CAN RESPECT IN SCHOOLS MODERATE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LATINO YOUTHS’ ENVIRONMENTAL STRESSORS AND HIGH-RISK BEHAVIORS?

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the degree of Master of Arts in Psychology,
General Experimental

by

Kayleigh L. Welsh

May 2012
The thesis of Kayleigh L. Welsh is approved:

Bradley McAuliff, Ph.D.  Date

Andrew Ainsworth, Ph.D.  Date

Scott Plunkett, Ph.D., Chair  Date

California State University, Northridge
DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all of my family, friends, mentors, and colleagues that have been patient and supportive while I completed this journey. Every single person was integral to my progress, and nothing would have been possible without my mother.
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to thank my committee members who supported my efforts in writing this thesis.

To my chair, Dr. Scott Plunkett, for all of his guidance during the past two years, during which this thesis was developed and completed. He provided not only the resources and data, but also the mentorship and support that enabled the research question to be explored in the first place. Thank you for all of your time and efforts during the many revisions, as well as the patience in continually acclimating me to an area that I was previously unfamiliar with; research. I owe much of my progress to the wisdom you have imparted in me.

To Dr. Andrew Ainsworth, for not only being an extremely knowledgeable and talented professor during many of my graduate courses, but also agreeing to sit on my thesis committee. To say that the statistical knowledge you have shared has allowed me to better understand and interpret my research is an understatement.

To Dr. Bradley McAuliff, for being an unofficial mentor as well as an enthusiastic committee member. Despite my thesis topic not being in your primary area of research, you not only agreed to sit on my committee, but have continually provided thoughtful advice and interpretations on an array of topics that are always profound, welcome, and warranted.

To Dr. Tovah Sands, for allowing me to use data from previous collections as part of my data sample.

To Dr. Carolyn Henry, for providing a number of very detailed, concise, and helpful explanations on three-way interactions.

To Paige Seegan, for coordinating the data collections that took place this year, from which part of the current data sample has been derived from. The data collections would not
have been possible without your hard work and organization. You have also been a very 
supportive colleague in the completion of this research, which has been sincerely appreciated.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Signature Page</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgment</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER I – INTRODUCTION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER II – REVIEW OF LITERATURE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinos in the USA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent Risky Behaviors</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent Environmental Risks/Stressors</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Context as a Source of Social Support</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypotheses</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER III – METHODOLOGY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurement</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER IV – RESULTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bivariate Correlations</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER V – DISCUSSION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion of the Findings</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations and Research Implications</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REFERENCES</strong></td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 1</td>
<td>Bivariate Correlations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2</td>
<td>Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis of Delinquent Behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3</td>
<td>Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis of Substance Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4</td>
<td>Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis of Physical Aggression</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

CAN RESPECT IN SCHOOLS MODERATE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LATINO YOUTHS’ ENVIRONMENTAL STRESSORS AND HIGH-RISK BEHAVIORS?

by

Kayleigh L. Welsh

Master of Arts in Psychology,

General-Experimental

The purpose of this research was to examine whether perceived mutual respect in schools (between teachers, administrators, and students) can moderate the relationship between environmental stressors (i.e., peer victimization, ethnic discrimination, parental intrusiveness) and the exhibition of high-risk behaviors (i.e., substance use, delinquent behaviors, physical aggression) in Latino adolescents in southern California. Research frequently investigates ways in which family-related variables can buffer such behaviors, but few studies have examined whether school climate can minimize the effects of stressors on youth high-risk behaviors. Given how much time adolescents typically spend at school, a positive school climate may serve as a protective factor against various stressors. Data from 610 ninth and tenth grade Latino adolescents (M=14.8 years old) in Los Angeles were used in the present study; a majority of which were 2nd generation youth (i.e., born in the U.S., parents born in other countries).

Hierarchical regression analyses were performed (1) to assess the direct and direct effects of environmental stressors on high-risk behaviors, and (2) to test mutual respect in school and gender as potential moderators. Analyses revealed that ethnic discrimination was the only environmental stressor that was significantly related to all three high-risk behavior outcomes. Also, school respect significantly moderated the effects of peer victimization and parental
intrusiveness on all three high-risk behavior outcomes. Results of the study indicated that promoting respect within the school environment could potentially buffer the impact of intrusive parenting and peer victimization on adolescent engagement in high-risk behaviors. In addition, schools should continue to investigate ways to decrease the incidences of peer victimization and ethnic discrimination within the schools, as well as ways to assist Latino youth in adaptively coping with environmental stressors when they do occur.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Adolescents encounter a milieu of stressors that increase their risk of maladaptive behaviors (Brook, Brook, Rubenstone, Zhang, & Saar, 2011). Research frequently investigates ways in which family-related variables can minimize high-risk behaviors, but few studies have examined whether school climate can minimize the effects of stressors on adolescents’ high-risk behaviors. Schools are crucial venues for both disseminating information on and deterring opportunities for delinquent and criminal behavior (Vogel & Barton, 2011). Given how much time adolescents typically spend at school, positive school climates may serve as protective factors against various stressors.

Latinos are the fast growing ethnic minority group in the U.S., comprising 1 in 5 children under the age of 18 (Pew Hispanic Center, 2009). Yet, few studies specifically examine environmental stressors in relation to Latino adolescents’ adaption and mental health. Given the large presence of Latinos in the United States, particularly in southern California, attention is needed to bridge these gaps in the research.

Purpose

The purpose of this research is to examine whether perceived mutual respect in schools (between teachers, administrators, and students) can moderate the relationship between environmental stressors (i.e., peer victimization, ethnic discrimination, parental intrusiveness) and the exhibition of high-risk behaviors (i.e., substance use, delinquent behaviors, physical aggression) in Latino adolescents in southern California. In addition, gender differences will be examined. Support for exploring this area of research can be
found in calls by researchers for more studies examining potential moderators of environmental stressors on the engagement in high-risk behaviors in adolescents (i.e., Sullivan, Farrell, & Kliewer, 2006; Okamoto, Ritt-Olson, Soto, Baezconde-Garbanati, & Unger, 2009). The results of this study could be beneficial to school administrators, counselors, and teachers, as well as practitioners working with Latino youth.

Definitions

1. Adolescence refers to the general stage of development that begins with the onset of puberty and ends at maturity (The American Heritage College Dictionary, 3rd ed.).

2. Delinquent behaviors include adolescent behaviors that are characterized as deviant, criminal, oppositional, or antisocial (Baer, 1999; Nagin & Tremblay, 1999; Scaramella, Conger, Spoth, & Simons, 2002). These behaviors will be categorized separately from substance use and physically aggressive behaviors.

3. Environmental risk factors include any factors in the environment that potentially increase the potential risk for emotional, psychological, or physical harm to a person (Surgeon General of the United States, 2001).

4. Ethnic discrimination is the experience of unsolicited, unfair treatment (Essed, 1991) based on race or ethnicity (Flores et al., 2008).

5. Externalizing behaviors are behaviors that are characterized as delinquent, aversive, and rebellious, and describe actions that are directed at other people and/or are in opposition of accepted social norms (Brook et al., 2011).

6. High-risk behaviors include (but are not limited to) antisocial behaviors, drug and alcohol use, criminal acts, arrests, and any behavior that increases the chances of experiencing aversive consequences (Lane & Cherek, 2000; 2001). They are often
also commonly referred to as *maladaptive* behaviors (Lane & Cherek, 2001).

7. Latino or Hispanic refers to a person of Spanish origin or cultural decent (e.g., Mexican, Cuban, South American, Central American, Puerto Rican; US Census Bureau, 2007). The term is used to make an ethnic (versus racial) designation.

8. Mutual respect in schools refers to the extent to which students feel that interactions between students, teachers, and adults in general are respectful and caring in nature, regardless of ethnic origin (Aber, Meinrath, Johnston, Rasmussen, & Gonzalez, 2000).

9. Parental intrusiveness describes parenting practices that are characterized by punitiveness (i.e., controlling, coercive, harsh, and excessively strict parenting practices) and psychological control (i.e., parental guilt induction and love withdrawal; Henry, Wilson, & Peterson, 1989).

10. Physical aggression is a form of overt aggressive behavior that is characterized as physical, verbal, angry, and/or hostile (Burton, Hafetz, & Henninger, 2007; Buss & Perry, 1992), and that is intended to harm someone (Surgeon General of the United States, 2001).

