

**Title:** The Influence of Adherence to Traditional Cultural Values on Family Conflict and Emotion Dysregulation in Predicting Suicide Behavior in Latina Adolescents

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**Background:** According to nationally representative surveys (e.g., Youth Risk Behavior Survey, CDC), for the past few decades, Latina adolescents have consistently reported higher rates of suicide ideation and attempts compared to non-Hispanic White and African American adolescents. Zayas and colleagues (2005, 2008) proposed a conceptual model to help explain these data: in Latino/a families who emphasize traditional cultural values and beliefs, adolescent-parent conflict may arise when Latina adolescents exert autonomy and adapt non-traditional values, with father conflict surrounding dating behavior being especially stressful. The consequent interpersonal stress then leads to increased emotional disturbances and suicide thoughts and behaviors in the adolescent. Although this model was proposed over a decade ago, research has yet to thoroughly examine its applicability. In the present study, we utilized this “cultural values” model to examine suicide behavior in Latina adolescents. **Methods:** Participants were 368 Mexican-American female students (aged 18 and 19) enrolled in a south Texas university and living with mother and father. Participants completed the Suicidal Behaviors Questionnaire-Revised, Beck Hopelessness Scale, Beck Depression Scale-II, Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale, Conflict Behavior Questionnaire to measure conflict with parents, and the Virtuous and Chaste subscale of the Marianismo Beliefs Scale, which measures gender role expectations for Latina females. Data were collected through Qualtrics online survey software. **Results:** Pearson correlations indicated that lower adherence to virtuous and chaste expectations was significantly associated with father conflict ( $r = .20, p < .001$ ), emotion dysregulation ( $r = .11, p = .02$ ), hopelessness ( $r = .17, p < .001$ ), depression ( $r = .14, p = .005$ ), and suicide behavior ( $r = .18, p < .001$ ); and that father conflict was significantly associated with emotion dysregulation ( $r = .29, p < .001$ ), depression ( $r = .37, p < .001$ ), hopelessness ( $r = .28, p < .001$ ), and suicide behavior ( $r = .35, p < .001$ ). A moderated mediation bootstrap analysis (Hayes, 2015) indicated that virtuous and chaste expectations had a significant indirect effect on suicide behavior through the interaction of father conflict and emotion dysregulation (unstandardized coefficient = .05,  $CI = .09, .02$ ). A plot of the interaction revealed that adolescents with high emotion dysregulation and high father conflict reported significantly greater suicide behavior than adolescents with low emotion dysregulation and low father conflict. **Conclusion:** Our findings provide support for the cultural values model. They suggest that lack of adherence to traditional values and beliefs in Latina adolescents may lead to increased conflicts with father which, in turn, may lead to increased suicide behavior dependent on the level of emotion dysregulation experienced by the adolescent. Research and clinical implications will be discussed.