



The Impact of Language Brokering on Stress Among Latinx Millennial College Students



Authors: Sergio A. Ruvalcaba (’19)¹, Elia L. Gil Rojas (’21)¹, Jovani Azpeitia (’19)¹, & Guadalupe A. Bacio, Ph.D.²

Institutional Affiliations: ¹Department of Psychology, Pomona College, Claremont, CA, ²Departments of Psychology and Chicana/o-Latina/o Studies, Pomona College, Claremont, CA

INTRODUCTION

- Language brokers are children or adolescents of immigrant parents who become the family’s English translator and interpreter (Buriel et al., 1998; Morales & Hanson, 2005)
- Their proficiency with mainstream U.S. language and culture are utilized to help their families navigate and function in society, oftentimes giving them adult-like responsibilities and exposing them to potentially taxing environments (Villanueva & Buriel, 2010).
- Literature on the topic has explored the role of language brokering (LB) in health outcomes for adolescents and their families, such as familial stress and mixed-results regarding academic performance (Martinez et al., 2009).
- Studies have also shown that LB has been found to act as a protective factor against higher levels of burnout in professional settings later in life.
- Burnout entails aspects of depersonalization, lack of personal accomplishment, and emotional exhaustion (Teran et al., 2017)

Study Aim

The current study seeks to build upon the literature by providing more information regarding LB and its implications on emerging adults in college. As such, this study will investigate the impact of LB on symptoms relating to burnout, particularly stress.

METHODS

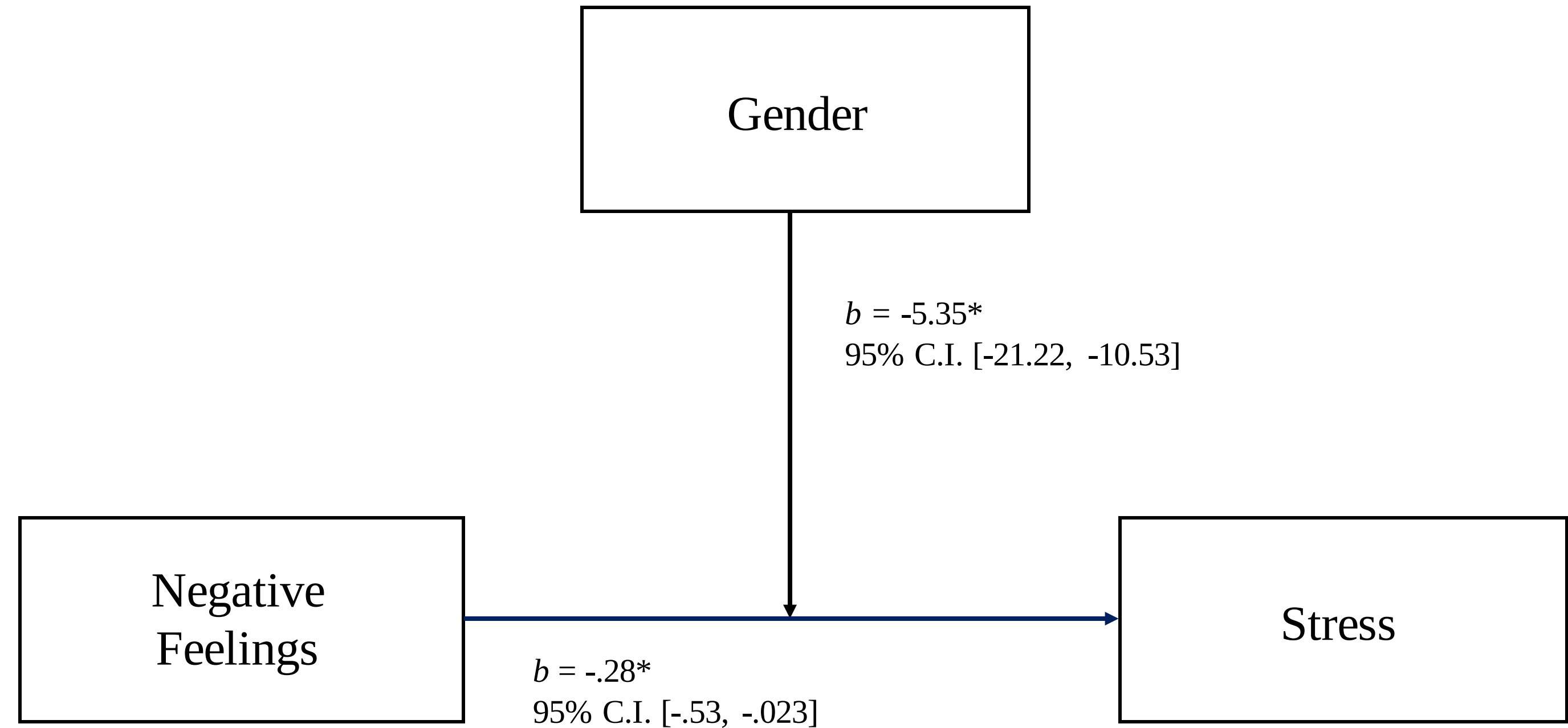
- This is a secondary analysis of 161 Latinx millennial college students primarily from Southern California, who participated in a larger study regarding language brokering and health outcomes.
- Data was gathered through surveys from participants across several 4-year undergraduate institutions across the nation. As compensation for completing the survey, they were entered into a raffle for tickets to an amusement park.
- Measures**
 - Demographics.** Participants were asked demographic questions regarding their nationality, gender, age, grade level, birth place, generation status, and income.
 - Language Brokering Scale (LBS).** The LBS is a 30-item assessment that examines the effects of language brokering has on adolescents and their parents (Kim et al., 2014). It yields 7 subscales: adolescent-focused burden, parent-focused burden, disrespect of parent/role reversal, positive relations with parents, negative feelings, adolescent efficacy, and adolescent independence.
 - Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale-21 (DASS-21).** The DASS-21 is a 21-item shortened version of the original DASS-42 assessment that measures three related states: depression, anxiety and stress (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995).

