Exploring the Influence of Acculturative Stress, Social Support, and Family Norms on Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) Victimization and Perpetration

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to the 12 million people who survive intimate partner violence every year, to the 463,634 people who are victimized by rape and sexual assault each year, to the over 1,500 women killed by an intimate partner this year, and especially to every survivor who has not been counted.

I hope my work sees and hears you and continues to do so throughout my career.

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Abstract of Dissertation

Exploring the Influence of Acculturative Stress, Social Support, and Family Norms on Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) Victimization and Perpetration:
A Mixed Method Analysis and Structural Equation Modeling

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) remains a critical public health issue, with higher prevalence among Latine immigrant communities, where lifetime rates range from 30% to 50%. These communities face distinct challenges, including acculturative stress from adapting to new cultural norms and traditional family dynamics, which contribute to IPV. This study employed an overall mixed-method approach to explore the impact of acculturative stress, social support, and family norms on IPV victimization and perpetration among Latine immigrants in Langley Park, Maryland.

A total of 269 adult participants took part in the study, which utilized the Revised Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS2) to assess IPV across emotional, physical, sexual, and stalking domains. Acculturative stress was measured through the Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental (SAFE) Acculturative Stress scale, including factors such as language proficiency and discrimination. Social support was measured via Social Cohesion and Reciprocal Exchange Scales. Nested logistic regression and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) were employed to analyze the quantitative data, while 47 qualitative interviews provided insights into participants' lived experiences of IPV and stress.

SEM revealed acculturative stress was significantly associated with emotional violence ($\beta = 0.184$, $p < 0.05$) and stalking victimization ($\beta = 0.195$, $p < 0.05$). Language barriers were

linked to higher physical violence perpetration ($\beta = 0.325$, $p < 0.001$) and sexual victimization ($\beta = 0.242$, $p < 0.01$). Social support was found to alleviate acculturative stress ($\beta = -0.214$, $p < 0.01$) but did not have a direct effect on IPV. Nested regression analysis indicated that acculturative stress was a significant predictor for physical and sexual victimization and stalking perpetration, while family and relationship norms played a significant role in predicting sexual violence perpetration and victimization. Emotional violence perpetration was influenced independently by both family norms and acculturative stress.

The qualitative findings revealed that acculturative stress, driven by economic pressures, language barriers, and shifting gender roles, heightened the risk of IPV. Men struggled with losing control as women gained financial independence, leading to emotional violence and stalking. Social isolation and fear of deportation further trapped IPV victims into staying in unhealthy relationships. Additionally, machismo and traditional gender expectations intensified conflict, especially when women entered the workforce. A lack of social cohesion within immigrant communities compounded these stressors, making it harder for individuals to cope with IPV.

Acculturative stress and shifting family norms significantly shape IPV dynamics among Latino immigrants. Culturally tailored interventions addressing both acculturative stress and shifting gender norms are essential to reducing IPV in these communities. The integration of social support mechanisms and healthy relationship communication, alongside targeted efforts to alleviate language and economic barriers, is critical for developing effective IPV prevention and intervention strategies.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Significance

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) impacts a significant portion of the population, and 41% of women and 26% of men have reported experiencing some form of IPV in their lifetime (CDC, 2022). These prevalence rates are even higher among immigrants to the U.S., particularly Latine women, ranging from 30% to 50% over their lifetimes (Marrs Fuchsel & Brummett, 2021). While immigration experiences may vary, common factors are shared among most immigrants, including disenfranchisement, feelings of isolation due to relocation, language barriers in accessing services, and encounters with discrimination within social service and criminal justice systems (Amanor-Boadu et al., 2012; Sabri et al., 2018). Both the perpetration and victimization of IPV emerge from a confluence of stressors, including pre-migration stressors and chronic stress associated with acculturation which includes discrimination, poverty, and limited access to services (Cao et al., 2023; Njie-Carr et al., 2021). Empirical evidence illustrates a negative correlation between acculturation and the experience of IPV among U.S. immigrants, attributed to an increased awareness and comprehension of available resources (Alvarez et al., 2020; Nava et al., 2014). Additionally, the absence of social support within the new context can theoretically amplify the effects of IPV (Fortin et al., 2012).

