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Perceived Context of Reception among Recent Hispanic Immigrants: Conceptualization, Instrument Development, and Preliminary Validation

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Abstract

Context of reception has been discussed widely in the sociological and anthropological literature, but no measures of this construct exist. We designed a measure of perceived context of reception and provide initial support for the factorial validity, internal consistency reliability, and incremental and discriminant validity of scores generated by this measure. A sample of 302 recent-immigrant Hispanic parent-adolescent dyads from Miami and Los Angeles completed the new perceived context of reception measure, as well as measures of perceived discrimination; Hispanic/American cultural practices, values, and identifications; and depressive symptoms. In Phase 1, exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses extracted a factor for negative perceived

context of reception. A subscale corresponding to this factor was used in Phase 2; for parents and adolescents, negative perceived context of reception and perceived discrimination were differentially associated with acculturation-related variables – suggesting discriminant validity between perceived discrimination and negative perceived context of reception. For adolescents at both sites and for parents in Los Angeles only, the negative perceived context of reception dimensions were significantly associated with depressive symptoms six months later, over and above the contribution made by perceived discrimination – suggesting incremental validity. Results are discussed in terms of perceived context of reception as a new and emerging construct.

Keywords

Context of reception; discrimination; Hispanic; immigrants; acculturation

The United States (U.S.) has been shaped by immigration throughout its history (see Galenson, 1997; Sterba, 2003; Stepick, Stepick, & Vanderkooy, 2011, for reviews). However, the U.S. has often been unfriendly to immigrants, viewing them as a threat to American national identity and cultural solidarity (Barker et al., 2001; Cornelius, 2002; Huntington, 2004; Stepick et al., 2011). Unlike earlier European immigrants who spoke numerous languages and learned English as a unifying language, the majority of recent immigrants are Hispanic (Larson, 2004; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010; Walters & Trevelyan, 2011) and share Spanish as a common language. In Hispanic enclaves, Hispanic residents do not need to speak English, and individuals who immigrate to these areas as adults often learn only rudimentary – or no – English (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006; Schwartz, Pantin, Sullivan, Prado, & Szapocznik, 2006). Although Hispanics are often stereotyped negatively (Fox, 2004), they have nonetheless become an important part of American society, making inroads within the American political and economic systems and influencing recent elections in many states. However, the mass immigration of Hispanics has also spurred anti-Hispanic policies, such as Arizona’s “racial profiling” law and the failure to pass the DREAM Act – serving as a reminder that discrimination and hostility against Hispanics are still ongoing. As a result Hispanics face a dual reality in the United States – they are unwanted by some White and Black Americans, but are often supported by a large co-ethnic community.

Perceived Context of Reception

Not all receiving communities are equally friendly or unfriendly to immigrants. Some large gateway cities are comprised largely of immigrants and their immediate descendants. These cities may present a different set of opportunities and challenges for immigrants compared to more rural or suburban areas that are less accustomed to receiving immigrants (cf. Saenz, Donato, Gouveia, & Torres, 2003; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). Immigration and its sequelae can be conceptualized as an interaction between the specific immigrant group and the context in which settlement occurs (Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, & Szapocznik, 2010; Schwartz, Vignoles, Brown, & Zagefka, in press). Sociologists (e.g., Portes & Rumbaut, 2001, 2006) and anthropologists (e.g., Stepick & Stepick, 2010) describe the *context of reception* as the opportunity structure, degree of openness versus hostility, and acceptance in the local community. In a positive context of reception immigrants are welcomed and can pursue the American Dream (i.e., find jobs and develop supportive social ties). In a negative context of reception immigrants are isolated, have difficulty finding jobs, and experience discrimination or perceive hostility.

Sociological accounts imply that context of reception is a singular phenomenon that applies to an entire immigrant group or receiving community. However, individual immigrants may experience the local context of reception differently. An immigrant’s perception of the

receiving context can be a function of that person's degree of acculturation as well as other personal, social, and economic resources (e.g., English language proficiency [Erwin, 2003]; whiter skin tone [Córdova & Cervantes, 2010; Stepick & Stepick, 2002]). Retention of heritage-cultural practices and values (e.g., displaying foreign flags [Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco, 2001]) may create a less favorable receiving context. We operationalize *perceived context of reception* as an immigrant's perception of welcomeness, opportunity structure, and availability of social supports in the receiving community¹. A negative perceived context of reception would be expected to lead to depressive symptoms and other negative reactions. A negative perceived context of reception could also encourage segmented assimilation (Alba & Nee, 2006), where phenotypes and other social and economic characteristics can affect patterns of assimilation (e.g., Haitians and West Indians associating with African Americans; Waters & Jimenez, 2005).

Similarly, different Hispanic groups may be regarded differently by the U.S. government. For example, under the "wet foot, dry foot" policy established by the Clinton administration, Cubans are granted legal status as soon as they reach U.S. soil, and they cannot be deported. Mexicans, on the other hand, are regarded quite differently. Prevalence estimates suggest that the majority of Mexican immigrants are in the United States on an undocumented or unauthorized basis (Passel, 2006), and some commentators (e.g., Buchanan, 2006; Huntington, 2004) have labeled Mexican immigration as a threat to the cultural solidarity of the United States. The ways in which different Hispanic groups are received may therefore be markedly different.

No empirical measures exist to assess perceived context of reception at the individual level. Items developed to assess perceived context of reception (both positive and negative) should measure the perception of one's available opportunities, hostility or warmth, and desirability of one's ethnic or cultural group in the receiving society.

Although negative perceived context of reception is conceptually similar to perceived discrimination, there are important distinctions. Perceptions of discrimination refer both (a) to "microaggressions," specific acts of prejudice, exclusion, denigration, or violence (King et al., 2011); and to (b) a generally unwelcoming climate directed toward individuals because of their racial or ethnic group (Pieterse, Carter, Evans, & Walter, 2010). Context of reception refers to the individual's perception of the overall valence that the receiving society directs toward an immigrant group and the opportunity structure available to that group (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). These two constructs probably overlap; in a hostile context of reception, immigrants may experience or perceive discrimination (Cornelius, 2002). However, a favorable receiving context may not preclude some degree of discrimination or intergroup or intragroup tension from occurring. Most communities likely include positive and negative elements, and both perceived discrimination and perceived context of reception may subsume these elements. Research is needed to determine whether perceived negative context of reception and perceived discrimination represent distinct constructs.

A positive context of reception also may be reflected in the belief that one can succeed in spite of adversities (Perez, 2009). Although sociological writings on context of reception have not included this American Dream dimension, the United States has been described as an ideal destination for immigrants because of the value placed on diligence, resilience, and capitalizing on opportunities (Huntington, 2004; Morales, Herrera, & Murry, 2011). Many

¹Note that Portes and Rumbaut (2006) have discussed context of reception with regard to how immigrants are received by the dominant society as a whole. There may also be a context of reception in terms of how immigrants are received by other immigrant or minority groups, although such a phenomenon has not been discussed or studied in the scientific literature.

immigrants perceive the U.S. as a “land of opportunity” and arrive with optimism (Hirschman, 2001), especially as they compare opportunities in the United States with opportunities for advancement in their countries of origin. In the present study, we generated items to refer to the American Dream and to the extent to which life in the United States was similar to the individual’s expectations prior to immigration. Items for negative perceived context of reception reflected tension, ostracism, and lack of opportunity.

