Profiles of Minority Stressors and Identity Centrality Among Sexual Minority Latinx Youth

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Abstract

Few studies have examined how the amalgamation of minority stressors for youth with multiple marginalized identities is associated with well-being. Additionally, among youth with multiple marginalized identities, identity centrality may clarify the associations between specific types of minority stressors (i.e., bias-based peer victimization, perceived discrimination) and adjustment. This study sought to identify intersectional profiles of perceived peer victimization, perceived discrimination, and identity centrality, specific to either Latinx ethnicity or sexual minority identity in the U.S. Demographic characteristics associated with each profile (i.e., age, SES, gender nonconformity, survey language, gender, rurality) were examined, as well as associations between profiles and grade-point average (GPA), self-esteem, and depression. In a sample of 219 in-school Latinx sexual minority youth (47% secondary, 53% post-secondary; M_{age} = 19, SD = 2.3), four profiles of intersectional minority stress (perceived victimization, discrimination) and identity centrality were identified: a) low stress, low centrality; b) low stress, high centrality; c) moderate stress, moderate centrality, and d) high stress, moderate centrality. Men, youth who were relatively older, socioeconomically advantaged, gender nonconforming, and in urban areas had higher probabilities of membership in profiles with moderate and high stress. Compared to the low stress, low centrality profile, profiles with higher levels of intersectional stress were associated with maladjustment, whereas the profile characterized by low stress, high centrality had higher levels of self-esteem.

Keywords

School-based peer victimization in adolescence is common in the U.S., with roughly one in four youth reporting peer victimization (Robers, Kemp, Rathbun, & Morgan, 2014); and experiences of victimization are clearly associated with poor mental health and academic outcomes (Hong, Kral, & Sterzing, 2015; Nakamoto & Schwartz, 2010). Youth with marginalized identities, including youth of color and sexual minority youth, also experience unique minority stressors, such as discrimination and bias-based peer victimization, which are associated with poor adjustment (Russell & Fish, 2016; Pascoe & Richman, 2009;

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Umaña-Taylor, 2016). Peer victimization refers to direct physical harm, verbal threats, social exclusion and humiliation from peers (Hymel & Swearer, 2015), which can be attributed to, homophobic, heteronormative, or racial-ethnic biases among others. Discrimination, on the other hand, more specifically refers to systemic unfair treatment based on one's social position (Benner & Graham, 2013; Rivas-Drake, Hughes, & Way, 2009). Minority stressors such as bias-based victimization and discrimination have been shown to be more strongly associated with poor adjustment (regardless of whether the minority stressor is attributed to race or ethnicity, or sexual orientation) relative to general stressors, such as victimization not attributed to bias (e.g., Russell, Sinclair, Poteat, & Koenig, 2012). However, most literature has examined bias-based victimization and discrimination among youth along a single dimension of identity (e.g., only homophobic bias or only racial-ethnic bias), rarely assessing simultaneous or co-occurring multiple minority stressors.

Although there is limited evidence that rates of peer victimization differ by race-ethnicity (e.g., Hong et al., 2014), a national study found that Latinx youth are more likely than White youth to be in a physical fight in school and to report being afraid of physical harm or attack at school (Robers et al., 2014). In addition, a majority of Latinx youth report experiences of racial-ethnic discrimination (Umaña-Taylor, 2016). Further, sexual minority youth are at higher risk for peer victimization, particularly bias-based victimization, than their heterosexual peers (e.g., Russell et al., 2012; Toomey & Russell, 2016). Sexual minority youth also experience higher levels of discrimination relative to heterosexual youth (Saewyc, Konishi, Rose, & Homma, 2014). Yet little is known about youth who identify both as Latinx and sexual minority, or even youth holding multiple marginalized identities more broadly, and their experiences of simultaneous minority stressors such as bias-based victimization and discrimination. One exception is a recent study examining multiple minority stressors of discrimination and victimization attributed to race-ethnicity, perceived sexual orientation, immigration status, and weight, which found that intersectional discrimination (i.e., the experience of discrimination attributed to multiple identities) was associated with higher odds of poor mental health (Garnett et al., 2014). Following this approach, and framed by the minority stress framework (Meyer, 2003), the current study used person-centered methods to identify profiles of minority stressors of discrimination and victimization among a specific population holding multiple minority identities, Latinx sexual minority youth, as well as associations between these profiles and adjustment.

Due to our focus on youth with multiple identities, including nonbinary gender identities, we use the term Latinx to explicitly include youth who may identify both as gender nonbinary and Latinx (Scharrón-del Río & Aja, 2015). The term Latinx comes from the word Latino, which many use as an umbrella term to refer to diverse communities claiming Central and/or South American heritage. In Spanish, Latino is gendered according to the gender of the subject (e.g., Latina, Latino), which is not inclusive of those who do not identify within the gender binary (i.e., man/woman; Scharrón-del Río & Aja, 2015). While our focus is on sexual minority youth, a distinct dimension of identity from gender identity, we feel it is critical to conduct scholarship that is inclusive of young people's lived experiences, including those who identify as gender nonbinary.

Theoretical Frameworks

The minority stress framework posits that unique minority stressors contribute to health disparities, but these can be mitigated via identity-based processes (Meyer, 2003). Specifically, the framework identifies distal (discrimination, prejudice events) and proximal stressors (internalized homonegativity) that are unique to individuals with sexual minority identities (Meyer, 2003). While the minority stress framework focuses on sexual minority populations, it acknowledges that other social statuses that are privileged/oppressed (race, gender, social class) also contribute to unique minority stress processes (Meyer, 2003). The current study focuses on distal stressors of discrimination and bias-based victimization attributed to ethnicity and sexual minority identity.

Because of our focus on Latinx sexual minority youth – a multiply marginalized social location ---- we also draw on intersectionality theory (Crenshaw, 1989) to extend the minority stress framework. Intersectionality is a critical theoretical approach coming out of Black feminist scholarship and organizing, that interrogates the meaning and consequences of simultaneous membership in multiple social categories, as well as investigating how power and inequality construct, reproduce, and sustain those categories (Cole, 2009; Else-Question & Hyde, 2016). While rooted in Black women's experiences, it is a useful heuristic for examining how identities or experiences of marginalization intersect and are experienced simultaneously (Else-Quest & Hyde, 2016), requiring an integrated view of how multiple minority stress processes are actually experienced. Together these frameworks provide a lens that captures both the detrimental nature of minority stressors, as well as the complexity with which youth holding multiple minority identities may experience multiple minority stressors.