Social norms within communities, particularly those concerning gender roles, can significantly shape individuals' health and their propensity for engaging in IPV. In the context of immigrant couples, a notable stressor arises from the dissonance between their personal values, the socio-cultural norms of the origin country, and norms of the host country. Elevated rates of IPV are observed in immigrant couples when there is a substantial disparity between traditional

roles within the couple and the acculturated role-related behaviors of the host community (Martin & Garcia, 2011).

The population of Latine immigrants has experienced considerable growth in the U.S., accounting for more than half of the total population increase from 2010 to 2019, and Latines are projected to comprise 25% of the total population by 2065 (The Office of Minority Health, 2021; Maldonado et al., 2020). As the Latine population continues to expand, it becomes increasingly imperative to comprehend the risks and prevalence of IPV within this demographic. A comprehensive national study conducted in 2005 revealed that IPV incidence and recurrence rates were significantly higher among Latine couples compared to non-Latine couples (Caetano et al., 2005). Insights from the 2016-2017 NISVS survey further underscored this, indicating that 42.1% of Latinas and 40% of Latinos reported experiencing some form of IPV (CDC, 2022).

Sociodemographic variables such as lower education levels, income instability, and lower socioeconomic status disproportionately impact Latine communities, rendering them more susceptible to IPV compared to non-Latines (Jackson et al., 2015; Stockman et al., 2015). However, the distinctive challenges of acculturation and evolving social norms particularly influence this immigrant group's dynamics with regard to violence perpetration and victimization.

A significant point to highlight is that much of the existing research on IPV predominantly concentrates on the victimization of women by male partners. However, it is crucial to emphasize that this does not imply that IPV is exclusively relevant to individuals identifying as female. Heterosexual men can also be targets of IPV instigated by their female partners. Regrettably, the limited extent of research and attention directed towards this aspect has resulted in a lack of comprehension regarding the prevalence of IPV victimization among men

and the underlying sociocultural factors that render men susceptible to such experiences (Scott-Storey et al., 2022).

In this dissertation, the primary objective was to examine the intricate interplay between IPV and the challenges stemming from immigration across two distinct research papers. The first paper aimed to construct a comprehensive structural model that discerns the correlation between acculturative stress and both victimization and perpetration of IPV among male and female individuals. Subsequently, a gender-segregated model was formulated to identify specific facets of acculturative stress that may impact the genders disparately. Beyond investigating the connection between acculturative stress and IPV, I intended to incorporate an exploration of the moderating influence of social support. This involved constructing and comparing models for each gender, thus elucidating potential variations in how social support affects the IPV victimization and perpetration depending on the gender of the victim.

The second paper in this dissertation employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative analyses, to explore the connections between family and relationship norms, acculturation, and IPV victimization and perpetration. The quantitative segment of the study was designed to identify correlations between family norms, gender norms, relationship norms, acculturative stress, and the occurrence of IPV experiences. Given that a substantial proportion of acculturative stress is associated with the dynamics of shifting social norms (Jewkes, 2002), the qualitative component of the study sought to further elaborate and contextualize quantitative findings by thematically analyzing the experiences shared by immigrant Latine study participants through in-depth interviews. These interviews served the purpose of identifying patterns in stressors or circumstances related to evolving norms in both home and host countries that contributed to experiences of IPV.

Intimate Partner Violence

IPV is defined as the abuse or aggression that occurs within a romantic or sexual relationship. It encompasses a range of behaviors that can vary in severity, from minor threats to physical and sexual abuse. These behaviors include threats, stalking, emotional manipulation, emotional abuse, economic abuse, physical violence, and sexual violence (CDC, 2022; Sabina et al., 2015).

In the United States, IPV is a significant issue affecting both women and men. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2022), approximately 41% of women and 26% of men have reported experiencing some form of IPV in their lifetime. Furthermore, it is reported that 75% of female survivors and 48% of male survivors of IPV have experienced injuries directly related to these incidents (CDC, 2022). The 2016-2017 The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence (NISVIS) survey provides some lifetime and past year prevalence for select types of IPV, as seen in the table below.

