

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHREYER HONORS COLLEGE

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

EXAMINING THE INTERACTION OF PARENT-YOUTH CONFLICT AND
NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT ON LATINO ADOLESCENTS' EDUCATIONAL
ASPIRATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

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SPRING 2018

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements
for baccalaureate degrees
in Psychology and Criminology
with honors in Psychology

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ABSTRACT

In the United States in the last five years, Latino adolescents have academically performed at a rate lower than that of other ethnic minorities on indicators such as GPA and standardized test performance (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). This study focused on the relationship between parent-youth conflict and neighborhood characteristics on educational aspirations and expectations of Latino youth to understand how these factors impact the academic outcomes. This study used data from FAN-C (Understanding Family, Adolescent, and Neighborhood in Context) and PLACES/LUGARES (FAN-C $N = 80$; PLACES/LUGARES $N = 56$) to examine (1) the relationship between parent-youth conflict, as reported by adolescents, with adolescents' educational attainment aspirations and expectations; (2) the relationship between structural neighborhood disadvantage and youth's aspirations for and expectations of academic attainment; (3) the relationship between neighborhood academic resources, as reported by parents, and youth's self-reported educational attainment aspirations and expectations; and (4) whether neighborhood disadvantage and presence of neighborhood academic resources moderate the association between parent-youth conflict and youth's educational aspirations and expectations. Using hierarchical linear regression, results indicated that although the overall model was not statistically significant, the individual relationship between parent-youth conflict and academic aspirations by neighborhood disadvantage was meaningful and may indicate that parent-youth conflict and academic aspirations vary by neighborhood disadvantage ($B = -.507, p = .046$). This may suggest that the association between parent-youth conflict and academic outcomes may differ based on neighborhood context.

Keywords: neighborhood disadvantage, neighborhood resources, parent-youth conflict, academic expectations, academic aspirations, academic outcomes

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the following people for their help and support throughout the writing of this thesis: Dr. Dawn Witherspoon for serving as my thesis supervisor. Dr. Mayra Bámaca-Colbert and the Context and Development Lab for providing assistance and support for this project. Dr. Richard Carlson for serving as my honors advisor. And, Saskia Boggs who provided feedback and was always available to offer advice and support.

Chapter 1

Background and Significance

The Latino population is a quickly growing subgroup of the American population (Camacho-Thompson, Gillen-O'Neel, Gonzales, & Fuligni, 2016). Unfortunately, Latino students lag behind other ethnic groups in high school completion and, on average, fall behind academically (Camacho-Thompson et al., 2016). Among 16-24 year olds in the United States, Latino adolescents have the highest high school drop-out rate at 9.2%, compared to 4.6% of White adolescents (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). Mexican-origin youth, one of the fastest growing Latino ethnic groups in the US, are more likely to perform poorly in school, and have higher dropout rates compared to other ethnic minorities (Bhargava, Bámaca-Colbert, Witherspoon, Pomerantz, & Robins, 2017). Although proportionally fewer Latino youth enroll in or attend two- or four-year colleges than their White counterparts, the number of Latino youth attending college has been increasing steadily since 1993 (Krogstag, 2016). Most youth generally report that they have high educational attainment *aspirations* (i.e., beliefs possessed by the youth regarding how much education they would like to receive), and *expect* that they will complete at least a four-year college degree (Stewart et al., 2007). Because of the quickly-growing presence of the Latino population in the United States, understanding factors that may lead to the discrepancy between academic beliefs and academic performance is imperative.

Academic aspirations differ from academic expectations in that aspirations are often defined as desired level of education, and expectations are defined as the level of education one believes they will achieve. Both types of academic beliefs are important to measure in order to understand how extra-individual factors influence the desires of adolescents as well as how these

factors influence their understanding of their limitations. In the existing literature, aspirations tend to be associated with youth academic performance, while expectations are associated with economic indicators related to further academic achievement (e.g. Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott, 2009; Jencks & Mayer, 1990). Although there are many potential factors that could influence the development of academic aspirations and expectations, the current study focuses on parent-youth conflict and neighborhood context. Based on existing research, neighborhood context can promote or hinder youth's academic outcomes (Bhargava et al., 2017).

Most Latino students feel that academics are important to their parents (Alexander et al., 2017). Latino parents are likely to encourage academic success through high standards and expectations (Alexander et al., 2017). Parent-youth relationship quality can contribute to youth's outcomes through youth's perceptions of parenting and expectations set by the parents (Camacho-Thompson et al., 2016). The parent-adolescent relationship in Latino families unfolds within a broader cultural context. Latino family values tend to reflect family support, solidarity, and loyalty (Padilla, 2016). Familisim plays a central role in an individual's sense of self, which includes values that emphasize family support, loyalty and connectedness, and is a key component of Latino culture (Padilla, 2016). In general, there is limited research on the link between parent-youth conflict and Latino youth educational outcomes. Existing research mainly focuses on Mexican families (e.g. Ayón et al., 2015). The current study expands the literature base by including multiple Latino ethnic groups.

Some existing research examines the link between parent-youth conflict and academics among diverse families (e.g., Dotterer, Lowe, & McHale, 2014); however, very little research focuses solely on Latino youth. By examining parent-youth conflict within Latino families, we are able to add to the literature regarding how negative parent-youth relationships relate to

youth's aspirations and expectations for educational attainment and extend scholarship on youth and families of color. Conflict in general contradicts with Latino values and distinguishes Latino families from other groups, in that Latino families tend to place a higher emphasis on family support than their counterparts from White or Asian backgrounds (Padilla, 2016). Although parent-youth conflict is a normative developmental process, familism values promote a culture that highlights the importance of family networks and protects against conflict (Padilla, 2016).

Latino parenting emphasizes both responsiveness and demandingness (Ayón, Williams, Marsiglia, Ayers, & Kiehne, 2015). Demandingness focuses on parental control, high expectations, and high levels of supervision while responsiveness encompasses warmth, supportiveness, and acceptance (Ayón et al., 2015). Mexican parents, in particular, are more likely to implement authoritative parenting strategies and are more likely to use authoritative practices than White parents (Ayón et al., 2015). Since conflict is not a cultural norm within Latino families, the presence of conflict between parents and adolescents may have implications for academic adjustment, outside of what is developmentally appropriate, such that youth's educational attainment expectations may decrease due to limited perceived familial support. This study will contribute to the literature by examining parent-youth conflict and youth educational outcomes in the context of multiple Latino ethnic groups.

Parent-youth conflict, while most often present in family context, does not happen in a vacuum. Neighborhood context plays a role in the development of kinship ties, and is interconnected with familial values and structure (Coll et al., 1996). In extant literature, neighborhood context is most often operationalized through structural characteristics related to SES or poverty. Disadvantaged neighborhoods are less likely to have resources to support adolescents and families (Bhargava et al., 2017). While researchers have explored the role

neighborhood structure has on youth outcomes, there is limited research on the way specific resources matter for youth's outcomes. The current study seeks to explore the relationship between academic resources available in the neighborhood and youth's educational outcomes.

The current study examines how neighborhood moderates the association between parenting and academic outcomes so it is important to review the significant connections existing in the literature between these different factors. The goal of this study is to understand the pattern of associations between parent-youth conflict, neighborhood context, and Latino youth's academic outcomes. First, we provide the theoretical concepts that guide this study as well as review the empirical evidence available. Next, we examined how the relationship between parent-youth conflict and academics varied by neighborhood context.

Chapter 2

Theory and Conceptual Frameworks

There are multiple theories and conceptual frameworks that inform this study. These theories are both developmental and sociological in nature. They include ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998), the integrative model (Garcia Coll et al., 1996), the family stress theory (Hardaway & Cornelius, 2014; Conger et al., 2000), social disorganization theory (Shaw & McKay, 1942), and the institutional resources model (Jencks & Mayer, 1990).