Victimization and Discrimination: Single Dimension Approaches

Racial-ethnic discrimination and victimization

For Latinx youth, research on minority stressors in adolescence has often focused on discrimination more broadly, rather than school-based peer victimization attributed to racial-ethnic bias (Benner & Graham, 2011; Hughes, Harding, Way, & Rarick, 2016; Seaton, Neblett Jr., Cole, & Prinstein, 2013). Estimates of the prevalence of racial-ethnic bias indicate a majority of Latinx adolescents have experienced discrimination (Umaña-Taylor, 2016), suggesting the salience of this minority stressor both in schools and in community settings for this population. On the other hand, several studies focused on victimization (and not discrimination) have found that the prevalence of bullying victimization does not differ across racial-ethnic groups (Connell, El Sayed, Reingle Gonzalez, & Schell-Busey, 2015; Vitoroulis & Vaillancourt, 2015), although Hong and colleagues (2014) noted variation in prevalence of self-reported victimization (ranging from 15–34%) among Latinx youth. Yet, studies focused on school victimization of Latinx youth do not typically measure whether victimization is attributed to racial-ethnic bias, but rather disaggregate general victimization by race-ethnicity. This method captures categorical differences in victimization by race-ethnicity but does not indicate the degree to which Latinx youth experience bias-based victimization in particular.

It can be difficult to untangle how Latinx youth experience multiple forms of minority stressors (e.g., discrimination and peer victimization). Specifically, studies may not assess whether victimization is attributed to racial-ethnic bias, or may simply measure racial-ethnic discrimination alone. For instance, Seaton and colleagues (2013) examined associations between general peer victimization (not attributed to bias) and racial discrimination among Black and Latinx youth, and found that reports of racial discrimination were positively associated with peer victimization, suggesting that experiences of racial discrimination and victimization in school settings may overlap for Latinx youth. Further, research on minority stressors among Latinx youth also points to specific structural factors affecting this population in the US, including acculturation-related stressors. In their review of bullying among Asian and Latinx youth, Hong and colleagues (2014) suggest the importance of considering macro-level factors such as racism in studies of bullying and victimization, as well as the potential impact of other macro-level factors (e.g., immigrant status) on bullying and victimization among these groups. Other studies with Latinx youth have found that among youth of color, violation of racial stereotypes may increase risk of school victimization (Peguero & Williams, 2013), that immigrant generational status is linked to differences in types of victimization experienced (Hong et al., 2014; Peguero, 2009), and that victimization mediates the relationship between acculturative stress and depressive symptoms (Forster et al., 2013). These findings provide evidence that racial-ethnic bias may influence the victimization of Latinx youth.

Minority stressors of discrimination and victimization are both associated with poor mental health (e.g., higher depressive symptoms, lower self-esteem) and academic outcomes (e.g., GPA) for Latinx youth. Benner and Graham (2011) found that authority discrimination was negatively associated with academic performance among a majority Latinx sample (61%). Among Latinx youth, experiences of discrimination in adolescence have been linked with poor mental health (e.g., depressive symptoms; Bauman & Summer, 2013; Forster et al., 2013; Lorenzo-Blanco, Unger, Oshri, Baezconde-Garbanti, & Soto, 2016; Umaña-Taylor, Tynes, Tooomey, Williams, & Mitchell, 2015), while experiences of victimization have been linked to poor school attendance (Espinoza, 2015). Thus, experiences of minority stressors have been associated with poor adjustment and academic outcomes.

Heterosexist discrimination and victimization

Another body of research has examined minority stressors, particularly victimization, among sexual minority youth, finding this population to be at higher risk for school-based peer victimization relative to heterosexual youth (Russell & Fisher, 2016; Toomey & Russell, 2016). That is, sexual minority youth experience higher levels of victimization (Russell & Fisher 2016), as well as higher levels of discrimination attributed to sexuality minority status compared to their heterosexual peers (Hong, Woodford, Long, & Renn, 2016; Poteat & Russell, 2011). Similar to research with racial-ethnic minority youth, minority stress is associated with poor mental health outcomes among sexual minority youth (Poteat & Russell, 2013; Russell, Ryan, Toomey, Diaz, & Sanchez, 2011). For example, the minority stressor of victimization is associated with lower esteem, and higher levels of depressive symptoms (Russell et al., 2011; Toomey, Ryan, Diaz, Card, & Russell, 2010), as well as significantly higher odds of poor grades and truancy (Poteat, Mereeish, DiGiovanni, &

Koenig, 2011; Russell et al., 2012). Studies suggest that, relative to heterosexual youth, sexual minority boys and men are at higher risk for bias-based school victimization, although sexual minority girls and women are still at elevated risk (Toomey & Russell, 2016), and that gender nonconformity is also associated with higher risk (Toomey et al., 2010). In addition, sexual minority students in more supportive environments are less likely to experience victimization (Russell & Fish, 2016).

Victimization and Discrimination: Co-occurring Approaches

Few studies have examined minority stressors attributed to multiple marginalized identities. However, two recent studies of victimization or discrimination found that experiences of minority stressors attributed to multiple marginalized identities were more detrimental to adjustment compared to minority stressors attributed to a single dimension (Byrd & Andrews, 2016; Garnett et al., 2014). Using latent profile analysis, Garnett and colleagues (2014) created intersectional profiles of bias-based victimization attributed to several characteristics (i.e., weight, religion, race-ethnicity, sexual orientation), with an ethnically diverse sample including Latinx youth (29%). The intersectional discrimination and victimization profile group reported the highest levels of depressive symptoms and suicidal ideation compared to other profiles identified. Similarly, Byrd and Andrews (2016) also used latent class analysis to examine clusters of multiple indicators of discrimination (e.g., from peers, teachers, school staff; attributed to race-ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, etc.), and found that intersectional discrimination profiles were predictive of negative school outcomes (e.g., low school engagement, negative relationships with teachers, negative school climate). These studies provide initial evidence that multiple minority stressors of discrimination and victimization may be more negatively associated with mental health and school outcomes, compared to minority stressors along a single dimension of identity. However, it is important to note some challenges in research on minority stressors attributed to multiple identities. First, these two studies included different combinations of identities (e.g., gender and race-ethnicity versus sexual orientation or race-ethnicity alone), which makes comparisons across studies challenging. As a result, it is not clear to what extent particular combinations (e.g., racial discrimination and gender discrimination vs. heterosexist discrimination and racial discrimination) may be differentially associated with specific outcomes, given variations in the attributions investigated across studies. Finally, given that it may be useful to examine the importance of each identity, we incorporate the construct of identity centrality in the current study.