11. Protective factors include any factor that potentially protects against opposing risk factors on an individual’s emotional, psychological, or physical well-being (Surgeon General of the United States, 2001).

12. Substance use includes using tobacco products (e.g., cigarettes), alcohol, cannabis (Groth & Morrison-Breedy, 2011), and illicit drug use (e.g., cocaine, opiates, hallucinogens, amphetamines, and non-prescription drugs; Bhattacharya, 2002).

13. Victimization refers to relational, verbal, and mild physically aggressive acts that
are targeted at another person (Champion & Clay, 2007). The term victimization is	en often considered synonymous with *bullying*.

**Assumptions**

This research study was created based upon certain assumptions:

- Participants will not be coerced into participating in the present study.

- Participants will be English-literate and able to comprehend the information and surveys distributed to them.

- Participants will respond accurately and honestly to survey questions.

- Latino participants of varying backgrounds are similar enough to be considered under the umbrella of one ethnic group for research purposes.

- The scales used to measure the present research variables are reliable enough to use with multicultural research participants.

- Errors were not made during data entry since all coding and entry were double checked for accuracy.

- Data analysis errors were not made.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Latinos in the USA

Latino or Hispanic refers to a person of Spanish origin or cultural decent, such as Mexican, Cuban, South American, Central American, and Puerto Rican (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). According to the U.S. Census (2007), Latinos comprise the largest ethnic minority group in the United States. In 2004, Latinos comprised 14.2% of the country’s population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007), a figure that was predicted to grow to 17.8% by 2020 (Owens, n.d.). California had the largest Latino population of any state between 2000 and 2006, and Los Angeles County had the largest Latino population, as well as population gain, during that same time period than any other county in the country (Owens, n.d.).

When it comes to children under the age of 18, Latinos comprise 20% of the U.S. population (Pew Hispanic Center, 2009), and in California that percentage was more than double the national average (i.e., 45%; Owens, n.d.). The presence of a considerably young and rapidly growing Latino population creates a need to understand issues relevant to the Latino adolescent population in the United States, especially in areas with high concentrations of Latino residents (e.g., southern California). The present research seeks to contribute to the growing body of research regarding Latino youth, and focuses its studies on Latino adolescents in Los Angeles.

Adolescent Risky Behaviors

Adolescent risky behaviors include (but are not limited to) antisocial behaviors, drug and alcohol use, criminal acts, arrests, and any other behavior that increases the
probability of experiencing aversive consequences (Fraser & Richman, 1999; Lane & Cherek, 2000; 2001). The implications of engaging in high-risk behaviors during adolescence are that healthy psychological development may be disrupted, and adolescents’ abilities to acquire the functional, constructive coping skills that are central to positive development later in life may be stunted (Sullivan et al., 2006).

Three of the most widely recognized adolescent high-risk behaviors include delinquency, substance use, and aggression, with literature consistently confirming correlations between these three variables (Begle et al., 2011; Lynne-Landsman, Graber, Nichols, & Botvin, 2011). Sometimes, physical aggression is incorporated under the umbrella of delinquency (Fleming et al., 2008). Similarly, substance use has sometimes been included in the measure of delinquency (Piquero, Brezina, & Turner, 2005). However, the present research seeks to divide all three high-risk behaviors into separate constructs for further examination.

**Delinquency**

The present research defines delinquent behaviors as acts committed by adolescents that are characterized as deviant, criminal, oppositional, or antisocial (Baer, 1999; Nagin & Tremblay, 1999; Scaramella et al., 2002). The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention defines delinquency as offenses committed by adolescents that would otherwise be prosecuted in criminal court if the offender had been an adult (http://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/glossary.html). Examples of delinquent behaviors include (but are not limited to): truancy, trespassing, stealing, dealing drugs, vandalism, carrying weapons, being arrested, and being in a gang.

The exhibition of delinquent behaviors during adolescence is related to a number
of unfavorable outcomes across a variety of domains. Misbehavior in school during grades 6 through 8 has been significantly correlated with delinquent behaviors in grades 8 and 9 (Fleming et al., 2008). And, adolescents that frequently engage in externalizing behaviors (i.e., rebelliousness, delinquency) have been found to persist in these behaviors into early adulthood (Brook et al., 2011; Mason et al., 2010). Similarly, many studies across a variety of ethnicities and clinical populations have reported that engaging in externalizing or delinquent behaviors significantly predicted later antisocial personality (e.g., Ristikari, Sourander, Ronning, & Helenius, 2006) and substance use (Lynne-Landsman et al., 2011; Timmermans, van Lier, & Koot, 2008; Wiesner & Windle, 2006), including when engaging in delinquent behaviors in response to life stressors (e.g., children of alcoholics, King & Chassin, 2008).

Gender differences have been found. For example, girls who engage in higher levels of delinquent behaviors tend to experience more depressive symptoms than boys (Diamantopoulou, Verhulst, & van der Ende, 2011). Also, girls appear to have lower self-report incidences of delinquency and teachers’ reports of misbehavior than their male counterparts (Fleming et al., 2008).

Substance Use

Substance use includes using tobacco products (e.g., cigarettes), alcohol, cannabis (Groth & Morrison-Breedy, 2011), and illicit drug use (e.g., cocaine, opiates, hallucinogens, amphetamines, and non-prescription drugs; Bhattacharya, 2002). Substance use has been correlated significantly with delinquent behaviors for both genders (e.g., Begle et al., 2011; Dillon, Pantin, Robbins, & Szapocznik, 2008). In addition, gender differences appear to vary throughout the literature by substance(s)
examined, frequency of use, and population of participants, with some research reporting no significant differences between genders and substance use (e.g., Lynne-Landsman et al., 2011).

A particularly salient outcome in the literature is the presence of depressive symptoms co-morbid with substance use in adolescence. Subjects in the United States (Waller et al., 2006) and Spain (Espada, Sussman, Huedo Medina, & Alfonso, 2011) that engaged in substance use behaviors (i.e., alcohol and cigarettes) were found to be at a significantly higher risk of experiencing depressive symptoms than adolescents who abstained from using alcohol or cigarettes. Similar results were found in a sample of adolescent girls. For example, female participants that smoked cigarettes and/or cannabis reported more depressive symptoms than non-smokers (Groth & Morrison-Breedy, 2011).

In addition, higher levels of inhalant use were significantly related to suicidal ideation and prior suicide attempts in a study of incarcerated youth, with any level of inhalant use being significantly related to suicidal ideation (Freedenthal, Vaughn, Jenson, & Howard, 2007). The latter finding was significantly stronger for girls than boys, which mimics results found by Waller et al. (2006) who reported that female adolescents who engaged in low levels of substance use reported more depressive symptoms than their male counterparts. This similarity may suggest that girls may be more susceptible than boys to experiencing depressive symptoms as a consequence of any amount of substance use.

Additional negative outcomes have been linked to adolescent substance use. For example, substance use during adolescence has also been linked to disordered eating and
alcohol use in adolescent girls (Groth & Morrison-Beedy, 2011). Caminis, Henrich, Ruchkin, Schwab-Stone, and Martin (2007) found that substance use was related to an increased likelihood of initiating sexual behavior during middle school years. In addition, substance use during adolescence is related to violent behavior in adulthood (Brook et al., 2011).

Increased risk of incarceration in adolescence as well as adulthood has also been found in substance using adolescence. For example, Slade et al. (2008) reported that adolescent African American boys who exhibited a substance use disorder by age 16 were arrested more times overall, arrested more times for assault, and convicted of more offenses than matched controls that did not engage in substance use behavior. These adolescents were also four times more likely to be incarcerated as an adult for substance related offenses when compared to controls. The researchers also found that adolescents who developed a substance use disorder after 16 had significantly higher lifetime arrests than matched controls without any substance use disorders.

Physical Aggression

Physical aggression is a form of overt aggressive behavior that is characterized as physical, verbal, angry, and/or hostile (Burton et al., 2007; Buss & Perry, 1992), and that is intended to harm someone (Surgeon General of the United States, 2001). Physical aggression continues to be a pervasive problem in high schools in the United States (Surgeon General of the United States, 2001), which makes this a particularly concerning risk factor for adolescents.