Acculturation and Perceived Context of Reception

We would expect perceived context of reception to correlate with the person’s cultural orientations – which might be labeled as acculturation with regard to immigrants (e.g., Schwartz et al., 2010). For example, in largely monocultural receiving contexts, immigrants who are fluent in English and familiar with U.S. customs may experience the local receiving context more positively than those with poor English proficiency and unfamiliarity with U.S. culture (Erwin, 2003). However, in areas where a large heritage-culture community has developed, new immigrants typically settle in ethnic enclaves where they interact with one another (e.g., Portes & Rumbaut, 2006). Cities such as Miami and Los Angeles are home to large Hispanic communities. Recent Hispanic immigrants commonly settle in these communities (Logan, Zhang, & Alba, 2002; Stepick, Grenier, Castro, & Dunn, 2003), where familiarity with – and retention of – heritage-culture practices, values, and identifications may be as important as acquiring those from U.S. culture to determine an immigrant’s perceived context of reception.

Cultural values and identifications also likely correlate with perceived context of reception. Primarily individualistic Western nations are receiving waves of immigrants from primarily collectivist cultural contexts – setting up a potential incompatibility between these two sets of cultural values (Steiner, 2009; van de Vijver & Phalet, 2004). The positive association between individualism and U.S. cultural practices, across ethnic groups (Schwartz, Zamboanga, Rodriguez, & Wang, 2007), suggests that favorability of one’s context of reception might be positively associated with individualist values, and negatively linked with collectivist values.

Ethnic enclaves are not necessarily “friendlier” to immigrants compared to other receiving communities. Although some established immigrants help recent settlers, others may discriminate against newcomers (Cervantes, Salgado de Snyder, & Padilla, 1989; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Stepick & Stepick, 2002). In bicultural areas, adapting both to the United States and to a heritage-culture ethnic enclave may result in a more favorable perceived context of reception.

Another empirical question is which individual-level cultural orientations correlate with perceived contexts of reception, and whether these correlates vary across locales. Acculturation is not a single linear dimension – rather, it is represented by separate heritage and receiving cultural dimensions (Phinney, 2003) and operates within several domains: practices, values, and identifications (Schwartz et al., 2010). Although language and other cultural practices are the most external elements, cultural values and identifications are also important components of the acculturation process (Castillo & Caver, 2009). Traditional familistic and collectivistic value systems may cause immigrants to prioritize family members’ needs over their own (Triandis, 1995). Collectivist values are more strongly endorsed by some immigrant groups (including Hispanics) than by White Americans (Schwartz, Weisskirch, et al., 2010; Szapocznik, Scopetta, Aranalde, & Kurtines, 1978). Immigrants can express their identification with their country of origin or with the United States by displaying flags or symbols from either country. These domains of acculturation may affect the ways in which communities receive the immigrants, which in turn affects the individual’s perceptions of their receiving context. It is important to examine heritage and

receiving cultural practices, values, and identifications in relation to perceived discrimination and context of reception.

Adolescents and context of reception

Finally, it is not known whether context of reception affects adults and adolescents similarly. Immigration is often a family phenomenon, and many immigrant adults bring children who subsequently attend school in the receiving community. Adults enter the world of work, where new immigrants may be viewed by established residents as competing for jobs, or alternatively as doing jobs that the community needs (Stoll, Melendez, & Valenzuela, 2002). High unemployment rates in many U.S. cities may increase competition for jobs and worsen the context of reception for new immigrants. Adolescents enter the world of school, where many principals and teachers are challenged with (and unprepared for) educating large numbers of students who are not fluent in English and are unfamiliar with the U.S. school system. Work and school represent contexts of reception where adults and children, respectively, spend a great deal of time – and the extent to which perceived context of reception operates for immigrant adults and their children warrants investigation.

Miami and Los Angeles as Contexts of Reception

This study was conducted in two U.S. metro areas, Miami and Los Angeles. These cities were selected because they have large Hispanic populations, but also because they differ in immigrants' countries of origin, reasons for immigrating, resources available to immigrants, and their overall socio-political context. The first influx of Cubans helped to transform Miami into a thriving metropolis (Portes & Stepick, 1994), and Cuban Americans have held the majority of political and economic power in Miami since the late 1970s (Stepick et al., 2003). Since 1980, the Hispanic population of Miami has diversified and includes Central and South Americans (Fernández-Kelly & Curran, 2001; Sabogal, 2005). Cubans have continued to immigrate as well, aided by the “wet foot, dry foot” law that allows them to stay legally in the United States (Stepick & Stepick, 2002). Miami is home to a large undocumented population, and contrary to popular lore, many Miami Hispanics are poor and lack health insurance. However, because most of the established leaders in Miami are Cuban Americans, Cuban immigrants may perceive a more favorable context of reception compared to non-Cubans (cf. Stepick & Stepick, 2010).

Los Angeles, on the other hand, was part of the territory that was annexed by the U.S. from Mexico in the 19th century; the city has been home to a sizeable Mexican community since its inception. Mexican immigrants have been settling in the Los Angeles area for more than a century, but the city's Mexican population has grown more rapidly since restrictive immigration quotas were lifted in 1965 (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006). Based on the 2010 U.S. Census, 48% of the population in Los Angeles self-identifies as Hispanic. Although the majority of Hispanics in Los Angeles are of Mexican origin, there was a large influx in the 1990's of individuals from Central America (Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala). Like Miami, Los Angeles is home to a large number of undocumented immigrants. Although some Mexican immigrants and their descendants have entered professional and other high-status occupations, the majority of recent Mexican immigrants in Los Angeles have not. In particular, undocumented immigrants, who comprise a sizeable proportion of Los Angeles's Mexican-born population (Massey, Rugh, & Pren, 2006), are ineligible for government benefits and most employment opportunities and typically work in the informal economy – often receiving substandard wages and no benefits. Hispanic immigrants also lack affordable housing and face a public school system that mandates English immersion after the first year (Light, 2006). Although Mexican Americans in Los Angeles have enjoyed increasing political and economic power; and although parts of Los Angeles County are heavily

Hispanic and have elected Hispanic politicians, the political and economic climate in Los Angeles still favors non-Hispanics.

The Present Study

This study represents an initial step toward developing and validating a measure of perceived context of reception. It included two phases – (a) establishing the dimensionality of our set of perceived context of reception items, and (b) establishing discriminant validity for perceived context of reception vis-à-vis perceived discrimination, as well as incremental validity for perceived context of reception. Both phases used a sample of recent Hispanic immigrant families from Miami and Los Angeles. Phase 1 of the study involved (a) developing items assessing perceived context of reception based on sociological writings on this construct and (b) using exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses on randomly selected half-samples to examine the factorial validity of scores generated by the measure that these items comprised (Thompson, 2004). In Phase 2, discriminant and incremental validity were evaluated between perceived context of reception and perceived discrimination in three ways: (a) examining bivariate associations between these two constructs; (b) regressing both of these constructs on Hispanic and American practices, values, and identifications to ascertain whether perceived discrimination and context of reception would relate differently to indices of acculturation; and (c) mapping the associations of perceived discrimination and context of reception with depressive symptoms (a correlate of perceived discrimination; Torres & Ong, 2010) to examine whether perceived context of reception would contribute additional variance in depression beyond that accounted for by perceived discrimination. Each of these steps, except for item generation, was followed separately for parent and adolescent data, to examine the extent to which the construct of perceived context of reception would operate similarly for adults and for their adolescent children. Differences in patterns of findings between study locations were examined through invariance testing by site.

Based on existing literature (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006; Stepick & Stepick, 2010), we hypothesized that perceived context of reception would be a bifactorial construct – including positive and negative dimensions. For example, immigrants may simultaneously have high hopes for success in the United States, yet be denigrated because of their skin color or poor English proficiency. We further hypothesized that perceived negative context of reception would be strongly correlated with perceived discrimination, but that these two constructs would be sufficiently independent such that each would be characterized by a different set of correlates. Especially given the multicultural contexts in which our research was conducted, we expected that orientation towards both Hispanic and American cultural streams should predict a more favorable perceived context of reception. Consistent with our expectation that perceived context of reception and perceived discrimination would be conceptually separate, we hypothesized that perceived context of reception would be related to depressive symptoms, over and above the contributions made by perceived discrimination.