Identity Centrality

Consistent with the minority stress framework (Meyer, 2003), we also consider how identity-related processes (e.g., identity centrality, integration) co-occur with minority stress to inform adjustment. A large body of research on racial-ethnic identity development in adolescence and among college-aged youth suggests that racial-ethnic identity processes are protective against discrimination for youth of color (e.g., Umaña-Taylor et al., 2015). Further, racial-ethnic identity development may buffer negative effects of discrimination on depressive symptoms, self-esteem, and academic outcomes for Latinx youth (e.g., Umaña-Taylor et al., 2015). Racial-ethnic identity centrality, specifically, is the relative importance

of race-ethnicity to an individual's overall identity. Among Latinx youth, racial-ethnic identity centrality is promotive of better academic achievement (Fuligni, Witkow, & Garcia, 2005), and among Black youth, centrality has been found to protect against the negative effects of discrimination on academic achievement (Chavous et al., 2003).

To our knowledge, the construct of identity centrality has not been examined among sexual minority youth. Given the promotive and protective findings for racial-ethnic identity centrality, there is reason to examine whether identity centrality is also protective against minority stressors for sexual minority youth. However, studies typically examined identity centrality as a moderator, and no studies that we are aware of used person-centered approaches, due to the newness of this methodological approach in the developmental sciences. In the context of youth with multiple identities, examining latent profiles that include racial-ethnic and sexual orientation identity centrality and multiple forms of minority stress may provide a more nuanced way to examine both minority stress and identity related processes among multiply marginalized youth.

Current Study

Guided by an intersectionality framework (Crenshaw, 1989) and the minority stress framework (Meyer, 2003), the current study identified and examined correlates of varying profiles of discrimination, bias-based school victimization, and identity centrality, related to both sexual minority status and ethnicity. Previous intersectional approaches to quantitative analyses have often relied on variable-centered moderation analyses or variable-centered additive models. Person-centered analyses, on the other hand, allows for a novel approach to the study of multiply marginalized youth, above and beyond moderation or additive models. Specifically, person-centered analyses identify profiles or classes of people who have similar patterns of co-occurring key variables (Bergman & Magnusson, 1997; Masyn, 2013). These profiles or classes can then be examined in relation to other variables, shifting the focus from the relationship among the variables to profiles or clusters of participants with similar experiences. Because person-centered analyses focus on the individual as the unit of analysis and derive profiles based on patterns of key variables (Bergman & Magnusson, 1997; Masyn, 2013), they may better capture the complexity and heterogeneity of multiple minority stress and identity experiences compared to variable-centered analyses. Further, person-centered approaches allow for the design and implementation of more effective preventative interventions, given that they provide information about the pervasiveness of particular minority stress and identity profiles, the characteristics of individuals within certain profiles, and the differential associations between minority stress profiles and key outcomes (Copeland et al., 2009; Lanza & Rhoades, 2013). Due to the exploratory nature of latent profile analysis, we hypothesized that at least two profiles would emerge, including a low minority stressor profile, and a high intersectional minority stressor profile.

Once the best-fit profile solution was identified, we also examined demographic correlates and outcomes associated with profile membership. We hypothesized that the demographic characteristics of age, rurality, socioeconomic status (SES), preferred language (Spanish or English), gender, and gender nonconformity would be differentially associated with the identified profiles. Previous research documents that perceptions of racial-ethnic

discrimination increase with age for Latinx youth (Umaña-Taylor, 2016). Age may also have implications for heterosexist victimization, given that disclosure of sexual orientation may occur as late as young adulthood among sexual minority youth (Martos et al., 2015). Previous research has also identified that victimization varies by geographic location (i.e., rural vs. urban locations; Leadbeater et al., 2013) and socioeconomic status (Due et al., 2009). In addition, previous literature suggests that minority stress may depend on acculturation among Latinx youth (e.g., Forster et al., 2013), and gender nonconformity among sexual minority youth (Toomey et al., 2010).

Further, given research on associations among minority stressors and adjustment (e.g., Benner & Graham, 2011; Poteat et al., 2011; Toomey et al., 2010), we hypothesized that membership in the profile with high intersectional minority stressors would be negatively associated with grade-point average (GPA) and self-esteem, and positively associated with depressive symptoms, relative to the low minority stressor profile. Finally, given research on identity centrality among racial-ethnic minority youth (Chavous et al., 2003; Fuligni et al., 2005), we hypothesized that membership in profiles with higher levels of identity centrality would be associated with adjustment (i.e., higher GPA and self-esteem and fewer depressive symptoms). In these models, we also controlled for social support, given that networks of support among sexual minority youth have been found to be associated with mental health outcomes, including depression (Mustanski, Newcomb, & Garofalo, 2011; Teasdale & Bradley-Engen, 2010); gender identity has also been founded to influence mental health, and was also controlled for (Reisner, Katz-Wise, Gordon, Corliss, & Austin, 2016).

Method

Sample

The current study used cross-sectional online survey data from 219 in-school Latinx sexual minority youth living in the U.S. The sample included post-secondary (56%) and secondary school students (43%), and ages ranged from 14 to 24 years ($M_{age} = 19$, $SD = 2.3$). All participants reported a Latinx ethnicity (68% Mexican, 19% Puerto Rican, 4% Cuban, 9% other Latinx ethnicity) and identified as a sexuality minority (79% gay or lesbian, 6% bisexual, and 16% queer/other). A majority identified as cisgender men (71%), followed by cisgender women (21%). About 9% identified as trans, including transmasculine, transfeminine, and nonbinary trans identities. Most youth (71%) lived in urban areas, followed by suburban (22%), and rural areas (5.9%).