According to ecological systems theory, multiple systems impact youth development, with the microsystem being the most proximal (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). The microsystem refers to contexts and individuals that have an immediate and direct influence on an individual (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). Microsystems can include the family, or individual family members, the peer group or individual peers, and neighborhoods – each of these contexts has a direct effect on an individual, and various aspects of each microsystem may relate to various individual outcomes. For example, stressors within the family microsystem may directly impact academic success (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). Additionally, increased levels of conflict within the family is related to negative emotional and behavioral responses in adolescents (Merrilees, Geneseo, McCormick, Hsueh, Chou, & Cummings, 2018). Another relevant microsystem is the neighborhood context. Structural characteristics of neighborhoods such as socioeconomic status, percent living below the poverty line, female headed households, and unemployment level, can facilitate the availability and quality of academic resources present in the neighborhood (Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott, 2009). The mesosystem consists of

interactions between different microsystems, such as an interaction between family and neighborhood contexts (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). For example, neighborhoods with higher levels of disadvantage are more likely to be related to other barriers to adolescent success such as family SES, (e.g., parents with inflexible job hours, lack of adequate transportation, lack of child care; Alexander et al., 2017) and less access to educational resources in the community (Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott, 2009). Parenting is informed by neighborhood context, which can be related to youth development through the interaction of microsystems (Dotterer et al., 2014). Supportive parent-youth relationships that exist in the home context can protect against negative influences in other settings, like the school context (Alfaro et al., 2006) or neighborhood.

Garcia Coll and colleagues' integrative framework (1996) highlights how one's social position (e.g., racial-ethnic group, minority status) plays an integral part in youth's outcomes. This expands upon the ecological systems theory by describing important contexts of development for children and families of color. Specifically, Garcia Coll and colleagues suggest how factors like racism, environments, culture, family, and development may be interconnected and shape the experience of minority children differently than their White counterparts (Garcia Coll et al., 1996). Thus, the environment and culture of the environment of families of color impact individual families' processes, including interactions with their children (Garcia Coll et al., 1996). For example, Latino families have demonstrated unique characteristics engrained in their culture (Camacho-Thompson et al., 2016) and the relationship between family members is a part of that identity. Familism, and the emphasis on kin networks, inherently serves in opposition of variables such as conflict. Cultural values are related to the development of youth, and can be related to other factors of influence, such as neighborhood context (Garcia Coll et al., 1996). The

neighborhood context in which a family lives also affects the development of youth (Garcia Coll et al., 1996). Socioeconomic status and neighborhood contexts can shape parenting strategies regarding the education of their children (Bhargava et al., 2017).

As the integrative model focuses on the unique developmental experiences of youth of color, the family stress model focuses on how economic hardship may indirectly affect youth's outcomes. The family stress theory (Hardaway & Cornelius, 2014; Conger et al., 2000) suggests that economic hardship (i.e., a household's income, ability to handle bills, and financial strain) impacts family functioning, specifically the marital relationship, which in turn impacts youth's outcomes (Hardaway & Cornelius, 2014). Specifically, increased stress levels among parents, like with financial hardships, can be related to less supportive parenting, including increased hostility towards the children by the parents (Hardaway & Cornelius, 2014), and in turn may be related to greater parent-youth conflict (Conger et al., 1994). These processes in turn can increase externalizing problems, which are associated with poorer academic performance (Hardaway & Cornelius, 2014).

Both the family and neighborhood matter for youth's academic outcomes. Social disorganization theory (Shaw & McKay, 1942) argues that an increase in adolescent delinquent behaviors may be due to neighborhood disorganization (i.e. social instability and economic decline) eroding neighborhood-based community ties and social organization (i.e. the relationships formed between individuals and social groups; Roche & Leventhal, 2009). Structurally disadvantaged neighborhoods are likely to have higher rates of juvenile delinquency (Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott, 2009) while also limiting social interactions and preventing the formation of community ties (Bhargava et al., 2017). This neighborhood structural disadvantage influences neighborhood disorganization and youth problem behavior (Kingston, Huizinga, &

Elliott, 2009). Specifically, a disruption of positive social processes may be associated with poorer outcomes (Shaw & McKay, 1942). Roche and Leventhal (2009), in exploring the way that family and neighborhood influence can conjointly relate to youth's risky behaviors, found that ineffectual family management is related to more problem behaviors. Further, this association is compounded by neighborhoods with fewer resources, such that when neighborhood disadvantage co-occurs with negative parenting practices, such as lowered parental monitoring or increased criticism, youth outcomes are worse, such as increased engagement in delinquent behaviors and feelings of hopelessness regarding the future (Roche & Leventhal, 2009).

Social disorganization theory highlights how neighborhood disadvantage can be reflected in adolescent outcomes, while the institutional resource model (Jencks & Mayer, 1990) focuses on a specific model of neighborhood influence. In particular, the resource model highlights the perceived presence of resources in the neighborhood and their ability to facilitate development, through provision of positive educational and social environments (Jencks & Mayer, 1990; Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000). Neighborhood resources affect adolescents both directly and indirectly (Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000). Resources can serve as a pathway for neighborhood influence through providing education and promoting healthy development (Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000). Indirectly, resources can influence parent behavior and family functioning (Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000). The presence of resources could also influence development through school readiness and academic achievement outcomes (Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000). Competition, or perceived competition, for resources also can have an influence on adolescent development (Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000). Resources are not evenly distributed in neighborhoods, which can be related to increased competition

between neighbors and peers for scarce resources, and influence the perception of resource availability (Jencks & Mayer, 1990). In more advantaged areas, where there might be more resources that can contribute to child well-being, competition for these resources may still be harmful to the development of adolescents, by enabling comparisons of relative success to their more affluent or successful peers (Jencks & Mayer, 1990). Adolescents tend to judge their own success and status by comparing themselves to their peers, and in more affluent areas, adolescents can view their own abilities unfavorably (Jencks & Mayer, 1990).

Chapter 3

Literature Review

Parent-Youth Relationships

Existing research regarding parent-youth relationships focuses mainly on the degree of warmth demonstrated by parents and the extent that children develop externalizing problems (e.g. Lippold, Hussong, Fosco, & Ram, 2017; Palomar-Lever & Victorio-Estrada, 2016). Adolescents with parents who are both responsive and demanding in their parenting style are more likely to have higher academic achievement than adolescents whose parents are not (Dotterer et al., 2008). In particular, mother's expectations for higher degrees were associated with adolescents also having higher aspirations for academic success (Lazarides, Viljaranta, Aunola, Pesu, & Nurmi, 2016). Parents shape their child's beliefs by providing materials and through indirect communication of their beliefs to their children (Lazarides et al., 2016). Adolescents with affectionate parents tend to demonstrate a higher overall psychological functioning in multiple domains (Patterson, Cheung, Mann, Tucker-Drob, & Harden, 2017). Studies have also shown that a parent's highest educational attainment level is related to their children's aspirations for their own educational futures (Reese et al., 2016). Parental expectations have been shown to have a positive relationship with educational aspirations, and parental expectations may serve as a moderating factor between students' academic abilities and their educational aspirations and attainment (Kirk et al., 2011). The relationship between parents and adolescence is also bidirectional and reciprocal, in that parenting can be child-driven, with parents exhibiting certain strategies as a reaction to the behaviors demonstrated by adolescents (Patterson et al., 2017). For example, parents who demonstrate poor monitoring strategies can be

related to adolescents who engage in delinquent behaviors, which can further result in parents engaging in poor monitoring strategies (Patterson et al., 2017).

