

## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

# Latina mothers' cultural orientation and child self-esteem: The mediating role of cultural socialization

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## Abstract

This longitudinal investigation evaluated parental cultural socialization practices as a central mechanism by which parents' cultural values influence developmental outcomes in ethnic–racial minority children. Drawing on a sample of 129 Latina mothers and their children (48.1% daughters and 51.9% sons), path analyses evaluated hypothesized individual and interactive contributions of mothers' Latina heritage and American mainstream cultural orientations to changes in children's self-esteem via overt and covert cultural socialization practices. Mothers reported on their cultural orientation and socialization practices when their children were ages 5 and 8, respectively. Children reported their self-esteem at ages 8 and 10. Controlling for family socioeconomic status, mothers' nativity status, and prior child self-esteem, path analyses revealed a significant indirect effect from mothers' heritage orientation to increased child self-esteem via overt cultural socialization practices. Interestingly, a multigroup analysis by gender showed that mothers' heritage orientation was positively related to overt and covert cultural socialization practices toward both daughters and sons, but the indirect paths to child self-esteem through cultural socialization did not attain significance for daughters. Moreover, among sons, the indirect path through overt cultural socialization predicted increased self-esteem, whereas the indirect path through covert cultural socialization predicted decreased self-esteem. These findings show that cultural socialization is a salient process by which parental cultural orientation influences children's self-esteem while highlighting the specificity of these effects across overt and covert

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expressions of cultural socialization and child gender. Efforts to promote positive self-esteem among Latinx children should encourage parental cultural socialization practices, such as teaching, reading, and/or performing activities that celebrate the Latinx culture.

#### KEYWORDS

cultural socialization, heritage orientation, Latinx, mainstream orientation, self-esteem

## INTRODUCTION

In multicultural societies, such as the United States (U.S.), ethnic–racial minority (ERM) families must negotiate a balance between values derived from their heritage culture of origin and those to which they are exposed in the dominant American mainstream culture. Disconnects between heritage and mainstream orientations may be especially pronounced in ERM families as compared to families of Western European descent (Berry, 2005). A wealth of prior research has documented relations between how ERM parents meet these cultural demands and both child adjustment outcomes (Knight et al., 2011; Ryan et al., 2010) and family cultural socialization practices (Derlan et al., 2018; Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004).

As outlined in García Coll et al.'s (1996) *integrative model of developmental competencies in minority children*, ERM parents may construct an adaptive culture, which is “a social system defined by sets of goals, values, and attitudes that differs from the dominant culture” (p. 1896), by equipping their children with cultural values, messages, and assets that buffer against negative experiences of discrimination. Similarly, Knight et al.'s (1993) *social cognitive model of development* emphasizes the roles of familial and non-familial agents in shaping ERM children's identity development and behaviors. Together, these theories position cultural socialization as one mechanism by which parents may influence child adaptation in ERM families. However, although studies have evaluated individual associations between (a) parental cultural orientation and child adjustment (Calzada et al., 2009; Delgado et al., 2011), (b) parental cultural orientation and cultural socialization (Derlan et al., 2018; Romero et al., 2000), and (c) cultural socialization and child adaptation (Huguley et al., 2019; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014), empirical tests of theorized mediating relations remain limited. To date, studies that have tested cultural socialization practices as explanatory mechanisms undergirding relations between parental cultural orientation and child development have primarily focused on the development of ethnic–racial facets of self-concept. For example, research has demonstrated longitudinal relations from parental heritage values to adolescents' ethnic–racial identity (i.e., ERI; the extent to which adolescents explored their ethnic–racial group membership and felt certain about their ethnic–racial identity; Knight et al., 2016) and children's ethnic self-identification (Derlan et al., 2017) via greater cultural socialization practices.

Building on prior research, the current study evaluated pathways from Latina mothers' heritage and mainstream cultural orientations to changes in children's self-esteem over time through intervening parental cultural socialization practices. Self-esteem is an important evaluative aspect of self-concept that takes on increasing salience across childhood (Harter, 2006). In addition to being highly sensitive to parenting practices (Bámaca et al., 2005; Pinquart & Gerke, 2019), self-esteem appears to buffer against the deleterious effects of ethnic–racial discrimination on ERM youth (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2002). Moreover, because Latinx youth consistently report lower levels of self-esteem compared to youth of African American and/or White European descent (Adams et al., 2006; Erol & Orth, 2011; McClure et al., 2010), identifying familial cultural processes that support self-esteem development for Latinx children may help them combat the negative effects of ethnic–racial discrimination. In addition

to extending existing research to include an explicit focus on childhood self-esteem in Latinx families, we evaluated a bidimensional model of cultural orientation (Berry, 2005; García Coll et al., 1996) to test both individual and interactive effects of parental heritage and mainstream orientations on cultural socialization practices and child self-esteem. Likewise, we considered both overt cultural socialization (e.g., teaching Spanish) and covert cultural socialization (e.g., consumption of traditional food) practices as mechanisms that may undergird intergenerational transmission from parental cultural orientation to child self-esteem (Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004). Finally, given gendered norms and expectations that shape parenting practices, including cultural socialization (García Coll et al., 1996; Spencer, 2008), we tested the hypothesized mediation model separately for daughters and sons. In sum, this study integrated distinct bodies of extant research within a unified model to evaluate pathways from Latina mothers' heritage and mainstream orientations during early childhood (age 5) to changes in children's self-esteem from ages 8 to 10 as mediated by mothers' overt and covert cultural socialization practices when children were aged 8.

## Parental cultural orientation and child adaptation

Cultural orientation refers to people's affiliation and involvement with their ethnic and racial group memberships, identity, values, and behavioral practices (Ying, 1995). Cultural orientation is distinct from, but overlaps with, the construct of acculturation, which refers to the process of learning about the mainstream dominant culture (e.g., U.S.) while maintaining one's heritage culture (e.g., Mexican culture; Ying, 1995; Schwartz et al., 2011). In this way, heritage and mainstream orientations are separate cultural dimensions that, together, support the examination of the acculturation process. Contemporary models of acculturation recognize that individuals from ERM groups are challenged to negotiate some degree of cultural orientation to both their heritage culture (e.g., Latinx cultural values) and the mainstream dominant culture in which they live (e.g., U.S. cultural norms; Berry, 2005; Phinney, 2003; Schwartz et al., 2011).

