4-12-2019

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Who I Am: A Mixed-Methods Analysis of Guatemalan Adolescents' Identity Development

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C O L L E G E

Introduction

- Identity development is the central task of adolescence (Erikson, 1968).
- Hybrid identity refers to the incorporation of both traditional and Western values into an individual's identity development (Jensen & Arnett, 2012).
- Remote acculturation, experiencing another culture through social media and television or the use of their food, brands, and music, may contribute to the formation of a hybrid identity (Ferguson, Ferguson, & Ferguson 2017). In other words, acculturation now can occur without migration.
- Cheek and Cheek (2018) developed four identity orientation domains: personal, relational, public, and collective.

Current Study

- The purpose of this study was to examine Guatemalan adolescent identity development in light of traditional and Western values using a Mixed-Methods Approach.
- **Research Question:** Which identity orientations will be most commonly endorsed in the 20 statements test, and will the identity orientation endorsements differ by gender or age?

Method

Participants

- Participants included 129 middle school and high school students (52.7% girls) who attend a bilingual school on Guatemala's south coast.
  - Middle school: 6th grade (11.6%), 7th grade (9.3%), 8th grade (20.2%)
  - High school: 9th grade (15.5%), 10th grade (16.3%), 11th grade (12.4%), 12th grade (20.7%)

Materials & Procedure

- To assess inter-rater reliability between coders, Cohen's Kappa was calculated for 20% of the responses. The Kappa statistics ranged from a low of .46 to a high of 1.0. Using Landis and Koch's (1977) guidelines, agreement ranged from moderate to (almost) perfect agreement.
- Participants completed the 20 statements test (Kuhn & McPartland, 1954) in English using Qualtrics, an online survey platform. Responses were coded using an adaptation of Cheek & Cheek's (2018) identity typology of four domains: personal identity (e.g., a good person), relational identity (e.g., a sister), public identity (e.g., skinny), collective identity (e.g., Guatemalan), activities and hobbies (e.g., a swimmer), and miscellaneous (e.g., being annoyed).
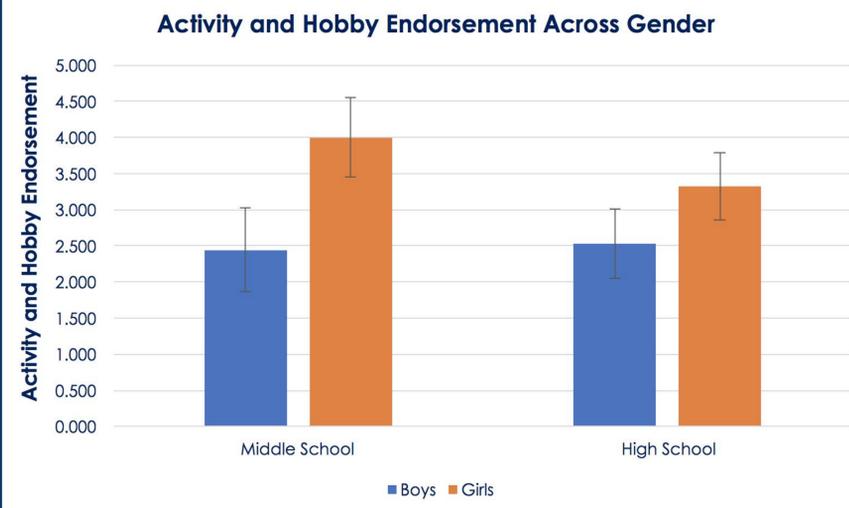

Figure 1. Activity and Hobby Endorsement Across Gender

Results: Identity Orientations

A series of 2 (Participant Gender: Boy vs. Girl) x 2 (Age: Middle School vs. High School) ANOVAs were conducted to assess for gender and age differences in the five identity domains listed below.

Personal Identity
- Gender: $F(1,125) = 1.765$, $p = 0.186$
- Age: $F(1,125) = 0.009$, $p = 0.926$
- Interaction of gender and age: $F(1,125) = 0.001$, $p = 0.972$

Relational identity
- Gender: $F(1,125) = 0.046$, $p = 0.830$
- Age: $F(1,125) = 0.272$, $p = 0.603$
- Interaction of gender and age: $F(1,125) = 0.024$, $p = 0.877$

Public Identity
- Gender: $F(1,125) = 0.310$, $p = 0.579$
- Age: $F(1,125) = 2.319$, $p = 0.130$
- Interaction of gender and age: $F(1,125) = 0.016$, $p = 0.900$

Collective Identity
- Gender: $F(1,125) = 1.997$, $p = 0.160$
- Age: $F(1,125) = 0.884$, $p = 0.349$
- Interaction of gender and age: $F(1,125) = 1.197$, $p = 0.276$

Activities and Hobbies
- **Gender: $F(1,125) = 5.158$, $p = 0.025$**
- Age: $F(1,125) = 0.320$, $p = 0.573$
- Interaction of gender and age: $F(1,125) = 0.540$, $p = 0.464$

Descriptive Statistics for "I am" Statements

The **personal identity orientation** ($M= 9.91$, $SD= 3.71$) was the most commonly endorsed identity orientation, followed by the **public identity orientation** ($M= 3.41$, $SD= 2.43$), and the **activities and hobbies orientation** ($M= 3.08$, $SD= 2.93$). The **collective identity orientation** ($M= 2.16$, $SD= 1.96$) and the **relational identity orientation** ($M= 2.06$, $SD= 1.57$) were the fourth and fifth most frequently endorsed identity orientations, respectively. The **miscellaneous identity orientation** was the least frequently endorsed ($M= 0.32$, $SD= 0.72$)

Discussion

- The higher prevalence of the personal identity domain over the relational and collective domains suggests that remote acculturation may be happening among Guatemalan adolescents
  - Western culture is more likely to be associated with the personal identity domain, emphasizing the self over the group.
- Cultural identities of adolescents are becoming increasingly complex due to remote acculturation.
  - Parents, teachers, and other adults should become attuned to the complexity of identity development today with respect to increasingly diverse cultural influences

- **Limitations**
  - Students completed the "Who I Am" statements in their non-native language, English.
  - Asking students to complete 20 "I am…" statements may have led to less meaningful answers because students may have become bored or exhausted all they wanted to say before finishing the task.

- **Future Directions**
  - Explore the five identity domains among:
    - Adolescents in Western countries to serve as comparison
    - Adolescents in other areas where remote acculturation is a possibility
  - Investigate which aspects of the media and/or minority world culture influence remote acculturation the most
  - Analyze adolescents' Photovoice data depicting their current and future lives