Physically aggressive behavior has been linked to a variety of deleterious outcomes. The exhibition of physical aggression in adolescents has been associated with
engagement in high-risk behaviors such as marijuana use (Herrenkohl, Catalano, Hemphill, & Toumbourou, 2009), “hard” and “soft” drug use (Timmermans et al., 2008), cigarette smoking and alcohol use (Timmermans et al., 2008), and an increased likelihood of initiating sexual behavior (Caminis et al., 2007). Physical aggression has also been linked to a significant decline in GPA performance (Loveland, Lounsbury, Welsh, & Buboltz, 2007), dropping out of high school, physical violence (Kokko, Tremblay, Lacourse, Nagin, & Vitaro, 2006), and future physically aggressive behavior (Herrenkohl et al., 2009).

In general, the literature shows evidence of a gender component in the display of physically aggressive behaviors. Boys have typically been found to engage in more violent and aggressive behaviors than girls (Skara et al., 2008; Surgeon General of the United States, 2001), though this difference tends to dissipate with age (Herrenkohl et al., 2009; Kim, Kamphaus, Orpinas, & Kelder, 2010; Timmermans et al., 2008). The effects of engaging in physical aggression appear to be somewhat differential as well. For instance, physical aggression has been found to predict a significantly larger portion of variance in GPA in girls than boys (Loveland et al., 2007), and alcohol use one year later in boys but not girls (Skara et al., 2008).

Though research suggests that some differences in physical aggression and ethnicity may exist, results are sparse and inconclusive. There does appear to be an indication that Latino adolescents may engage in higher levels of aggressive behavior earlier in adolescence than other ethnicities, but that this gap is insignificant by mid-adolescence. For instance, Herrenkohl et al. (2009) reported that Latinos were the only adolescent ethnic group where physically aggressive behavior significantly predicted
subsequent physically aggressive behavior a year later. However, Kim et al. (2010) found that although Latino and Black youth in their study engaged in higher levels of aggression than Caucasian youth, ethnicity alone did not predict aggression later in adolescence.

**Correlations Between High-Risk Behaviors**

Research studies have frequently investigated the effects of multiple high-risk behaviors within the same study, often showing similar effects and significant correlations between these behaviors. For example, Begle et al. (2011) found that delinquent behaviors (including aggressive behaviors) and substance use significantly predicted future engagement in these same high-risk behaviors, with strong correlations emerging between substance use and delinquent behaviors. Similarly, aggressive behaviors and delinquent behaviors in youth have been significantly correlated with each other (Diamantopoulou et al., 2011; Finkenauer, Engels, & Baumeister, 2005). Aggression and delinquency have also been correlated with future exhibition of aggressive and delinquent behaviors in adulthood (Diamantopoulou et al., 2011), and they have been identified as predictors of ecstasy use in adulthood (Alati et al., 2008). Alcohol use, alcohol disorders, and delinquency have been found to be strongly correlated (Mason et al., 2010), with delinquency and substance use being linked to an increased likelihood of experiencing a major depressive episode (Van Vorhees et al., 2008).

As discussed earlier, there appears to be significant gender differences in regards to the exhibition of risky behaviors, though the literature provides varying degrees and types of relationships between the genders. Some studies have found that the correlation
between substance use, delinquent behaviors, and aggression is stronger in boys (Patterson, DeBaryshe, & Ramsey, 1990), and other research has found that gender differences only exist in earlier developmental years (Farrell, Sullivan, Esposito, Meyer, & Valois, 2005; Lynne-Landsman et al., 2011).

The most unclear associations are the ones involving physical aggression with other high-risk behaviors in girls. Researchers have contended that these associations may not be as strong or well understood as they are with adolescent boys (Lynne-Landsman et al., 2011; Patterson et al., 1990). Regardless of any ambiguities related to physically aggressive behaviors, the association between delinquent behaviors and substance abuse by adolescents appears to be very strong within both genders (Begle et al., 2011).

**Adolescent Environmental Risks / Stressors**

Adolescence is a transitional period where many individuals experience a variety of stressors. These stressors exist across a variety of contexts in the adolescent’s life (e.g., family, peer relationships, school, the community; Surgeon General of the United States, 2001), and often contribute to adolescents’ engagement in high-risk behaviors (King & Chassin, 2008). Three environmental risk factors that may be especially important to Latino youth include ethnic discrimination, victimization by peers, and intrusive behaviors by parents.

**Ethnic Discrimination**

Ethnic discrimination is the experience of unsolicited, unfair treatment (Essed, 1991) based on race or ethnicity (Flores et al., 2008). Ethnic minorities are frequently the target of ethnic discrimination, including adolescents of Latino background. Latino youth
often experience ethnic discrimination in various arenas, including in the community, by peers, in schools, and by shopkeepers (Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000; Katz, 1999; Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). Latino adolescent victims of ethnic discrimination report that they are singled out because of their speech, language, and appearance, which are largely rooted in cultural differences. The discrimination frequently takes the form of being stereotyped, treated with suspicion, and assumed to be engaging in negative or delinquent behaviors (Cordova & Cervantes, 2010).

Experiencing ethnic discrimination during adolescence can cause issues in ethnic identity development as adolescents attempt to establish their identity in relation to their surroundings (e.g., peers; Okamoto et al., 2009). Adolescents may turn to externalizing behaviors (e.g., delinquency, aggression, substance use) in attempts to cope with this perceived rejection due to experiencing ethnic discrimination. Literature on the topic provides support for this suggestion in relation to each of these externalizing behaviors. For example, adolescents’ perceived ethnic discrimination has been identified as a significant predictor for engagement in both aggressive and delinquent behaviors in multiple studies, as outlined in the studies below.

Smokowski and Bacalloa (2006) found that ethnic discrimination was a significant risk factor for adolescents’ engagement in aggressive behaviors in their sample of immigrant Latino adolescents. Similarly, a longitudinal study examining African American adolescents in Iowa and Georgia found that ethnic discrimination predicted both violence and delinquency, even after neighborhood qualities were accounted for in the analyses (Martin et al., 2010). In addition, ethnic discrimination predicted patterns of adolescent delinquency over all three data collections in their 5-year
panel study. Le and Stockdale (2011) also examined discrimination effects on delinquency in a large multiethnic sample of adolescents. Results of their study indicated that perceived discrimination significantly predicted delinquent behavior (i.e., aggressive and non-aggressive offenses) in early to mid adolescence in youth who had experienced at least one event of discrimination.

Ethnic and racial discrimination have also been widely associated with substance use outcomes. A longitudinal study of Navajo Indian adolescents in the Southwest U.S. revealed that ethnic discrimination effects persisted over the length of the study to significantly predict later substance use (Galliher, Jones, & Dahl, 2011). Okamoto et al. (2009) reported similar patterns in Latino adolescents in Southern California. Their study examined discrimination effects on substance use in ninth graders across seven high schools, and found significant associations between recent (i.e., past 30 days) and lifetime use of cigarette, alcohol, marijuana, and inhalants.

A Northern California study of Mexican American adolescents found a significant relationship between perceived ethnic discrimination and an increase in reported post traumatic symptoms, which was subsequently related to more substance use and incidence of being involved in a physical fight (Flores, Tschann, Dimas, Pasch, & de Groat, 2010). Furthermore, the researchers asserted that ethnic discrimination has far more detrimental and serious effects than “meet the eye”; the results indicated a significant relationship emerged between experiencing ethnic discrimination and engaging in risky behaviors (i.e., alcohol and drug use, fighting, sexual activity), despite the overall relatively low reports of both ethnic discrimination and posttraumatic symptoms. The implication is that even minimal amounts of experienced ethnic
discrimination can result in detrimental effects in adolescents.

Victimization by Peers

Victimization refers to relational, verbal, and mildly physically aggressive acts that are targeted at another person (Champion & Clay, 2007). The term victimization is often considered synonymous with bullying. There is a high prevalence of adolescent victimization. Studies have found that 50%-61% of adolescents reported at least one event of victimization (Mitchell, Ybarra, & Finkelhor, 2007; Perron, Gotham, & Cho, 2008; Sullivan et al., 2006).