Previous studies using unidimensional assessments of cultural orientation have documented the main effects of parents' mainstream versus heritage orientation on child adjustment outcomes. For example, Eamon and Mulder (2005) found that a composite measure of Latina mothers' mainstream orientation (i.e., American born, no English barriers when obtaining a job, and study interview conducted in English) was negatively related to adolescents' concurrent antisocial behavior. Likewise, drawing on the same sample, but defining mainstream orientation using different indicators (i.e., English language difficulties and country of origin), Eamon (2005) found that Latina mothers' English proficiency, but not U.S. nativity status, was positively associated with concurrent measures of adolescents' reading and math achievement. Of note, Eamon's (2005) results did not replicate those of Keith and Lichtman (1994), who did not find significant relations between similar parental indicators of mainstream orientation (i.e., language proficiency and nativity status) and Mexican American adolescents' concurrent academic achievement when controlling for the previous achievement.

Research has also documented significant positive influences of parental heritage and cultural orientation on children's behavioral and socioemotional outcomes. For example, Wood et al. (2017) found that Puerto Rican–origin mothers who reported higher levels of heritage orientation (e.g., cultural activities, Spanish language use, and preference for intra-ethnic socialization) rated their toddlers as more compliant 6 months later. Among young children of U.S.-born Latina mothers, maternal heritage orientation (i.e., ERI) was negatively related to maternal reports of children's internalizing symptoms (Lazarevic et al., 2020). Likewise, Germán et al. (2009) found a negative correlation between mothers' endorsed values of *familism*, which are central to a Latinx heritage orientation, and maternal reports of youth externalizing problems.

Together, prior studies of parental mainstream *or* heritage orientation support theoretical models that position parental cultural orientation as a salient influence on the development of ERM children (García Coll et al., 2000). Moreover, consistent with bidimensional models of cultural orientation

(Berry, 2005; García Coll et al., 1996), studies have begun to examine both heritage and mainstream orientation effects in the same sample. For example, Delgado et al. (2011) found that Latina mothers' mainstream orientation, but not their heritage orientation, magnified significant relations between youth's perceived ethnic-racial discrimination and greater affiliation with deviant peers. These findings suggest that Latina mothers' mainstream cultural orientation is salient for understanding the developmental consequences of youth's discriminatory experiences. Extending over time, Knight et al. (2016) found that Mexican American parental heritage orientation (i.e., *familism*) when children were in 5th grade predicted children's increased heritage orientation in 7th grade, whereas parental mainstream orientation (i.e., material success and personal achievement values) was not longitudinally associated with children's mainstream orientation. In a test of potential interactive cultural orientation effects, Ryan et al. (2010) found that parents' Latinx heritage orientation was positively related to Spanish language fluency among school-aged children, and parents' mainstream orientation was positively related to children's English language proficiency, but there was no significant interactive effect of parents' heritage and mainstream orientations on language fluency. Of note, however, other studies point to positive relations between biculturalism and adaptive child outcomes. For example, in a sample of diverse families, parents who identified as bicultural (e.g., high heritage and American mainstream orientation) had children with lower levels of teacher-rated internalizing symptoms and higher levels of adaptive behavior (Calzada et al., 2009). Likewise, Huang et al. (2017) found that bicultural Asian American parents concurrently reported their children as having more adaptive behavior (e.g., social skills).

Despite numerous studies of mainstream, heritage, and bicultural orientation effects on children's academic and behavioral development, no studies to our knowledge have evaluated relations between parental cultural orientation and children's self-esteem. As noted earlier, some research points to positive connections between parents' Latinx heritage cultural orientation and facets of ERI development in childhood (Derlan et al., 2017; Knight et al., 1993) and adolescence (Knight et al., 2011). Building on these studies, the current investigation evaluated the prospective contributions of Latina mothers' heritage and mainstream orientations to changes in children's self-esteem across childhood.

## Parental cultural orientation and cultural socialization

Cultural socialization encompasses heritage messages that teach children about their ethnic and racial background, values, history, customs, and traditions (Hughes et al., 2006). These messages are conveyed in all families but may take on special significance in ERM families given the unique social challenges and negative stereotypes children of color frequently encounter (Wang & Huguley, 2012). ERM parents may use cultural socialization practices to build an adaptive culture that responds to discriminatory and contextual demands on themselves and their families (García Coll et al., 1996), to communicate culturally specific sources of strength that enhance children's overall self-perception and identity development (Chávez-Reyes, 2010; Knight et al., 2010; Umaña-Taylor & Hill, 2020), and to provide tools that enable children to navigate a socially stratified society (Perez-Brena et al., 2018).

Cultural socialization may be expressed explicitly (i.e., *overt* practices) through direct communication about cultural background, customs, history, and belief systems, or implicitly (i.e., *covert* practices) via subtle, often unintentional, signals of cultural heritage, such as decorating the home with heritage objects (González et al., 2006; Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004). Prior research suggests that parental cultural orientation may influence the frequency and form of cultural socialization practices. For example, Knight et al. (1993) found that Mexican American mothers of children who identified as having low levels of "Mexicanism" or high levels of "Americanism" displayed lower levels of both overt practices (i.e., talked less with their children about Mexican culture, ethnic pride, and discrimination) and covert practices (i.e., lived in homes adorned with fewer heritage objects). Moreover, in a study of Mexican-origin parents, Romero et al. (2000) found that parents with greater levels of Mexican cultural identity tended to score higher on overt Latinx cultural socialization practices.

Likewise, Mexican-origin mothers' ERI, when their children were 4 years, was positively related to cultural socialization behaviors (e.g., buying toys representing the heritage culture) 1 year later (Derlan et al., 2018).

Compared to research on parental heritage orientation and cultural socialization, fewer studies have considered the influence of American mainstream orientation on cultural socialization practices, and still fewer have tested interactive relations between parental heritage and mainstream orientations as related to cultural socialization. In a rare study of parental heritage and mainstream orientation effects on parenting values and practices, Choi et al. (2018) found that parents who maintained a strong Korean identity and continued heritage activities also endorsed traditional parenting values, whereas parents' mainstream orientation was not significantly related to traditional parenting values and practices. Although not specifically focused on cultural socialization, these findings suggest that parental heritage orientation may evidence stronger relations with cultural socialization practices as compared to parental mainstream orientation. The current study extended this work by examining relations of Latina mothers' heritage, mainstream, and bicultural orientations to both overt and covert cultural socialization practices.

## Cultural socialization and child adaptation

Cultural socialization practices may promote positive family relations and connections with ethnic–racial group members, which can protect ERM children against socioemotional problems (Smokowski et al., 2010). Paralleling studies of parental cultural orientation and child adaptation, and research on cultural socialization and child adjustment has emphasized academic and behavioral outcomes (Chen et al., 2014; Gudiño & Lau, 2010). Furthermore, the limited work examining cultural socialization and children's self-concept has focused on the development of ERI (Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004), rather than on self-esteem. For example, Umaña-Taylor et al. (2014) found that parental cultural socialization positively predicted Mexican-origin youths' ERI 2 years later, which, in turn, was associated with youth reports of increased academic self-efficacy and social competence, as well as with parent and youth ratings of decreased depressive symptoms and externalizing problems.

