ABSTRACT
LATINE YOUTH’S INTERSECTING IDENTITIES AND MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES: EXAMINING THE MEDIATING ROLE OF FAMILY FUNCTIONING

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In the existing literature base, the mechanisms by which a bicultural identity leads to more positive mental health outcomes among Latine youth are not yet clearly understood. The present study aimed to clarify these relationships by examining family functioning as a possible mediating variable between Latine youth’s cultural identity-related processes (i.e., bicultural identity integration, bicultural stress, ethnic identity, parent-child acculturation differences) and mental health outcomes (i.e., internalizing/externalizing symptoms and overall well-being). Participants included Latine youth (ages 9-12; n = 78) and their parents (n = 70) who were primarily recruited to participate in the study via Facebook over the course of a 13-month period. Results of five unique simple mediation models did not support the original hypothesis that family functioning would mediate relationships between Latine youth’s cultural identity variables and select mental health outcomes. However, inspection of the direct effects of several cultural identity variables revealed statistically significant relationships with youth’s well-being and select internalizing symptoms. Further interpretation of these findings, theoretical implications, and future directions for supporting the mental health needs of Latine youth and families through research and clinical practice are discussed.