Strong relationships have been found between experiencing peer victimization and concurrent behavioral problems, perceiving friends as not being protective (Hodges, Boivin, Vitaro, & Bukowski, 1999), and peer rejection (Hanish & Guerra, 2002). Thus, adolescents experiencing these events may be particularly vulnerable prey for peer bullies, which may at least partially explain the reasons behind the perpetration of these victimizing behaviors (Hanish & Guerra; Hodges et al.). Given the high prevalence rates and the harms, adolescent victimization by peers is an especially relevant issue in the study of adolescent adjustment.

Victimization is often strongly related to the exhibition of high-risk behaviors. These high-risk negative outcomes are usually pervasive and long-lasting, and there is evidence of statistically significant effects with both genders. In a study of predominantly African American eighth grade students in the Southeast, physical victimization by peers was related to physical aggression, alcohol use, cigarette use, and delinquency (Sullivan, et al., 2006). Relational victimization was related to all of these outcomes, in addition to marijuana use and advanced alcohol consumption.
Rusby, Forrester, Biglan, and Metzler (2005) found similar results in a longitudinal study of a large sample of Oregon adolescents. Specifically, they found that adolescents who experienced frequent victimization (i.e., verbal and physical harassment) exhibited significantly higher levels of problem behavior, antisocial behavior, aggression, and cigarette smoking behavior than their peers that either had not been victimized or had experienced lower levels of victimization. This frequent peer harassment explained a large portion of variance in problem behaviors later in adolescence. Experiencing physical harassment in middle school also predicted aggressiveness in males and antisocial behavior in females in high school. An important implication of their research is in the enduring effects of chronic victimization; an implication that is also supported by Hanish and Guerra’s (2002) finding that victimization experienced earlier in adolescence or childhood predicted later delinquency and aggressive behavior.

Delinquent behaviors and substance use are also independently linked to victimization. A study of African American adolescents in substance abuse treatment found that lifetime victimization, victimization experienced in the past 30 days, and high levels of experienced victimization were all significantly associated with conduct behavior problems and participation in high-risk behaviors (e.g., illegal activity; Perron et al., 2008). Additionally, experiencing victimization within the past 60 days was significantly associated with smoking cigarettes, drinking behaviors, and using marijuana in a nationally representative multiethnic sample of adolescents (Luk, Wang, & Simons-Morton, 2010), and smoking and drinking in Italian adolescents in middle school and secondary school (Vieno, Gini, & Santinello, 2011).

A study of a large multi-ethnic sample of adolescents in Southern California
examined effects of victimization at two time points (i.e., Fall 2004 and Spring 2005) on substance use behaviors (Tharp-Taylor, Haviland, & D’Amico, 2009). The researchers found that in the overall sample, being victimized (i.e., physical, mental victimization) at Time 1 was significantly related to substance use (i.e., alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana, and inhalants) at Time 2. Latino adolescents reported fewer incidents of victimization in comparison to the other six ethnic groups in the study, and older adolescents in the sample reported generally higher frequencies of substance use and less instances of physical victimization. The latter finding regarding substance use may lend more support for an enduring effect of early victimization on the exhibition of high-risk behaviors later in adolescence.

Aggressive behavior in adolescents is much less examined than the other risky behaviors (i.e., delinquent behaviors, substance use) as an outcome of peer victimization. A possible reason for this disparity in the literature may be due to the role that aggression plays in classifications of bullying behaviors. For example, Unnever (2005) described three classes of individuals who are involved in bullying behaviors as being either solely victims, solely bullies, or bully-victims. Bully-victims are explained as aggressive victims that in turn begin to bully other peers as a result of being victimized themselves. Thus, without separating the sample populations into these three classifications, the trajectories of aggression outcomes as a result of victimization are much less clear or explanatory.

In addition to aggressive behavior, very few research studies report on the effects of peer victimization of Latino adolescents specifically. Even fewer studies report on the engagement in adolescent high-risk behaviors (e.g., substance use) as a result of
victimization in Latinos. Thus, this thesis will add to the understanding of the relationship between peer victimization and high-risk behaviors in Latino adolescents.

**Intrusiveness by Parents**

Parental intrusiveness describes parenting practices that are characterized by punitiveness (i.e., controlling, coercive, harsh, and excessively strict parenting practices) and psychological control (i.e., parental guilt induction and love withdrawal; Henry et al., 1989). Studies have found that perceived parental intrusiveness is related to adolescent internalizing behaviors, such as depressive symptoms in girls (Mandara & Pikes, 2008), and depressive symptoms in 5th and 7th grade (Sher-Censor, Parke, & Coltrane, 2011). In addition, more perceived parental intrusiveness by adolescents is related to lower family life satisfaction (Henry, 1994). However, research regarding the effects of parental intrusiveness on adolescent externalizing behaviors (i.e., high-risk behaviors) has been less widely studied.

Psychological control, one form of intrusiveness, has been related to adolescent high-risk behaviors. In two large studies of children and adolescents in the Netherlands, researchers found that higher levels of manipulative or psychological controlling parenting behaviors were directly related to behavioral problems, such as delinquency (de Kemp, Scholte, Overbeek, & Engels, 2006; Finkenauer et al., 2005) and aggression (Finkenauer et al., 2005). Similarly, adolescents who perceived their parents as having a punitive parenting style were found to exhibit much higher levels of delinquent behaviors (Heaven & Virgen, 2001).

Other research has provided evidence for the relationship between parental psychological control with aggression and substance use separately. Coercive and
controlling parenting was found to be associated with increased frequency of substance use (i.e., cigarette smoking, alcohol use, and marijuana use) during adolescence, as well as into young adulthood (i.e., binge drinking and alcohol consumption) in a nationally representative U.S. sample (Aquilino & Supple, 2001). Significant correlations between parental psychological control and overt aggression were also found in a sample of youth in Texas middle schools for both genders independently (Loukas, Paulos, & Robinson, 2005).

Literature examining the relationship of intrusive parenting with risky behaviors in Latino adolescents has been sparse. The attention that has been given to the Latino population has indicated unclear and inconclusive results (e.g., Manongdo & Garcia, 2011; Sher-Censor et al., 2011). A possible reason for the mixed findings in Latinos may be due to the nature of their culture and values. For example, Latino adolescents may feel that psychologically controlling behaviors by parents serve as a protective factor and are in line with their familial projections of love and closeness (Sher-Censor et al., 2011).

Regardless, parental psychological control has shown negative effects in work with other populations, and further work needs to be completed to determine the extent that previous findings of effects of parental psychological control on high-risk behaviors are generalizable to the Latino population. The current study seeks to help clarify this discrepancy.

School Context as a Source of Social Support

Despite the number of stressors that adolescents face, several protective factors exist that can mitigate the negative influence of high-risk environmental stressors. Protective factors include environmental assets that help to buffer the relationship
between adolescent risk factors and engaging in high-risk behaviors (Surgeon General, 2001). In other words, protective factors can diminish the impact of environmental stressors on high-risk behaviors.

Numerous studies have shown how parental support (e.g., Wills & Cleary, 1996) can be a potential moderator of the relationship between stress and maladjustment. For example, Wills and Cleary (1996) suggested that supportive parenting behaviors can serve as a buffer to stressful life events in adolescents because increased support can serve as a venue for increasing adolescents’ use of coping skills and other adaptive functioning skills, which can subsequently minimize the influences of existing risk factors. The implication is that when adolescents view their parents as being supportive, they may be more likely to turn to their parents as a resource (e.g., talking to them) during stressful times. Thus, supportive parenting may provide youth with a safe environment in which they can face life challenges in an adaptive way. When adolescents engage in more adaptive coping skills (i.e., turning to their parents for support), they may be less likely to engage in maladaptive coping mechanisms (e.g., abusing substances, engaging in physically aggressive and delinquent behaviors). However, less attention has been given to the school context as a potential source of support for youth in minimizing the impact of environmental risks.

Mutual respect in schools is one possible environmental factor that may contribute to increasing adolescents’ social capital. Respect in schools refers to the extent to which students feel that interactions between students, teachers, and adults in general are respectful and caring in nature, regardless of ethnic origin (Aber et al., 2000). Considering how much time adolescents spend in their school environment, creating a
respectful school climate could plausibly provide the support that youth need to engage in more adaptive behaviors. Similar to the assertions regarding supportive parenting, a respectful school climate may serve as a safe haven for youth to engage in adaptive coping mechanisms when they encounter stressful life events. When adolescents perceive that teachers, administrators, and students are respectful of each other, they may be more inclined to employ others in their school environment for support when facing life challenges. By turning to more productive resources within the school context, adolescents may be less likely to engage in high-risk behaviors (e.g., delinquency, substance use, physical aggression) in reaction to environmental stressors (e.g., ethnic discrimination, peer victimization, and parental intrusiveness).