Regarding self-esteem, scholars have suggested that cultural socialization may enhance children's positive perceptions about themselves in ways that enable them to attribute negative events, such as ethnic–racial discrimination, to external causes and protect their self-esteem (Hughes et al., 2006). In support of this assertion, a meta-analysis by Huguley et al. (2019) revealed significant relations of parental cultural socialization with positive self-perceptions and interpersonal relationship quality, although effect sizes were small within childhood. Importantly, these authors noted a dearth of longitudinal data addressing this question and notable gaps in research on Latinx families (i.e., only 6 of 35 studies focused on Latinx families). The current study sought to fill these gaps while refining extant research on cultural socialization to consider potentially distinct influences of overt versus covert cultural socialization practices on child self-esteem.

## Parental cultural orientation and child adaptation: the mediating role of cultural socialization

Following Knight et al. (1993)'s *social cognitive model of development*, we hypothesized that cultural socialization practices would mediate pathways from Latina mothers' cultural orientation to changes in child self-esteem. Several longitudinal studies of Mexican American parents focusing on parental heritage cultural orientation and children and adolescents' ERI development support the proposed model. First, Knight et al. (2016) found that Latina mothers' heritage orientation (i.e., *familism*) in 5th grade was positively associated with concurrent cultural socialization efforts (e.g., conversations about heritage traditions, history, and values), which, in turn, predicted children's ERI and heritage values in 7th grade. Second, Knight et al. (2017) found that Mexican American parents' endorsement of heritage values positively predicted adolescents' self-efficacy in 12th grade via intervening cultural

socialization practices in 7th grade. Third, in a study of younger children, Derlan et al. (2017) demonstrated that Mexican-origin mothers' ERI and heritage cultural orientation (i.e., involvement in the Mexican culture) when children were 3 years predicted children's Mexican self-identification 2 years later via mothers' cultural socialization practices at age 4 (e.g., discussing the importance of the heritage background).

## Child gender

Both the *integrative model of developmental competencies in minority children* (García Coll et al., 1996) and the *Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory* (PVEST, Spencer, 2008) emphasize that gender norms and expectations are embedded within broader sociocultural systems. In support of these postulates, data point to gender differences in the influence of parental cultural orientation on child adaptation. For example, Dumka et al. (2008) found that Latina mothers' heritage orientation was positively associated with daughters' grade point average, whereas both mothers' and fathers' mainstream orientation correlated with negative outcomes among sons, including more classroom behavior problems and delinquent peer relations.

Additional evidence points to gender differences in relations between parental cultural orientation and parenting practices. For example, McHale et al. (2005) found that Mexican-origin parents who endorsed higher levels of heritage orientation and lower levels of mainstream orientation assigned fewer chores and more privileges to their adolescent sons than daughters. This pattern mirrors Latinx gender norms that grant sons more independence while tasking daughters with more household chores that tie them to the home (Raffaelli & Ontai, 2004; Updegraff & Umaña-Taylor, 2015), and illustrates how parental cultural orientation, particularly heritage orientation, may differentially influence parenting (and potentially cultural socialization) practices toward daughters versus sons.

## The current study

Notwithstanding the likely influence of other parenting activities (e.g., monitoring and discipline; Huang et al., 2017; Liu et al., 2009), this investigation evaluated individual and interactive contributions of Latina mothers' heritage and mainstream cultural orientations in early childhood to changes in children's self-esteem from ages 8 to 10 as mediated by mothers' overt and covert cultural socialization practices assessed at age 8. First, we hypothesized that mothers' heritage and mainstream orientations would be positively related to both child self-esteem and cultural socialization practices. Furthermore, in light of prior theory (García Coll et al., 1996), as well as evidence suggesting heritage orientation has particularly strong effects on both child adaptation (Derlan et al., 2017; Knight et al., 2011; Lazarevic et al., 2020) and cultural socialization practices (Knight et al., 1993; Romero et al., 2000), we predicted that Latina mothers' heritage orientation would be more strongly related to both child self-esteem and cultural socialization practices as compared to mainstream orientation effects. Interactive analyses were exploratory given limited and mixed evidence regarding the influence of bicultural orientation (i.e., high heritage and high mainstream values) on child adaptation and cultural socialization practices (Calzada et al., 2009; Huang et al., 2017; Ryan et al., 2010).

Second, we hypothesized that mothers' cultural socialization practices would mediate expected relations between maternal cultural orientation and changes in child self-esteem. Prior studies of cultural socialization have rarely considered overt cultural socialization practices, such as discussing cultural customs or encouraging native language use in the home, as potentially distinct from covert cultural socialization practices, such as listening to music or eating foods that are indigenous to the heritage culture. That said, given our focus on young children and their relatively greater sensitivity to direct socialization messages from parents (Ayón et al., 2020; Huguley et al., 2019), as well as prior evidence that overt cultural socialization provides children with psychological resources to maintain a positive self-concept in the face of ethnic-racial discrimination (Chávez-Reyes, 2010), we hypothesized that, as compared to covert cultural socialization, overt cultural socialization would

be more strongly influenced by mothers' cultural orientation and, in turn, evidence stronger effects on children's self-esteem.

Third, our hypotheses regarding child gender differences were exploratory. Some scholars have suggested that heritage cultural values provide Latino sons with more independence, privileges, and affirmation than Latina daughters (McHale et al., 2005; Updegraff & Umaña-Taylor, 2015), and thus may be especially connected with sons' self-esteem. However, others note that Latina daughters receive more traditional gender socialization messages from their mothers and may be tasked with more household chores that limit their activities to the home (Raffaelli & Ontai, 2004), which may also affect daughters' self-concept. Considering the mixed suggestions regarding gender patterns among parental cultural orientation, cultural socialization, and child adjustment proposed by major theories (i.e., *integrative model of developmental competencies in minority children*, García Coll et al., 1996; PVEST, Spencer, 2008) and the dearth of existing literature on these relations, we explored the proposed model separately for daughters versus sons.

To fill ongoing gaps in this literature, we employed a longitudinal research design that controlled for prior child self-esteem, while holding family socioeconomic status (SES) and mothers' nativity status (i.e., U.S.-born vs. immigrant) constant. Previous research indicates that family SES is linked to parental cultural orientation, child adaptation, and cultural socialization practices (Caughy & Owen, 2015; Kim et al., 2019). In addition, parents' nativity status has been shown to influence both overt and covert cultural socialization efforts, as well as children's *familism* values (Hughes et al., 2006; Knight et al., 2011; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2009). Thus, both family SES and mothers' nativity status were held constant in all analyses.