Method

Sample

The present sample was taken from the first two assessment points² of a longitudinal study of acculturation among recent Hispanic immigrant adolescents and their primary caregivers. The sample consisted of 302 families (parent-adolescent dyads) from Greater Miami ($N =$

²The second assessment point was used only to establish predictive and incremental validity (vis-à-vis depressive symptoms) and test-retest reliability for the perceived context of reception subscale(s).

152) and Greater Los Angeles ($N = 150$). For simplicity, we refer to these areas as Miami and Los Angeles, respectively. Each adolescent participated in the study with her/his primary caregiver. The majority of adolescents in Miami (83%) and Los Angeles (67%) arrived in the US at the same time as their primary caregivers; and 98% of adolescents were born in the same country as their primary caregivers. As per inclusion criteria, all adolescents had arrived in the U.S. within five years of the time of data collection and were either finishing or entering the ninth grade. Adolescents and parents in Miami had been in the United States for a median of 1 year (adolescents: interquartile range = 0–3 years; parents: interquartile range = 1–4 years), whereas adolescents and parents in Los Angeles had been in the United States for a median of 3 years (adolescents: interquartile range = 1–4 years; parents: interquartile range = 1–5 years). For families where the adolescent and primary parent arrived separately, the mean duration of the separation was 2.72 years (SD 1.65 years; range 0–4 years) in Miami and 2.28 years (SD 1.67 years, range 0–4 years) in Los Angeles.

The Miami sample was primarily from Cuba (61%), the Dominican Republic (8%), Nicaragua (7%), Honduras (6%), Colombia (6%), and other Hispanic countries (12%); the Los Angeles sample was primarily from Mexico (70%), El Salvador (9%), Guatemala (6%), and other Hispanic countries (15%). The mean annual household income was \$30,854 (SD \$10,824). Additional differences between sites are presented in Table 1.

Baseline data were gathered during the summer of 2010. The mean adolescent age was 14.51 years ($SD = 0.88$ years, range 14 to 17); 53% were boys. Biological mothers (70%), fathers (25%), stepparents (3%), and grandparents or other relatives (e.g., aunts or uncles; 2%) comprised the participating parents³. The mean parent age was 41.09 years ($SD = 7.13$ years, range 22 to 64). Seventy-seven percent of parents were married or cohabiting with a partner, 9% were separated, 7% were divorced, 2% were widowed, and 5% had never been married.

Procedures

Participants were recruited from randomly selected public schools in heavily Hispanic areas in Miami-Dade and Los Angeles counties. Because we were looking for recent-immigrant families, and because many Hispanic immigrants tend to settle in heavily Hispanic areas (Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Wolters, & Holdaway, 2008; Stepick et al., 2003), we selected schools where the student body was at least 75% Hispanic. Our goal was to recruit 25 students per school for a total of 150 families per site. In cases where a school or district did not provide at least 25 students, we recruited additional students from another nearby high school. The study was approved by the Institutional Review Boards at the University of Miami and the University of Southern California, and by the Research Review Committees for each of the participating school districts.

At each school, we first obtained approval from the principal or vice-principal to conduct the study. In Miami, because the majority of new Hispanic immigrant students are enrolled in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes, we gave a brief presentation in each ESOL class about the study and asked interested students to provide their primary caregiver's phone number. We also gave presentations in the basic-level English classes into which students would transition after completing the ESOL program. In Los Angeles, we also approached students in ESOL classes – but because students in California are transferred out of ESOL after one year, we also recruited from the student body at large. In some schools in Los Angeles, principals were able to supply us with a list of students who

³Although not all of the caregivers were the adolescents' biological parents, we use the term "parent" for simplicity.

had been in the United States for five years or less. All participating schools were public high schools. In Miami, 10 schools participated, and the number of participating students within each school ranged from 1 to 57 (*Mdn* = 9, *IQR* = 4–19). In Los Angeles, 13 schools participated, and the number of students participating from each school ranged from 1 to 27 (*Mdn* = 12, *IQR* = 4–16).

Staff members called parents to verify that the adolescent had been in the U.S. for less than five years and that the family planned to remain in the South Florida or Southern California area. Families who met these inclusion criteria were invited to schedule evening or weekend assessment appointments at a convenient location. We received contact information for 632 families who met the study's inclusion criteria. Of these, 197 were unreachable, primarily because of incorrect or non-working telephone numbers. The remaining 435 families were reached by telephone and invited to participate. Of these 435 families, 69% ($n = 302$) participated in the study. Of the 133 families who met inclusion criteria and were contacted, but did not participate, 93 (65%) were unable to participate due to reported work or scheduling conflicts, 18 (13%) missed at least three scheduled assessment appointments, 1 (1%) was planning to move, 2 (2%) reported experiencing serious health problems, and 19 (14%) declined but did not provide a reason. For the baseline assessment, each parent received \$40, and each adolescent received a voucher for a movie ticket.

Participating primary caregivers provided informed consent for her/himself and the adolescent, and adolescents provided informed assent. Parents and adolescents were taken to separate rooms so that the consent/assent process could be conducted privately. In cases where adolescents declined to provide assent, parents were told that the family did not meet inclusion criteria (to protect the adolescent's privacy).

Assessments were completed using an audio computer-assisted interviewing (A-CASI) system (Turner et al., 1998) on laptop computers (for adolescents) or on touch-screen tablet PCs (for parents). The A-CASI reduces completion time, eliminates the need for data entry and for storage of hard-copy data, and has been demonstrated to increase honest reporting regarding sensitive topics (Cooley et al., 2003). The system displays each item and response choices on the computer screen while the item and response choices are read to the participant through a set of headphones. Each participant completed the assessment battery in English or Spanish, according to her/his preference. Eighty-five percent of adolescents, and 100% of parents, completed their assessments in Spanish.

Retention at 6 Months Post-Baseline

To provide a longitudinal assessment of the predictive validity of the perceived context of reception subscale(s), and to ascertain test-retest reliability, we used data at 6 months post-baseline. We maintained contact with participants between assessment timepoints, and obtained their permission to contact friends or relatives who could locate them if we were unable to do so; 92% ($n = 278$) of study families were reassessed at the second timepoint. Parents received \$45 and adolescents were given another movie ticket.

Measures

Although back translation with committee resolution of discrepancies is the standard for translating measures (Sireci, Wang, Harter, & Ehrlich, 2006), we used a somewhat different approach because our participants would be from different Latin American countries in and would have settled in different parts of the United States. In keeping with variations in Spanish by national origin, we used two translators from each site. The two Miami translators worked together to translate the English versions into Spanish; the two Los Angeles translators reviewed these translations; and the four translators discussed language

discrepancies and any words that would not be understood similarly by Spanish speakers at both sites. The Spanish used was what is known as “broadcast Spanish”, which is the type of Spanish mostly used in the media, and can be understood by anyone of Hispanic origin. All measures used a five-point Likert scale unless otherwise noted.

Perceived Context of Reception—Following Portes and Rumbaut (2001, 2006), Kasinitz et al. (2008), and Stepick et al. (2003), we operationalized context of reception as “local labor market conditions and local social relationships ... toward a specific immigrant group” (Rumbaut & Portes, 2001, p. 231). Although these sociologists defined context of reception as an objective phenomenon, here we attempted to assess it as a subjective perception.

In developing a measure of perceived context of reception, a panel of experts in Hispanic cultural issues generated items reflecting the American Dream (e.g., “If we work hard we can overcome problems”), and items reflecting a feeling of being blocked or thwarted in one’s attempts to integrate oneself into the receiving community and society. A total of nine items were generated (listed in Table 2). Spanish translations of these items are available from the first author. Following Stepick et al. (2003), “negative” items were developed to reference the individual immigrant (e.g., “I don’t have the same chances as people from other countries”) and those referencing the larger immigrant group in which the person is embedded (e.g., “People from my country are not welcome here”). These “negative” items were assumed to cluster together given the social-psychological construct of stereotyping (e.g., Steele, 1997), which suggests that, when interacting with strangers, individuals are likely to be treated as exemplars of the group to which they belong (Kim, Wang, Deng, Alvarez, & Li, 2011).