In a large U.S. study investigating moderating school contextual factors on the relationship between impulsivity and behavior problems in school, researchers found that school connectedness significantly moderated the relationship between impulsivity and both substance use and weapon carrying (Vogel & Barton, 2011). Vogel and Barton suggested that school connectedness contribute to the reduction in delinquent behaviors in adolescents, even when taking into account individual characteristics. Similarly, Gregory et al. (2010) found that the emphasis of structure and support in the school climate was related to higher levels of school safety, lower levels of bullying, and lower levels of victimization.

Daigle, Beaver, and Turner (2010) reported that an adolescent’s commitment to school was the only significant protective factor against being victimized (in comparison to social support, religiosity, and verbal IQ) in their sample of youth at-risk for victimization. Other research studies have also found that higher levels of school
connectedness are associated with lower levels of depression in adolescents (Costello, Swedensen, Rose, & Dierker, 2008; Van Vorhees et al., 2008).

However, all of the above-mentioned studies involve large multiethnic samples of adolescents. Any differential effects based on ethnicity have not been widely explored, including studies with Latino adolescents. The current study proposes that the positive effects of a respectful school environment will moderate the influence of high-risk environmental factors (i.e. ethnic discrimination, victimization, and parental intrusiveness) on adolescents’ engagement in high-risk behaviors (i.e., delinquency, substance use, physical aggression).

**Hypotheses**

Based on the previous review of literature, it was hypothesized that Latino adolescents’ experiences with environmental risk factors (i.e., ethnic discrimination, peer victimization, parental intrusiveness) will be significantly and positively related to their engagement in risky behaviors (i.e., delinquent behaviors, substance use, physical aggression). It is also expected that the relationship between environmental risk factors and Latino adolescents’ high-risk behaviors will be buffered (i.e., moderated) by their perceived respect at school.

Many of the previously discussed studies have found gender differences when examining the relationship between environmental stressors and adolescents’ high-risk behaviors. Thus, this study will examine gender as a possible moderator as well. Specifically, it is hypothesized that gender differences will exist between Latino adolescent boys and girls’ exhibition of high-risk behaviors. It is also expected that gender differences will exist in the moderated relationships of respect in schools on
environmental stressors with high-risk behaviors.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Procedures

The data for the present study were collected with a paper and pencil survey (English) that was administered to adolescents in three public high schools and three Charter schools in Southern California. IRB approval from a university was obtained prior to data collection, as well as permission from administrators at each of the schools. Principals and teachers were notified prior to entering the schools for data collection. Data collection took place between 2009 and 2012, with survey administration taking place only one time at each school.

During the first school visit, researchers entered 9th and 10th grade classrooms at the schools, explained the purpose of the study and possible incentives for participation (explained below), and distributed an information packet with a parental informed consent attached. The students were instructed that the parental consent form must be signed and received prior to participation in the study. Approximately one week later, researchers visited the classrooms again to re-distribute misplaced packets, distribute packets to any students who may have previously been absent, and to collect any signed informed consent forms.

Approximately two weeks after the initial visit, data collection took place in the classrooms of the schools. This format applied to all schools except for one Charter school. In this one school, researchers did not return for the “second” visit one week after initially passing out consent forms, and only made two total trips to the school to (1) distribute consent forms, and (2) collect consent forms and administer surveys.
In all schools, signed informed consent forms were collected again. Surveys were then administered to all students who returned signed informed consent from a parent or legal guardian and who also signed an adolescent assent form. Students had the entire class period to complete the survey, and were given an alternative task (a crossword puzzle) to complete if they were not participating in the study. Students in each classroom (participants and nonparticipants) were entered into a drawing for a $10 Target gift card. Teachers were given a $20 gift card for their help and support of the research.

After data collection, surveys were taken to a university lab to be coded and entered by trained undergraduate and graduate student research assistants. All data coding of demographics (e.g., birth country, ethnicity) and data entry were double checked for accuracy. After data were entered and verified, frequencies were conducted on every item in the survey as one last check for possible data entry errors.

**Sample**

All of the students included in the analyses identified their ethnicity as Latino/Hispanic or a corresponding subgroup (e.g., Mexican, Salvadoran). The original sample size of 625 Latina/o participants was reduced to a final sample size of 610 after 15 cases were deleted for violation of statistical assumptions (see below). Though not all adolescents who were offered participation in the study did participate, response rates for Latino adolescent participants were difficult to ascertain for a variety of reasons (e.g., absences when either consent forms or surveys were distributed, adolescents’ losing signed consent forms, knowing which youth who did not participate were Latino).

The sample characteristics are as follows: 45.9% male participants and 54.1% female participants; 67.5% ninth graders and 32.5% tenth graders; ages ranged from 13 to
18 years old ($M = 14.8$); 66.4% 2nd generation status; 65.7% living with both birth mother and father; and family sizes ranging from 1 to 15 people ($M = 5.1$). The majority of participants were born in the United States (79.0%), with the remaining participants born in 9 other countries and 1.8% missing information. The majority of participants’ mothers (59.2%) and fathers (61.9%) were born in Mexico, with the remaining hailing from 13 other countries. Almost half of the participants were surveyed in public high schools (45.6%) and half in Charter schools (54.4).

**Measurement**

Standard fact sheet items were used to measure demographic variables in the present study (e.g., gender, age, birth country). All other variables were measured using multi-item scales.

**Delinquent Behaviors**

A 17-item delinquent behaviors scale was used to assess how frequently the adolescent engages in various delinquent behaviors. This particular scale was created specifically for a larger project at California State University Northridge funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. All item responses were rated on a four-point scale which indicates the frequency in which the adolescent has engaged in each delinquent behavior in the last 6 months: $0 = \text{never}$, $1 = \text{once}$, $2 = \text{a few times}$, $3 = \text{many times}$. A sample item includes: “In the last six months, how often have you…bought, used or sold something you knew was stolen.” Item responses were averaged to obtain a delinquent behaviors score. A Cronbach’s alpha of .90 was obtained in the current study.

**Substance Use**
Substance use was measured by using an 8-item substance use scale that was created specifically for the larger project. The substance use scale assessed how frequently the adolescent engaged in substance use behaviors in the last six months. The items include: cigarette smoking, alcohol consumption, marijuana, speed, heroin, cocaine, inhalant, acid, methamphetamine, ecstasy, PCP mushroom, and non-prescription drug use. All item responses were rated on a four-point scale which indicates the frequency in which the adolescent has used each substance/group of substances in the last 6 months: 0 = never, 1 = once, 2 = a few times, 3 = many times. A sample item includes: “In the last six months, how often have you used prescription drugs NOT prescribed by a doctor.” Item responses were averaged to obtain a substance use score. A Cronbach’s alpha of .81 was obtained in the current study.

**Aggression**

Physical aggression was measured using a 9-item physical aggression scale (Burton et al., 2007). All responses were rated on a five-point scale that indicates how frequently the adolescent engages in each of the physically aggressive behaviors: 0 = never, 1 = sometimes, 2 = frequently, 3 = very frequently, 4 = always. A sample item includes: “Once in a while I can’t control the urge to strike another person.” Item responses were averaged to obtain a physical aggression score. A Cronbach’s alpha of .85 was obtained in the current study.

**Ethnic Discrimination**

Ethnic discrimination was measured using a 10-item perceived discrimination scale (Essed, 1991). The ethnic discrimination scale asks adolescents to rate how often they feel they have been discriminated against by others because of their race, culture,
language, and/or skin color. Each item reflects an aspect of ethnic discrimination, and all responses were rated on a five-point scale that indicates the frequency in which the adolescent has been discriminated against: 1 = *never*, 2 = *less than once a year*, 3 = *a few times a year*, 4 = *a few times a month*, 5 = *at least once a week*, 6 = *almost every day*. A sample item includes: “You are called names or insulted.” Item responses were averaged to obtain a perceived ethnic discrimination score. A Cronbach’s alpha of .88 was obtained in the current study.