Procedure

The following inclusion criteria were used to recruit the sample: youth ages 14 to 24 years living in the U.S., who identified as both Latinx and sexual minority (e.g., lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, transgender, questioning, or other non-heterosexual sexual orientation identity and/or non-cisgender gender identity)[1]. A waiver of parental consent was obtained from the university's institutional review board to protect against unnecessary disclosure of sexual orientation or gender identity to parents or guardians (Mustanski, 2011). Participants

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[1]Of note, all trans-identified youth (n = 20) in the sample also identified as sexual minorities.

meeting these criteria were recruited via social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter), predominantly through the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network's (GLSEN) pages. Recruitment messages were posted in English and Spanish in late 2014. The survey was available in English and Spanish; most participants completed the survey in English (62%). Participants were compensated for completing the survey with a $10 gift card. Protocols for the study, Intersections of Being Young, Latina/o and Queer: Implications for Healthy Development, were approved by the Kent State University Institutional Review Board (14–160) and GLSEN's Research Ethics Review Committee.

Measures

A back-translation process was used to translate measures not previously available in Spanish. Initial translations were performed by a native Spanish-speaker, and then translated into English by an independent translator. Both versions were then compared by a third individual (see Knight, Roosa, Calderon-Tena, & Gonzales, 2009). Minor discrepancies identified were resolved by the last two authors.

Perceived bias-based victimization—Both overt and relational peer victimization experiences were assessed using six items rated on a four-point Likert-type scale (0=*Never* to 3=*Many times*). This scale was previously adapted from a generalized peer victimization scale (Little, Jones, Henrich, & Hawley, 2003; Toomey et al., 2014). Sample items included, "Other students hit or kick me", and "Other students try to make their friends ignore me or stop talking to me." Participants were also asked how frequently they attributed overt and relational peer victimization experiences to their sexual orientation or gender identity (SOGI), or to their Latinx identity. The scales had good internal consistency (α = .90 for SOGI-attributed victimization; α = .95 for Latinx-attributed victimization).

Perceived discrimination—Perceived discrimination based on either ethnicity or SOGI was assessed using an adapted version of the Authority Discrimination Subscale of the Perceived Discrimination Scale (Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007; Whitbeck et al., 2001). The original measure used 10 items to assess perceived discrimination from a global, authority, and school perspective for Native American adolescents (Whitbeck et al., 2001). Umaña-Taylor and Updegraff (2007) adapted the scale to assess discrimination among Latinx youth. The current study further adapted the three-item Authority Discrimination subscale by asking participants how frequently experiences of discrimination are attributed to their SOGI (three items), and how frequently this is attributed to their Latinx identity (three items). A four-point Likert scale was used (0=*Never* to 4=*Very Often*). Sample items include, "How often have others suspected you of doing something wrong because you are: Latina/o" and, "How often have others suspected you of doing something wrong because you are: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender." The measures had good internal consistency (α = .88 for SOGI-attributed discrimination; α = .86 for Latinx-attributed discrimination).

Identity centrality—Ethnic centrality was assessed using the previously adapted Ethnic Centrality subscale (Fuligni et al., 2005) from the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton, & Smith, 1997). This scale includes 5 items (e.g., "Overall, being a member of ethnic group is an important part of my self-image") rated

on a five-point Likert scale (1=*strongly disagree*, to 5=*strongly agree*). In the current study, internal consistency was adequate (α = 0.66 for ethnic identity centrality). The current study further adapted the measure to assess level of identity centrality associated with sexual orientation. The same response scale and parallel items were used, replacing "ethnic group" with "sexual orientation" (e.g., "My sexual orientation is an important reflection of who I am"). Internal consistency was adequate in this study (α = 0.64).

Depression—Depressive symptoms were measured using the 10-item Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression (CES-D) short-form scale (Radloff, 1977). These were rated on four-point scale (0 =*Rarely or none of the time* to 3=*Most of the time*). In this sample, the internal consistency was adequate (α = 0.75). The item-to-construct balance approach was used to create three parcels for latent modeling (Little, Cunningham, Shahar, Widaman, 2002).

Self-esteem—Self-esteem was measured using the 10-item Rosenberg (1979) scale on a four-point Likert scale (1=*Strongly disagree* to 4=*Strongly agree*), yielding adequate internal consistency reliability (α = 0.76). These items were also parceled into three indicators for latent modeling.

GPA—Grade point average (GPA) was assessed with one item, "During the past 12 months, how would you describe the grades you received in school," rated from 4 = *Mostly A 's*, to 0= *Mostly F's.*

Covariates—Gender nonconformity was assessed using a single item asking respondents how feminine or masculine they find themselves (Toomey et al, 2010). A 9-point scale was used (1= *Extremely feminine*, 5=*Equally feminine and masculine*, 9=*Extremely masculine*), with responses reverse-coded for male-gendered participants. Higher scores indicate higher levels of nonconformity. Acculturation was measured using the 12-item Brief Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans-II (Brief ARMSA-II; Cuéllar, 2004). Items were rated on 5-point scale (1=*not at all*, to 5=*almost always*). Although the scale was initially developed with samples of predominantly Mexican-origin individuals living in the U.S., the Brief ARSMA-II has been used successfully with diverse Latinx samples (e.g., Barrera Jr., Toobert, Strycker, & Osuna, 2012); reliability in the current study was adequate (α = .66). Friend and parent support were assessed by ranking how supportive each group was of LGBTQ people and issues using a single item each on a five-point Likert scale (1=*Not supportive*, 5=*Very supportive*, 6=*NA [recoded as missing]*). Other controls included survey language (0 = English, 1 = Spanish), family-of-origin socioeconomic status (1=*Less than $5,000*, to 9=*$100,000 or more*), and gender (dichotomous versions of cisgender woman and transgender person were created; referent group was cisgender men).

Analytic approach

Latent profile analysis in *Mplus* (Muthén & Muthén, 2015) was used to examine profiles of perceived victimization and discrimination due to sexual minority and Latinx identities, together with centrality of each identity. Models containing from 1 and 5 profiles were systematically tested, using common fit and diagnostic indices (BIC; AIC; Lo-Mendell-

Rubin likelihood ratio test) to determine the best-fitting solution (Masyn, 2013). Once a model was identified, the best-fitting solution was rerun with relevant covariates (e.g., acculturation, parental support, friend support) suggested by previous literature (e.g., Bauman & Summers, 2013; Poteat et al., 2011). These covariates were included to control for potential protective factors (e.g., support), as well as differential levels of acculturation, which may have implications for minority stressors among Latinx youth (e.g., Peguero, 2009). In addition, we conducted ANOVAs and chi-square difference tests to examine demographic characteristics (i.e., age, rurality, SES, language, cisgender woman/girl, transgender, gender nonconforming) by profile. Finally, associations between the probability of profile membership and key indicators of adjustment (i.e., GPA, depressive symptoms, and self-esteem) were tested via structural equation modeling in *Mplus*.