IPV	Female		Male	
	Lifetime	Past 12 months	Lifetime	Past 12 months
Physical IPV, Sexual IPV or Stalking	47.3	7.3	44.2	6.8
Emotional/Psychological IPV	49.4	6.7	45.1	7.0

Table 1.1: IPV prevalence in the U.S., NISVS 2016-17 (CDC, 2022).

Forms of IPV

Disaggregating IPV into distinct components is crucial for accurately classifying the specific forms of violence experienced by individuals, thereby facilitating a more precise estimation of prevalence and associated risk factors. Moreover, it is essential to recognize that

protection measures and interventions required for individuals facing different types of violence can significantly differ from one another.

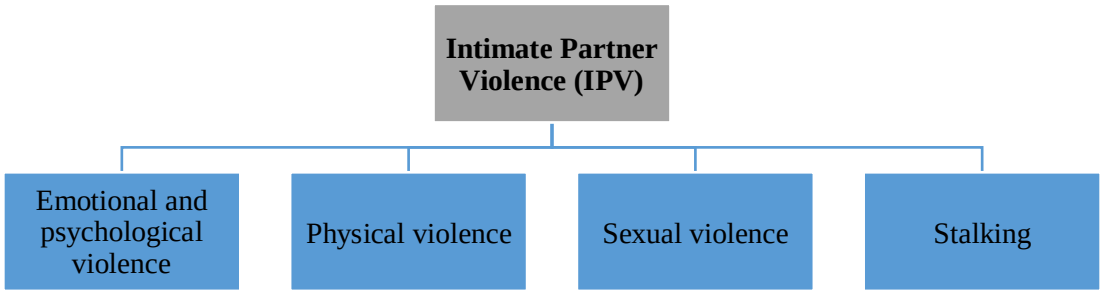


Figure 1.1: Types of IPV commonly experienced by victims

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse, also known as psychological aggression, refers to verbally and behaviorally degrading actions carried out by the perpetrator on the victim with the intention of exerting control. These actions can include threats, mocking, and unreasonable restrictions (Capaldi et al., 2012; CDC, 2022; Karakurt & Silver, 2013). Behaviors associated with emotional and psychological abuse encompass name-calling, swearing, blackmailing, threatening physical violence towards the victim or their family, restricting access to information and resources, and monitoring behavior (Ali et al., 2016; Vidourek, 2017). Isolation, a form of emotional abuse, is often part of a controlling dynamic in which abusers limit or cut off the victim's contact with their family and potentially supportive social networks (Bellotti et al., 2021; Denham et al., 2007). While emotional abuse can co-occur with other forms of abuse, it commonly serves as a precursor to escalated physical and sexual abuse (Dye, 2020; Karakurt & Silver, 2013).

According to Miller's hypothesis, the primary aim of emotional abuse is to fundamentally undermine the victim's sense of self-worth and self-esteem while eroding their capacity for logical reasoning, ultimately creating a sense of helplessness and isolation in the victim's life (Miller, 1996; Silva-Martínez, 2016). This need for control from the perpetrator and subsequent feelings of helplessness in the victim result in a toxic dependence on the abuser, leaving the victim unempowered (Bastian, 2019; Bornstein, 2006). Another form of emotional abuse is property damage, wherein inanimate objects are intentionally destroyed during aggressive episodes, often to instill fear of possible physical violence or to destabilize the victim's economic stability by jeopardizing essential resources (Karakurt & Silver, 2013; Trickett et al., 2009).

Emotional abuse exhibits the highest prevalence among types of IPV, as indicated by a meta-analysis conducted by Carney et al. (2012), which found that on average, 80% of the overall sample of the review had experienced some form of emotional abuse, either through expressions of aggression (40% women vs. 32% men) or coercive control (41% women vs. 43% men) (Carney & Barner, 2012). The impact of emotional abuse has significant consequences throughout the life course, as women who have experienced emotional abuse report higher rates of mental illnesses such as depression, anxiety, suicidality, disordered eating, and PTSD (Stockman et al., 2015).