**Peer Victimization**

Peer victimization was measured using a 9-item peer victimization scale (Champion & Clay, 2007), which is a modified version of the Bullying Scale. The peer victimization scale was used to assess the extent to which adolescents feel they have been victimized by their peers, specifically in the last 6 months. Each item reflects an aspect of peer victimization (i.e., relational, verbal, or physical), and all responses were rated on a five-point scale which indicates the frequency in which the adolescent has been victimized in the last 6 months: 1 = *never*, 2 = *once or twice*, 3 = *sometimes*, 4 = *once a week*, 5 = *more than once per week*. A sample item includes: “During the last 6 months another kid tried to keep others from liking me by saying mean things.” Item responses were averaged to obtain a perceived peer victimization score. A Cronbach’s alpha of .84 was obtained in the current study.

**Parental Intrusiveness**

A 28-item parental intrusiveness scale was used to assess the extent to which adolescents feel that their parents engage in intrusive parenting (Henry et al., 1989). The parental intrusiveness scale is comprised of two subscales that encompass the nature of
intrusive parenting (i.e., parental punitiveness and parental psychological control). Both of the subscales ask the adolescent to evaluate each survey question separately for their primary mother figure and their primary father figure. All responses were rated on a four-point Likert scale reflecting the adolescent’s level of agreement with each statement for each parent individually: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree. Sample items include: “(Mother Figure/Father Figure) …Yells at me a lot without good reason” And “will not talk to me when I displease him/her.” For the purposes of this study, responses of the adolescents in regard to both their mother and their father figures were collapsed into an overall “parental intrusiveness” variable. Responses to these variables were then averaged to obtain an overall perceived parental intrusiveness score. A Cronbach’s alpha of .88 was obtained in the current study.

**Mutual Respect in School**

A 6-item mutual respect in school scale was used to assess the degree to which adolescents perceived their school environment to be respectful and caring between students, teachers, and adults regardless of race or ethnicity (Aber et al., 2000). All responses were rated on a four-point Likert scale reflecting the adolescent’s level of agreement with each statement: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree. A sample item includes: “In our school we have a strong sense of responsibility to help and support one another.” The item responses were averaged to obtain a perceived mutual respect in school score. A Cronbach’s alpha of .85 was obtained in the current study.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Bivariate correlations were conducted to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables. Next, hierarchical multiple regressions were conducted to assess the strength and moderating effects of mutual respect in schools and gender on the relationship between environmental stressors and high-risk behaviors using procedures outlined by Aiken and West (1991) and Varela, Weems, Berman, Hensley, and Rodriguez de Bernal (2007).

Bivariate Correlations

The correlations, means, and standard deviations for all variables can be found in Table 1 (next page). The means and standard deviations reflect variable mean scores before they were transformed into centered variables for the hierarchical regression analyses. As predicted, all environmental stressors (i.e., ethnic discrimination, peer victimization, parental intrusiveness) were positively and highly significantly related to all three adolescent high-risk behaviors (i.e., delinquent behaviors, substance use, physical aggression; see Table 1). Mutual respect in school was significantly and negatively related to all of the environmental stressors and high-risk behaviors. Gender, however, was only significantly related to delinquent behaviors and physical aggression; indicating that boys reported significantly higher delinquency and aggression than girls. Mutual respect in school and gender were not significantly correlated.
Table 1

Summary of Bivariate Correlation Analyses on Environmental Stressors, High-Risk Behaviors, Mutual Respect in School, and Gender (N = 610)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Delinquent behaviors</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Substance use</td>
<td>.66**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Physical aggression</td>
<td>.57**</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ethnic Discrimination</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Peer victimization</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.48**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Parental intrusiveness</td>
<td>.10**</td>
<td>.10**</td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>.15**</td>
<td>.20**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. School respect</td>
<td>-.30**</td>
<td>-.16**</td>
<td>-.22**</td>
<td>-.34**</td>
<td>-.31**</td>
<td>-.11**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Gender (boys = 0)</td>
<td>-.11**</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.14**</td>
<td>-.11**</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05. **p < .01

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted (1) to analyze the amount of variance the environmental stressors (i.e., ethnic discrimination, Peer victimization, parental intrusiveness) explained in adolescents’ high-risk behaviors, and (2) to examine the beta coefficients in relation to each high-risk behavior (Pedhazur, 1982; Varela et al., 2007). Separate hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted for each of the high-risk behaviors (i.e., delinquent behaviors, substance use, physical aggression). In order to assess the effects of the moderator variables (i.e., mutual respect in school, gender), two-way and three-way interactions were analyzed in later models of the analyses. Prior to running the analyses, multivariate outliers were identified using Mahalanobis distances for each of the cases, at $df = 5$ and $\chi^2 = 25.515$ cutoff. Per these parameters, 15 cases were deleted for violating the assumption of multivariate
normality.

In Model 1, only the predictor variables (i.e., ethnic discrimination, peer victimization, parental intrusiveness) were analyzed for each dependent variable (i.e., delinquent behaviors, substance use, physical aggression) separately. In Model 2, the moderator variables (i.e., mutual respect in school, gender) were added into the model with the predictor variables. In Model 3, all relevant two-way interaction terms were added; two-way interactions between school respect and each of the three predictor variables, two-way interactions between gender and each of the three predictor variables, and the interaction between both of the moderator variables themselves (i.e., seven total two-way interaction terms). In the final model (Model 4), the relevant three-way interaction terms were added; school respect and gender in combination with each of the predictor variables (i.e., three total two-way interaction terms).

**Delinquent Behaviors**

In Model 1, the three environmental stressors were entered, accounting for 18% of the variance in delinquent behaviors (see Table 2 on next page). Ethnic discrimination was significantly and positively related to delinquent behaviors. Neither peer victimization nor parental intrusiveness was significantly related to adolescents’ delinquent behaviors.

In Model 2, mutual respect in schools and gender were added; accounting for an additional 3% of the variance in delinquent behaviors. Respect in schools was significantly and negatively related to delinquent behaviors. Gender was not significantly related. However, ethnic discrimination was still significantly related to delinquent behaviors in Model 2 even after adding respect in schools and gender.
Table 2
Summary of Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis on Adolescents’ Reports of Environmental Stressors on Delinquent Behaviors, Moderated by Mutual Respect in School and Gender (N = 610)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model 1 β</th>
<th>Model 2 β</th>
<th>Model 3 β</th>
<th>Model 4 β</th>
<th>ΔR²</th>
<th>ΔF-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Discrimination</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Victimization</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Intrusiveness</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>44.80**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect in School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.17**</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (boys = 0)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect x Discrimination</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect x Victimization</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect x Intrusiveness</td>
<td>-.09*</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender x Discrimination</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender x Victimization</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender x Intrusiveness</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender x Respect</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>2.15*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Model 3, the two-way interactions were entered into the analysis; accounting for an additional 2% of the variance in delinquent behaviors (see Table 2). Ethnic discrimination was still significantly related to delinquent behaviors, but respect in schools was no longer significant once the interaction terms were added to the analysis. The only significant two-way interactions were (1) school respect with parental intrusiveness and (2) school respect with peer victimization. The interactions were graphed, but prior to graphing the interactions, the predictor variables were split into low, medium, and high groups. The graph of the first interaction revealed that students who reported lower levels of respect in schools reported experiencing higher levels of delinquent behaviors when they also reported higher levels of parental intrusiveness (see Figure 1). They experienced lower levels of delinquent behaviors when they reported lower levels of parental intrusiveness and high or medium school respect.
Figure 1. The interaction of mutual respect in schools with parental intrusiveness on delinquent behaviors.

A similar relationship was found for the interaction of respect in schools with victimization; students who reported lower levels of respect in school also reported experiencing higher levels of delinquent behaviors, especially when simultaneously reporting higher levels of peer victimization (see Figure 2). Students who reported low levels of respect in schools reported higher levels of delinquent behaviors than those who reported medium or high levels of school respect, regardless of the level of peer victimization. Also, students who reported medium or high levels of respect in schools
reported fairly low overall averages of delinquent behaviors, especially when victimization was low or medium. Thus, in support of the stated hypotheses, respect in schools appears to moderate the relationship between intrusiveness and victimization.

