



Parental Monitoring, Solicitation, and Adolescent Disclosure in Contexts of Violence: Insights from Rural and Urban Mexico

Patrick T. Quintero, Eva S. Adame Montelongo, Ashley M. Lopez, & Andrea S. Medrano
Department of Psychology, University of Pittsburgh



In rural Mexico, parental knowledge compensates when family cohesion falls short, but in urban Mexico, community violence overwhelms family-level protection

Background

- Parental monitoring refers to parents' awareness of their children's whereabouts, activities, and peer associations (Dishion & McMahon, 1998)
- Parental monitoring was later reconceptualized as parental knowledge, encompassing three dimensions: adolescent disclosure, parental monitoring, & parental solicitation (Stattin & Kerr, 2000)
- Each dimension may differentially protect adolescents from community violence exposure (CVE)
- Family cohesion, the emotional closeness and commitment among family members, may buffer CVE outcomes by strengthening the protective reach of parental knowledge within the family system
- Yet research examining how parental knowledge and family cohesion jointly protect against CVE remains limited, particularly among Mexican adolescents across rural and urban contexts

Method

Fortaleza Mexicana Rural Sample

- $N = 200$ Mexican adolescents
- $M_{age} = 14.9$ years ($SD = 1.4$)
- Gender:** 58% girls, 42% boys
- Setting:** A public middle and high school in San José del Rincón, State of Mexico
- Data collection:** April–May 2021; Spanish paper and pencil surveys



MAPI Study Urban Sample

- $N = 346$ Mexican adolescents
- $M_{age} = 13.02$ years ($SD = .98$)
- Gender:** 47.8% girls, 52.2% boys
- Setting:** Two public middle schools in Uruapan, Michoacán
- Data collection:** November 2024; Spanish Qualtrics surveys on tablets



Research Aims

- Examine the associations between parental knowledge dimensions (parental monitoring, parental solicitation, & adolescent disclosure), and adolescents' CVE (witnessing and personal victimization)
- Test whether family cohesion moderates the links between each parental knowledge dimension and CVE
- Compare these patterns across rural and urban Mexican contexts

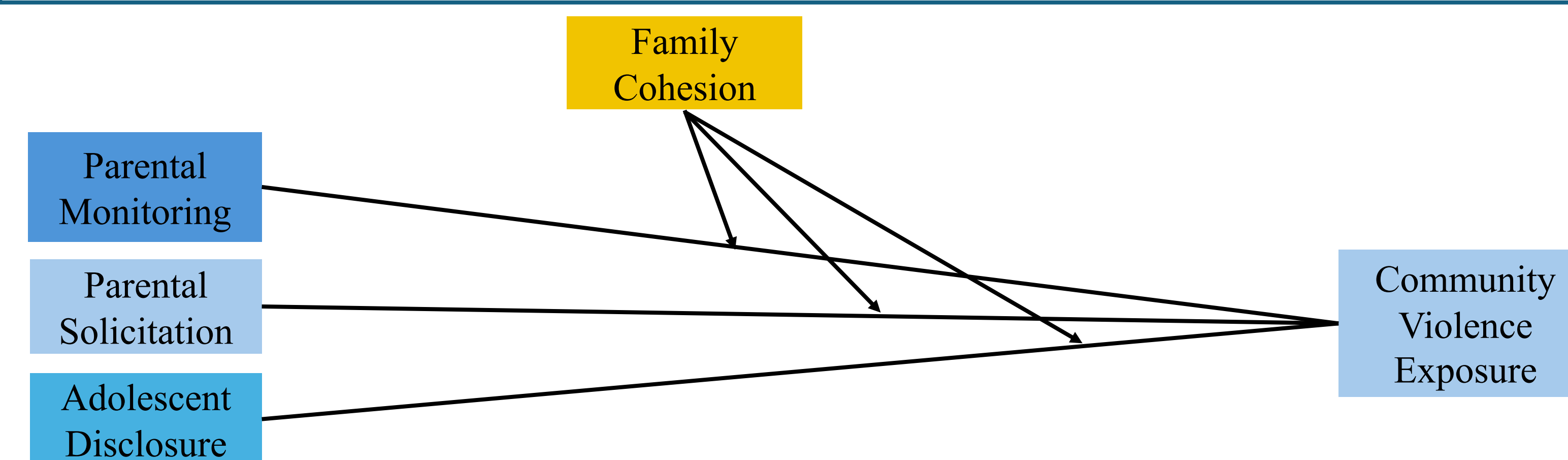


Figure 1. Family Cohesion as a Moderator in the Links Between of Parental Monitoring and CVE

Analyses

- Analyses were conducted separately for rural and urban samples in SPSS V.30
- Six hierarchical regression models were estimated, examining associations between each parental knowledge dimension and each CVE outcome
- Covariates included age, gender, father's education, and site (school in the urban sample; neighborhood in the rural sample)
- Moderation was tested following Aiken and West (1991) protocol

Main Effect Results

- In the rural sample, all three dimensions of parental knowledge were significantly associated with lower personal victimization
- In the urban sample, adolescent disclosure and parental monitoring were similarly protective, but solicitation was not
- Across both samples, no parental knowledge dimension was significantly associated with witnessing violence