Results

The means, standard deviations, and correlations of key study variables are displayed in Table 1. Bias-based victimization attributed to sexual orientation and Latinx ethnicity were highly correlated, as were discrimination attributed to sexual orientation and Latinx ethnicity. However, latent variable tests of redundancy revealed that the constructs are statistically different from each other (Toomey & Anhalt, 2016; results available upon request from the authors).

Latent Profile Models

Table 2 shows model comparisons for estimated latent profile models ranging from one to five profiles. Based on common fit and diagnostic indices (i.e., AIC, BIC, Lo Mendell Rubin likelihood ratio test), the four-profile solution was identified as the best-fitting model. Figure 1 displays the means and standard deviations of each variable included in the profile analysis by profile. The four profiles included: a) low perceived discrimination and victimization and low identity centrality (Profile 1); b) low perceived discrimination and victimization, but high identity centrality (Profile 2); c) moderate perceived discrimination and victimization, and moderate centrality (Profile 3); and d) high perceived discrimination and victimization, but moderate identity centrality (Profile 4). Notably, the majority of youth were classified in the two low minority stress profiles (i.e, 22.4% in Profile 1 and 40.6% in Profile 2).

Once the four-profile model was selected, relevant covariates were added, including acculturation, parental support, and friend support, based on previous literature on peer victimization (Bauman & Summer, 2013; Poteat et al., 2012). However, the covariate-adjusted model did not substantially affect profiles previously identified, or mean estimates of perceived discrimination and victimization and identity centrality per profile. Subsequent analyses used the covariate-adjusted profiles.

Demographic Characteristics by Profile

Next, demographic characteristics were examined by profile. Table 3 displays mean levels or proportions of demographic characteristics by profile. ANOVAs and chi-square tests of difference were used to determine whether profiles differed significantly in these characteristics. Youth in Profile 3 (moderate perceived discrimination and victimization,

moderate centrality) and Profile 4 (high perceived discrimination and victimization, moderate centrality) were significantly older than youth in Profiles 1 (low perceived discrimination and victimization, low centrality) and 2 (low perceived discrimination and victimization, high centrality). Youth in Profile 4 reported significantly higher family-of-origin socioeconomic status than youth in Profile 2. Youth in Profile 3 were significantly lower on gender nonconformity relative to all other profiles, and youth in Profile 4 were significantly higher on gender nonconformity relative to Profile 1.

Compared to youth in Profiles 1 and 2, a higher proportion of youth in Profiles 3 (moderate perceived discrimination and victimization, moderate centrality) and 4 (high perceived discrimination and victimization, moderate centrality) reported living in urban areas. Almost all youth in Profile 3 took the survey in English, whereas almost all youth in Profile 4 took the survey in Spanish. Finally, a larger proportion of youth in Profiles 3 and 4 identified as cisgender boys/men, while a higher proportion of youth in Profile 1 identified as cisgender girls/women, and both Profiles 1 and 2 had higher proportions of transgender youth compared to Profiles 3 and 4.

Associations between Profile Membership and Adjustment

Associations between probability of profile membership and the outcomes of interest were examined (see Figure 2). Probability of being classified in Profile 1 (low identity centrality, low perceived discrimination and victimization) was used as the referent group. Relative to Profile 1, probability of membership in Profile 2 (low perceived discrimination and victimization, high centrality) was positively associated with GPA ($\beta = .11$, p .05), while probability of membership in Profile 3 (moderate perceived discrimination and victimization, moderate centrality) was negatively associated with GPA ($\beta = -.41$, p .0001). Further, probabilities of membership in Profile 3 and 4 (high perceived discrimination and victimization, moderate centrality) were negatively associated with self-esteem ($\beta = -.50$, p .0001; $\beta = -.28$, p .001). Finally, probabilities of membership in Profiles 3 and 4 were positively associated with depressive symptoms ($\beta = .40$, p .01; $\beta = .30$, p .01).

Discussion

This study examined profiles of perceived discrimination and victimization, and identity centrality attributed to sexual orientation and ethnicity for Latinx sexual minority youth. As hypothesized, the best-fitting model did include at least two profiles, including one profile with low levels of minority stressors (Profile 1), and one profile with high levels of co-occurring minority stressors (Profile 4). Two additional profiles were identified, with varying levels of centrality and perceived discrimination and victimization. Profiles differed by age, SES, language of survey, rurality, gender, and gender nonconformity. In particular, profiles characterized by moderate and high levels of perceived discrimination and victimization (Profiles 3 and 4, respectively) were older, and included a higher proportion of urban youth and cisgender boys or men; differences between these profiles included language of survey (majority English for Profile 3; majority Spanish for Profile 4), and higher gender nonconformity in Profile 4. These findings are consistent with previous literature on minority stressors: sexual minority boys and men are at higher risk for victimization, relative

to sexual minority girls and transgender youth (Toomey & Russell, 2016), as well as youth with higher levels of gender nonconformity (Russell et al., 2010). Further, older youth as well as those in urban areas are generally at higher risk for perceived discrimination and victimization (Poon & Saewyc, 2009; Umana-Taylor, 2016; Toomey & Russell, 2016). Profiles 1 and 2 did not differ significantly on most characteristics, besides centrality (Profile 1 had low levels, Profile 2 had high levels).

We also hypothesized that the profile with highest co-occurring perceived discrimination and victimization (Profile 4) would be negatively associated with GPA and self-esteem, and positively associated with depressive symptoms, relative to profiles with low levels of stressors. We found partial support for this hypothesis. Profile 4 (highest co-occurring perceived discrimination and victimization) was negatively associated with self-esteem, and positively associated with depressive symptoms, but no significant association was found between membership in this profile and GPA. Further, Profile 3 (moderate perceived discrimination and victimization and centrality), while having lower levels of perceived discrimination and victimization than Profile 4, had a similar positive association with depressive symptoms, and negative associations with both GPA and self-esteem, compared to Profile 1. While previous intersectional examination of minority stressors is limited, this finding diverges from the work by Garnett and colleagues (2014) and Byrd and Andrews (2016), who found that the intersectional discrimination and/or victimization profile was associated with worse school and mental health outcomes in each study. It seems counterintuitive that Profile 3 (moderate perceived discrimination and victimization) would have a significant, negative relationship with GPA, where there is not a significant association for Profile 4 (high perceived discrimination and victimization). One possible explanation is that our measure of discrimination did not explicitly assess school discrimination, which is associated with poor school outcomes (Benner & Graham, 2013). Another possibility is that both youth in Profiles 3 and 4 experienced a threshold level of perceived discrimination and victimization, that is, enough stress to be detrimental. While they differ in level of perceived discrimination and victimization (Profile 3 is characterized by moderate levels of each, Profile 4 is characterized by high levels of each), it may be that there is a threshold after which experiencing higher levels of perceived discrimination and victimization is not more detrimental, above and beyond those experiencing moderate levels of the perceived discrimination and victimization.