Latino Parent-Youth Relationships

Research examining Latino familial context has demonstrated a strong familistic orientation that emphasizes the importance of extended family and social relationships (e.g. Alfaro et al., 2006). In this context, the microsystem is especially important for Latino adolescence (Alfaro et al., 2006). Parental involvement is critical in understanding the success of Latino adolescence (Alexander et al., 2017). Despite being an influential factor in academic performance, Latino parents are less likely to be involved in their adolescent's schooling as compared to other minority families (Alexander et al., 2017). However, this lack of involvement is not due to indifference, but due to other cultural factors (Alexander et al., 2017). Latino immigrant parents may be more hesitant to get involved with their child's education due to inexperience navigating the educational resources or due to feeling like the schools are not attentive to the needs of families (Alexander et al., 2017). Latino families alternatively use high standards and an expressed commitment to advancement through education as a vehicle of academic support (Alexander et al., 2017). Generally, parent's low monitoring of their adolescents has been linked to their adolescent's poorer school functioning (Chien & East, 2012). In Latino families specifically, this has also been linked to lower levels of academic achievement (Chien & East, 2012).

Parent-Youth Conflict

In general, parent warmth tends to decrease during adolescence while hostility increases (Lippold et al., 2017). In a study including White, Latino, and African American students, researchers found that during adolescence, the relationship between parent and adolescence tends

to undergo major changes, resulting in an increased level of independence for the adolescent (Lippold et al., 2017). This changing roles can contribute to parental stress, which may result in more parent-youth conflict as the parent tries to reassert control over the adolescent (Lippold et al., 2017). Frequent exposure to negative parent-child interactions has also been shown to be related to negative emotional and behavioral responses in adolescents (Merrilees et al., 2018).

Academic Outcomes

Although not a variable explicitly of focus in this study, school performance is most commonly examined in regards to academics in the literature. Academic performance can often be related to how far adolescents will go in academics, as well as an indicator of adolescent beliefs about what they can achieve (Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott, 2009). Children who feel supported by parents are less likely to exhibit externalizing problems in their lifetime, and more likely to have a higher school performance and remain in school (e.g., Palomar-Lever & Victorio-Estrada, 2016). Adolescents in areas of higher disadvantage are also more likely to perform poorer on academic indicators (Benner et al., 2017), which may limit or alter adolescents' plans for future education. While a common variable examined in the literature representing academic outcomes, the current study will not be directly examining this variable in order to focus directly on the beliefs of adolescence.

Another variable often examined in the literatures is externalizing behaviors as they related to academic outcomes (e.g. January et al., 2017). Research suggests that externalizing problems are negatively associated with school performance (January et al., 2017), which in turn is related to adolescents' educational attainment beliefs and academic self-concept (Dotterer et al., 2014). Because of the pathway from parent support to educational attainment beliefs, we know that the parent-child relationship is related to youth's academics. Parental expectations and

involvement in their child's academics may influence the child's educational aspirations (Kirk et al., 2011). Academic self-concept was positively associated with student achievement levels (Lazarides et al., 2016). Specifically, the level of importance that the adolescent assigns to a task can indicate their long term academic aspirations (Lazarides et al., 2016). In Latino families specifically, adolescents with high performance in academic settings reported more sources of support at home than adolescents who demonstrated lower academic performance (Alfaro et al., 2006). Latino adolescents with higher levels of familial support also demonstrated higher levels of motivation in academic settings (Alfaro et al., 2006).

While there is clear evidence that the formation of educational attainment aspirations are impacted by family socioeconomic background, social class, peer groups, and numerous other social and cultural resources (Stewart, Stewart, & Simons, 2007), it is also clear that there are some universal consistencies across youth regardless of ethnicity. Adolescents with parents who have lower academic attainment and lower income have also been shown to poorer performance on academic indicators, such as standardized test scores, GPA, attendance, and school engagement (Benner, Boyle & Bakhtiari, 2017). The existing research overall indicates that the parent-youth relationship is related to academic attitudes, however its relationship with aspirations and expectations specifically continues to remain unclear.

Parent-Youth Conflict and Academic Outcomes

Previous studies have shown a correlation between parent-youth relationships and school performance. Supportive and positive relationships with parents are related to adolescent academic success (Benner, Boyle, & Bakhtiari, 2017), including perceived support being positively related to GPA (Dotterer et al., 2014). When adolescents perceived negative parental conflict, girls demonstrated lower academic achievement as compared to boys (Dotterer et al.,

2014). Parents who have negative experiences in the child's school environment, such as language barriers or a lack of familiarity with the US school system, may engage in less encouragement and monitoring of their child's academic performance, which could in turn affect the child's overall academic performance (e.g., GPA; Alexander et al., 2017). Parental involvement in their child's academics at home decreases between middle school and high school, which is developmentally appropriate (Bhargava et al., 2017). Latino parents may encourage academic achievement through greater participation in their child's education, and barriers to participating in youth's education could be perceived as a lack of interest in the adolescent's academics (Alexander et al., 2017). Parents with a high school diploma or less also reacted more harshly (through increased conflict and stricter parenting practices) to poor academic performance from their adolescents than parents with higher levels of education (Dotterer et al., 2008; Alexander, Entwisle, & Bedinger, 1994). Relationships characterized by higher levels of conflict are related to school problems, lower academic self-esteem, and lower GPAs among 7th and 8th graders (Dotterer et al., 2008; Dotterer et al., 2014). Higher parent-youth conflict was also related to lower academic achievement over two years following the onset of conflict (Dotterer et al., 2008).

In other families of color, academic outcomes have been extensively examined in the literature, specifically in African American families. The relationship between African American parents and their adolescent is statistically meaningful for youth's academic outcomes, such that an increase in parent-youth conflict is associated with a decrease in the adolescent's GPA, school bonding, and self-esteem (Dotterer et al., 2014). These characteristics are worth noting because they often are indicators of academic performance and future educational orientations (Dotterer et al., 2014). The current study will expand the literature to other populations of color; however,

it is important to note the relationships between academics and parent-youth conflict present in other populations of color. The current study will expand the literature regarding parent-youth conflict and academics to include the role that neighborhoods have.

Neighborhoods

Research on neighborhood context indicates that structural aspects of neighborhoods can create an environment that is either supportive or hindering to a parent's strategies of involvement (Bhargava et al., 2017). For example, parents living in structurally disadvantaged neighborhoods, which are typically characterized by having low SES, tend to participate in more restrictive parenting strategies, or can have more restrictive work schedules which can impact involvement in their adolescents' education (Bhargava et al., 2017). However, it is also possible that positive social processes are maintained in disadvantaged neighborhoods. For example research suggests that the establishment of informal social control – a type of informal monitoring of the behaviors of neighborhood adolescents by neighborhood adults – may occur in disadvantaged neighborhoods (Bhargava et al., 2017). This is related to the creation of positive social experiences outside of the home and to the use of informal academic resources, such as homework assistance or increased levels of monitoring (Bhargava et al., 2017). Structural characteristics of neighborhoods may impede the formation of educational resources available to youths. Schools that serve impoverished neighborhoods can inherently lack necessary materials (Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott, 2009). Youth of low SES families have poorer performance on academic indicators (Benner, Boyle & Bakhtiari, 2017).

Neighborhoods and Academic Outcomes

Disadvantage. Previous studies show that neighborhoods' structural characteristics and resources to youth can shape the formation of African-American's academic aspirations (Stewart

et al., 2007). Generally, fewer economic resources may increase adolescent difficulty in completing school work at home due to a distracting work environment, limited areas to study, or crowded environments (Alexander et al., 2017). Living in a disadvantaged neighborhood lowered African American adolescent's aspirations of attending college (Stewart et al., 2007). Living in disadvantaged areas is also related to more negative expectations of the future, which can include lowered educational expectations (Stewart et al., 2007). However, earlier studies demonstrated that the overall average level of a school's SES has had little effect on chances of planning to attend college, actually attending college, or graduating from college (Meyer & Jenks, 1989). This set of findings may imply that even though neighborhood structural disadvantage was an important construct of consideration for African American adolescents, a different relationship may exist for other populations of color. While SES may not affect the attainment of students, teenagers who live in high SES neighborhoods attain more schooling than teenagers from similar families in low SES neighborhoods, and living in a high SES neighborhood may be related to high school graduates pursuing more education (Meyer & Jencks, 1989). Adolescents living in poverty may receive signals about the obstacles to academic and employment success, which may negatively affect their future orientation and create feelings of helplessness or hopelessness in regards to their potential success (Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott, 2009). This current study proposes an integration of both neighborhood disadvantage and academic resources to show a more complete picture of the complex context in which Latino youth are living.