Physical Abuse

Physical violence refers to the use of physical contact and force to cause harm or injury to a partner, ranging from minor acts such as light pushes and slaps to severe beatings, and in extreme cases, it can even lead to fatalities (Capaldi et al., 2012; CDC, 2022). Acts of severe

physical violence may involve stabbing, burning, or the threat or use of weapons that can result in long-term injuries (Ali et al., 2016).

It is important to note that physical violence often escalates to sexual abuse in a significant portion of reported cases, ranging from one-third to more than half of the cases (Krug et al., 2002). In addition to the increased prevalence of mental health disorders, female victims of IPV also experience adverse physical health conditions, including chronic pain, gastrointestinal problems, cardiovascular disorders, and neurological issues (Stockman et al., 2015). These physical health consequences further highlight the profound impact of IPV on the well-being of individuals who experience such abuse.

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence involves the emotional or physical coercion of a partner who does not provide consent to engage in any form of sexual activity. This coercion can occur through forceful actions or by disregarding verbal or behavioral cues that indicate a lack of consent, such as explicit rejection or resistance (Ali et al., 2016; Capaldi et al., 2012; CDC, 2022). Reproductive coercion, a form of sexual violence, occurs when a partner seeks to control the victim's reproductive choices, which can include attempts to impregnate the partner without consent, dictating whether to continue or terminate a pregnancy, or interfering with the use of contraception (Basile et al., 2013).

Both sexual violence and reproductive coercion have been strongly associated with acute and chronic health problems. These health risks include vaginal tearing, pelvic pain, dysmenorrhea, cervical neoplasia, and sexually transmitted infections, in addition to the mental health disorders associated with experiencing violence (Rakovec-Felser, 2014; Stockman et al.,

2015). These adverse health consequences highlight the significant physical and psychological impact of sexual violence and reproductive coercion on survivors.

Stalking

Stalking refers to a repetitive and unwelcome pattern of attention from a current or former intimate partner that instills fear for one's safety (CDC, 2022). The behaviors associated with stalking are akin to those seen in emotional and psychological abuse, as they involve dominance and control (Mechanic et al., 2000). Common stalking behaviors include surveillance, receiving unwanted calls or messages, unauthorized photography, threats towards the individual's new partner, leaving threatening items in personal spaces, and cyberstalking (NISVS, 2022; Mechanic et al., 2000). Cyberstalking is a more recent form of stalking that involves threats through electronic and social media platforms. This can include monitoring personal communication, sending threatening emails or social media messages, inundating the victim with unwanted contact, and using the victim's information to impersonate them online (Southworth et al., 2007).

In the United States, approximately 1 in 3 women and 1 in 6 men have experienced stalking at some point in their lives. Among those individuals, 58% of women and 49% of men experienced stalking before the age of 25, and 24% of women and 19% of men experienced stalking as minors (NISVS, 2022). A study conducted by Mechanic et al. in 2000 found that nearly half of the women who reported experiencing physical IPV had also been stalked by their partner within the six months following the report (Mechanic et al., 2000).

IPV in Latine Populations

The Latine population in the United States has experienced significant growth, accounting for more than half of the population growth from 2010 to 2019 and is projected to represent 25% of the total population by 2065 (The Office of Minority Health, 2021; Maldonado et al., 2020). As the Latine population continues to grow, it becomes increasingly important to understand the risks and prevalence of IPV within this group. Previous estimates suggest that lifetime experiences of physical IPV among the population ranges from 19.5% to 35.2%, but the level of emotional abuse has not been extensively studied (Sabina et al., 2015). A large national study conducted in 2005 found that IPV incidence and recurrence rates were significantly higher among Latine couples compared to non-Latine couples (Caetano et al., 2005). The 2016-2017 NISVS survey provided further insights, indicating that 42.1% of Latinas and 40% of Latinos experiencing some form of IPV (CDC, 2022).