**Figure 2.** The interaction of mutual respect in schools with peer victimization on delinquent behaviors.

In Model 4, the three-way interactions were entered (see Table 2). The $R^2$ change from Model 3 to Model 4 was not significant, indicating that Model 3 is probably the most sufficient in explaining the variance of delinquent behaviors. None of the three-way
interaction terms were significant (see Table 2), indicating that the pattern of the interactions between school respect and each of the predictor variables (i.e., ethnic discrimination, peer victimization, parental intrusiveness) were not significantly different between genders. This is contrary to the hypothesis regarding gender.

**Substance Use**

In Model 1, the three environmental stressors were entered, accounting for 12% of the variance in substance use (see Table 3). Ethnic discrimination was significantly and positively related to substance use, but peer victimization and parental intrusiveness were not significantly related.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
<th>$\Delta R^2$</th>
<th>$\Delta F$-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Discrimination</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Victimization</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Intrusiveness</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>27.47**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect in School</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (boys = 0)</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect x Discrimination</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect x Victimization</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect x Intrusiveness</td>
<td>-.13**</td>
<td>-.15*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender x Discrimination</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender x Victimization</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender x Intrusiveness</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender x Respect</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>2.84**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

In Model 2, mutual respect in schools and gender were added; accounting for non-significant change in substance use (see Table 3). Neither respect in schools nor gender was significantly related to substance use. However, ethnic discrimination was still significantly related to substance use in Model 2 even after adding respect in schools and
gender.

In Model 3, the two-way interactions were entered into the analysis; accounting for an additional 3% of the change in substance use (see Table 3). Ethnic discrimination was still significantly related to substance use. Similar to the results found in Model 3 of delinquent behaviors, the only two-way interactions that were significant were (1) school respect with parental intrusiveness, and (2) school respect with victimization.

Figure 3. The interaction of mutual respect in schools with parental intrusiveness on substance use.

Figure 3 shows students who reported lower levels of school respect reported higher
levels of substance use when they also reported higher levels of parental intrusiveness. They experienced higher levels of substance use when they reported higher levels of parental intrusiveness and low school respect. The relationship between school respect with victimization yielded similar results (see Figure 4); students who reported lower levels of school respect also reported engaging in higher levels of substance use, especially when simultaneously reporting higher levels of peer victimization.

**Figure 4.** The interaction of mutual respect in schools with peer victimization on substance use.

Students who reported low levels of school respect reported higher levels of substance
use than those who reported medium or high levels of school respect, regardless of the level of peer victimization. Thus, in support of the stated hypotheses, respect in schools appears to moderate the relationship between intrusiveness and victimization.

In Model 4, the three-way interactions were entered (see Table 3). The $R^2$ change from Model 3 to Model 4 was insignificant, indicating that Model 3 is probably the most appropriate model in explaining the variance in adolescent reports of substance use. None of the three-way interaction terms were significant (see Table 3), indicating that the pattern of the interactions between school respect and each of the predictor variables (i.e., ethnic discrimination, victimization, parental intrusiveness) were not significantly different between genders. Thus, the hypothesis that gender would moderate a significant difference between the predictor variables and moderated terms in the study was not supported.

**Physical Aggression**

In Model 1, the three environmental stressors were entered, accounting for 14% of the variance in physical aggression (see Table 4). All three environmental stressors (i.e., ethnic discrimination, peer victimization, parental intrusiveness) were significantly and positively related to physical aggression.

In Model 2, mutual respect in schools and gender were added, accounting for an additional 2% of the variance in physical aggression. Both respect in schools and gender were significantly and negatively related to physical aggression. Parental intrusiveness was no longer significantly related to physical aggression, however ethnic discrimination and peer victimization were still significant.
Table 4
Summary of Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis on Adolescent Reports of Environmental Stressors on Physical Aggression, Moderated by Mutual Respect in School and Gender (N = 610)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>β</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>ΔR²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Discrimination</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.24**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Victimization</td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Intrusiveness</td>
<td>.08*</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect in School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (boys = 0)</td>
<td>-.12**</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect x Discrimination</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.14*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect x Victimization</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect x Intrusiveness</td>
<td>-.13**</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender x Discrimination</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender x Victimization</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender x Intrusiveness</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender x Respect</td>
<td>-.12*</td>
<td>-.13*</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect x Discrimination x Gender</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect x Victimization x Gender</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect x Intrusiveness x Gender</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05. **p < .01.

In Model 3, the two-way interactions were added into the analysis, accounting for 4% of additional variance in physical aggression (see Table 4). Ethnic discrimination and gender were still significantly related to physical aggression, but all other predictors were no longer significantly related. Four of the two-way interactions were significantly related to physical aggression: (1) school respect with victimization, (2) school respect with parental intrusiveness, (3) gender with victimization, and (4) gender with school respect. The interactions were graphed, but prior to graphing the interactions, the predictor variables were split into low, medium, and high groups.

The first graph (see Figure 5) revealed that students who reported lower levels of respect in school reported engaging in higher levels of physical aggression reported higher levels of aggression across all levels of peer victimization. However, when adolescents experienced the lowest levels of physical aggression when they reported lower levels of victimization and high or medium school respect. Thus, school respect
can buffer the impact of peer victimization on physical aggression in Latino youth.

Figure 5. The interaction of mutual respect in schools with peer victimization on physical aggression.
The next graph revealed that students experiencing medium and high levels of respect in school reported lower levels of physical aggression across all levels of parental intrusiveness. However, when parental intrusiveness was high and school respect was low, physical aggression was the highest. Thus, in this sample, school respect is buffering the impact of parental intrusiveness on physical aggression in Latino youth.

Figure 6. The interaction of mutual respect in schools with parental intrusiveness on physical aggression.
The graph of the third interaction revealed that peer victimization was more strongly associated with physical aggression in boys than girls, and this relationship is especially obvious at lower levels of peer victimization (see Figure 7).

Figure 7. The interaction of peer victimization with gender on physical aggression.
The last interaction revealed that higher levels of school respect predicted substantially lower levels of physical aggression for girls than boys, and this difference was especially pronounced at high levels of school respect (see Figure 8). Thus, higher levels of school respect buffered physical aggression in girls more than boys.

![Figure 8. The interaction of mutual respect in schools with gender on physical aggression.](image)

In Model 4, the three-way interactions were entered (see Table 4). The change from Model 3 to Model 4 was insignificant, indicating that Model 3 is the most parsimonious model in explaining the variance in physical aggression in adolescents.
None of the three-way interaction terms were significant, indicating that the pattern of the interactions between school respect and each of the predictor variables (i.e., ethnic discrimination, victimization, parental intrusiveness) were not significantly different between genders. This is in contrary to the hypothesis that gender would moderate a significant difference between the predictor variables and moderated terms in the study.
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine potential moderating effects of mutual respect in school and gender on the relationship between environmental stressors (i.e., ethnic discrimination, peer victimization, parental intrusiveness) and adolescent high-risk behaviors (i.e., delinquent behaviors, substance use, physical aggression) in a sample of Latino adolescents in southern California. Partial support was found for the hypotheses. Specifically, the following results were found: (1) ethnic discrimination was significantly and positively related to all three high-risk behaviors (i.e., substance use, delinquency, and physical aggression); (2) peer victimization and parental intrusiveness were only related to physical aggression once entered into the analyses with ethnic discrimination; (3) mutual respect in school was negatively related to high risk behaviors and buffered the influence of peer victimization and parental intrusiveness on all three high-risk behaviors; (4) girls reported lower levels of delinquency and physical aggression than boys; (5) boys reported higher physically aggressive behavior than girls, especially when levels of peer victimization were low; (6) respect in school buffered the exhibition of physical aggression in girls, especially when respect in school was high; and (8) none of the three-way interactions involving gender were significant for any of the outcome variables.

Discussion of the Findings

The first hypothesis, that environmental risk factors would be related to adolescent risky behaviors, was only partially supported. The finding that ethnic discrimination was significantly related to delinquent behaviors, substance use, and
physical aggression is consistent with previous research (e.g., Smokowski & Bacalloa, 2006, Okamoto et al., 2009). Researchers have suggested that the experience of ethnic discrimination during adolescence may result in worse ethnic identity, increased feelings of rejection (Okamoto et al., 2009), and/or contribute to post traumatic symptoms (Flores et al., 2010). Adolescents may engage in more externalizing behaviors (e.g., delinquency, aggression) and/or use substances in an attempt to alleviate the frustration associated with experiencing ethnic discrimination.