Resources. In lower-income neighborhoods, families might be less likely to seek resources in the neighborhood, possibly due to a lack of knowledge regarding the resources available (Bhargava et al., 2017). In neighborhoods comprised primarily of lower-income

families, there can also be fewer resources available than more affluent neighborhoods and the existing resources are of lower quality than neighborhoods of higher socioeconomic status (Bhargava et al., 2017). Wealthier schools can often provide higher quality educational resources that can increase academic aspirations and enhance future successes (Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott, 2009). In neighborhoods with strong social structures, access to resources can support the development of youth and is related to more positive outcomes (Bursik & Grasmick, 1993). However, in some instances the presence of such resources can also be related to worse academic outcomes (Jencks & Mayer, 1990). In all areas of disadvantage, competition for resources can be related to youth engaging in more negative outlooks regarding academic outcomes (Jencks & Mayer, 1990). Neighborhood social structure has also been related to the availability of resources, where concentrated poverty may be related to lower formation of resources to support educational needs (Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott, 2009). Impoverished neighborhoods typically lack stable institutions to serve the residences of that area (Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott, 2009). The presence of higher quality educational resources is also associated with greater rates of academic aspirations, and adolescents may be encouraged to pursue future education (Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott, 2009). This could negatively impact academic aspirations and expectations for adolescents in all areas of disadvantage.

Parent-Youth Conflicts and Neighborhoods

There is limited scholarship examining the link between neighborhoods and parent-youth conflict. The current literature suggests that there is a relationship between parenting and context. Neighborhoods and shared environments can influence positive parenting behaviors, impacting parents to be adaptive to their neighborhood context (Patterson et al., 2017). From the existing literature, evidence suggests that compared to non-immigrant Mexican parents in

Mexico, Mexican American parents engaged more in authoritarian parenting strategies (Varela, Vernberg, Sanchez-Sosa, Riveros, Mitchell, & Mashunkashev, 2004). This finding indicates that this trend may be a response to contextual stressors, like lower income neighborhoods (Varela et al., 2004). Bámaca, Umaña-Taylor, Shin, & Alfaro (2005) demonstrate that parenting in relation to academic outcomes differ depending on neighborhood context. In high-risk neighborhoods – defined as areas with lower household income, lower levels of education, and fewer economic resources – higher levels of restrictive control were associated with higher grades, whereas in low risk neighborhoods, greater levels of parental control were associated with lower grades (Bámaca et al., 2005). This could be due at least in part to the interpretations adolescents have of their parents' behavior in relation to their environmental context (Bámaca et al., 2005). In low-risk environments, higher levels of control by parents were seen by adolescents as a restriction of their autonomy and led to a decrease in trust and acceptance of the relationship (Bámaca et al., 2005). Conversely, in high-risk neighborhoods, higher levels of parental control were viewed with higher levels of trust and acceptance by the adolescents (Bámaca et al., 2005). Ineffective management practices are also more harmful with higher levels of neighborhood disadvantage (Roche & Leventhal, 2009). Whereas neighborhood social resources can serve as a buffer for ineffective parenting (Roche & Leventhal, 2009). Social support from family and peers could reduce parental stress, in areas of high disadvantage, and reduce the negative effects of parental stress on the children (Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000; Conger et al., 1994).

Neighborhoods on Parent-Youth Conflict and Academic Outcomes

There is robust empirical evidence that higher levels of conflict in the home impairs adolescent academic achievement across cultures and geographical context (i.e., urban/rural setting; Phillippo, 2016). What is unclear, however, is the extent to which the specific

neighborhood context plays a role in the relationship between parent-youth conflict and academics. For example, parenting varies across cultures, and the goals and values of academic socialization have an impact on parenting (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Parenting also depends on additional factors, including the environmental context where the parent-youth interaction takes place (Beyers et al., 2003). Parental expectations also seem to be affected by lower socioeconomic status and to mediate the relationship between economic disadvantage and later college enrollment (Kirk et al., 2011). Therefore, it is necessary to examine the complex interplay of parent-youth relationship and the neighborhood context upon adolescents' educational beliefs. Stressors in each of these key socializing contexts may cumulatively impact Latino youth's developmental competencies. The current study will add to that literature by providing additional knowledge regarding the specific context of Latino adolescents that influence educational aspirations and expectations.

The current study extends such previous research by examining the adolescent's educational aspirations and expectations in the context of a dimension of the parent-youth relationship as well as within the neighborhood context. The existing body of literature extensively discusses the role of psychological well-being in the pathway between academic performance and parent-youth conflict. The current study will further explore the relationship between academics and parent-youth conflict while considering the neighborhood context of the adolescents.

Covariates

Socioeconomic Status. Low SES is related to poorer performance on academic indicators (Benner, Boyle & Bakhtiari, 2017). Parent education, which can often be an indicator of SES, can be related to academic outcomes in youth, in that lower educational attainment levels of

parents can be related to lower levels of educational attainment in their children (Benner, Boyle & Bakhtiari, 2017).

Age. In addition to socioeconomic status, age can have an effect on youth's educational outcomes. As students transition from middle school to high school, their grades tend to decline and motivation and engagement in school tends to decrease (Benner, Boyle & Bakhtiari, 2017).

Gender. In the last decade, girls, when compared to boys, tend to earn higher grades, have higher levels of engagement, higher involvement in academic and extracurricular activities, higher levels of motivation and educational aspirations (Lazarides et al., 2016), and place a greater value on school (Benner, Boyle & Bakhtiari, 2017).

Chapter 4

Current Study

The goals of the current study is to determine the link between parent-youth conflict and adolescent academics and understand how neighborhood structural characteristics and academic resources moderate that link. This study will include both academic aspirations and expectations in order to understand how parenting and neighborhood are related to each academic outcome separately. The specific research questions of interest include:

1. What is the relationship between adolescent-reported levels of parent-youth conflict and their self-reported educational attainment aspirations and expectations?

We hypothesize that parent-youth conflict will be negatively related to youth's educational attainment aspirations and expectations. Previous research shows that parent-youth conflict is associated with lower academic performance, which can often be an indicator of further academic achievement (Dotterer et al., 2014). We believe that our results will reflect a similar trend, such that that parent-youth conflict will be related to lower academic outcomes.

2. What is the relationship between structural neighborhood disadvantage and youth's aspirations for and expectations of academic attainment?

We hypothesize that structural neighborhood disadvantage will be negatively associated with youth's educational attainment aspirations and expectations, such that greater disadvantage will be linked to lower aspirations and expectations. Among African American adolescents, neighborhood structural characteristics are negatively related to student's academic aspirations (Stewart et al., 2007); we postulate a similar association for Latino adolescents. Lower disadvantage neighborhoods are associated with a higher chance of pursuing higher education

(Jencks & Mayer, 1990), which could contribute to adolescents having higher aspirations and expectations. We expect that neighborhood disadvantage will be linked with higher academic aspirations. Youth in disadvantaged neighborhoods may view academics as a way of moving out of disadvantage, and hope to achieve further academic pursuits as a way of accomplishing this. (Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott, 2009). We also expect that higher levels of disadvantage will be related to lower expectations. Youth in disadvantaged neighborhoods might recognize factors limiting their ability to pursue higher education, and view barriers such as financial accessibility as a limiting factor in their ability to achieve higher education (Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott, 2009).