Family Cohesion Moderates the Association Between Parental Knowledge and Personal Victimization (Rural Sample)

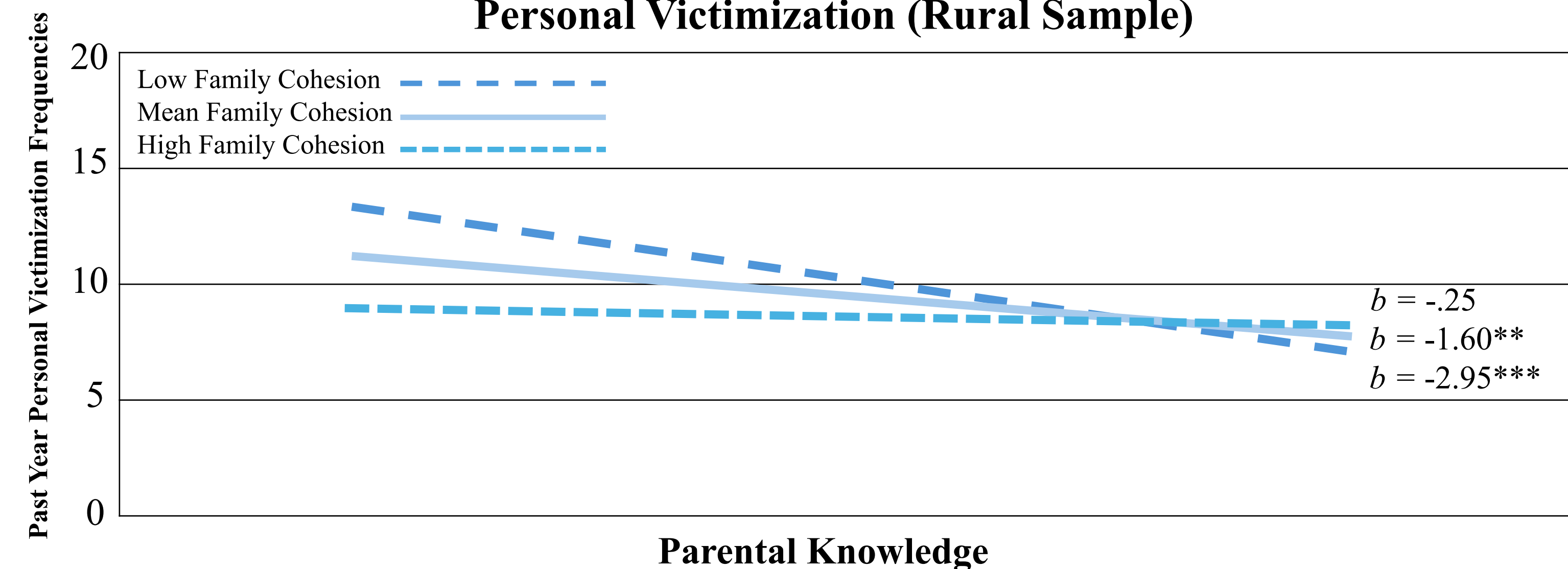


Figure 2. Simple Slopes of Parental Knowledge on Personal Victimization at Low, Mean, and High Family Cohesion

Results

- At low family cohesion, all dimensions of parental knowledge were significantly associated with lower personal victimization
- At average family cohesion, associations remained significant but attenuated relative to low cohesion
- At high family cohesion, associations were no longer significant, as victimization was already low regardless of monitoring level
- Family cohesion did not moderate associations with witnessing violence
- These protective dynamics were not observed in the urban sample, suggesting family cohesion buffering may vary by community context

Discussion

- Parental knowledge may signal parental presence, co-occurring with reduced youth engagement in high-risk environments beyond just acquiring knowledge
- Parental knowledge functioned as a compensatory resource at low levels of family cohesion, stepping in as a secondary protective mechanism when cohesion was lowest
- Rural and urban communities likely differ in kinship density, collective efficacy, and exposure patterns, which may shape how parental knowledge and cohesion operate as protective processes

Implications

- Strengthening family cohesion may be a key violence prevention strategy in rural communities where kinship networks amplify its protective reach
- Interventions targeting CVE among Mexican adolescents may need separate strategies for witnessing versus victimization, since family-based protective processes protective dynamics operated on victimization but not on witnessing
- Family-based interventions likely require community-specific adaptation, leveraging kinship networks in rural settings and extra familial systems in urban ones

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For more information, contact:

Patrick T. Quintero: patrick.quintero@pitt.edu
Sofia Adame: sofia.adame@pitt.edu



Measures	Items	Sample Item	α
Parental Monitoring	9	How much do your parents KNOW what you do during your free time?	Rural = .87 Urban = .81
Parental Solicitation	8	How often do your parents ASK where you go when you are out with friends at night?	Rural = .91 Urban = .88
Adolescent Disclosure	8	How often do you TELL your parents where you go and do after school?	Rural = .92 Urban = .89
Family Cohesion	8	Family members were supportive of each other during difficult times.	Rural = .88 Urban = .85
Witnessing Violence	13	Seen someone being threatened or assaulted?	Rural = .91 Urban = .90
Personal Victimization	10	Been personally threatened or assaulted?	Rural = .88 Urban = .89

Table 1. Descriptive Information for Study Measures