



Mexican American Youth Patterns of Identity Development: The Role of Post-Secondary Activities, Family Nativity, and Gender

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INTRODUCTION

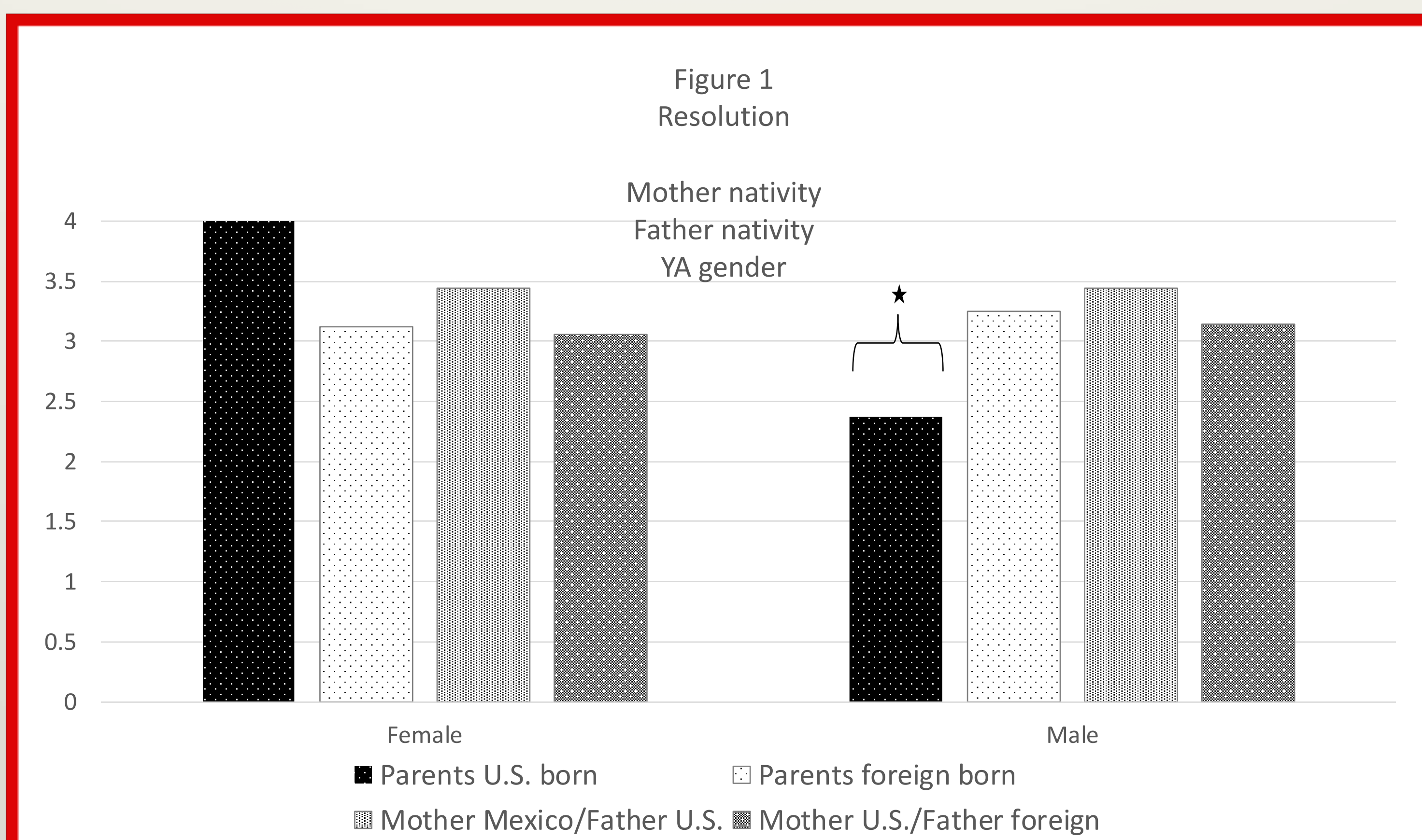
- Mexican Americans are the largest ethnic group within the Latinx category in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017)
 - Exploration of levels of ethnic identity combined with contextual factors (i.e., postsecondary activities, gender, parent nativity)
 - How do these factors influence ethnic identity levels of affirmation, exploration, and resolution?
- Ethnic identity serves as promotive and protective factor for youth (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2009)
- High levels of ethnic identity relates to positive outcomes in higher education and work status (Fulgini et al., 2005)
- Need for understanding what contextual factors relate to higher levels of ethnic identity among Mexican American young adults (YA)

METHODS

- Wave 4 of “Junto’s” Project (Updegraff et al., 2005)
 - N=170 Young adults
 - 51% female, 49% male
- Independent Variables
 - Gender
 - Work status (Not working, PT, FT)
 - School status
 - Parent nativity (mother, father)
- Dependent Variables (Ethnic Identity Scale) (Umaña-Taylor, Yazedjian, & Bamaca-Gomez, 2004)
 - Affirmation (scored 0-4)
 - Exploration (scored 0-4)
 - Resolution (scored 0-4)
- Control Variables
 - Family Socioeconomic status
- Multivariate Analysis of Covariance and Analysis of Variance (SPSS v. 25)

Parent nativity greatly influences youth’s levels of ethnic identity; father’s nativity most salient.

Levels of ethnic identity vary beyond adolescence in young adulthood.



MCNAIR SCHOLARS PROGRAM



RESULTS

- Work and School
 - YA hours worked relate to variation in exploration levels. PT workers had the lowest levels of exploration ($F(2)=3.23, p=.04; Wilks' \Lambda = .890$)
- Parent Nativity
 - YA resolution levels were highest for those with foreign born fathers that were also working PT ($F(2)= 3.3, p=.04 Wilks' \Lambda = .943$). Compared with YA with native born fathers and working FT
 - YA with foreign born fathers had lowest levels of resolution compared to those with U.S born fathers ($F(1)=12.57, p=.001; Wilks' \Lambda = .894$)
 - YA with U.S. born mothers had the lowest levels of resolution ($F(1) = 8.02, p=.005 Wilks' \Lambda = .920$) compared to YA with foreign born mothers
- Gender, Parent Nativity, School and Work
 - YA males with both U.S born parents had the lowest levels of resolution ($F(1)=4.52, p=.04 Wilks' \Lambda = .926$) compared to YA with Foreign born mothers and U.S born fathers (Figure 1)

DISCUSSION

- Summary
 - Parent nativity is the most salient contextual factor that relates to variation in levels of ethnic identity
 - Primarily for fathers nativity and levels of resolution
- Limitations
 - Sample came from a Southwestern U.S., may not generalize to other parts of the U.S.
- Implications
 - Fathers role significantly relates to levels of resolution for YA. Learning how those relationships function for those with high levels of resolution is important
- Future Research
 - During resolution phase of ethnic identity development, attachment between females and foreign born fathers may be influential
 - Further investigate the relationship between foreign born parents and YA