In the parent version, items referred to work, whereas in the adolescent version these items were rephrased to refer to school. A five-point Likert scale was used, with responses ranging from 0 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 4 (*Strongly Agree*). Although no formal pilot testing was performed, the items were discussed and agreed upon among a group of experts in Hispanic cultural adaptation. To minimize overlap with perceived discrimination, care was taken to avoid reference to specific discriminatory events or actions.

Perceived discrimination was assessed using seven items (Phinney, Madden, & Santos, 1998) asking about the degree to which participants have been treated unfairly by members of the receiving community (e.g., “How often do teachers or employers treat you unfairly or negatively because of your ethnic background?”). Cronbach’s alpha values were .89 and .87 for adolescents and parents respectively.

Acculturation—Acculturation was used as a hypothesized correlate of perceived context of reception and was assessed in terms of heritage and U.S. practices, values, and identifications (Schwartz et al., 2010). Cultural *practices* were measured using the Bicultural Involvement Questionnaire (BIQ; Guo, Suarez-Morales, Schwartz, & Szapocznik, 2009; Szapocznik, Kurtines, & Fernandez, 1980). The BIQ consists of 24 items, 12 of which assess American practices (e.g., speaking English, eating American food, associating with American friends), and 12 of which assess Hispanic practices (e.g., speaking Spanish, eating Hispanic food, associating with Hispanic friends). In the present sample, Cronbach’s alpha coefficients for adolescents and parents, respectively, were .91 and .91 for American practices and .89 and .86 for Hispanic practices.

Cultural *values* were measured in terms of individualism-collectivism (e.g., Triandis, 1995). Sample items include “I’d rather depend on myself than on others” (individualism) and “Family members should stick together, no matter what sacrifices are required”

(collectivism). Alpha coefficients for these subscales in the present sample for adolescents and parents, respectively, were: individualism, .73 and .74; and collectivism, .79 and .70.

Cultural *identifications* were assessed in terms of ethnic and U.S. identity. Ethnic identity was assessed using the 12-item Multi-Group Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM; Roberts, Phinney, et al., 1999). Sample items include “I am proud to be a member of my ethnic group” and “I have tried to learn about my ethnic group, such as its history and traditions.” In the present sample, Cronbach’s alphas were .91 for adolescents and .89 for parents.

U.S. identity was assessed using the 12-item American Identity Measure (Schwartz et al., 2012), which is parallel to the MEIM in terms of item content and structure. In the American Identity Measure, “the United States” was inserted in place of “my ethnic group.” Psychometric analyses have supported the concurrent validity, construct validity, factorial validity, and internal consistency reliability of American Identity Measure scores (Schwartz et al., 2012; Schwartz, Weisskirch, et al., 2010, 2011). In the present sample, Cronbach’s alphas were .88 for both adolescents and parents.

Depressive symptoms were assessed at 6 months post-baseline using the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D; Radloff, 1977), designed to assess depressive symptoms in the general population. The CES-D consists of 20 items asking how often various depressive symptoms (e.g., lack of appetite, difficulty sleeping, lethargy) occurred during the week prior to assessment. Cronbach’s alpha values in the present sample were .93 for adolescents and .87 for parents. The CES-D has been translated into Spanish and used frequently with Hispanic samples (e.g., Todorova, Falcón, Lincoln, & Price, 2010).

Family functioning was used to establish discriminant validity for the perceived context of reception measure. Campbell and Fiske (1959) define discriminant validity as a finding that two constructs that are expected to be unrelated are empirically found to be unrelated. Family functioning was assessed in terms of parental involvement, positive parenting, and parent-adolescent communication. Parents and adolescents each completed separate measures of each of these constructs. *Parental involvement and positive parenting* were assessed using parent and adolescent versions of the Parenting Practices Scale (Gorman-Smith, Tolan, Zelli, & Huesmann, 1996). The adolescent-report parental involvement subscale consists of 12 items ($\alpha = .87$); the adolescent-report positive parenting subscale consists of 6 items ($\alpha = .91$); the parent-report involvement subscale consists of 10 items ($\alpha = .71$); and the parent-report positive parenting subscale consists of 6 items ($\alpha = .79$). Sample adolescent-report items include “How often did your parent ask you about your plans for the coming day?” (involvement) and “When you do something that your parent likes, does s/he give you a wink or a smile” (positive parenting). Aside from the two additional adolescent-reported involvement items, the parent report items ask the same questions as the adolescent report items, from the parent’s perspective – such as “How often have you asked your child about her/his plans for the coming day?” The response scale for each item ranges from 1 (*Almost Never*) to 3 (*Often*). *Parent-adolescent communication* was assessed using the Parent-Adolescent Communication Scale (Barnes & Olson, 1982). Both the parent and adolescent versions consist of 20 items (adolescent, $\alpha = .93$; parent, $\alpha = .81$). Sample items include “I can express my feelings to my parent/child without feeling restrained.”

Results

Analysis Plan

The present analyses proceeded in five steps. In our analyses we used a sandwich covariance estimator (Kauermann & Carroll, 2001) to adjust model parameters and their standard errors

for the effects of multilevel nesting (i.e., families within schools). Because the sandwich estimator is a multilevel technique, school-level effects are modeled as part of the multilevel algorithm, and not as an explicit predictor variable (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). We also used a robust maximum likelihood estimator to control for non-normality.

First, we conducted exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses on the perceived context of reception items, separately for adolescents and for parents. The adolescent and parent samples were each randomly split in half. For both adolescents and parents, exploratory factor analyses were conducted on the first half-sample using SPSS release 19, and confirmatory factor analyses on the second half-sample using Mplus release 5.1. Second, provided that an interpretable factor structure emerged from these analyses – that is, that the perceived context of reception scores possess adequate factorial validity – we would then examine the extent to which perceived context of reception is associated with Hispanic and U.S. practices, values, and identifications (in a pattern different from that observed for perceived discrimination) and with depressive symptoms. Third, to establish discriminant validity, we estimated a model where the parent and adolescent perceived context of reception scales were correlated with parent and adolescent reports of family functioning. A null or small correlation would indicate discriminant validity. The second and third steps of analysis were performed as path models in Mplus.

Fourth, we used both baseline and 6 months post-baseline data to compute test-retest reliability coefficients for the perceived context of reception and perceived discrimination subscales, for both adolescent and parent reports. Finally, we compared perceived context of reception scores between the Miami and Los Angeles adolescents, and between the Miami and Los Angeles parents. We controlled for parental education and annual family income because these variables differed significantly across sites.

Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analyses for Perceived Context of Reception

We conducted exploratory factor analyses on one randomly selected half of each sample. Following Conway and Huffcutt (2003), we used a multi-stage process to decide on the number of factors to extract. First, we examined the scree plot (Thompson, 2004), where the “leveling-off-point” on the scree line represents the last factor that should be extracted. Second, we considered only factors with eigenvalues above 1.00, where the eigenvalue represents the product of the number of items entered into the analysis and the percentage of variability accounted for by the factor (Kaiser, 1958). Third, we conducted a parallel analysis, which compares the eigenvalues from the data entered into analysis to the eigenvalues obtained from a random-number dataset with the same number of cases and variables (Thompson & Daniel, 1996). Only those factors associated with a greater eigenvalue than the corresponding factor from the random-number dataset were eligible for retention. Parallel analysis prevents factors associated with chance variability from being retained. Finally, as recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), we extracted only factors characterized by at least two loadings above .70 or by at least three loadings above .60. We used promax rotation, an oblique solution that allows factors to correlate while minimizing cross-loadings and maximizing the unique variability assigned to each factor (Conway & Huffcutt, 2003). Eigenvalues reported are therefore those derived after the solution was rotated.