## METHOD

### Participants

The current sample of 129 Latina mother–child dyads completed one or more laboratory assessments at ages 5, 8, and/or 10 as part of an ongoing study of child development within a larger sample of 250 maternal caregivers (51.6% Latina) and their children. Children (48.1% girls, 51.9% boys) completed laboratory assessments at ages 5 ( $N = 121$ ;  $M_{\text{age}} = 61.90$  months,  $SD = 2.41$ ), 8 ( $N = 115$ ,  $M_{\text{age}} = 97.60$  months,  $SD = 3.21$ ), and/or 10 ( $N = 116$ ,  $M_{\text{age}} = 115.27$  months,  $SD = 3.00$ ) with 119 dyads (92.2%) completing two or more data waves. The larger sample was recruited when children were in preschool (i.e., 45–54 months old), but the current study included assessments at ages 5, 8, and 10 because the first measure of maternal cultural orientation was collected when children were aged 5. Participating mothers/mother figures were biological mothers (92.3%), stepmothers (1.6%), female extended kin (2.3%), and foster/adoptive mothers (3.9%). Most of the participating mothers were born in the U.S. ( $n = 82$ ; 63.6%), with the remaining mothers born in Mexico ( $n = 35$ ; 27.1%), El Salvador ( $n = 4$ ; 3.1%), Columbia ( $n = 2$ ; 1.6%), Guatemala ( $n = 2$ ; 1.6%), Honduras ( $n = 2$ ; 1.6%), and Peru ( $n = 1$ ; 0.8%). One (0.8%) mother of Mexican descent was born in Korea because her family was stationed there at the time of her birth. Education levels were variable (i.e., 27.1% attended grade school, 13.2% had a high school diploma or GED, 41.1% completed some college courses or trade school without a degree, 5.4% completed a 2-year degree, and 13.2% had a 4-year degree or higher). Most mothers were married (58.9%) or had a partner in the household (11.6%), and most were employed (54.3%). Dyads who completed assessments at all ages ( $n = 104$ , 80.6%) did not differ from those who did not ( $n = 25$ ; 19.4%) on any study variables.

### Procedure

Dyads were recruited through flyers distributed to community-based childcare programs inviting participation in a longitudinal study of children's early learning and development. Mothers completed

a brief phone screening in English or Spanish and were excluded if the child had received a diagnosis of a developmental disability or delay ( $n = 3$ ), was unable to complete the assessment in English ( $n = 4$ ), and/or was not within the target age range 45–54 months at the start of the study (not tracked). At each data wave, dyads completed a 3-h laboratory visit, consisting of child and parent surveys, as well as observational tasks. Mothers had the option to complete laboratory assessments in either English or Spanish, but children were required to complete assessments in English due to a lack of Spanish-speaking child examiners. Mothers were compensated with \$25/h of assessment, and children received a small gift for each visit. Informed consent and assent were collected from the child's legal guardian and the child, respectively. All procedures were approved by the human research review board of the participating university.

## Measures

### Cultural orientation

At age 5, mothers' cultural orientation toward their Latinx heritage culture and the American mainstream culture was measured using the 20-item Vancouver Index of Acculturation (VIA; Ryder et al., 2000). The VIA consists of two subscales, with 10 items assessing “heritage” orientation and 10 items evaluating “mainstream” orientation regarding cultural values (e.g., “I believe in the values of my heritage culture”), social relationships (e.g., “I am comfortable interacting with typical American people”), and traditions (e.g., “I often participate in my heritage cultural traditions”). Items on each subscale were averaged to measure heritage or mainstream orientation, with higher scores connoting greater identification with the heritage or mainstream culture. Mothers endorsed each item using a 9-point Likert scale from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (9). Both the heritage ( $\alpha = 0.868$ ) and mainstream ( $\alpha = 0.811$ ) orientation subscales evidenced good reliabilities, which were consistent with prior findings in Latinx samples (Mercado et al., 2017; Santos & Kalibatseva, 2019).

### Cultural socialization

At age 8, mothers reported on their cultural socialization practices using the Family Ethnic Socialization Measure—Revised (FESM-R; Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004; González et al., 2006). Five items assessed overt cultural socialization, such as engaging children in discussions about their ethnicity and culture (e.g., “I teach my child about our ethnic/cultural background” and “I talk to my child about the values and beliefs of our ethnic/cultural background”;  $\alpha = 0.914$ ). Seven items assessed covert cultural socialization, such as indirect teaching of ethnicity and culture through selective activities (e.g., “Our home is decorated with things that reflect my ethnic/cultural background” and “My family listens to music sung or played by artists from my ethnic/cultural background”;  $\alpha = 0.902$ ). Mothers rated each item using a 5-point Likert scale from *not at all* (1) to *very much* (5), with higher values demonstrating greater cultural socialization. Items on each subscale were averaged with higher scores indicating more overt or covert cultural socialization practices. The FESM-R evidences strong psychometric properties in Latinx samples (González et al., 2006).

### Self-esteem

At ages 8 and 10, children completed the Self-Perception Profile for Children—Revised (SPPC-R; Harter, 2012). Global self-esteem was indicated by six items capturing how much the child liked and valued themselves. For each item, children were presented with contrasting statements (e.g., “Some kids are often unhappy with themselves BUT other kids are pretty pleased with themselves”) and were asked to indicate which kind of kids they were most like or identified with. Once they made their initial choice among alternatives, the child was asked to choose whether the statement they selected



was *really true* for them or *sort of true* for them. Responses were scored on a 4-point scale from *least favorable* (1) to *most favorable* (4) and averaged across all items so that higher scores denoted higher levels of child self-esteem. The SPPC-R evidenced acceptable reliability at ages 8 ( $\alpha = 0.616$ ) and 10 ( $\alpha = 0.660$ ), which is comparable to previous samples of Latinx youth (Dinh et al., 2002; Mirza et al., 2011).

## Family socioeconomic status

Family socioeconomic status (SES) was evaluated at age 5 based on parents' reported education level and occupational status using the Hollingshead Four Factor Index of Social Status (Hollingshead, 1975). Parental education was rated from *less than 7th grade* (1) to *graduate or professional training* (7). Occupational status was coded from *farm laborers/unskilled service workers* (1) to *higher executive/major professionals* (9). Weighted scores for Education\*3 and Occupation\*5 were summed to yield a family SES score. In families with two caregivers, weighted composite scores were averaged. SES scores in this sample ranged from 30 (e.g., construction worker) to 66 (e.g., business owner or director), with the average rating of 30.22 (SD = 11.24) corresponding to a semi-skilled worker (e.g., salesperson).