At the same time, Profile 2 (low perceived discrimination and victimization, high centrality), the only profile characterized by high levels of identity centrality was positively associated with GPA, relative to Profile 1 (low perceived discrimination and victimization, low centrality). This finding suggests a potential protective relationship between intersectional identity centrality and GPA. Importantly, neither Profile 3 or 4, both characterized by moderate centrality, showed evidence of protective associations. While some previous literature has examined racial-ethnic identity centrality and school perceived discrimination and victimization, we are not aware of examination of this construct with regard to sexual minority identities, or occurring simultaneously. Previous studies of intersectional perceived discrimination and/or bias-based victimization do not assess potential protective factors (e.g., Garnett et al., 2014), and to our knowledge multiple or intersectional identity development has not been examined. However, previous research on racial-ethnic identity

has found it to be protective against the negative effects of discrimination on depressive symptoms, self-esteem, and academic outcomes for Latinx youth (e.g., Umaña-Taylor et al., 2015). Further, the construct of racial-ethnic identity centrality has been linked to better academic achievement among Latinx youth (Fuligni et al., 2005), and protective against the negative effects of discrimination on academic achievement among Black youth (Chavous et al., 2003).

Limitations

Our study has several limitations. First, we rely on cross-sectional data. Thus, while we examined whether profile membership is associated with outcomes of well-being and achievement, longitudinal data are necessary to examine the antecedents and consequences of profile membership. A second limitation is that, in this sample, subgroup sizes were too small to examine within-group heterogeneity among Latinx youth (e.g., differences between Mexican- and Cuban-American youth) or among sexual minority youth (e.g., differences between youth identifying as gay, versus those identifying as queer). For example, Latinx is a panethnic category, which requires attention to differences in experiences of victimization across Latinx ethnicities (Hong et al., 2014); our study also lacked measures of race and skin color, which may also play into experiences of discrimination. This extends also to sexual minority youth, which includes a range of sexual orientation identities (O'Brien, Putney, Hebert, Falk, & Aguinaldo, 2016). Further, these within-group differences have not been explored intersectionally, and may also influence how multiple and intersecting minority stressors are experienced.

Third, literature on minority stressors in schools emphasizes the importance of school-level characteristics, such as ethnic composition or school climate (e.g., Benner & Graham, 2013; Hong et al., 2014). Our study lacks a measure of school climate or environmental factors related to minority stressors (e.g., school racial climate). Further, while the discrimination measure used was general and could capture discrimination in schools, it did not explicitly tap into discrimination by school adults (e.g., teachers, administrators), which may have a stronger relationship with school outcomes (Benner & Graham, 2013).

Finally, while we did assess minority stressors attributed to different identities, which is an improvement on other studies, our study relies on an additive approach to multiple identities. That is, each minority stressor is conceptualized as distinct, related to a unique dimension of identity (e.g., only Latinx identity, only sexual minority identity). Further, we only assessed two dimensions of identity, and excluded many more (e.g., gender, social class, immigration status). In reality, individuals may experience minority stressors that are simultaneously based on multiple identities, as intersections. For example, some research on minority stressors among Black women has captured microaggressions that are simultaneously gendered and racialized, not separate but coexisting (Lewis & Neville, 2015). In the context of the current study, our measurement of discrete minority stressors attributed to each identity (e.g., Latinx, sexual minority) may miss the mark if youth perceive minority stressors as simultaneously related to their intersecting identity as Latinx sexual minority youth. Future research can examine this question of how multiple minority stressors are experienced, as well as best practices in intersectional measurement of such experiences.

Implications for Practice, Policy, and Future Research

Overall, this study contributes to deeper understanding of how multiply marginalized youth experience minority stressors such as victimization and discrimination attributed to their multifaceted identities. Further, given the inclusion of identity centrality, our findings suggest that centrality of both racial-ethnic and sexual minority identities may be important to consider in terms of the promotion of health and intervention of bias. Notably, this study provides additional support for the idea that youth do in fact experience intersectional minority stressors (e.g., Garnett et al., 2014). Previous literature has often neglected to examine bias attribution in victimization among youth of color, and, with a few exceptions (e.g., Garnett et al., 2014; Russell et al., 2012), has examined attributions of bias to multiple marginalized identities. By assessing attributions of minority stressors to both sexual minority and Latinx identities, this study accounts for the perceived motivation for the minority stressor. Policies and interventions aimed to reduce either victimization or discrimination in school settings must also acknowledge the intersectional nature of these experiences.

One strength of this study is that it examines different types of minority stressors. While our measure of discrimination was not specific to school, previous research speaks to the salience of discrimination for Latinx youth more generally (Benner & Graham, 2013; Umaña-Taylor, 2016). Thus, by capturing both discrimination and victimization, a broader range of minority stressors were explored, potentially providing a more thorough picture of multiply marginalized youths' lived experiences. This broader range of minority stressors implicates both peers as well as adults in school settings in potentially participating in both racial-ethnic and sexual minority stressors, as well as minority stressors occurring in the community. This finding also underscores the importance of integrating interventions aimed to address peer victimization or discrimination to recognize that both types of minority stressors may have negative implications for youth adjustment. In addition, interventions can be designed with multiple targets in mind, including school-level (peers, school adults, climate), and community-level. Given that Crenshaw (1989) originally coined the term intersectionality in order to highlight discrimination that was erroneously seen as unidimensional, it seems fitting that intersectional conceptualization of minority stressors should also guide school and district policy on discrimination and victimization.