Based on this multi-stage decision process, we extracted two factors for adolescents and two factors for parents. These factors were labeled as positive and negative perceived context of reception. For adolescents, positive perceived context of reception emerged as the stronger factor (eigenvalue 2.70, 30.12% of variability explained), and negative perceived context of reception was somewhat weaker (eigenvalue 1.54, 16.43% of variability explained). For parents, the opposite pattern emerged: negative perceived context of reception was the

stronger factor (eigenvalue 3.36, 37.77% of variability explained), whereas positive perceived context of reception was considerably weaker (eigenvalue 1.58 15.56% of variability explained). In both the adolescent and parent factor solutions, three items loaded onto the positive context of reception factor, and six items loaded onto the negative context of reception factor. Correlations between the two factors were .11 for adolescents and $-.16$ for parents.

Using the second half-sample, and separately for adolescents and for parents, we entered this two-factor solution into a confirmatory factor analysis. Each item was attached to the factor onto which it patterned in the exploratory analysis, and no cross-loadings were estimated. The factor solution was evaluated according to standard structural equation modeling criteria: excellent fit was characterized as comparative fit index (CFI) $.95$, non-normed fit index (NNFI) $.90$; root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) $.08$; and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) $.06$. Adequate fit is characterized as CFI $.90$; NNFI $.85$; RMSEA $.10$; and SRMR $.08$ (Kline, 2006). The 90% confidence interval for the RMSEA provides additional information about the precision of this index. Nonetheless, there is some controversy concerning how model fit should be evaluated, and therefore a model that satisfies most (but not all) of the fit criteria should not necessarily be rejected (Marsh, Hau, & Wen, 2004). The chi-square index is reported, but not used in model evaluation, because it tests the null hypothesis of perfect fit to the data and is therefore rarely tenable.

The confirmatory factor analysis model fit the data adequately for both adolescents, $\chi^2(24) = 44.47, p < .01$; CFI = $.94$; NNFI = $.91$; RMSEA = $.053$ (90% CI = $.028-.077$); SRMR = $.045$; and parents, $\chi^2(25) = 61.01, p < .01$; CFI = $.93$; NNFI = $.90$; RMSEA = $.069$ (90% CI = $.047-.091$); SRMR = $.060$. Exploratory factor loadings are presented in Table 2. In the CFA model, the factor loadings for the item referring to “life in the United States being similar to one had expected” were low for both adolescents, $\lambda = .28$, and parents, $\lambda = .16$. This item therefore loaded weakly on the perceived context of reception factor. Although the two “American Dream” items loaded more strongly ($.62$ and $.61$ for adolescents, $.76$ and $.88$ for parents), the positive perceived context of reception subscale would be left with only two items – and we concluded that additional items would need to be developed for this subscale. We therefore did not include this subscale in further analyses, and it was dropped from the measure. Cronbach’s alpha values for adolescent and parent negative context of reception were $.83$ and $.88$, respectively. The perceived negative context of reception factor refers to immigrants from one’s country of origin being unwanted in the United States, to feeling unwelcome, and to feeling “blocked” in finding work (or achieving in school) because of their country of origin.

We then computed bivariate correlations to estimate discriminant validity between perceived negative context of reception and perceived discrimination. These correlations were $.36$ for adolescents and $.49$ for parents (both $ps < .001$). These correlations did not differ significantly between sites (z values ranged from $1.10-1.71$, p values ranged from $.09-.27$). Although these correlations are in the moderate range, the proportions of variance explained (12% and 24%, respectively) are sufficiently small to conclude that perceived discrimination and context of reception represent distinct constructs.

Bivariate correlations, summarized in Table 3, were computed for (a) perceived discrimination and negative context of reception and (b) demographic variables (parental education and family income), acculturation indices (Hispanic and U.S. cultural practices, values, and identifications), and depressive symptoms (at Time 2). To determine whether the pattern of correlations was consistent across the two sites (Miami and Los Angeles), we conducted invariance testing procedures on the bivariate correlations model. Specifically,

we compared a model with each correlation free to vary across sites to a model with all correlations constrained equal across sites. The assumption of invariance across sites would be statistically rejected if two of the following three criteria were met: $\Delta\chi^2$ significant at $p < .05$ (Byrne, 2011); $\Delta\text{CFI} > .01$ (Dimitrov, 2010); and $\Delta\text{NNFI} > .02$ (Vandenberg & Lance, 2000). The invariance test indicated that the assumption of invariance should be rejected, $\Delta\chi^2(36) = 51.39, p < .05; \Delta\text{CFI} = .016; \Delta\text{NNFI} < .001$. Only one path differed significantly across sites – the association between U.S. identity and perceived negative context of reception for parents. This path coefficient was $\beta = -.25 (p < .02)$ in Miami and $\beta = .22 (p < .01)$ in Los Angeles.

Incremental Validity

We then estimated two path models – one for adolescents and one for parents – in Mplus to ascertain the incremental validity of negative perceived context of reception vis-à-vis perceived discrimination (see Figure 1). In each model, perceived negative context of reception and perceived discrimination at baseline were regressed on Hispanic and American cultural practices, values, and identifications at baseline; and perceived negative context of reception and perceived discrimination at baseline were modeled as predictors of depressive symptoms at Time 2. This model builds on theoretical assumptions that (a) perceptions of context of reception are based, at least in part, on the person's cultural orientation (Schwartz et al., 2010); and (b) individuals who perceive discrimination or unfavorable contexts of reception are likely to report psychological distress (cf. Finch & Vega, 2003). The model was estimated in multigroup form to examine the consistency of findings between the Miami and Los Angeles samples. Family income and parental education were controlled in the prediction of perceived discrimination, perceived context of reception, and depressive symptoms.

Adolescent Incremental Validity Model—The adolescent incremental validity model provided an adequate fit to the data, $\chi^2(12) = 15.44, p = .21; \text{CFI} = .96; \text{NNFI} = .82; \text{RMSEA} = .044$ (90% CI = .000 to .099); $\text{SRMR} = .025$. Individualist values, $\beta = .12, p < .03$; significantly predicted perceived discrimination. Collectivist values, $\beta = -.14, p < .03$, predicted negative context of reception; and U.S. identity, $\beta = .12, p < .07$, was marginally significant. For depressive symptoms, both perceived discrimination, $\beta = .21, p < .001$; and negative context of reception, $\beta = .18, p < .02$, were significant predictors. An invariance test indicated equivalent fit across sites, $\Delta\chi^2(20) = 21.11, p = .39; \Delta\text{CFI} = .013; \Delta\text{NNFI} < .001$.

Parent Incremental Validity Model—The parent incremental validity model also provided an adequate fit to the data, $\chi^2(10) = 11.59, p = .31; \text{CFI} = .99; \text{NNFI} = .94; \text{RMSEA} = .032$ (90% CI = .000 to .097); $\text{SRMR} = .026$. The model did not fit the data equally across sites, $\Delta\chi^2(20) = 27.63, p = .39; \Delta\text{CFI} = .050; \Delta\text{NNFI} = .054$. Similar to the bivariate correlation findings, U.S. identity was a negative predictor of perceived context of reception in Miami, $\beta = -.25, p < .02$; but a positive predictor in Los Angeles, $\beta = .22, p < .01$. Hispanic cultural practices were marginally significant as a predictor of negative context of reception in Los Angeles, $\beta = .16, p < .08$; but not in Miami, $\beta = -.07, p = .41$. Perceived discrimination was marginally associated with U.S. identity in Miami, $\beta = -.18, p < .08$; but was linked with Hispanic identity in Los Angeles, $\beta = .26, p < .005$. In Los Angeles, both perceived discrimination, $\beta = .22, p < .04$; and perceived context of reception, $\beta = .24, p < .02$ significantly predicted depressive symptoms. However, neither perceived discrimination, $\beta = .14, p = .15$; nor perceived context of reception, $\beta = .13, p = .28$; significantly predicted depressive symptoms in the Miami sample.⁴

Discriminant Validity

The discriminant validity model fit the data adequately, $\chi^2(11) = 39.77, p < .001$; CFI = .93; NNFI = .86; RMSEA = .093 (90% CI = .063 to .125); SRMR = .047. For parents and adolescents, family functioning latent variables were defined using parental involvement, positive parenting, and parent-adolescent communication. These latent variables were then entered as predictors of perceived negative context of reception. The association between family functioning and perceived negative context of reception was not statistically significant for either adolescents, $\beta = -.02, p = .73$; or parents, $\beta = -.07, p = .47$.