## Data preparation and analytic plan

Descriptive and bivariate analyses were performed in SPSS 27. The path model was evaluated using the *lavaan* package in RStudio (Rosseel, 2012). All study variables met non-normality assumptions for parametric statistics (Afifi et al., 2007). Data were missing for family SES at age 5 ( $n = 9$ ), maternal reports of cultural orientation at age 5 ( $n = 6$ ), maternal reports of cultural socialization at age 8 ( $n = 11$ ), and child reports of self-esteem at ages 8 ( $n = 18$ ) and 10 ( $n = 15$ ). Results from Little's (1998) MCAR test indicated these data were missing completely at random,  $\chi(47) = 32.68, p = 0.944$ . Missing data were addressed using the full-information maximum-likelihood (FIML) procedure in the *lavaan* package in RStudio.

A series of independent *t*-tests using Bonferroni-corrected significance levels evaluated mean differences across study variables as a function of child gender. Path analyses tested the unique contributions of mothers' heritage and mainstream cultural orientations, as well as their interactive effects, at age 5 to changes in child self-esteem from ages 8 to 10 via simultaneously estimated pathways through overt and covert cultural socialization practices at age 8. All analyses held family SES, mothers' nativity status, and prior reports of child self-esteem constant. We centered all covariate and predictor variables to their respective means to reduce multicollinearity among study variables, support an unbiased interaction term for parental cultural orientation (Heritage orientation  $\times$  Mainstream orientation), and mitigate the influence of data missing at the item level (Kraemer & Blasey, 2004). If the interaction did not attain significance, we removed the term to isolate individual main effects (Aiken & West, 1991).

Indirect and direct effect sizes, as well as associated standard errors, *p*-values, and confidence intervals (CIs), were estimated using the *lavaan* package. Significant effects were indicated by 95% CIs that did not contain 0 and *p*-values below 0.05 (Yu & Li, 2017). A multigroup analysis explored these effects separately for daughters and sons. Follow-up chi-square difference tests evaluated model fit when the pathway of interest was fixed to be equal between daughters and sons as compared to the fit of an unconstrained model with all parameters freely estimated (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002). A significant chi-square difference test showing improved fit of the constrained model over the unconstrained model indicated that the path differed significantly between daughters and sons. Model fit was assessed based on root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) values below 0.08, and comparative fit index (CFI) and Tucker Lewis index (TLI) values above 0.90 (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

## RESULTS

### Descriptive and bivariate analyses

Descriptive statistics and bivariate relations among study variables for the total sample and by child gender are displayed in Table 1. Bonferroni-corrected, independent  $t$ -tests revealed no significant mean differences across study variables as a function of child gender. Bivariate correlations indicated that mothers' heritage and mainstream cultural orientations were positively correlated in the total sample, as well as among mothers of daughters and mothers of sons. Mothers' mainstream orientation was positively correlated with overt and covert cultural socialization in the total sample and among mothers of sons, whereas mothers of daughters showed a significant positive relation between mainstream orientation and overt, but not covert, cultural socialization. Overt cultural socialization was positively correlated with covert cultural socialization in all groups. Finally, family SES and self-esteem at age 8 were positively associated with self-esteem at age 10 for girls, but these relations were not significant for boys.

### Mediation analyses

Path analyses evaluated relations from mothers' heritage and mainstream orientations at age 5 to child self-esteem at age 10 via overt and covert cultural socialization practices at age 8, controlling for family SES, mothers' nativity status, and child self-esteem at age 8. The interaction of heritage and mainstream orientations did not attain significance in predictions to either form of cultural socialization or to child self-esteem and was dropped from further analyses. As shown in Table 2, for the total sample, mothers' heritage orientation was positively associated with overt and covert cultural socialization, and overt cultural socialization predicted increased self-esteem. Moreover, the indirect path from mothers' heritage orientation to increased self-esteem via overt cultural socialization practices was significant.

As depicted in Figure 1, a multigroup comparison revealed positive contributions of mothers' heritage orientation to overt and covert cultural socialization for both daughters and sons. However, neither indirect pathway attained significance for daughters, whereas both indirect pathways were significant for sons. Interestingly, overt cultural socialization predicted *increased* self-esteem for sons, but covert cultural socialization predicted *decreased* self-esteem for sons. Both indirect pathways from mothers' heritage orientation to sons' increased self-esteem via overt cultural socialization and from mothers' heritage orientation to sons' decreased self-esteem through covert cultural socialization were significant. Chi-square difference tests comparing the fully unconstrained model with all paths freely estimated,  $\chi^2(36) = 210.88$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , RMSEA  $< 0.01$ , SRMR  $< 0.01$ , CFI = 1.00, TLI = 1.00, to constrained models, wherein paths were fixed via overt cultural socialization,  $\chi^2(34) = 9.26$ ,  $p = 0.01$ , RMSEA = 0.24, SRMR = 0.05 0.01, CFI = 0.95, TLI = 0.25, and covert cultural socialization,  $\chi^2(34) = 8.58$ ,  $p = 0.01$ , RMSEA = 0.23, SRMR = 0.05, CFI = 0.96, TLI = 0.32, confirmed that these indirect effects differed significantly between daughters and sons,  $\Delta\chi^2(2) = 3.73$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ,  $\Delta\chi^2(2) = 8.58$ ,  $p = 0.01$ .

## DISCUSSION

This investigation extended prior theory and research on child development in sociocultural context by documenting cultural socialization practices as significant explanatory mechanisms through which Latina mothers' cultural orientation influences childhood self-esteem beyond family SES, mothers' nativity status, and prior child self-esteem. Prospective relations between Latina mothers' heritage orientation and changes in child self-esteem were mediated by overt, but not covert, cultural socialization practices. However, neither mothers' mainstream cultural orientation, nor the interactive relation between their heritage and mainstream orientations predicted changes in child self-esteem.

**TABLE 1** Descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations among study variables for the total sample ( $N = 129$ ), daughters ( $N = 62$ ), and sons ( $N = 67$ )