Previous work indicates that interventions to prevent victimization often fail to center the experiences of Latinx sexual minority youth. Bullying and victimization interventions have often been successful for White youth, but not youth of color (Hong et al., 2014). These interventions may also lack explicit focus on sexual orientation (Toomey & Russell, 2016). Further, for immigrant youth, schools must ensure anti-bullying interventions and programs are culturally relevant (Hong et al., 2014). Following recommendations by Toomey and Russell (2016), school-level harassment policies should encompass both types of minority stressors using an intersectional lens. In addition, discrimination and victimization is perpetuated by both school peers, adults, as well as in the community more broadly. Thus, school personnel should be trained not just to intervene when they witness bias interactions among students, but also to not discriminate or victimize youth themselves. Further, curricula and classroom contexts should feature the histories and lived experiences of sexual

minority youth in creating a humanizing and positive climate (Toomey & Russell, 2016) – this can include intersectional experiences facing sexual minority, Latinx youth, but may also recognize additional intersections in students' lived experiences.

Future research should continue to examine both intersectional minority stressors, but also the relationship with components of youth sexual minority and/or racial-ethnic identity. We have explored identity centrality, but given findings that racial-ethnic identity processes and content may be protective against minority stressors, it may be prudent to explore whether and how parallel identity development processes are experienced by Latinx sexual minority youth with sexual minority identity. Further, identity-based interventions specifically aimed at intersectional minority stressors in schools may be effective in promoting inclusive school climates and preventing minority stressors. For example, recent research has documented the success of interventions designed to increase healthy outcomes and achievement by directly intervening on racial-ethnic identity exploration and resolution (Umaña-Taylor, Douglass, & Marsiglia, 2017). An intersectional extension of this type of identity intervention, one which incorporates other aspects of identity, may also protect against intersectional minority stressors, and help promote inclusive, safe environments for youth of all backgrounds.

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Public policy relevance statement

This study suggests that policies and interventions aimed at mitigating minority stressors such as bias-based victimization and discrimination should account for simultaneous minority stress processes (e.g., racism, heterosexism) in young people's lives. Further exploration of intersectional identity development processes and minority stressors, including as interventions against intersecting minority stressors, is needed.
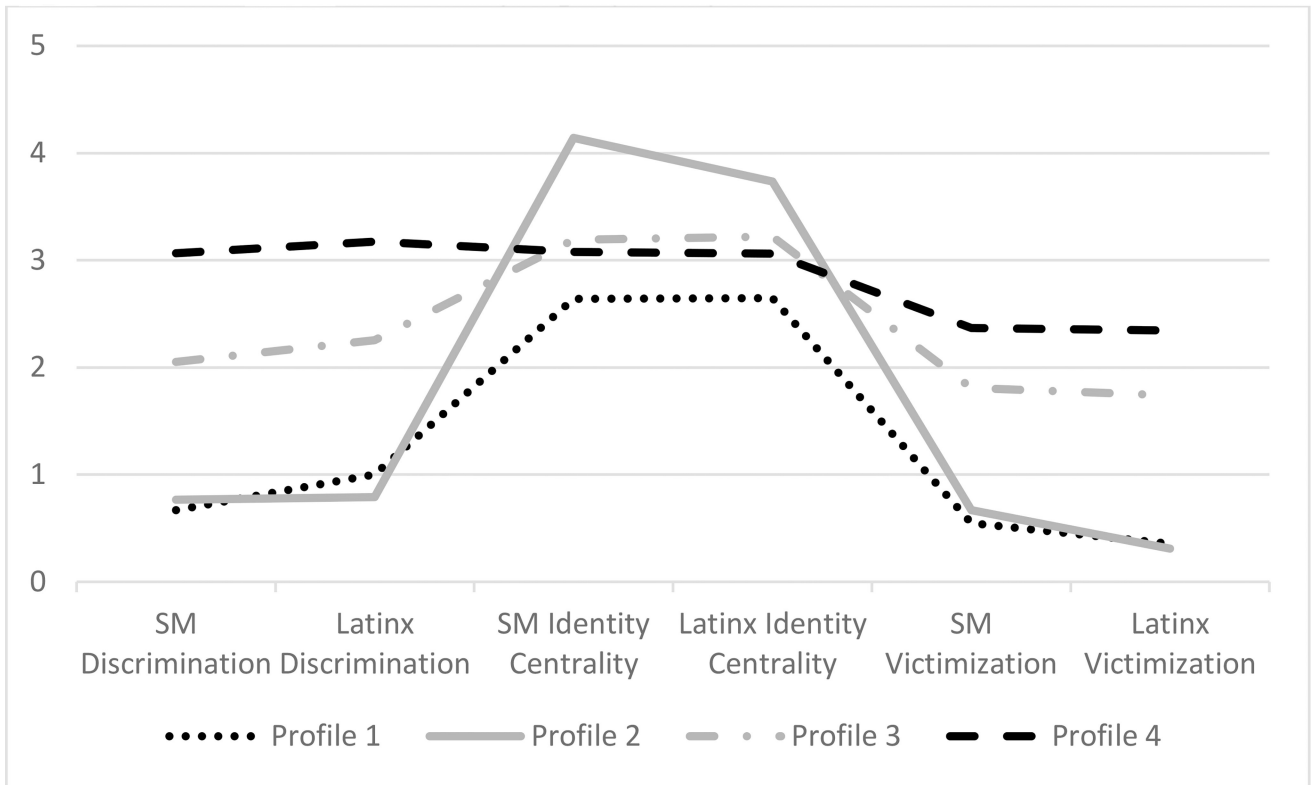
Figure 1. Four-profile solution for profiles of discrimination, victimization, and identity centrality

Notes. SM = sexual minority.

The results presented are for the covariate-adjusted model, including networks of support (parental and friend) and acculturation. Range, mean (standard deviation) for each indicator: SM discrimination, 0–4, M = 1.63, SD = 1.01; Latinx discrimination, 0–4, M= 1.79, SD = 1.03; SM identity centrality, 1–5, M = 3.27, SD = 0.67; Latinx identity centrality, 1–5, M = 3.19, SD = 0.65; SM Victimization, 0–4, M = 1.40, SD = 0.79; Latinx victimization, 0–4, M = 1.25, SD = 0.88.

Percentages of participants classified into each profile: Profile 1, 22.4%, Profile 2, 40.6%, Profile 3, 14.6%, Profile 4, 22.4%.