Test-Retest Reliability

We estimated test-retest reliability separately for adolescent and parents, and for perceived discrimination as well as for perceived context of reception. Six-month test-retest reliability coefficients appear in Table 4. Coefficients were in the moderate range, with only two below .40 (both for adolescent reports in Miami).

Perceived Discrimination and Context of Reception across Regions

The final step of analysis was to compare parent-reported and adolescent-reported perceived context of reception and discrimination scores between the Miami and Los Angeles sites. Because we needed to control for multilevel nesting (students within schools, using the sandwich covariance estimator) and for non-normality, we conducted this analysis in SEM format, where site was allowed to predict each of the variables of interest. Unstandardized coefficients are reported here, where the unstandardized coefficient represents the mean difference between sites and where each mean is on a 0–4 scale. We took the square root of the reported family income because Mplus has difficulty computing variances and covariances with numbers in the ten-thousands.

Results indicated that parent-reported, but not adolescent-reported, discrimination and context of reception differed between sites. Not unexpectedly, compared to Los Angeles parents, Miami parents provided lower scores for both negative context of reception, $B = 2.63, p < .001$; and discrimination, $B = 0.24, p < .02$. Table 5 reports the mean levels of endorsement for each of the study constructs across sites.

Discussion

This study provides initial evidence for the construct of perceived context of reception, and provides evidence for internal consistency reliability, factorial validity, and discriminant and incremental validity of a measure of this construct, in a heterogeneous sample of Hispanic parents and their adolescent children from Miami and Los Angeles. We also examined the extent to which the correlates and mean levels of perceived context of reception would differ between these two cities both of which have a large Hispanic populations, but differ in their social, political, and economic position of Hispanics.

Structure of Perceived Context of Reception

The negative context of reception factor – the single reliable factor – was structured similarly between immigrant parents and adolescents. This factor represents the individual's perception of tension, ostracism, and lack of opportunity (Portes and Rumbaut, 2006).

⁴To ensure that range restriction was not responsible for the lack of correlation with depressive symptoms in the Miami parents, we compared standard deviations between the Miami and Los Angeles parents. The standard deviations were not significantly different by site, Levene's $F = 0.94, p = .33$.

Supporting discriminant validity – the conceptual distinction between perceived context of reception and discrimination – correlations between perceived discrimination and negative context of reception represented less than 25% of the shared variability among adolescents and parents. Participants reported low rates of perceived discrimination, but were more likely to perceive some degree of hostility and lack of opportunities. Both perceived discrimination and perceived negative context of reception were associated with subsequent levels of depressive symptoms in the incremental validity models.

In Los Angeles, where the context of reception for Hispanics is often characterized as ambivalent (Hayes-Bautista, 2004), parents reported significantly more discrimination and a more negative context of reception compared to their Miami counterparts, but this was not true for adolescents. Perceived discrimination and context of reception significantly predicted subsequent depressive symptoms for adolescents at both sites, but for parents only in Los Angeles. The school context may have insulated adolescents from negative contexts of reception; the schools from which we sampled were all more than 75% Hispanic, and rejections from other ethnic groups may have been less apparent to adolescents than to their parents, who may have encountered hostility from other ethnic groups while seeking housing, employment, healthcare, or social services. This dynamic may have operated more strongly in Los Angeles County, where recent Hispanic immigrants are likely to be undocumented (Massey et al., 2006) and non-White, than in Miami, where Cubans cannot be undocumented.

However, a negative context of reception is not necessarily created by the dominant White American cultural group (Alba & Nee, 2006). Recent immigrants may be discriminated against by other immigrants from their same country of origin or from another country, and by other minority groups as well as by Whites (Logan et al., 2002; Stepick & Stepick, 2002). Efforts to reduce discrimination against recent immigrants should be directed toward longer-term immigrant groups as well as toward other minorities and non-immigrant groups.

Perceived Context of Reception: Associations with Acculturation-Related Variables

As an individual's view of the immediate context into which she or he has settled, perceived context of reception is assumed to be related to the types of acculturation orientations that the person has adopted. Interestingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, links between acculturation and perceived context of reception were different for adolescents than for parents. For adolescents, these links were consistent between the Miami and Los Angeles samples, and cultural values appeared to be most closely related to perceived discrimination and negative context of reception. In both Miami and Los Angeles, adolescents' individualist values were positively associated with perceptions of discrimination, and collectivist values were negatively associated with negative perceived context of reception. It may be that more individualistic or Americanized adolescents are spending time with non-Hispanic peers, whereas more collectivist or traditional adolescents are associating mostly with family members and with other recent-immigrant peers.

For parents, the acculturation-related correlates of perceived discrimination and context of reception differed between the Miami and Los Angeles samples. The associations of U.S. identity with perceived discrimination and negative context of reception for parents differed by city. For Miami parents, identifying with the United States was negatively associated with perceptions of a negative context of reception – whereas for Los Angeles parents, this association was positive. These differential patterns are likely linked to the divergent social positions held by Hispanics in these two regions. The favorable social position held by Hispanics in Miami allows them to selectively identify with the United States (Stepick et al., 2011). On the other hand, Hispanics (especially Mexican-born individuals) in many parts of Los Angeles are often socially and economically marginalized – and when socially

marginalized individuals attempt to identify with a group to which others do not see them as belonging, they may be rejected (Scheepers, Branscombe, Spears, & Doosje, 2002). This same difference in social position may also be responsible for the differences in mean levels of perceived negative context of reception between the Miami and Los Angeles parents. Claiming an identity as a member of the receiving community may make one a target for discrimination – especially when one's cultural group (in this case Mexican immigrants) is often stereotyped and rejected.

Perceived Context of Reception: Associations with Depressive Symptoms

Perceived context of reception predicted depressive symptoms six months later, over and above the contribution made by perceived discrimination, for adolescents at both sites and for parents only in Los Angeles. This finding suggests that both specific discriminatory acts, and a generally hostile and unsupportive community, are linked – both together and separately – with feelings of distress for adolescents and for parents within the Los Angeles context. This finding further supports the discriminant and incremental validity of perceived context of reception and suggests that it is conceptually distinct from perceived discrimination. However, it is not clear why neither perceived discrimination nor perceived context of reception emerged as a significant predictor of depressive symptoms six months later for the Miami parents. It is possible that the Miami parents, nearly two-thirds of whom were from Cuba, did not experience very much discrimination and did not perceive a hostile context of reception. It is also possible, and worthy of further study, that families immigrating to Miami may have different expectations for life in the United States compared to families immigrating to Los Angeles.

Test-retest coefficients were in the moderate range for both adolescents and parents. Perceived context of reception tended to be more stable over time than perceived discrimination, especially for Los Angeles adolescents and parents. This suggests that, although specific discriminatory acts may change over time, a general perception of hostility and lack of opportunity is more stable. Test-retest reliability may represent another way by which perceived context of reception differs from perceived discrimination.

