



Impact of Family and Neighborhood Factors on Lifetime Substance Use Among Latinx Youth



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INTRODUCTION

- According to the 2015 National Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey report, Latinx adolescents report highest lifetime alcohol (65.9%) and marijuana (45.6%) use, with males having the highest tobacco use (37.8%),. Rates of lifetime use differed by gender with alcohol and tobacco, but not for marijuana (YRBS 2015).
- Early onset health concerns can impact the Latinx community, as early substance initiation could prompt addiction in adulthood (Kouyoumdjian, et al., 2015)
- Protective factors against substance use initiation and frequency within Latinx communities can be tied to cultural values; however, it ultimately depends on the relational context of the family (Telzer et al., 2014). An increase in family warmth and overall positive parent-youth relationship decreases consumption of substances (Nackos, 2017). A reduction in family closeness negatively determines alcohol use patterns within adolescents when coupled with an increase association to substance-using peers (Bacio, et al., 2013).
- Gender differences are also influenced regarding risk and protective factors. Socio-ecological influences such as parent-child communication reduce substance use rates, such as decreasing marijuana use among males (Lac et al. 2011), and overall preventing risk behaviors in females (Milan, 2015).

Study Aim

The current study aims to build upon current literature, while providing more information on how neighborhood ties, along with familial closeness, act as protective factors for substance use outcomes within Latinx adolescents, with gender as a moderator.

METHODS

This is a secondary analysis of a statewide survey consisting of 353 Latinx adolescents from San Diego, California. Participants were high school students who completed the 15th Biennial California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) for the years 2013-2015.

Measures

- **Demographics:** Participants reported their gender, race and ethnicity, age, grade, etc.
- **Familial Ties:** Family care, understanding, enjoyment, and attention.
- **Neighborhood Perspective:** This variable is a sum of measures regarding person-environment relationship, action and inaction, and generational.
- **Lifetime alcohol, marijuana, tobacco, and electronic cigarettes:** Dichotomous variables were calculated to assess whether (1) or not (0) they ever used any of the listed substances in their lifetimes.

Logistic regression models were used to examine how family and neighborhood ties were related to each substance use outcome separate for males and females.