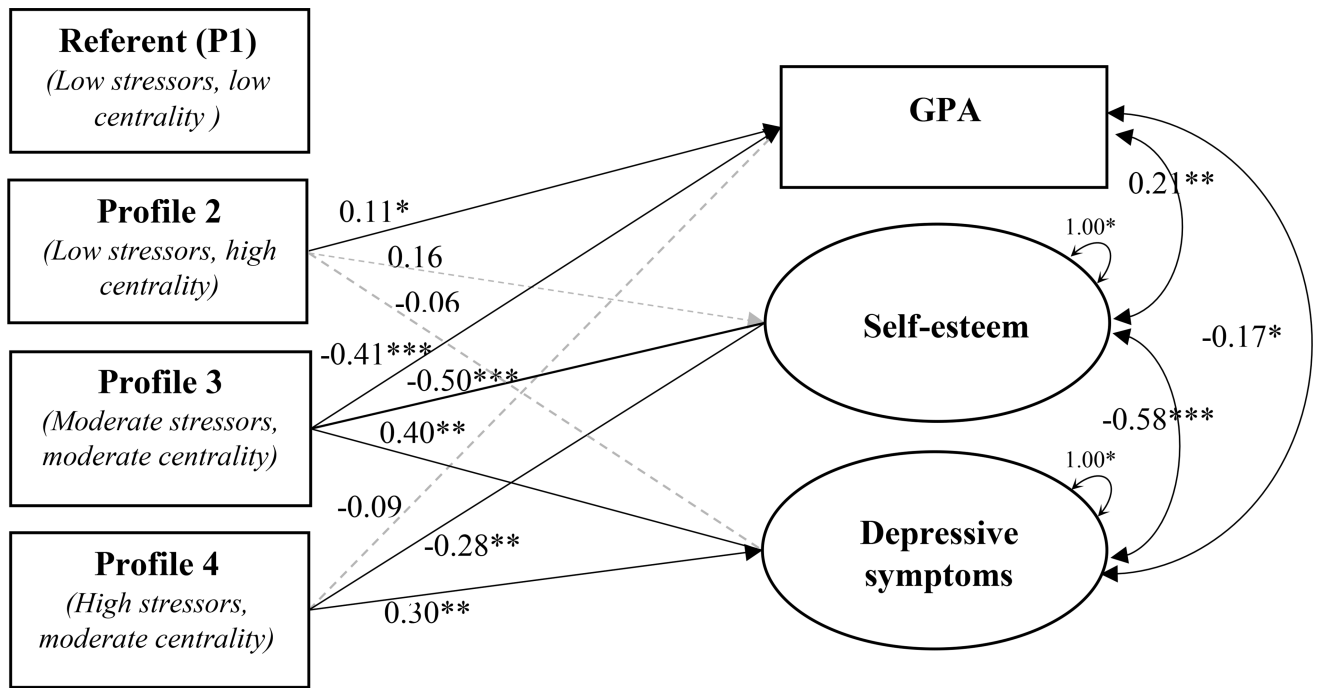**Figure 2. Path diagram of profile membership on GPA, self-esteem, and depressive symptoms**
Note. Standardized parameter estimates are reported.

Covariates included age, SES, language of survey, gender, gender nonconformity, and rurality. Black solid lines indicate estimates at p 0.05; grey dashed lines indicate p>0.05. Further, statistical significance is indicated by: *p 0.05 **p 0.01 ***p 0.001

Table 1

Descriptive statistics of key variables

Variable	(Min, Max)	Mean (SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. SM Discrimination	0–4	1.63 (1.01)						
2. Latinx Discrimination	0–4	1.79 (1.03)	.75 **					
3. SM Identity Centrality	1–5	3.27 (0.67)	−.15 *	−.19 **				
4. Latinx Identity Centrality	1–5	3.19 (0.65)	−.06	.74	.51 ***			
5. SM Victimization	0–4	1.40 (0.79)	.82 **	.75 **	−.10	−.03		
6. Latinx Victimization	0–4	1.25 (0.88)	.79 ***	.81 ***	−.20 **	−.02	.86 **	

Note. SM = sexual minority. Statistical significance is indicated by:

*
p 0.05

**
p 0.01

***
p 0.001

Table 2

Model Comparisons for Estimated Latent Profile Models

Model	Solution	LL	BIC	AIC	Comparison Model	Smallest group %
1	1 Profile	−1521.64	3107.95	3067.28	---	100.00%
2	2 Profiles *	−1183.84	2470.06	2405.67	1	43.81%
3	3 Profiles *	−1115.28	2370.67	2282.55	2	21.78%
4	4 Profiles *	−1058.04	2293.92	2182.08	3	14.98%
5	5 Profiles	−1024.38	2264.31	2128.75	4	3.71%

Note. L.L. = Log likelihood; B.I.C. = Bayesian information criterion; A.I.C. = Akaike information criterion.

*
Indicates significant Lo-Mendell-Rubin likelihood ratio test at $p < .001$ (Comparison model shown in column 6).

Table 3

Demographic characteristics by profile

		Profile 1 (LS, LC)	Profile 2 (LS, HC)	Profile 3 (MS, MC)	Profile 4 (HS, MC)	Test statistic
N		49	49	89	32	
Age	Mean	17.71$_{a,b}$	17.98$_{c,d}$	20.37$_{b,d}$	19.35$_{a,c}$	F = 24.417
	(SD)	(2.31)	(2.48)	(1.65)	(1.52)	
SES	Mean	5.49	5.33$_a$	5.82	6.53$_a$	F = 3.110
	(SD)	(2.19)	(2.51)	(1.30)	(1.27)	
GNC	Mean	4.98$_{a,b}$	5.78$_d$	3.28b,c,d	6.75$_{a,c}$	F = 36.750
	(SD)	(2.13)	(1.91)	(1.65)	(1.80)	
Urban	%	54.17%	47.92%	85.39%	96.88%	χ^2 = 40.006
Suburban		33.33%	41.67%	12.36%	3.13%	
Rural		12.50%	10.42%	2.25%	0.00%	
English		42.86%	59.18%	95.51%	3.13%	χ^2 = 97.374
Spanish		57.14%	40.82%	4.49%	96.88%	
Cisgender girl/woman		33.33%	20.83%	12.36%	25.00%	χ^2 = 29.117
Cisgender boy/man		50.00%	61.22%	85.39%	75.00%	
Transgender		16.67%	18.37%	2.25%	0.00%	

Note. LS = low minority stress; MS = moderate minority stress; HS = high minority stress. LC = low identity centrality; MC = moderate identity centrality; HC = high identity centrality. GNC = gender nonconformity.

Subscripts of the same letter within a row indicate statistically significant differences between profiles.