Variable	M (SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Family SES (age 5)	<b>30.22 (11.24)</b>	—						
	31.15 (10.34)							
	<i>29.31 (12.07)</i>							
2. M nativity status (age 5; U.S.-born = 1)	<b>0.64 (0.48)</b>	<b>-0.02</b>	—					
	0.66 (0.48)	-0.03						
	<i>0.61 (0.49)</i>	<i>-0.03</i>						
3. M Heritage orientation (age 5)	<b>71.49 (15.82)</b>	<b>0.04</b>	<b>&lt;0.01</b>	—				
	69.68 (17.56)	0.12	0.02					
	<i>73.28 (13.82)</i>	<i>-0.04</i>	<i>-0.01</i>					
4. M Mainstream orientation (age 5)	<b>75.68 (11.75)</b>	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.50***</b>	—			
	75.69 (10.54)	0.04	<0.01	0.45***				
	<i>75.68 (12.91)</i>	<i>0.03</i>	<i>0.06</i>	<i>0.58***</i>				
5. M Overt cultural socialization (age 8)	<b>17.00 (5.25)</b>	<b>0.17</b>	<b>-0.06</b>	<b>0.61***</b>	<b>0.31**</b>	—		
	18.04 (4.69)	0.23	-0.05	0.64***	0.36**			
	<i>16.13 (5.57)</i>	<i>0.11</i>	<i>-0.08</i>	<i>0.67***</i>	<i>0.28*</i>			
6. M Covert cultural socialization (age 8)	<b>20.92 (7.35)</b>	<b>-0.01</b>	<b>0.01</b>	<b>0.57***</b>	<b>0.31**</b>	<b>0.76***</b>	—	
	22.26 (7.43)	<-0.01	0.02	0.52***	0.26†	0.73***		
	<i>19.78 (7.15)</i>	<i>-0.04</i>	<i>-0.01</i>	<i>0.71***</i>	<i>0.37**</i>	<i>0.76***</i>		
7. C Self-esteem (age 8)	<b>3.22 (0.55)</b>	<b>0.10</b>	<b>-0.17†</b>	<b>-0.04</b>	<b>-0.19</b>	<b>-0.07</b>	<b>-0.13</b>	—
	3.14 (0.64)	0.20	-0.10	0.02	-0.20	-0.06	-0.14	
	<i>3.27 (0.46)</i>	<i>0.02</i>	<i>-0.24†</i>	<i>-0.19</i>	<i>-0.20</i>	<i>-0.06</i>	<i>-0.09</i>	
8. C Self-esteem (age 10)	<b>3.51 (0.44)</b>	<b>0.16</b>	<b>-0.08</b>	<b>-0.02</b>	<b>0.01</b>	<b>0.13</b>	<b>-0.02</b>	<b>0.19</b>
	3.59 (0.37)	0.29*	-0.19	0.12	-0.02	0.26†	0.13	0.29*
	<i>3.44 (0.49)</i>	<i>0.07</i>	<i>-0.05</i>	<i>-0.11</i>	<i>0.03</i>	<i>0.03</i>	<i>-0.17</i>	<i>0.15</i>

Note: Bold font = total sample; normal font = daughters; italicized font = sons. † $p < 0.10$ , \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , and \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ .

Abbreviations: C, child variables; M, mean; M, mother variables; SD, standard deviation; SES, socioeconomic status.

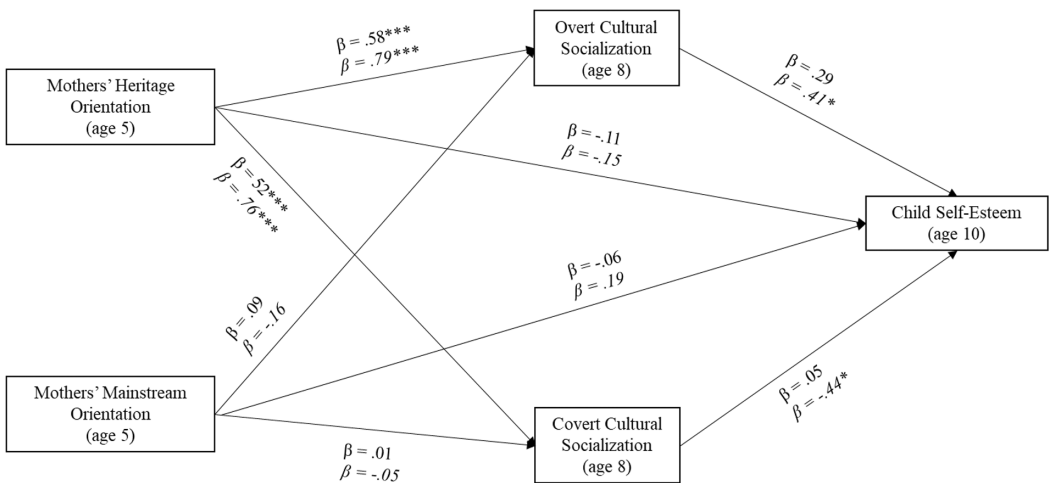
These pathways revealed increased complexity that warrants further replication and explication when examined separately by child gender. Although mothers' heritage orientation was positively associated with both overt and covert cultural socialization for daughters and sons, cultural socialization practices were significantly related to changes in self-esteem for sons only. Specifically, Latina mothers' heritage orientation predicted increases in their sons' self-esteem via overt practices but decreases in their sons' self-esteem via covert practices. These findings illuminate the importance of examining the developmental significance of Latina mothers' heritage orientation for children's self-system development, as well as the need to consider these effects according to the socialization type (i.e., overt vs. covert cultural socialization) and child gender.

Consistent with our hypotheses and prior research (Knight et al., 1993; Romero et al., 2000), mothers' heritage orientation evidenced significant positive relations with both overt and covert cultural socialization efforts. However, neither the relation between mothers' mainstream orientation and cultural socialization practices nor interactive effects of heritage and mainstream orientations attained significance. Although bidimensional models have emphasized interactive cultural orientation effects on individual adjustment (Berry, 2005), our findings replicate prior studies showing non-significant interactions (Ryan et al., 2010) while highlighting specific contributions of mothers' Latinx heritage orientation to the cultural socialization practices examined here. Importantly, other facets of cultural socialization, such as preparation for bias or promotion of mistrust (Hughes et al., 2006), may be related to mainstream or bicultural orientations and warrant consideration in future research. For example, greater mainstream orientation could sensitize parents to potential encounters with ethnic-racial discrimination beyond the family and heighten their efforts to prepare their children for such events, although this hypothesis awaits empirical evaluation. Consistent with

**TABLE 2** Indirect effects of Latina mothers' heritage and mainstream cultural orientations on child self-esteem through overt and covert cultural socialization practices for the total sample ( $N = 129$ )