3. What is the relationship between neighborhood academic resources, as reported by parents, and the youth's educational attainment aspirations and expectations?

We hypothesize that neighborhood academic resources will be positively related to youth's educational attainment aspirations and expectations. A lack of neighborhood resources may be related to greater adolescent difficulty in completing school work and lower academic performance (Alexander, 2017). We believe that this will be a contributing factor to how adolescents perceive what they can achieve academically, and result in lower academic aspirations and expectations.

4. Does neighborhood disadvantage and the presence of neighborhood academic resources moderate the association between parent-youth conflict and youth's educational attainment beliefs (i.e., aspirations and expectations)?

We believe that neighborhood indicators will moderate the relationship between parent-youth conflict and youth's educational attainment beliefs. However, given the lack of existing

research probing this pattern of associations in comparable populations, this research question is exploratory in nature; we do not have any specific hypotheses about the pattern of results.

Chapter 5

Methods

Sample

Participants for this study were drawn from the Latino Families, Adolescents, and Neighborhoods in Context (FAN-C) study and the PLACES/LUGARES study. Both studies use mixed methods and multi-informant research designs to examine how place-based (e.g. neighborhood) and cultural factors impacted the outcomes of Latino families in the Northeastern region of the United States.

Adolescent FAN-C participants completed study protocols in English, and PLACES/LUGARES adolescents completed study protocols in either Spanish or English (80.6% completed in English). Participants included 80 adolescents from Latino FAN-C, ranging in age from 11-17 ($M = 13.43$, $SD = 2.011$, 50.9% female). Of these participants 44.3% were Puerto Rican descent, 22.8% were Dominican descent, 20.3% were of Mexican descent, and 12.7% came from other Caribbean, Central, and South American countries.

Participants also included 56 adolescents from PLACES/LUGARES, ranging in age from 11-17 ($M = 13.71$, $SD = 2.078$, 50.9% female). Of these participants 50% identified as Puerto Rican, 10.7% identified as Dominican, 8.9% identified as Mexican, and 17.9% came from other Caribbean, Central, and South American countries.

Ten adolescents participated in both FAN-C and PLACES/LUGARES. Only data from one project was used; adolescent data was randomly used in these instances.

Procedure

The projects were approved by the Institutional Review Board. Caregivers provided consent and permission for their youth to participate. Youth provided assent once caregiver

permission was granted. Participants were recruited through flyers and referrals from existing participants (both caregivers and adolescents). Interested participants called the Project Hotline to get information about the study and to be screened for participation. For both studies, participants had to identify as Latino or Hispanic during the initial telephone screening. Adolescents had to be between the ages of 11 and 17, and caregivers had to be older than 18 years of age. To be eligible for Latino FAN-C, adolescents were required to be able to speak and read in English. Parents could speak or read in either English or Spanish. To be eligible for PLACES/LUGARES, adolescents and parents could either speak or read in English or Spanish. Of the adolescents who participated in PLACES/LUGARES, 80.6% participated in English. Of the parents, 20% participated in English. Both copies were then compared for accuracy. The current project uses both adolescent and primary caregiver data from each study. After eligibility was determined, interested families were scheduled for a data collection date. Data collection lasted for approximately two hours; an appropriate time-of-day meal was provided. All measures and protocols were translated to Spanish and back-translated to English. Data from the FAN-C and PLACES/LUGARES studies were combined for the current study.

Measures

Parent-Youth Conflict—*Disagreement Scale*. Parent-youth conflict was assessed using the Disagreement scale that was developed by Smetana (1988) and modified by Bámaca (Bámaca-Colbert, Umaña-Taylor, Gayles, 2012). This 15-item measure assessed the frequency and intensity of several domains of conflicts within the parent-youth relationship (e.g., friends, physical appearance, and chores). The scale was adapted to include items perceived to be specific to Mexican American families, such as putting family first (Bámaca-Colbert, Umaña-Taylor, Gayles, 2012). Responses were measured on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) - 5

(most of the time). Higher scores on this scale indicated higher levels of conflict between parents and youths. Sample items included chores, schoolwork, dating, and family obligations. On average, adolescents reported high levels of conflict ($M = 4.41$, $SD = 1.434$, $\alpha = .78$). For participants in Latino FAN-C, adolescents reported conflict with their mother ($M = 2.77$, $SD = .90$, $\alpha = .90$). In PLACES/LUGARES, conflict was reported from the primary caregiver. Data was taken from the adolescent reports. Because our analyses are focusing on the academic outcomes of the adolescents and their own aspirations and expectations, we did not include parent-youth conflict as reported by the parents. This scale demonstrated good reliability ($\alpha = .90$).

Neighborhoods—*Neighborhood Resources Measure*. Neighborhoods were examined in the context of parent's perception of academic resources available which will be taken from the institutional resources measure from the Parents' questionnaires (Witherspoon, Hagelskamp & Hughes, 2005). The Neighborhood Resources Measure consisted of 24 items assessing whether caregivers knew of its presence in the neighborhood and if they used it. From the 24 items, 8 items were considered academic resources and used in this study. They were selected by two independent coders based on the classification that the items may provide educational benefits, peer or adult support, or were relevant to youths. Items that were included were schools, day care, community center, Boys and Girls Clubs, museums, libraries, adult education programs, and after school programs. Parents were first asked if the resource was in the neighborhood. They could respond with "Yes," "No," or "DK" (Don't Know). The variable was recoded so that all answers recorded as "Don't Know" were coded as "No," indicating that the resource was not present in the neighborhood. This was done to recognize that even if the resource was present in the neighborhood, the family was unaware of its presence and therefore

unused. If the resource was present, participants (i.e., parents) were then asked if they had used the resource, to which they could respond with “Yes” or “No.” If they answered “Yes,” they were then asked how frequent they used the facility. Only parent-report of this variable was collected. Of the seven possible educational resources measured in this study, a proportion was calculated to determine the available resources in the neighborhood as perceived by the parents ($M = .46$, $SD = .28$). This resulted in a range from 0 to 1, where lower values indicated that families used fewer resources than available, and higher numbers indicated more resources available in the area being used.

Neighborhood Risk/Disadvantage Index. Participant addresses were geocoded at the census tract level. Information was drawn from the American Community Survey 5-year estimates from the time period immediately prior to the start of data collection (2010 for Latino FAN-C and 2015 for PLACES/LUGARES). The census information was accurate for the time the data was collected and reflects the experiences recorded in data collection; however the census information might have changed following the completion of data collection. Information for five key aspects of these census tracts were drawn from the decennial census and standardized to create a mean score for each tract, which characterizes each tract’s neighborhood disadvantage (i.e., neighborhood disadvantage index). These five items are residential turnover in the last year ($M = 45.87$, $SD = 29.42$), percent of female headed households ($M = 29.58$, $SD = 11.683$), percent of the population over 25 years without a high school diploma ($M = 25.54$, $SD = 12.07$), percent of the population 16 years and over unemployed in the civilian labor force ($M = 11.41$, $SD = 8.12$), and percent of the population who fall below the poverty line ($M = 34.08$, $SD = 17.95$). The overall disadvantage score was constructed by standardizing indicators ($M = 0$, $SD = 1.00$) and taking the mean of all five. Disadvantage scores ranged from

-1.46 to 1.30, with lower standardized scores indicating less disadvantage, and higher scores indicating higher level of disadvantage.