Demographic factors such as lower education levels, income instability, and lower socioeconomic status disproportionately affect Latine populations, placing them at higher risk of IPV compared to non-Latine White Americans (Jackson et al., 2015; Stockman et al., 2015). Non-Latina White women have been found to have 28% lower odds of experiencing violence compared to Latinas (Yakubovich et al., 2018). Latinas also report higher rates of partner condom refusal and non-consensual pregnancy attempts compared to White non-Latinas (Basile et al., 2013). Income instability and low socioeconomic status act as predictors of increased economic abuse, with Latinas experiencing higher rates of economic control, exploitation, and employment sabotage, which create barriers to leaving violent relationships (Davila et al., 2021). Latine populations are more vulnerable to the consequences of IPV, with Latina victims being

more likely to experience poor mental health and suicidal ideation compared to victims from other racial and ethnic backgrounds (Cummings et al., 2013).

Demographic, Social, and Cultural Predictors of IPV

Demographic factors, such as age, education, socio-economic status, and gender, play a significant role in determining those factors that may affect the risk associated with both perpetration and victimization of IPV. Research has consistently shown that women are at higher risk of IPV victimization compared to men (Capaldi et al., 2012). Furthermore, older individuals tend to have lower rates of IPV victimization (Capaldi et al., 2012; Yakubovich et al., 2018). In a study conducted by Karakurt and Silver (2013), it was found that comparatively younger women had the highest rates of emotional abuse-related social isolation compared to men and older women.

Education serves as a protective factor against IPV, with higher levels of education being associated with lower risk of experiencing IPV (Capaldi et al., 2012; Jackson et al., 2015). For instance, women with less than a high school education had 40% higher odds of experiencing IPV in adulthood compared to those with at least a high school education (Yakubovich et al., 2018). On the other hand, lower educational attainment and lower IQ in men are associated with higher risk of perpetrating IPV (Capaldi et al., 2012). Similarly, higher income and socio-economic status act as protective factors against IPV victimization (Capaldi et al., 2012; Jackson et al., 2015).

Substance use, particularly alcohol consumption, has been found to be a significant predictor of increased aggression and a causal factor in IPV. Problematic alcohol use is associated with higher rates of IPV perpetration and victimization (Capaldi et al., 2012; Preiser

& Assari, 2017). Studies have indicated that around 80% of male IPV perpetrators use alcohol during the period of abuse, and individuals with alcohol use disorder have approximately ten times higher risk of violence perpetration compared to those without (Preiser & Assari, 2017).

Mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety, and personality disorders, have a strong association with IPV due to their comorbidity with impulse control problems, which are predictors of IPV (Preiser & Assari, 2017). For example, a study by Lehrer et al. (2006) found that women with severe depression had a higher likelihood of experiencing IPV compared to those without depression (Capaldi et al., 2012).

Exposure to violence during childhood plays a significant role in the risk of both perpetrating and experiencing IPV. A substantial proportion of individuals in the United States have been victims of violence perpetrated by a parent or guardian before the age of 18, and a significant percentage have been exposed to severe inter-parental physical violence (McKinney et al., 2009). Growing up in a household with consistent IPV or being exposed to consistent violence as a child is strongly linked to a higher risk of both victimization and perpetration of IPV (Capaldi et al., 2012). Men who have experienced moderate or severe childhood violence have a significantly higher risk of perpetrating violence towards their female partners, and similar patterns are observed in women who have lived in violent households as a child (McKinney et al., 2009). These associations align with the concept of the cycle of violence and intergenerational transmission of violent behavior within families and closely-knit communities (Cummings et al., 2013).

Socio-cultural predictors of IPV

Family and Gender Norms

Cultural and social norms exert a significant influence on individual behavior, including the use of violence as conflict resolution or as ways to maintain the status quo within a family. These norms, particularly those related to gender, can either positively or negatively influence people's health and their propensity for perpetrating IPV (Shakya et al., 2022; Nnyombi et al., 2022). Feminist theories of IPV argue that IPV is intrinsically linked to the existing patriarchal organization of society, which marginalizes women and perpetuates gender-based violence (Rakovec-Felser, 2014; Sabri et al., 2018). Societal gender inequities and patriarchal family structures create an environment where IPV is tolerated (Fine et al., 2021). Research across cultures suggests that societies with stronger ideologies of male dominance tend to have higher rates of IPV (Jewkes, 2002).

