., peers, significant other) to cope with coparenting stressors, as this may provide a more fruitful avenue for escaping the parenting role that is causing distress with their mother; given their developmental period, it is possible that turning toward peers may result in greater likelihood of engaging in risk-taking behaviors. These ideas are speculative and further work is needed to understand the nuances of the pattern of associations that emerged in this study. In fact, one possibility is that the modest sample size for each group in the multigroup analyses may have limited our ability to detect significant associations. Thus, an important step for future research will be to examine the association between everyday and coparenting conflict and both internalizing and externalizing problems with larger samples of acculturated, enculturated, and bicultural teen mothers.

Overall, our findings are consistent with previous work that shows that mother-daughter conflict is associated with poorer adjustment (e.g., Crean, 2008, Pasch et al., 2006). This study extends prior work by examining mother-daughter *coparenting* conflict as a significant indicator of teen mothers' maladjustment. Scholars have noted the importance of teen mothers' own mothers to their pregnancy and transition to parenting (e.g., Gee & Rhodes, 2003), and our findings support this notion by indicating that mother-daughter everyday conflict and coparenting conflict are both associated with teen mothers' poorer adjustment in the early years of adolescent motherhood.

Strengths, Limitations, and Future Directions

The contributions of this study must be considered with several limitations in mind. First, following recommendations for capturing the bidimensional nature of cultural orientation (e.g., Schwartz et al., 2010), we classified teen mothers into clusters based on their high and/or low involvement in the heritage and mainstream culture, and examined whether the hypothesized model varied by these classifications. However, the small sample sizes present in each of these classifications may have affected power to detect associations between mother-daughter conflict and teen mothers' adjustment. For example, we expected that mother-daughter coparenting conflict would be associated with teen mothers' engagement in risky behaviors among all teen mothers, but this association was only found among bicultural teen mothers (i.e., no significant association among acculturated or enculturated teen mothers), which was the group that contained the largest number of teen mothers. Thus, future work with larger sample sizes is warranted to determine whether the association between coparenting conflict and engagement in risky behaviors is specific to bicultural teen mothers, or whether this association emerges for all teen mothers regardless of cultural orientation.

Second, participants chose to be involved in a study focused on the experiences of Mexican-origin families; therefore, self-selection bias may have limited our ability to capture the experiences of families who would not participate in a study that explicitly required self-identification with Mexican-origin culture. Indeed, participants in our sample reported relatively high levels of familial ethnic socialization (i.e., sample mean of 3.4 on a scale that ranged from 1 to 5). Thus, it will be important for future research to assess whether

mismatches occur among families who provide little or no ethnic socialization, and if the implications of those mismatches are similar to what we found here.

Third, the assessments that were included in the current study were all based on teen mothers' reports using survey methods. For example, we examined adolescents' accounts of the family context (i.e., familial ethnic socialization), which may have introduced single-reporter bias. It will be important for future work to examine other reporters' accounts of familial ethnic socialization (e.g., mothers, siblings). In addition, research should assess these constructs using other methods (e.g., observational data capturing mother-daughter everyday conflict and coparenting conflict) to eliminate shared-method bias and provide a more rigorous examination of these associations. Finally, the current study was conducted in a Southwestern region of the United States in which Mexican-origin Latinos comprised the largest ethnic group. It is possible that individuals' cultural orientation and familial ethnic socialization processes may be different in regions where one's ethnic group is not a numeric majority. Therefore, it will be important to examine the generalizability of our findings to Mexican-origin adolescents in other regions of the U.S.

Despite the aforementioned limitations, results from the current study point to several recommendations for future work and have implications for interventions with this population. Our findings highlight that teen mothers who experience a mismatch between their cultural orientation and their families' efforts to socialize them about their ethnicity are at greater risk for experiencing everyday and coparenting conflict with their mothers and, subsequently, increased maladjustment. Thus, it is critical to address *both* everyday conflict *and* coparenting conflict, and provide support for mother-daughter dyads to manage conflict constructively. Assisting mothers and daughters navigate multiple facets of their relationship is critical to promote positive adjustment for families in which a teen pregnancy has occurred.

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Figure 1.

Final partially constrained final model for acculturated, enculturated, and bicultural teen mothers.

Table 1
Means and Standard Deviations of Study Variables by Cultural Orientation Classification

	Acculturated (<i>n</i> = 56)		Enculturated (<i>n</i> = 65)		Bicultural (<i>n</i> = 83)	
	M (<i>SD</i>)		M (<i>SD</i>)		M (<i>SD</i>)	
Wave 1 Mexican orientation	2.96 (.41) ^a		4.40 (.34) ^b		4.12 (.41) ^c	
Wave 1 Anglo orientation	3.99 (.39) ^a		2.77 (.59) ^b		4.01 (.33) ^a	
Wave 1 Adolescents' age	16.90 (1.05) ^a		16.72 (.98) ^a		16.81 (.96) ^a	
Wave 1 Mother-daughter coresidency ⁺	.82 (.38) ^a		.91 (.29) ^a		.87 (.34) ^a	
Wave 1 Familial ethnic socialization	3.05 (.77) ^b		3.56 (.70) ^a		3.59 (.75) ^a	
Wave 2 Mother-daughter everyday conflict	1.93 (.62) ^a		1.94 (.74) ^a		1.93 (.62) ^a	
Wave 2 Mother-daughter coparenting conflict	2.04 (.93) ^a		1.97 (.79) ^a		2.00 (.83) ^a	
Wave 3 Adolescents' depressive symptoms	0.81 (.65) ^a		0.88 (.53) ^a		0.79 (.57) ^a	
Wave 3 Adolescents' risky behaviors	1.32 (.35) ^a		1.26 (.28) ^a		1.33 (.32) ^a	

Note.

⁺ Coresidency coded as: 0 = No, 1 = Yes. Within rows, values that do not share a superscript are significantly different from one another at $p < .001$.

Table 2
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations among Study Variables for Sample (N = 204).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. W1 teens' age	--								
2. W1 M-D coresidency [†]	.07	--							
3. W1 teens' Mexican orientation	-.10	-.14*	--						
4. W1 teens' Anglo orientation	-.02	-.05	-.42***	--					
5. W1 familial ethnic socialization	.02	-.09	.39***	-.04	--				
6. W2 M-D everyday conflict	-.14*	-.07	-.02	.06	.17*	--			
7. W2 M-D coparenting conflict	-.09	-.11	-.01	.01	.15*	.57***	--		
8. W3 teens' depressive symptoms	.07	-.02	.05	.01	.18**	.41***	.32***	--	
9. W3 teens' risky behaviors	-.06	.01	-.04	.10	-.00	.20**	.26***	.44***	--
Mean	16.81	.87	3.89	3.61	3.43	1.93	2.00	.82	1.30
Standard Deviation	1.00	.34	.70	.72	.78	.66	.85	.58	.32

Note.

[†] Coresidency coded as: 0 = No, 1 = Yes. W = Wave, M-D = Mother-Daughter.

* $p < .05$.

**

$p < .01$.

$p < .001$.