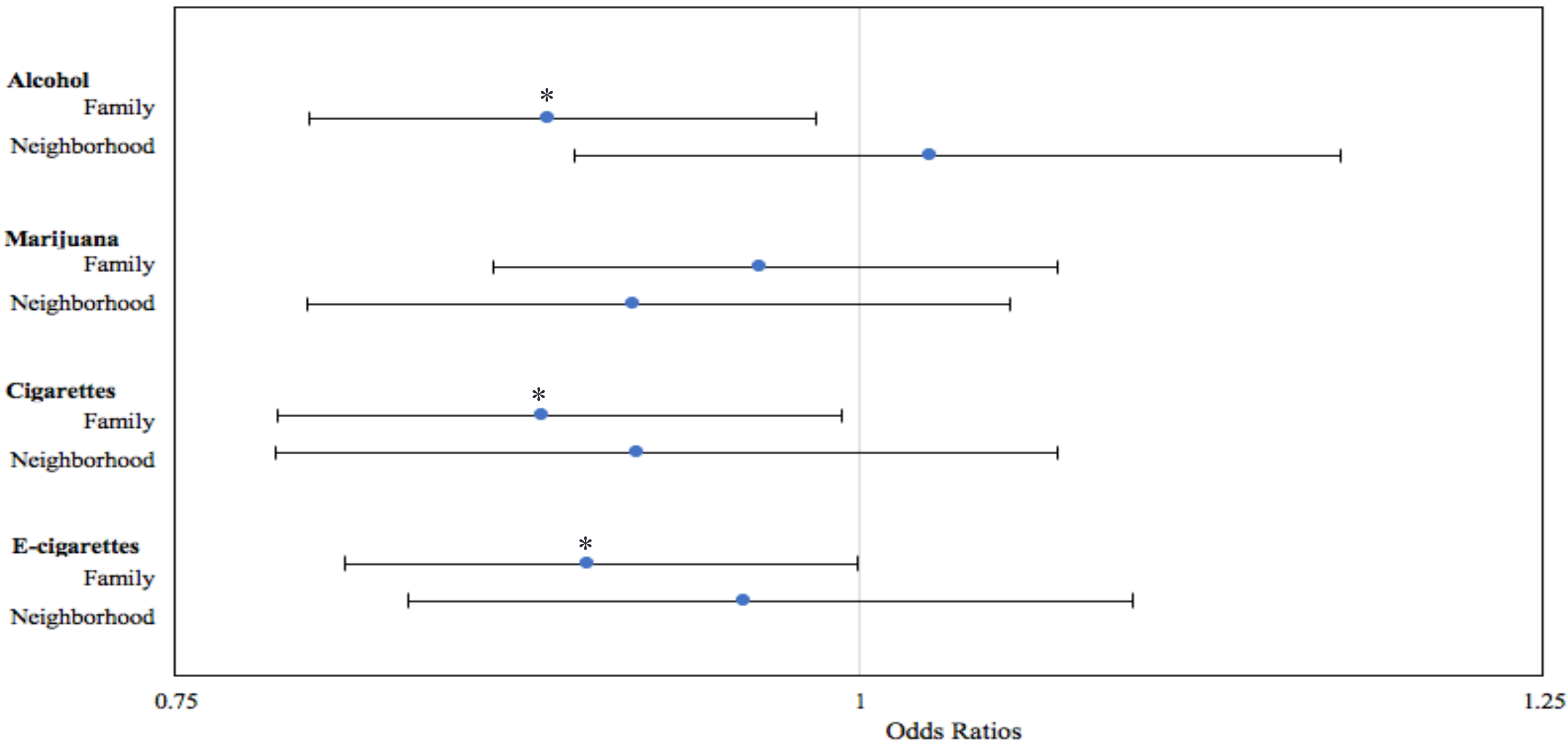
- All models controlled for age

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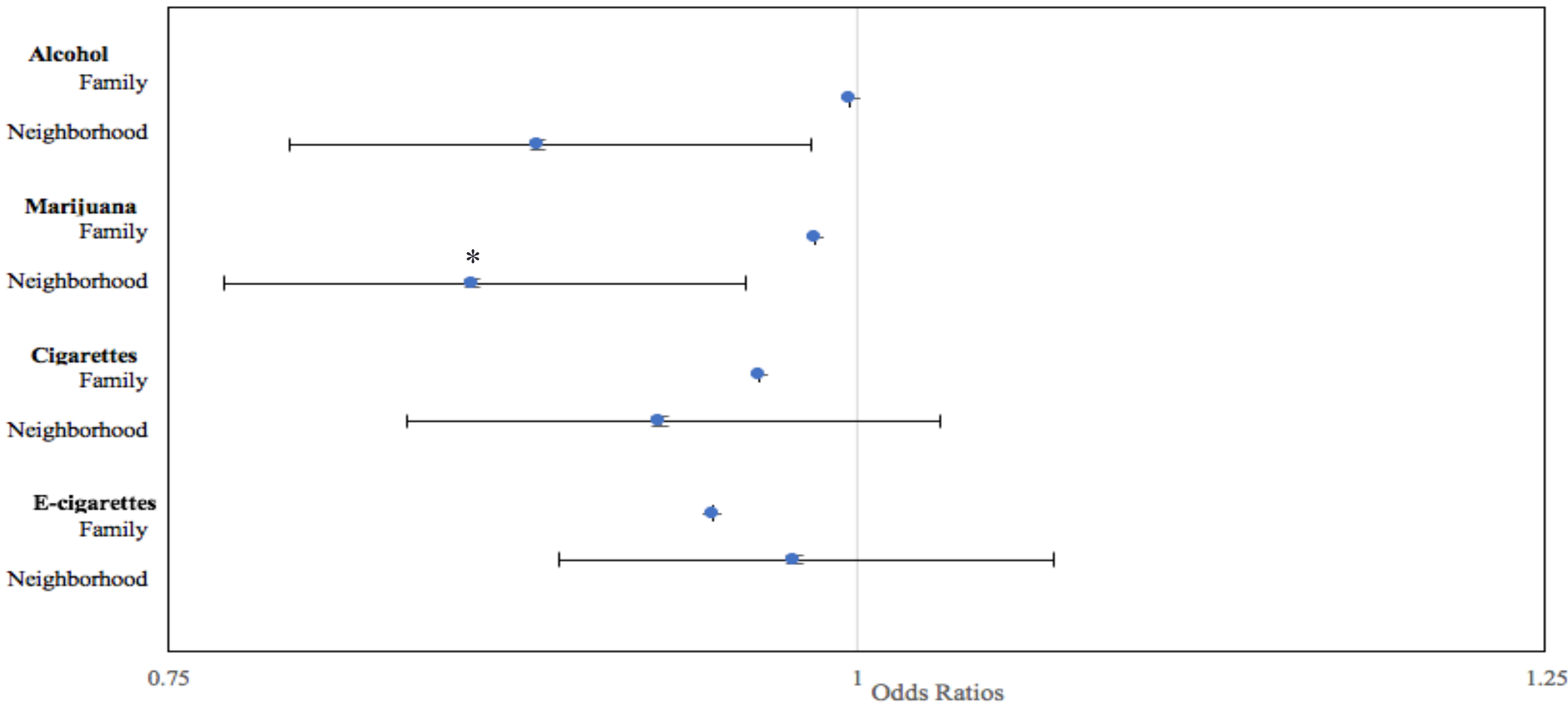
RESULTS

Figure 1. Odds ratios of family and neighborhood ties predicting lifetime use of alcohol, marijuana, cigarettes, and e-cigarettes for females



Note. All models controlled for age. * Significant odd ratio

Figure 2. Odds ratios of family and neighborhood ties predicting lifetime use of alcohol, marijuana, cigarettes, and e-cigarettes for males



Note. All models controlled for age. * Significant odd ratio

Table 1. Participants

Variable	Total Sample n = 353 (%)
Gender	
Female	48.4
Male	51.6
Age	
14	14.7
15	25.8
16	27.2
17	22.4
18+	9.9
Grade Level	
9 th	25.2
10 th	28.9
11 th	24.1
12 th	21.8

DISCUSSION

The models examining the impact of neighborhood and family ties on each of the substance use outcomes functioned differently for males and females (Figures 1 and 2)

- Positive neighborhood ties lowered the likelihood of marijuana lifetime use for males but not females.
- Stronger family ties decreased the likelihood of lifetime alcohol, cigarettes, and e-cigarettes for females but not males.
- As expected, age was positively related to each outcome for females and males—except for cigarette use in males.

Implications

- Results suggest that ecodevelopmental factors related to the initiation of early substance use in adolescence function differently by gender among Latinx youth.
- Prevention programs should take into consideration the differential effect of these ecodevelopmental factors, as well as cultural context and how it varies among gender.

Limitations

- This survey only provided data from San Diego, California high schools, so it may not generalize to all Latinx youth in the country. Furthermore, an analysis weighing in on other key factors such as academic performance were not conducted.

Future Directions

- Account for a more ethnically/racially diverse breakdown of participants. The sample pooled all participants who self-identified as Latinx as one group. Taking into consideration other intersectional identities (e.g. socio-economic status, sexual orientation, generation status, etc.) would further strengthen future tailored interventions.

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