Academics— *Educational Attainment Aspiration and Expectation Beliefs.* Expectation and Aspirations of adolescents were both measured using single-item measures and taken from the adolescent data set. Adolescents were asked to indicate how far they wanted to go in school (i.e., aspirations) and how far they believed they would go in school (i.e., expectations). This was measured on a 1 (less than high school degree) -7 (advanced, post-master degree) scale. Higher scores indicated greater educational attainment. Participants also had the option to include that they did not know how far they wanted to go in school. This was coded as missing data for analyses. For aspirations, the youth reported that on average they wanted to attend a four-year college ($M = 4.83, SD = 1.53$); 13% ($N = 11$) of the adolescents “did not know” how far in school they wanted to go. For expectations, youth reported that they expected to attend and complete a four year college ($M = 4.76, SD = 1.56$); 11% ($N = 9$) of youth “did not know” how far in school they expected to go.

Chapter 6

Plan of Analyses

For all scales, factor structure was determined using an exploratory factor analysis. Cronbach's alpha was used to establish scale reliability (Cronbach, 1951). Preliminary analyses included descriptive statistics as well as psychometrics to construct scales. Substantive analyses included hierarchical regressions to examine the unique associations among the constructs of interest. There are two, independent models performed on each of the dependent variables of youth's educational aspirations and youth's educational expectations— first for the independent variable of neighborhood disadvantage and second for the variable of neighborhood resources – were examined. A fifth model was performed including both neighborhood variables. For all models, the regression model proceeded in four steps. Step 1 included youth demographics (i.e., socioeconomic status, age, ethnicity, and gender). All non-significant covariates (at the bivariate correlation level) were excluded; therefore, adolescent gender and ethnicity were not included as covariates. The second step added parent-youth conflict, as reported by the adolescents. The third step included the neighborhood variables (i.e., neighborhood structural disadvantage and perceived academic resources). Step 4 included the interaction between each neighborhood variable and parent youth conflict.

Chapter 7

Results

Analyses were conducted in SPSS v. 24. Table 1 indicates the correlations between the measures. Preliminary analysis indicate that educational aspirations and expectations are highly correlated. Neither educational aspirations nor expectations were related to parent-youth conflict. However, neighborhood disadvantage was negatively correlated with parent-youth conflict ($B = -.22, p \leq .05$). Neighborhood disadvantage also varied by ethnicity. Specifically, mean differences in neighborhood disadvantage by ethnic group were probed using a one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), $F(3) = 2.62 (p = .054)$. The results of this test indicated that compared to their counterparts, families of Puerto Rican descent lived in less disadvantaged neighborhoods, whereas families of Dominican descent lived in more disadvantaged neighborhoods. However, when ethnicity was included in the overall hierarchical regression model, it did not contribute to variance in the outcomes of interest. Gender differences in variables of interest were also probed. Using an independent samples T-Test, gender was found to be unrelated to the outcomes of interest ($B = -.43, SE = .29, p = .14$), so it was removed from the regression models. Adolescent age was also not significantly related to adolescent aspirations or expectations ($B = -.01, SE = .07, p = .91$).

The overall model testing parent-youth conflict, neighborhood disadvantage, and the interaction of these variables on adolescent aspirations was not statistically significant. However, individual indicators were related to educational attainment beliefs. It is important to acknowledge that, neighborhood disadvantage was found to be trending towards significance in relation to youth's aspirations ($B = 1.003, p = .080$), suggesting that neighborhood disadvantage

may be positively related to youth's beliefs about how far they want to go in school. No other models yielded significant results. The relationships between covariates, parent-youth conflict, neighborhoods, and the interaction with academic aspirations and expectations are presented in Tables 2-7.

Even though the overall model testing the association between parent-youth conflict and academic aspirations, moderated by neighborhood disadvantage, was not statistically significant ($R^2 = .046, p = .287$), the interaction between parent youth conflict and neighborhood disadvantage in relation to youth's aspirations was statistically significant ($B = -.507, p = .046$). The interaction was probed using simple slope testing. We looked at the predictor and outcome variables through the moderating variable. The slopes were probed at the mean, +1 SD, and -1 SD for neighborhood disadvantage. Probing indicated that the slopes were not significantly different from 0, which limits our ability to make inferences about the results. However, taken together, this evidence suggests that the association between parent-youth conflict and youth's outcomes does not vary meaningfully based on levels of neighborhood structural disadvantage. This interaction is graphed in Figure 1. However, trends suggest that in areas characterized by very high levels of disadvantage (i.e., 2.00), higher levels of parent-youth conflict were associated with lower academic aspirations. For areas with low disadvantage, higher levels of parent-youth conflict were related to higher academic aspirations.

Chapter 8

Discussion

The aim of this study was to examine (1) the relationship between parent-youth conflict and adolescent's educational attainment aspirations and expectations, (2) the relationship between structural neighborhood disadvantage and adolescents' educational attainment aspirations and expectations, (3) the relationship between neighborhood academic resources and youth's educational attainment aspirations and expectations and (4) if neighborhood disadvantage and presence of neighborhood academic resources moderate the association between parent-youth conflict and youth's educational attainment beliefs.

This study characterized neighborhoods using two broad characteristics—structural characteristics and neighborhood resources. Neighborhood resources, such as academic resources, boys and girls clubs, and community centers were also used to characterize neighborhoods. This study contributed to the existing literature by examining the relationship of these characteristics separately on academic indicators. While there is existing research examining the association of neighborhood structural characteristics (i.e., Stewart et al., 2007; Alexander et al., 2017) and neighborhood resources (i.e. Bhargava et al., 2017; Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott, 2009) on academic outcomes individually, in this study, we examined the relationships between academic outcomes and parent-youth conflict as moderated by neighborhood characteristics.

This study helps fill in gaps in the literature regarding the relationship between parenting and youth academics by specifically focusing on parent-youth conflict and adolescent aspirations and expectations. Previous studies have indicated a relationship between parent-youth

relationships and adolescent academic success (e.g.: Benner et al., 2017; Dotterer et al., 2018; Dotterer et al., 2014; Alexander et al., 2017). In this study, we did not find an association between parent-youth conflict and adolescent aspirations and expectations. This indicates that while the parent-youth relationship matters in terms of measurable academic characteristics, such as GPA and standardized test scores (Dotterer et al., 2014), it may not be as important for the academic attitudes of Latino adolescents. There is also the possibility of a floor effect being represented in the data. Data indicated that conflict was reported at generally low levels, indicating that our data could be skewed and that it lacks variability in the reported levels of conflict. This could be due to the size of the sample, with the possibility of more variability being present with a larger sample. Additionally, youth may have under-reported conflict. The lack of association between conflict and academic beliefs could also indicate that the indicators we used to measure conflict were not related to academic outcomes, and that other indicators could be more relevant for this population. For example, the present indicator (i.e., frequency of conflict) may not be as relevant to academic beliefs as the intensity of conflict. Further study is necessary to determine whether frequency of conflict differs from intensity of conflict in relation to academic outcomes.

Likewise, this study also indicated that neighborhood structural characteristics and academic resources were not associated with adolescent aspirations and expectations. This finding contradicts previous research that showed that neighborhood structural characteristics were associated with adolescent expectations (Stewart et al., 2007). This could indicate that while other ethnic populations may be impacted by the neighborhood structural characteristics, there could be additional cultural values specific to Latino adolescents that may serve as a protective factor (Stewart et al., 2007). Further research would be needed to understand the

differences between Latino populations and other populations of color in regards to academic outcomes. The data also indicated that neighborhood disadvantage was reported with an extreme peak. This could indicate that there is a lack of variability in the data. Families were recruited primarily from low-SES and otherwise disadvantaged neighborhoods, which could have resulted in a lack of variability with respect to neighborhood disadvantage. This also contradicts with previous research that showed that more academic resources present in the neighborhood had a positive relationship with academic aspirations (Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott, 2009). The research performed by Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott (2009) defined resources as social processes and delinquency, whereas the current study defined resources as additional academic and community institutions present in the neighborhood, which could account for the difference in findings. Our study looked exclusively at resources that were related to academics, however it is possible that other resources available in the neighborhood that were not included in our study could have a varying relationship on academic outcomes than what was determined. For example, resources that focus on delinquent behaviors could be correlated to academic outcomes through externalizing behaviors (Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott, 2009). Further research would be needed to determine the differences in relationship.