Implications for Research, Practice, and Policy

These results suggest several important implications for clinical practice and for community policy. First, the finding that the pattern of results differed across sites for parents, but not for adolescents, may suggest that adolescents are somewhat insulated from the local context of reception. Such a conclusion is bolstered by the significant mean differences by site in perceived negative context of reception for parents, but not for adolescents. In heavily Hispanic areas, the schools that adolescents attend are likely to be comprised primarily of Hispanic students. The hostility and negative interactions that parents may experience with members of other groups (e.g., at work) may be less likely to occur in the lives of adolescents.

Second, for parents, U.S. identity was negatively related to perceived context of reception in Miami but positively related in Los Angeles. These opposing patterns may be due to between-site differences in where the immigrants are coming from, and in the receiving communities where they are settling. In many parts of Miami, the empowerment of Hispanics has led to the predominance of a hybrid Hispanic/American culture, where many people identify both with the United States and with their countries of origin (Stepick & Stepick, 2002). In many parts of Los Angeles, however, immigrants (especially Mexicans) have not experienced such group-level empowerment – and in fact they are often viewed with hostility and suspicion (Stoll et al., 2002). It is important for researchers and policy makers to design and test interventions to sensitize receiving-community individuals to the

needs of immigrants, the contributions that they can make, and the supports that they require if they are to contribute to their communities.

Limitations

The present results should be interpreted in light of several important limitations. First, because we used cross-sectional data in estimating the associations of acculturation with perceived discrimination and context of reception, we cannot test the directionality in these associations. Although we posited here that acculturation-related variables influence how a given immigrant will perceive the context of reception in which s/he is embedded, it is also possible that immigrants entering a hostile context may assert their ethnic identities and may resist identifying with the United States.

Second, we generated only three items for positive context of reception. Because three or more items are required to create a reliable factor (Thompson, 2004), it is important to generate more items for positive context of reception in future work. Third, we sampled from two U.S. metro areas with large Hispanic populations and with fairly long histories of Hispanic immigration. Context of reception may work quite differently in “newer” receiving communities. Similarly, we sampled from heavily Hispanic areas – but we do not know whether the correlates of context of reception might have been different for recent immigrants in less densely Hispanic communities.

Third, although we targeted all Hispanic families who had been in the United States for less than five years, our sample was limited to those whom we were able to reach by telephone. Poor and undocumented immigrants, who may be more transient, use prepaid cell phones, and are less likely to have working or consistent telephone numbers, may have been less likely to participate. Similarly, because we planned to follow participants over time as part of the parent study, we excluded individuals who planned to move out of the South Florida or Southern California areas during the study timeframe. Considering the mobility of this population (especially in California), and especially of those that may be undocumented, this exclusion criterion likely resulted in omission of migrant and seasonal workers. It is important for future studies to recruit and track these individuals so that we can understand how they experience shifting contexts of reception as they move continuously in search of work.

Fourth, we did not ask about exposure to U.S. culture prior to immigration. Due to the pervasive effects of globalization, U.S. culture has spread around the world (Jensen, Arnett, & McKenzie, 2011). U.S. music, movies, television shows, social media, and dress styles have become popular in many Latin American countries, especially among adolescents and young adults (Arnett, 2002).

Despite these limitations, the present study has provided some preliminary validation evidence for the construct of perceived context of reception. This new measure may facilitate the empirical operationalization of what has thus far been a somewhat abstract concept. For immigrants, both the *objective* receiving context (e.g., physical built environment, number of available jobs, quality of schools) and a given immigrant’s *subjective* perception of that context are likely important for immigrant adjustment. The fact that individuals’ cultural orientations were associated with their perceptions of the context of reception suggests that perceived context of reception is – at least in part – an individual-difference construct. We hope that the present study will open a new line of empirical research on context of reception – both actual and perceived – and that this important construct will find its way into empirical work on immigrant acculturation and adjustment.

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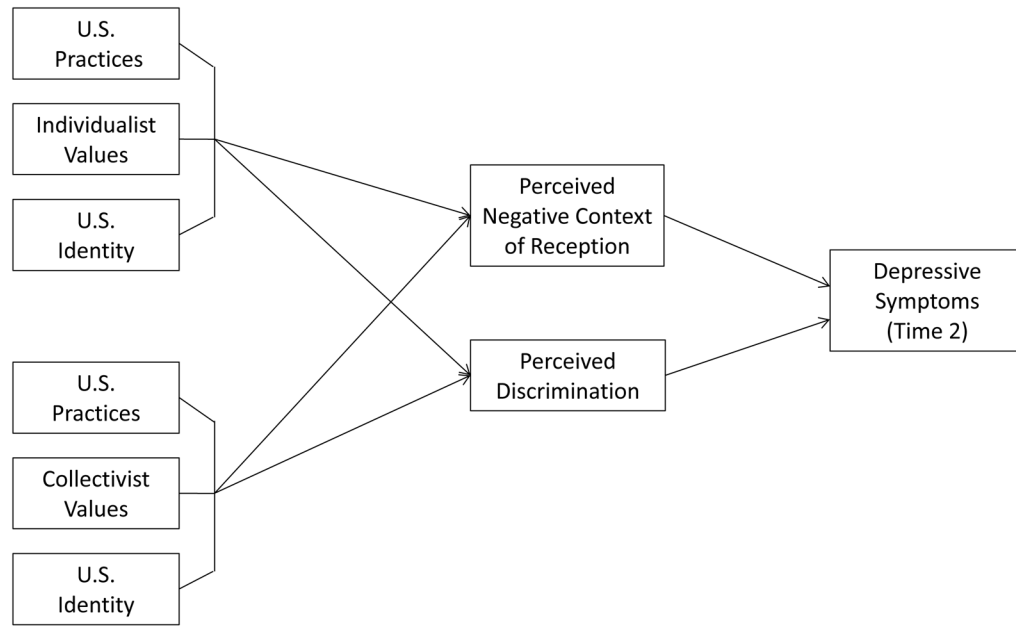


Figure 1.
Incremental Validity Model

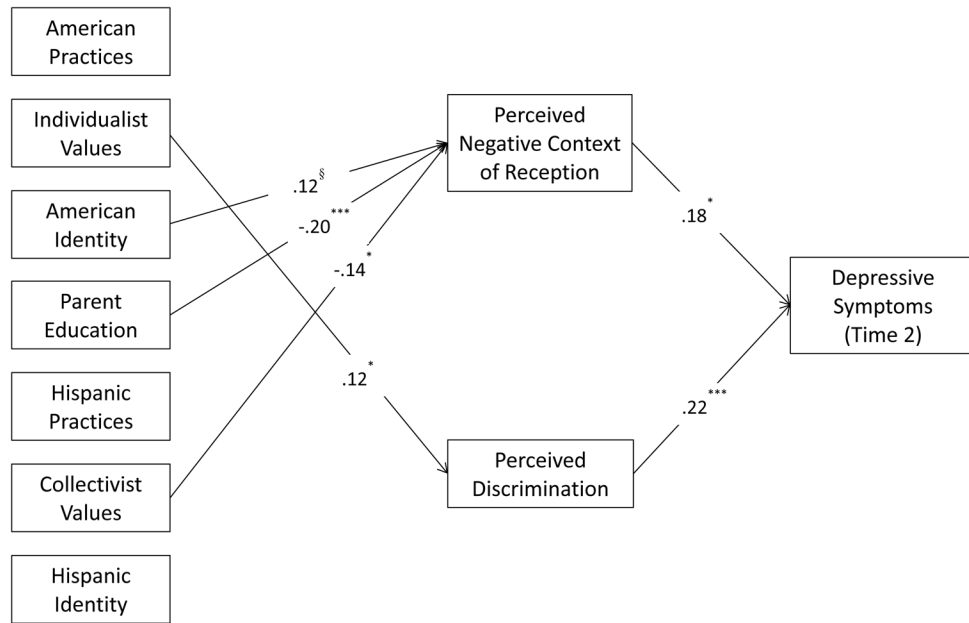


Figure 2.
Incremental Validity Results (Adolescents)