As hypothesized, peer victimization and parental intrusiveness were both related to physical aggression in the regression analyses. Both of these findings support previous research linking peer victimization (Rusby et al., 2005; Sullivan et al., 2006) and parental intrusiveness (e.g., Finkenauer et al., 2005) to physical aggression in adolescents. Adolescents experiencing peer victimization may be respond with physical aggression in order to protect themselves against their perpetrator(s), especially if the methods in which they are being victimized include acts of physical aggression. In addition, being victimized by peers can sometimes result in the victimized adolescent engaging in bullying behaviors themselves either as a form of modeling or a way to relieve the frustration associated with the victimization (Unnever, 2005). Similarly, intrusive parenting may model aggressive behaviors to the youth due to its controlling and manipulative nature, reinforcing physical aggression as a method for coping with environmental stressors and everyday challenges. Adolescents many also engage in physical aggression as a way to externalize their frustrations with their parents’ intrusive methods, and as a way to attempt to regain some sort of perceived control over their lives.

Although parental intrusiveness and peer victimization were related to the
substance use and delinquency in the bivariate correlations, neither were significant predictors once entered into the regression analyses with ethnic discrimination. The lack of significance may be partially due to shared variance between the three predictors in relation to the two high-risk behaviors. For example, adolescents may simultaneously experience being discriminated against and victimized in some situations.

Partial support was found for the hypothesis that mutual respect in school would buffer the impact of environmental stressors on risky behaviors. Specifically, mutual respect in school moderated the relationships of peer victimization and parental intrusiveness on delinquent behaviors, substance use, and parental intrusiveness. Students spend a large portion of their day in school, so the finding that a positive and respectful school climate can buffer the impact of the experiences of victimization by peers and parental intrusiveness makes sense. Specifically, a respectful school climate may serve as a “safe haven” against the environmental stressors that Latino adolescents face. When Latino adolescents view others in their school environment being respectful to each other, they may feel comfortable turning to others in their school environment for support when they are struggling with stressful life events. Thus, the adolescent may be more inclined toward adaptive coping mechanisms versus externalizing behaviors when they perceive support and respect modeled by the school environment. The lack of significance in the buffering influence of school respect on ethnic discrimination is unexpected. It is possible the positive impact of school respect alone may not be able to significantly negate the deleterious influences of perceived ethnic discrimination. Other potential moderators of ethnic discrimination on Latino adolescents’ risky behaviors should be examined in future research. For example, a strong ethnic identity has previously been found to buffer
the impact of ethnic discrimination on Latino adolescents’ depression (Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007).

Minimal support was found for the third hypothesis regarding gender differences. Initially, gender was significantly correlated to both delinquent behaviors and physical aggression (see Table 1), but did not significantly predict any differences in delinquent behavior once entered into the regressions with the environmental stressors. In regards to the interactions, peer victimization and school respect were more significantly related to physical aggression for boys than girls. Other gender differences did not emerge. Some studies have suggested that gender differences are more pronounced in later adolescence (i.e., Herrenkohl et al., 2009; Kim et al., 2010; Timmermans et al., 2008), and this study only examined 9th and 10th graders. In regards to the significant gender differences that did emerge, it appears that peers and school climate are more significant indicators of physical aggression for Latino boys than girls. This may be because Latino boys may externalize more due to stressful interactions with others (possibly resulting in more aggression), while girls may internalize stressful interactions with peers (possibly resulting in increased risk of depression; Bámaca-Colbert, Plunkett, & Espinosa-Hernández, 2011).

**Limitations and Research Implications**

This thesis will contribute to the body of research regarding how a positive school climate can buffer the influences of environmental stressors on adolescent engagement in high-risk behaviors. However, limitations to the research need to be addressed. First, the data used for this thesis were gathered via self-report questionnaires in a cross-sectional design. A number of factors can potentially confound the results of such types of data: (1)
the variables are merely measuring adolescents’ perceptions of the variables being measured at one point in time, (2) social desirability can influence participants’ responses, and (3) cultural expectations may influence inaccurate reporting of individual and familial characteristics. Due to the sensitive nature of the variables being ascertained, the last two factors (i.e., substance use, delinquency) are especially at risk for being misreported. However, researchers assured the adolescent participants that their information would remain confidential so that they might be more inclined to provide honest answers. Second, causation between any of the study variables cannot be inferred in this type of a study, as the survey data were gathered at only one time point and without manipulation to any study variables. Additionally, the relationships between the variables may be bidirectional (e.g., just as discrimination predicted substance use, substance use might predict discrimination), and so should be interpreted with caution. Third, using hierarchical regression analysis begs the possibility that some variables may be over or underestimated due to correlations that are unaccounted for in the analysis, especially with research that uses highly correlated variables. Using a method such as structural equation modeling may be able to better account for any existing overlap. Fourth, the present thesis collapses multiple Latino groups into one overall Latino group, which ignores any intra-group variations. Lastly, the present sample is limited in its generalizability. The sample is comprised of 9th and 10th grade adolescent Latino youth in Los Angeles, which may limit extrapolation of the present findings to other groups outside Southern California. Also, the present sample is comprised of adolescents who are attending school, whereas some adolescents engaging in high levels of high-risk behaviors may not be in school. Thus, the results may not be as generalizable to
populations with higher levels of engagement in high-risk behaviors.

**Implications**

The findings of the present study have several implications for educators and practitioners. The primary implication is that educational institutions that promote mutual respect within their school can potentially decrease high-risk behaviors (i.e., delinquent behaviors, substance use, physical aggression) and buffer the impact of intrusive parenting and peer victimization on adolescents’ engagement in high-risk behaviors. Promoting respect in school can be cost-effective through (1) educating school personnel (possibly through in-service trainings), (2) creating policies that discourage disrespectful behaviors by students and school personnel, and (3) by highlighting and promoting positive images of the school environment to the students, faculty, and staff so as to increase their perception that the school environment is respectful. Future research should implement policies, programs, or training that promote respect in school in order to assess whether they change adolescents’ engagement in risky behaviors.

The strong and significant relationship between ethnic discrimination and adolescent engagement in high-risk behaviors – well above the other environmental stressors – indicates a need for school counselors and helping professionals to assist Latino youth in learning how to effectively cope with ethnic discrimination. Also, educators could look for ways to decrease ethnic discrimination that occurs at schools. For example, schools could help teachers to identify incidents of ethnic discrimination and how to effectively intervene, or devise a system for adolescents to report to teachers that they are experiencing ethnic discrimination from another adolescent. And finally, parent education programs could teach parents ways to help their offspring deal with
ethnic discrimination in adaptive ways.

Given that peer victimization relates to increased physical aggression (and correlates significantly with substances use and delinquency), school administrations should continue to focus on reducing the incidence of bullying in the school environment. In addition, helping professionals can give Latino youth coping skills to deal with perceived victimization.

Also, practitioners and parent educators should continue to encourage more effective parenting practices, with a particular focus on diminishing intrusive parenting behaviors such as guilt induction, coercion, and love withdrawal. In addition, practitioners and school counselors can help Latino youth reframe intrusive parenting practices into signs of support. For example, if an adolescent is upset because of being grounded by his/her parent, the helping professional could help the youth see that the parent’s action may be due to care and concern for the youth.

In addition, schools could provide more extensive training on how teachers can identify situations where ethnic discrimination, victimization, and negative parenting practices are taking place, and how to effectively intervene when they do occur. Given that some gender differences did emerge in relation to physical aggression, it is possible that programs may need to be tailored differently for Latino boys and girls.
REFERENCES


Begle, A. M., Hanson, R. F., Danielson, C. K., McCart, M. R., Ruggiero, K. J.,
victimization, substance use, and delinquency: Findings from the National Survey

study of Asian Indians in the United States. *Health and Social Work, 27*(3), 175-
183.

Developmental associations between externalizing behaviors, peer delinquency,
drug use, perceived neighborhood crime, and violent behavior in urban

physical aggression. *Social Behavior and Personality, 35*(1), 41-50.
doi:10.2224/sbp.2007.35.1.41

Social Psychology, 63*(3), 452-459. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.63.3.452

Psychosocial predictors of sexual initiation and high-risk sexual behaviors in early

provocation and frequent victimization by peers. *Child Psychiatry & Human


School Health, 81(7), 393-399.