The current study failed to demonstrate any association between parent-youth conflict, neighborhood structural characteristics and academic resources and adolescent's academic beliefs. However, the interaction of parent-youth conflict and neighborhood disadvantage on youth's aspirations was statistically significant. This finding potentially demonstrates tenets of the ecological systems theory. In particular, this supports the theory that the interaction of microsystems is related to youth development, and that the presence of mesosystems is important to consider in relation to academic development. Parenting is informed by neighborhood context

(Dotterer, 2008) and our findings align with previous research that looked at the interacting contexts of home and neighborhood contexts. Our findings show that while not statistically significant independently, the interaction of parent-youth conflict and neighborhood disadvantage is related to youth academic aspirations, demonstrating the importance of the mesosystem.

Also, this interaction suggests that while parent-youth conflict and neighborhood structural characteristics may not be uniquely associated with academic beliefs, the co-action of these important contextual variables does impact academic beliefs. Specifically, the level of parent-youth conflict matters more for academic aspirations and expectations in different neighborhood contexts. We found that in areas with high disadvantage, higher levels of parent-youth conflict result in lower academic aspirations. For areas with low disadvantage, higher levels of parent-youth conflict were related to higher academic aspirations. Research has indicated that parental involvement in academics is an indicator of academic success in Latino families (Alexander et al., 2017). Parent-youth conflict in areas of high disadvantage could be interpreted as disinterest in the adolescent's success, resulting in adolescent's feelings of inadequacy in terms of academics. Parent-youth conflict has also been shown to be related to higher levels of externalizing behaviors (Smokowski, 2017), which in turn is related to academic attainment beliefs (Dotterer et al., 2014). Academic aspirations have also been shown to be related to family socioeconomic background, social class, and other social and cultural resources (Steward, 2007). In areas of lower disadvantage, where adolescents have higher levels of SES and higher quality of support (Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott, 2009), higher levels of parent-youth conflict could serve as a motivating factor. Adolescents in higher areas of disadvantage could also have a more realistic understanding of how far they will be able to go in school, in terms of

what they can afford and their own academic performance, such that higher levels of parent-youth conflict in these areas would further reinforce the limits on academic achievement (Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott, 2009).

Previous research indicated that parenting was dependent on factors like environmental context (Beyers et al., 2003). The finding of the current study aligns with previous research, reaffirming the argument that the parent-child relationship varies by context.

Future Directions

While this study focused on the relationship parenting and neighborhood variables had on adolescent aspirations and expectations independently, this study did not explore the differences between adolescents' aspirations and expectations. Examining the differences between the aspirations and expectations could help determine the effect of parenting and neighborhoods on the gap between desired academic achievement and what is expected for them to attain. This study focused on aspirations and expectations as separate variables, however studying the difference in aspirations and expectations could provide insight to what factors contribute to any potential difference between these academic outcomes. This study did not examine if there were any differences in and adolescent's aspirations and expectations. However, determining if there was a difference between outcomes, and how that difference changed by parent-youth conflict and neighborhood context, could provide insight regarding why there might be a difference in outcomes. Kingston, Huizinga, & Elliott (2000) hypothesized that adolescents in poverty might have economic barriers limiting their opportunity for future advancement through legitimate means, such as higher education. By examining the differences in academic outcomes we could understand the role that variables other than academics have in determining future academic success.

This study also mainly used reported data on conflict with the mother. Further areas of study could focus on conflict with both mother and father in order to determine if gender of the parent matters in terms of the relationship between parent-youth conflict and on adolescent academic outcomes, as well as exploring if the relationship with gender of the parent and gender of the adolescent matters as well. While this study did use conflict reported with both mothers and fathers, this study did not examine the role that parent gender played on conflict. Research conducted by Padilla et al. (2016) demonstrated that the mothers and fathers may have different understandings of cultural values and that these differences could have different relationships on youth outcomes. By examining the parent-youth conflict as moderated by gender, we could further understand the parent-youth relationship.

Chapter 9

Limitations and Conclusion

This study had strengths and limitations. Strengths included the emphasis on Latino adolescents as the focus of this study and the availability of information for each neighborhood. There were also limitations on this study. Specifically, this study lacked generalizability, variance in sample location, and in how reported conflict was measured.

This study focused exclusively on Latino adolescents. This allowed for specific conclusions to be drawn regarding this population. Most of the existing research regarding academic outcomes focuses on African-American youth or minority populations in general (e.g. Dotterer et al., 2014). While focusing solely on Latino adolescents provides us with a more exact understanding of Latino adolescents, it also limits the generalizability of this study to other ethnic minorities. Further study would be needed to understand how Latino adolescents vary compared to other ethnic minorities.

Both populations used for this study were taken from the same general area. This allowed for specific census information to be collected regarding each neighborhood, and for comparisons to be made between neighborhoods. Participants in both Latino FAN-C and PLACES/LUGARES were taken from overlapping residential neighborhoods, which allowed for a larger data set to be used in the current study.

This study was limited by the population that the sample was drawn from. Data for this sample were taken from two separate studies in which participants were recruited from a single urban area in Pennsylvania. Data collection for Latino FAN-C took place prior to PLACES/LUGARES. Because data was collected at different times, this could have resulted in

inherit, historical and/or contextual differences between data collection that could have created differences between the samples. Preliminary analysis indicated that when examining just participants from FAN-C and just participants from PLACES/LUGARES produced different results. This could have confused the results and produced varying results. Because participants were drawn from a larger urban area, this limits the generalizability to rural areas and to other urban areas throughout the United States. This study would be applicable to other urban areas with a similar level of disadvantage composition and a similar racial/ethnic makeup, however rural areas may not have the applicability of disadvantage and resources. While overlapping participants were removed from one study, the variability amongst participants was limited. Analysis of the relationship between ethnicity and disadvantage showed that there were differences in disadvantage by ethnicity. Families of Puerto Rican descent experienced overall less neighborhood disadvantage, whereas families of Dominican descent experienced higher levels of neighborhood disadvantage. However, this data could be skewed because of the lack of variance in neighborhoods observed in this study. Because many of the participants in this study came from the same neighborhoods, it is possible that there is a nesting effect and that the difference in disadvantage comes from a concentrated area of a given ethnic population. Further testing on a larger sample would be needed to determine if this finding is consistent to other areas. There could also be a nesting effect in the amount of resources present. Given that there was overlap in where participants were drawn from, the indication of higher resources might be due to data being collected from the same area.

This study is also limited in that parent-youth conflict data was drawn mostly from reported conflict with the mother and did not explore differences in conflict between the mother and father. Another limitation for this study is that parent-youth conflict data was taken solely

from the adolescent reporting and did not include parental reports of conflict. This could have resulted in a difference in reported level of conflicts for a household. This study also mainly used data from the adolescent on the conflict with their mothers. Comparing levels of conflict reported with the mothers and fathers of the adolescents might produce different results. Previous research has indicated that parenting and developmental outcomes is dependent on parent gender (Bámaca et al., 2005), and that parents' attitudes towards the socialization of their children varies by child's gender (Valera et al., 2004). By reviewing the differences between mother reported conflict and father reported conflict, we might see differences in the level of conflict, and therefore differences in our outcomes.

This study focused on how the association between parent-youth conflict and academic outcomes varied by neighborhood context. More specifically, we looked at how neighborhood structural characteristics and academic resources moderated the relationship between parent-youth conflict and academic aspirations and expectations for Latino adolescents. While a rapidly growing population in the United State, the current literature lacks research on this population specifically. This study adds to the literature by providing specific insight to Latino adolescents and will highlight pathways involved with the formation of adolescent academic outcomes and help shape the narrative of Latino adolescents living in urban populations.