Effect	<i>B</i>	SE	<i>z</i> -Value	<i>p</i> -Value	95% CI
<b>Covariates</b>					
Family SES	0.08	<0.01	0.85	0.39	[<-0.01, 0.01]
M nativity status (U.S.-born = 1)	-0.04	0.08	-0.47	0.64	[-0.20, 0.12]
C Self-esteem (age 8)	0.17	0.08	1.79	0.07	[-0.01, 0.29]
<b>Predictors</b>					
M Heritage orientation → M Overt cultural socialization	0.60	0.03	7.06	<0.01	[0.14, 0.25]
M Heritage orientation → M Covert cultural socialization	0.56	0.04	6.31	<0.01	[0.18, 0.34]
M Mainstream orientation → M Overt cultural socialization	-0.01	0.04	-0.05	0.96	[-0.08, 0.07]
M Mainstream orientation → M Covert cultural socialization	0.02	0.06	0.22	0.83	[-0.10, 0.12]
M Overt cultural socialization → C Self-esteem (age 10)	0.33	0.01	2.19	0.03	[<0.01, 0.05]
M Covert cultural socialization → C Self-esteem (age 10)	-0.18	0.01	-1.21	0.23	[-0.03, <0.01]
<b>Direct effects</b>					
M Heritage orientation → C Self-esteem (age 10)	-0.15	<0.01	-1.17	0.24	[-0.01, <0.01]
M Mainstream orientation → C Self-esteem (age 10)	0.07	<0.01	0.64	0.53	[<-0.01, 0.01]
<b>Indirect effects</b>					
M Heritage orientation → M Overt cultural socialization → C Self-esteem (age 10)	0.20	<0.01	2.09	0.04	[<0.01, 0.01]
M Heritage orientation → M Covert cultural socialization → C Self-esteem (age 10)	-0.10	<0.01	-1.19	0.24	[<-0.01, <0.01]
M Mainstream orientation → M Overt cultural socialization → C Self-esteem (age 10)	<-0.01	<0.01	-0.05	0.96	[<-0.01, <0.01]
M Mainstream orientation → M Covert cultural socialization → C Self-esteem (age 10)	<-0.01	<0.01	-0.22	0.83	[<-0.01, <0.01]
Total $R^2$	0.10				
Cohen's $f^2$	0.01				

Abbreviations: C, child variables; CI, confidence interval; M, mother variables; SE, standard error; SES, socioeconomic status.



**FIGURE 1** Indirect effects of Latina mothers' heritage and mainstream cultural orientations on child self-esteem through overt and covert cultural socialization practices for daughters ( $N = 62$ ) and sons ( $N = 67$ ). Note: Normal font = daughters; italicized font = sons. \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

theories of development among ERM children (García Coll et al., 1996; Perez-Brena et al., 2018; Spencer, 2008), this study demonstrates the need for expanded research to understand cultural socialization practices as mechanisms by which parents transmit their cultural orientation to their children and, in turn, influence child development.

Extending prior research documenting relations between parental cultural orientation and ethnic-racial facets of self-concept, such as ERI (Knight et al., 2016, 2017) and ethnic self-identification (Derlan et al., 2017), this study documented a significant pathway from Latina mothers' heritage orientation to increases in childhood self-esteem via increases in overt cultural socialization practices. Understanding these pathways *within* childhood is important as children begin to evaluate their competencies and worth as individuals (Harter, 2006) at the same time they encounter more complex (and potentially discriminatory) social relationships beyond the family. Moreover, by extending the evidentiary base for cultural influences on children's self-system beyond the domain of ERI, this study broadens the scope of parental cultural orientation and cultural socialization effects on child development.

Cultural socialization practices encompass a diverse set of family processes (Hughes et al., 2006; Umaña-Taylor & Hill, 2020). Given the scarcity of research on the potentially distinct contributions of overt and covert cultural socialization practices to child adjustment, it is not clear why overt, but not covert, cultural socialization practices mediated the relation between Latina mothers' heritage orientation and child self-esteem in the full sample. One possibility is that overt practices necessitate direct parent-child engagement about cultural issues. Intentional discussions of cultural topics may enhance the quality of the parent-child relationship and the child's perceptions of support and community. This interpretation is in line with recent work showing positive correlations between cultural socialization practices and family cohesion in Latinx families (Constante et al., 2020).

Gender-specific relations between cultural socialization practices and child self-esteem emerged for sons, but not for daughters, which introduces a new layer of complexity to this research. Latina mothers may articulate cultural values that affirm the son's position as the future authority figure and provider for the family (e.g., *caballerismo*; González et al., 2006; Sanchez et al., 2017) in ways that promote self-concept and ethnic identity resolution (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2008) for sons to a greater degree than for daughters. However, the unexpectedly differential relations of overt and covert cultural socialization practices with increases and decreases in sons' self-esteem, respectively, warrant further consideration. One possibility is that, because boys tend to be more reliant than girls on direct involvement in activities for learning (Majzub & Rais, 2010), explicit heritage messages from overt cultural socialization may reinforce the parent-child relationship and affirm heritage cultural values, whereas implicit heritage messages conferred by covert cultural socialization may introduce cultural information in the absence of direct engagement in ways that precipitate uncertain or confusing messages about sons' ERM status in the mainstream culture and undermine their self-esteem. In addition, since boys may encounter more ethnic-racial discriminatory experiences than girls as they transition to adolescence (Alfaro et al., 2009; Benner & Graham, 2011), covert messages without direct explanations about heritage cultural values may leave boys confused and hinder their ability to connect with their ERM background in positive ways, particularly amidst increased ethnic-racial discriminatory experiences in social settings. That said, the current sample size was relatively modest and there is a dearth of prior literature distinguishing overt from covert cultural socialization effects generally, let alone toward daughters versus sons. The nuanced pattern of findings in this study highlights the importance of considering the intersectionality between gender and ERM status, as well as the need for further replication and explication in future research.

Lastly, the positive correlation between Latina mothers' heritage and mainstream cultural orientations was somewhat surprising given prior studies suggesting negative (Lau et al., 2005; Ryan et al., 2010) or non-significant relations (Brittian et al., 2013) between these orientations. This discrepancy may reflect the fact that 63.6% of the Latina mothers in the current investigation were U.S.-born and the remaining non-U.S.-born Latina mothers (36.4%) generally immigrated to the U.S. in early adolescence ( $M = 12.65$  years old,  $SD = 9.66$ ), whereas previous studies examined samples

with predominantly immigrant parents (Lau et al., 2005; Ryan et al., 2010). Moreover, these results underline the importance of assessing both heritage and mainstream orientations as suggested by bidimensional models of cultural orientation (Berry, 2005; García Coll et al., 1996). Furthermore, these findings show that the assessment of cultural orientation should not end with individuals from immigrant backgrounds, but rather should include all caregivers who navigate multiple cultures (Bámaca-Colbert et al., 2019).

## Strengths and limitations

The current investigation filled existing gaps in the literature by using a bidimensional assessment of cultural orientation to examine both the main and interactive effects of Latina mothers' heritage and mainstream orientations on changes in children's self-esteem. Moreover, this longitudinal research design supported the evaluation of both overt and covert cultural socialization practices on pathways from mothers' cultural orientation to changes in child self-esteem. Despite these strengths, several limitations qualify these findings and suggest promising directions for future research.

