

# Promoting Resilience in Young Adults from Mixed Legal Status Families



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## Introduction

Young adults from mixed legal status families, in which members have different immigration statuses, are at an increased risk for poor mental health (Alif et al., 2019).

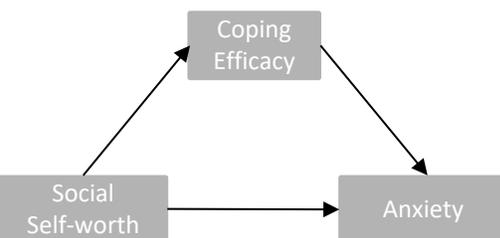
Research has demonstrated that higher social support from one's community may be protective for under-represented groups (Hurd et al., 2018), suggesting that social self-worth (i.e. perceptions of mattering or deservingness of social resources) may also be associated with lower anxiety symptoms.

In addition, engaging in coping efficacy, a form of resilience, has found to buffer the effects of stress and has been linked to positive psychological outcomes among young adults (Smith et al. 2016).

**The current study examined the associations between generalized anxiety symptoms, social self-worth, and coping efficacy among young adults from mixed legal status families.**

## Hypothesis

**We hypothesized that: (1)** low social self-worth would be associated with greater generalized anxiety **(2)** coping efficacy would mediate the relationship between social self-worth and generalized anxiety



## Participants

A sample of **231 young adults** (Mage = 22; Female = 65%) were recruited from a state university.

**Race/Ethnicity:** 64.5% Hispanic/Latinx, 5.6% Asian American, 5.6% White, 5% African American/Black, 4.3% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 2.2% Middle Eastern, 16.1% multi-ethnic/other

## Methods

Young adults between the age of 18-35 years old who reported having at least one "undocumented" family member living in the United States, participated in an anonymous online study that examined stress and resilience.

### Measures

- **Coping Efficacy** was assessed using the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC). The 10-item self-report questionnaire measure resilience. Resilience can be viewed as *the ability to overcome challenges and adversity*. The CD-RISC-10 specifically looks at the cognitive aspects of resilience (Madewell & Ponce-Garcia, 2016). Higher scores indicate higher resilience.
- **Social Self-Worth** was assessed using the Social Self-Worth scale, a subscale of the Socio-Ecological Self Worth scale. A measure developed by Dr. Melissa Hagan and Dr. Abigail Batchelder that assesses self-worth (i.e. felt perceptions of one's mattering and deservingness of equity and psychological, social, and material resources). Higher scores indicate higher social self-worth.
- **Generalized Anxiety** was assessed using the Generalized Anxiety Disorder - 7 (GAD-7). The 7-item questionnaire measures and identifies possible cases of GAD and/or assess the severity of the symptoms. Higher scores indicated higher generalized anxiety symptoms.

## Results

- As expected, greater social self-worth was found to be associated with lower generalized anxiety symptoms ( $B = -.21, p = .002$ ) and greater coping efficacy ( $B = .32, p < .001$ ).
- Additionally, coping efficacy was found to partially account for the association between social self-worth and generalized anxiety symptoms (95% CI: -1.58, -.32)

## Discussion

Individuals from mixed legal status have been found to be at an increased risk of anxiety problems, potentially as a result of immigration-related stress (Alif et al., 2019). Less is known about protective factors that might promote well-being in this population.

- Results suggest that higher levels of social self-worth to be related with lower levels of generalized anxiety symptoms, among a population of young adults from mixed legal status families.
- Additionally, higher social-self worth was found to be related with higher self-efficacy. However, self-efficacy was found to partially explain the relationship between social self-worth and generalized anxiety symptoms.

Our findings shed a light on the importance of the role of social self-worth and coping efficacy in promoting resiliency among young adults from mixed legal status families.

## References

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