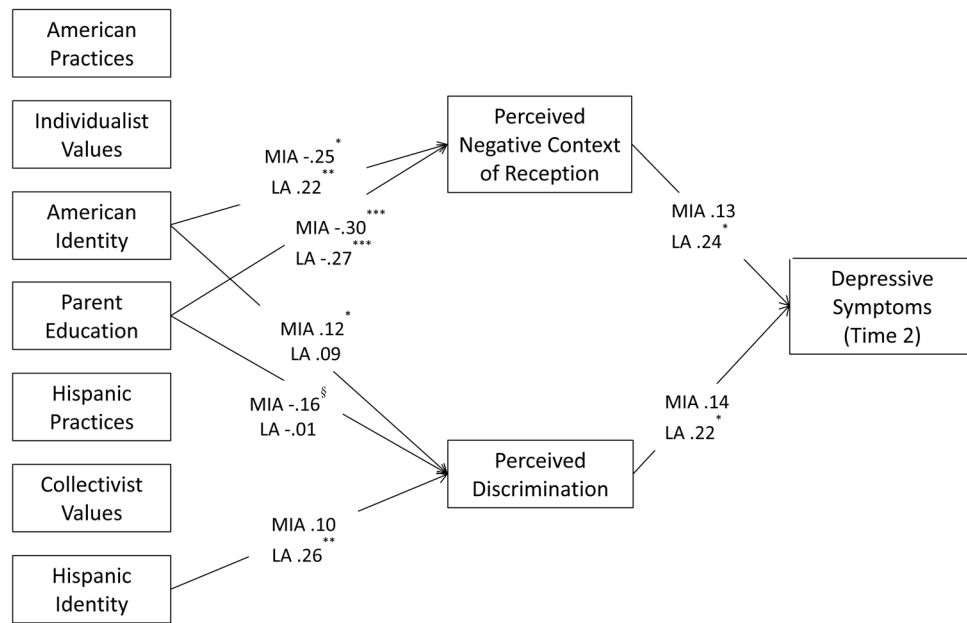


Figure 3.
Incremental Validity Results (Parents)

Table 1

Demographic Differences between the Miami and Los Angeles Sub-Samples

Variable	Miami	Los Angeles	Statistical Test
Countries of Origin	61% Cuban, 8% Dominican, 7% Nicaraguan, 6% Honduran, 6% Colombian, 4% Salvadoran, 3% Mexican, 2% Peruvian, 3% other countries	70% Mexican, 9% Salvadoran, 6% Guatemalan, 4% Honduran, 3% Nicaraguan, 3% Peruvian, 5% other countries	N/A
Percentage of Families Arriving Together	83%	67%	$\chi^2(1) = 9.76^{**}$, $\phi = .19$
Duration of Separation (years) ^a	2.72 (1.65)	2.28 (1.67)	$t(66) = 1.06$, $d = 0.28$
Years in the U.S.	<i>Mdn</i> = 1, <i>IQR</i> = 0–3	<i>Mdn</i> = 3, <i>IQR</i> = 1–4	Wilcoxon $Z = 6.39^{***}$
Annual Family Income	\$27,028 (<i>SD</i> \$13,454)	\$34,521 (<i>SD</i> \$5,398)	$t(178) = 6.09^{***}$
Years of School Completed	11.17 (3.72)	8.84 (4.47)	$t(289) = 4.92^{***}$
Parent Employed Past Year	39.9%	52.7%	$\chi^2(1) = 4.99^*$

^aIncludes only families who reported an immigration-related separation.

*
 $p < .05$

**
 $p < .01$

 $p < .001$

Table 2Exploratory Factor Loadings for Positive and Negative Context of Reception^a

Item	Positive Context	Negative Context	η^2
The environment where I am living in the United States is pretty much what I expected when I came here.	.57, .30	-.06, -.20	.33, .13
I believe that I have the same opportunities as other immigrants coming into this country.	.78, .82	.03, -.02	.62, .67
If my family and I work hard enough, we can overcome whatever problems we have in our current lives here in the United States.	.74, .82	.13, -.02	.57, .67
I don't have the same chances in life as people from other countries.	.02, -.11	.55, .57	.30, .33
People from my country are not welcome here.	-.01, -.20	.62, .73	.38, .57
My family and I would be treated better if we were more like other immigrant groups.	-.01, -.20	.73, .74	.53, .58
It is hard for me to get good grades because of where I am from.	.09, .02	.72, .79	.53, .62
Teachers treat kids from my country differently than kids from other countries.	.09, .02	.74, .83	.55, .58
People in this country often criticize people from my country.	-.03, -.10	.62, .73	.39, .54

^aLoadings and η^2 values for adolescents are presented first, followed by values for parents.

Table 3

Bivariate Correlations of Perceived Discrimination and Negative Context of Reception with Other Study Variables^{a,b}

Variable	Perceived Discrimination (A)	Perceived Negative Context of Reception (A)	Perceived Discrimination (P)	Perceived Negative Context of Reception (P)
<i>Demographics</i>				
Family Income	-.11, .07	-.01, .00	.12*, .14	-.07, -.01
Parent Education	.02, .14*	-.13 [§] , -.30***	-.04, .07	-.25**, -.20**
<i>Acculturation (Time 1)</i>				
American Practices	.06, .16	-.15, -.18*	-.15, .01	.11, -.15
Hispanic Practices	.20*, .05	.01, .04	-.13, -.02	.03, .18***
Individualist Values	.18, .08	.00, -.10	-.01, -.07	.10, .10
Collectivist Values	-.10, -.03	-.03, -.11	-.02, -.10	.09, .10*
U.S. Identity	-.19**, -.07	.21 [§] , .15	-.05, -.12*	-.19, .28**
Ethnic Identity	.08**, -.03	-.03, .05	.34*, .43***	-.33**, -.23***
<i>Depressive Symptoms (Time 2)</i>				
Depressive Symptoms	.04*, .30**	.42***, .25***	.28***, .25***	.03, .09

^aFor all variables other than demographics, only within-person correlations are reported (e.g., adolescent-reported context of reception with adolescent-reported acculturation and depressive symptoms).

^bWithin each cell, the first number reported is for the Miami sample, and the second number reported is for the Los Angeles sample.

Table 4

Test-Retest Reliability Coefficients

	Perceived Discrimination	Perceived Negative Context of Reception
<i>Adolescent Report</i>		
Miami	.31***	.38***
Los Angeles	.41***	.58***
Difference	$z = 1.04, q = .12$	$z = 2.05^*, q = .25$
<i>Parent Report</i>		
Miami	.47***	.57***
Los Angeles	.47***	.61***
Difference	$z = 0.03, q = .00$	$z = 0.49, q = .06$

Note: The z -test for independent correlation coefficients and the q index of effect size (Cohen, 1988) were used to compare test-retest reliability coefficients across sites.

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

Table 5Means and Standard Deviations for Perceived Negative Context of Reception and Perceived Discrimination^{a,b}

Variable	Miami <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	Los Angeles <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	Site Difference (<i>B</i>)
<i>Adolescent Reports</i>			
Negative Context of Reception	8.47 (4.81)	8.53 (4.80)	0.28
Perceived Discrimination	0.76 (0.82)	0.79 (0.81)	0.06
<i>Parent Reports</i>			
Negative Context of Reception	9.30 (4.57)	11.96 (4.55)	2.63***
Perceived Discrimination	0.85 (0.78)	1.09 (0.78)	0.24*

Note: All means are on a 0–4 scale.

^aMeans, standard deviations, and test statistics are adjusted for years of education and for annual family income.

^bUnstandardized beta coefficients are reported because we used regression-type analyses to control for nesting of students within schools.