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RESULTS

Figure 1. Gender moderates the association between negative feelings (LBS) and stress (DASS21).



Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 2

Correlations of All Variable of Interest

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Gender	--										
<i>Language Brokering Scale</i>											
2. Adolescent focused-burden	.05	--									
3. Parent focused-burden	-.04	.26*	--								
4. Disrespect of parent/role reversal	-.02	.40**	.17	--							
5. Negative feelings	.07	.65**	-.03	.54**	--						
6. Positive relations with parents	-.04	-.15	-.45**	-.03	.11	--					
7. Adolescent efficacy	.12	.08	-.44**	-.049	.33**	.44**	--				
8. Adolescent independence	.02	.11	-.45**	-.078	.30**	.49**	.78**	--			

DASS-21

9. Stress	-.27*	-.21	.01	-.16	-.25*	.06	-.14	-.06	--		
10. Anxiety	-.19	-.16	-.08	-.14	-.21	.002	-.12	-.02	.77**	--	
11. Depression	-.22	-.10	-.07	-.05	-.20	-.06	-.19	-.06	.72**	.65**	--

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations of All Variables of Interest

Variables	Females		Males (n = 45)		Overall	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
<i>Language Brokering Scale</i>						
Adolescent focused-burden	13.27 ¹	4.31	13.80	4.05	13.42 ³	4.24
Parent focused-burden	11.87 ¹	4.13	11.62	4.17	11.80 ³	4.13
Disrespect of parent/role reversal	31.91 ¹	3.22	31.78	3.48	31.87 ³	3.28
Negative Feelings	24.49 ²	4.74	25.07	4.43	24.65 ⁴	4.65
Positive parent relations	10.41 ²	2.97	10.42	3.22	10.41 ⁴	3.03
Adolescent efficacy	11.16 ²	2.89	12.49	2.41	11.53 ⁴	2.82
Adolescent independence	11.75 ²	2.55	12.20	2.33	11.88 ⁴	2.49
<i>DASS-21</i>						
Stress	8.00 ²	5.13	6.53	5.08	7.59 ⁴	5.14
Anxiety	5.62 ²	4.68	4.49	4.44	5.30 ⁴	4.63
Depression	6.58 ²	5.80	5.93	5.43	6.40 ⁴	5.69

¹ $n = 116$, ² $n = 117$, ³ $n = 161$, ⁴ $n = 162$

PARTICIPANTS

Table 1

Descriptives of Participants

Variables	Total Sample N = 161 n(%)
<i>Gender</i>	
Female	117 (72.2)
Male	45 (27.8)
<i>Year in College</i>	
1 st	48 (74.7)
2 nd	34 (21)
3 rd	40 (24.7)
4 th	37 (22.8)
Other	3 (1.9)
<i>National Background</i>	
Mexican	121 (74.7)
South American	20 (12.3)
Central American	10 (6.2)
Puerto Rican	5 (3.1)
Cuban	3 (1.9)
Dominican	2 (1.2)
Spaniard	1 (0.6)

DISCUSSION

Stress was negatively correlated with negative feelings relating to LB

- As predicted, higher levels of negative feelings regarding LB and gender were correlated with higher levels of stress (Table 2).

Associations between negative feelings relating to LB and stress moderated by gender

- Latinas experience lower levels of stress when experiencing higher negative feelings relating to LB compared to their male counterparts. This is consistent with a previous study found that despite an increase in filial responsibilities and frequency of brokering, Latinas reported lower levels of depression relating to a possible increase in autonomy (Love & Buriel, 2007)

Implications

- Results suggest a further in-depth examination of the varying contexts pertaining to being a language broker in relation to mental health, such as gender. As such, careful consideration of differential factors among individuals is pivotal when approaching mental health.

Limitations

- Due to the limitation of measures, we investigated a latent variable of burnout created from symptoms related to the construct.

Future Directions

- Administer measure that directly assesses burnout, as well as include an item(s) that operationalizes frequency of LB. Examine levels of cultural values, such as family obligation that can indicate a broker’s level of psychological autonomy.

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