First, although the measure of cultural orientation in this study evidenced good psychometric properties and was selected for its applicability to the varied ethnic and racial groups that comprised the broader sample, the VIA does not explicitly tap important constructs that are specific to Latinx groups. Alternative measures that are designed for Latinx samples include, but are not limited to, the Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans (ARSMA-II; Cuéllar et al., 1995) and the Bidimensional Acculturation Scale for Hispanics (BAS; Marín & Gamba, 1996). Similar to the VIA, the ARSMA-II and BAS evaluate attitudes toward both Latinx heritage culture and American mainstream culture. However, they include questions about culturally specific constructs, such as preferences for Spanish language use, and cultural practices pertaining to food, media, and relationships that may have special significance for understanding cultural orientation processes within Latinx families.

Second, this study employed the FESM-R to accommodate the diverse ethnic and racial groups present in the broader sample, but, as with the VIA, the FESM-R does not specifically focus on Latinx groups. Thus, other facets of cultural socialization that may be especially important in Latinx families, such as the connection to family (i.e., *familism*) or emphasis on personal relationships (i.e., *personalismo*; Cauce & Domenech-Rodríguez, 2002), were not examined here. Given the obtained gender differences, it is especially important for future research to employ assessments aimed at understanding how Latinx families conceptualize and discuss culturally specific gender roles, such as *marianismo*, *machismo*, and *caballerismo* (Sanchez et al., 2017). Likewise, as noted earlier, other facets of cultural socialization (e.g., preparation for bias, promotion of mistrust, and valuation of egalitarianism; Hughes et al., 2006) may influence relations between parental cultural orientation and child outcomes. In addition to multidimensional assessments of cultural socialization practices, multimethod assessments that include both reported and observed practices among ERM families will advance future research and address shared method bias that may have influenced the current findings.

Third, the SPPC-R evidenced modest reliability within the current sample. Although this is consistent with most prior studies of self-esteem among Latinx youth (Dinh et al., 2002; Kuperminc et al., 2004; Mirza et al., 2011), two studies reported good internal consistency using this same measure in elementary- and middle school-age Mexican American samples (Hess & Petersen, 1996; Sher-Censor et al., 2011). Ongoing concerns regarding the reliability of the SPPC-R in Latinx samples warrant caution when interpreting the current findings. Furthermore, this limitation highlights the need for future research to develop and validate culturally appropriate measures of self-esteem for Latinx youth, which might consider factors that are known to be correlated with Latinx individuals' well-being and self-esteem, such as social support, religious support, and ethnic identity (Finch & Vega, 2003; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2002).

Fourth, although researchers have called for increased consideration of heterogeneity across Latinx subcultures (Durand & Massey, 2010), the current subsamples were too small to explore these

patterns. Likewise, although most mothers in this sample were U.S.-born, we did not have reliable information about the generational status. Given past research showing significant relations between generational status and parental behaviors (Suizzo et al., 2019), it is possible that relations of mothers' cultural orientation with cultural socialization efforts and/or child adaptation may vary by generational status in ways that could not be examined here. Of note, due to limited interpreter services, the current study focused on families wherein the target child was able to understand English. Although this resulted in the exclusion of only four families from the current sample, it nevertheless raises concerns about generalizability. Despite the limited linguistic representativeness of our child sample, 64.6% of these children resided in homes where Spanish was the dominant language, which is comparable to the national rate of 68% among Latinx second-generation children (Lopez et al., 2017). Relatedly, 36.4% of the Latina mothers were born outside the U.S. (all but one in a Latin American country), which is comparable to the national rate of 43.8% among Latina mothers (Pew Research Center, 2016).

Fifth, the current study included only Latina mothers. Parental cultural orientation may influence the cultural socialization practices of mothers and fathers in distinct ways. In turn, these practices may have differential effects on daughters versus sons. Indeed, some data suggest that parent-child gender match is especially salient for understanding parenting effects in Latinx families (Dumka et al., 2008). Regarding self-esteem, in particular, adolescent studies suggest that Latino boys' self-esteem is influenced by both mothers' and fathers' parenting (e.g., support, monitoring, and psychological control), but Latina girls' self-esteem may be affected by mothers' parenting only (Bámaca et al., 2005). Given the likely importance of fathers' cultural orientation and gender match effects for understanding child outcomes, future studies should include both female and male caregivers while testing for distinct relations by child gender. These studies would also support the exploration of interparental congruence in cultural orientation and/or cultural socialization practices as potential qualifiers of parental cultural orientation and socialization effects on child development.

Finally, the present sample was modest in size, which may have reduced the likelihood of detecting significant interaction effects between mothers' heritage and mainstream orientations, as well as gender effects for daughters. Moreover, although this study illuminated cultural socialization as one mechanism undergirding relations between Latina mothers' heritage orientation and child self-esteem, other parenting processes may also contribute to these relations. For example, cultural orientation may influence other parenting facets, such as authoritative and authoritarian strategies (Chen et al., 2014; Liu et al., 2009). Investigating additional parenting practices will extend our understanding of whether and how parental cultural orientation shape child adaptation.

## Implications

This multi-informant, longitudinal investigation contributes to the growing appreciation for cultural influences on development within ERM families (García Coll et al., 1996; Spencer, 2008). The current findings revealed potential benefits of overt cultural socialization as a promotive factor that supports Latinx children's self-esteem development while extending extant evidence of self-system effects beyond the domain of ERI and prior to adolescence. Findings regarding covert cultural socialization practices were more nuanced by child gender and warrant further replication and explication before confirming negative effects on Latino boys' self-esteem.

The current findings suggest that Latinx families may benefit from actively engaging their children in discussions about their ethnicity and race to promote children's self-esteem. Latinx parents may implement and maintain activities (e.g., reading and cooking) and lessons (e.g., direct teaching about cultural figures) related to heritage traditions or values to engage their children in active learning about their cultural traditions and customs. In this way, Latinx parents can support the development of an adaptive culture for their children, which would include heritage cultural goals, behaviors, and attitudes, to combat the negative effects of social stratification and discrimination.

Interventions targeting Latinx families should encourage parents to introduce explicit discussions of heritage cultural values, which may enhance child adjustment and improve family relation-

ships. Intervention efforts should also encourage family activities (e.g., preparing meals together and talking about daily activities) that promote positive parent–child relationships, introduce opportunities for heritage cultural socialization, and provide explicit support to ERM children as they navigate the mainstream culture in school and other settings. Overt cultural socialization practices may have special significance for enhancing Latinx children's self-esteem by nurturing a sense of group membership and buffering children from the negative effects of ethnic–racial discrimination. These direct expressions of cultural socialization may be especially important for Latino sons, at least during their childhood years. Together, these findings support the ongoing efforts of scholars, educators, and parents to understand and promote family cultural socialization practices and ERM children's adjustment.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

D.T.T. identified the research question, conducted the analyses, and drafted the manuscript; T.M.Y. oversaw the design and execution of the larger study, assisted with conceptualizing the research question, and collaborated in editing and preparing the manuscript.

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