Appendix A

Tables

Table 1. *Descriptives and Correlations for Measures*

| | Youth Aspirations | Youth Expectations | Parent/Youth Conflict | Neighborhood Disadvantage | Neighborhood Resources |
|------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Aspirations | 1 | .73** | .03 | -.052 | -.12 |
| Expectations | - | 1 | .04 | -.11 | -.07 |
| Parent-Youth Conflict | - | - | 1 | -.22* | .09 |
| Neighborhood Disadvantage | - | - | - | 1 | .18* |
| Neighborhood resources | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| M | 4.97 | 4.86 | 2.36 | 0.00 | .46 |
| SD | 1.52 | 1.57 | .92 | 1.00 | .28 |

Note: † $p = .1$, * $p = .05$, ** $p = .01$, *** $p = .001$.

Table 2. *Model for the Interaction of Parent-Youth Conflict and Neighborhood Disadvantage with Adolescent Academic Aspirations*

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
|---------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Constant | 4.23(.92)*** | 4.08(1.01)*** | 4.14(1.03)*** | 4.67(1.05)*** |
| Child's Age | .06(.07) | .06(.07) | .06(.07) | .02(.07) |
| Parent Youth Conflict | | .06(.16) | .05(.17) | -.02(.17) |
| Neighborhood Disadvantage | | | -.07(.20) | 1.00(.57) [†] |
| Interaction | | | | -.51(.25)* |
| R ² | .007 | .008 | .009 | .046 |

Note: The overall model was not significant, [†] $p = .1$, * $p = .05$, ** $p = .01$, *** $p = .001$.

Table 3. *Model for the Interaction of Parent-Youth Conflict and Neighborhood Disadvantage with Adolescent Academic Expectations*

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| Constant | 3.53(.95)*** | 3.5(1.03)*** | 3.69(1.04)*** | 3.83(1.07)*** |
| Child's Age | .10(.07) | .10(.07) | .10(.07) | .09(.07) |
| Parent-Youth Conflict | | .01(.17) | -.03(.17) | -.05(.17) |
| Neighborhood Disadvantage | | | -.21(.19) | .13(.55) |
| Interaction | | | | -.16(.25) |
| R ² | .019 | .019 | .030 | .034 |

Note: The overall model was not significant. † $p = .1$, * $p = .05$, ** $p = .01$, *** $p = .001$.

Table 4. *Model for the Interaction of Parent-Youth Conflict and Neighborhood Resources with Adolescent Academic Aspirations*

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
|--|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| Constant | 4.38(.93)*** | 4.25(1.00)*** | 4.41(1.02)*** | 3.9(1.11)*** |
| Child's Age | .05(.07) | .05(.07) | .05(.07) | .04(.07) |
| Parent-Youth Conflict | | .06(.16) | .07(.16) | .33(.28) |
| Neighborhood Resources Interaction | | | -.51(.51) | 1.03(1.42) |
| R ² | .004 | .005 | .014 | -.66(.57) |

Note: The overall model was not significant. † $p = .1$, * $p = .05$, ** $p = .01$, *** $p = .001$.

Table 5. *Model for the Interaction of Parent-Youth Conflict and Neighborhood Resources with Adolescent Academic Expectations*

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
|------------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| Constant | 3.58(.95)*** | 3.42(1.03)*** | 3.52(1.05)*** | 2.97(1.13)** |
| Child's Age | .097(.07) | .1(.07) | .1(.07) | .09(.07) |
| Parent-Youth Conflict | | .07(.16) | .07(.17) | .382(.29) |
| Proportion of Resources Used | | | -.28(.52) | 1.53(1.45) |
| Interaction | | | | -.79(.6) |
| R ² | .016 | .018 | .020 | .035 |

Note: The overall model was not significant. † $p = .1$, * $p = .05$, ** $p = .01$, *** $p = .001$.

Table 6. *Model for the Interaction of Parent-Youth Conflict and Neighborhood Resources and Disadvantage with Adolescent Academic Aspirations*

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Constant | 4.225(.935)** * | 4.084(1.009)** * | 4.260(1.040)** * | 4.260(1.049)** * |
| Child's Age | .058(.068) | .058(.068) | .058(.069) | .058(.071) |
| Parent-Youth Conflict | | .062(.163) | .063(.169) | .062(.171) |
| Resources Available | | | -.403(.542) | -.404(.554) |
| Neigh Disadvantage | | | -.034(.204) | -.037(.350) |
| Interaction | | | | .002(.226) |
| R ² | .007 | .008 | .014 | .014 |

Note: The overall model was not significant. † $p = .1$, * $p = .05$, ** $p = .01$, *** $p = .001$.

Table 7. *Model for the Interaction of Parent-Youth Conflict and Neighborhood Resources and Disadvantage with Adolescent Academic Expectations*

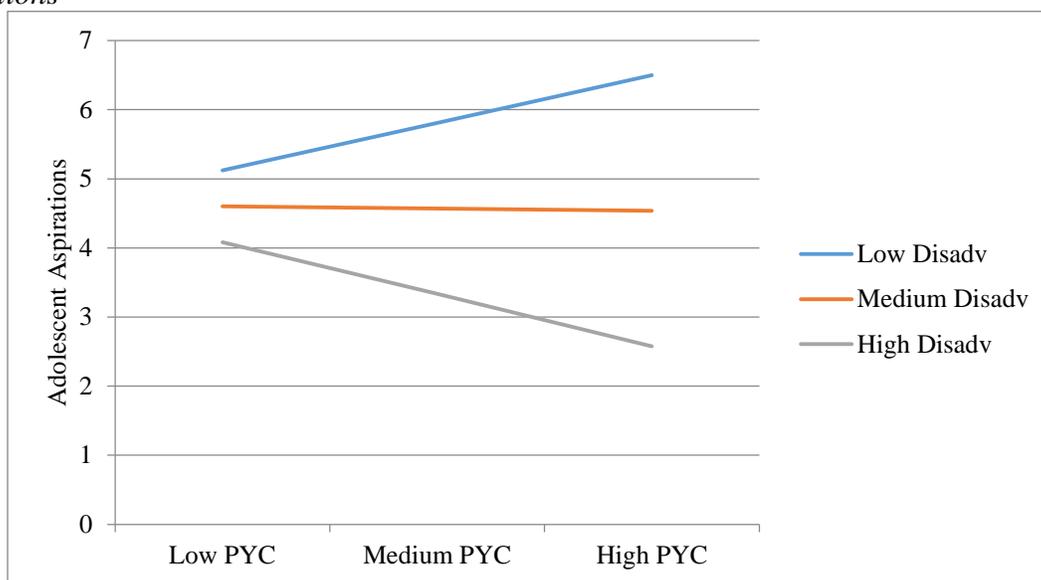
| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| Constant | 3.53(.95)*** | 3.5(1.03)*** | 3.79(1.06)*** | 3.78(1.07)*** |
| Child's Age | .10(.07) | .10(.07) | .01(.07) | .10(.07) |
| Parent-Youth Conflict | | .01(.17) | -.02(.17) | -.03(.17) |
| Resources Available | | | -.30(.55) | -.36(.57) |
| Neigh Disadvantage | | | -.19(.2) | -.3 (.34) |
| Interaction | | | | .09(.23) |
| R ² | .019 | .019 | .033 | .034 |

Note: The overall model was not significant. † $p = .1$, * $p = .05$, ** $p = .01$, *** $p = .001$.

Appendix B

Figures

Figure 1. *The Interaction between Parent-Youth Conflict and Disadvantage with Academic Aspirations*



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