Traditional gender roles and societal expectations encourage men to use violence as a means of asserting their masculinity, while women are expected to conform to submissive and passive roles (González & Rodríguez-Planas, 2020; Murnen et al., 2002). Social norms often place women in disadvantaged positions, as men believe they have innate rights over their families, which internally justifies their use of violence (Anderson, 2002). Studies have found women who adhere to traditional gender roles are at higher risk of experiencing IPV (Fine et al., 2021; Yakubovich et al., 2018). In societies where violence against women is more prevalent and accepted, women may be more likely to experience, accept, or rationalize IPV (González & Rodríguez-Planas, Linos et al., 2013, Sabri et al., 2018).

At the individual level, men who hold conservative ideas about the social status of women are more likely to perpetrate violence, while women who hold more liberal ideas are at

greater risk of experiencing violence as there is stress from men to reassert traditional norms (Jewkes, 2002; Schuler & Nazneen, 2018). Violence against women is not only an expression of male power and dominance but is also rooted in male vulnerability stemming from societal expectations of manhood that are often unattainable due to factors such as poverty, changing roles and women in employment taking away from men's perceived power (An & Sh, 2021; Jewkes, 2002; Murnen et al., 2002).

It is important to acknowledge that feminist theories of IPV tend to overlook violence faced by men in intimate partnerships, as they focus primarily on violence against women (Anderson, 2002). In fact, the patriarchal hegemonies play a negative role even in the IPV experience of men since the ideas of masculinity prevents men from reporting or even acknowledging IPV due to the fear of being considered "weak" or "less manly" (Bates, 2020). However, studies have shown that male victimization is prevalent across different racial and socioeconomic groups (Anderson, 2002, Hines & Douglas, 2009).

Contrary to common perceptions, several studies have identified similar rates of IPV perpetrated by both men and women (Archer, 2000; Carmo et al., 2011). Anti-oppressive feminist frameworks highlight the importance of examining power imbalances within relationships as a core factor contributing to abuse. This perspective emphasizes that power dynamics extend beyond physical strength, encompassing economic control, emotional manipulation, and social status. These forms of power are not merely employed for self-defense but often serve as tools for exerting control, dominance, or even seeking revenge (Archer, 2000; Ben Simon et al., 2024). Data from a UK survey conducted between 2012 and 2013 revealed that men reported higher instances of non-physical forms of IPV, such as emotional or financial abuse (56% of men versus 51% of women). In contrast, women were more likely to report

threats of violence (23% of women compared to 8% of men) and more severe sexual harassment (11% of women versus 3% of men) (Flatley, 2016). The underreporting of male victimization is often attributed to fears of being labeled as victims, shame, judgment within a patriarchal context, or minimizing the impact of the violence (Machado et al., 2020; Taylor et al., 2021). While the issue of male victimization in IPV remains contentious in some circles, it is undeniable that men, like women, can be victims of partner violence, even if the nature of the abuse differs in severity (Migliaccio, 2002). Therefore, it is crucial to approach IPV as a degendered issue, ensuring that all victims' voices are heard and validated.

Acculturation and Acculturative Stress

Acculturation is the phenomenon signifying the transitional mechanism wherein individuals originating from immigrant backgrounds assimilate to the ideological systems, communal conventions, and conduct patterns prevalent within the dominant culture of the host society they have relocated to (Berry, 2006; Smokowski et al., 2009). The theoretical construct formulated by Berry is widely acknowledged and offers valuable explanation regarding the acculturation process. Berry (2006) posits that heightened exposure to a novel culture elicits gradual transformations in the personality, identity, attitudes, and other psychological and behavioral attributes of individuals, eventually aligning them with the prevailing cultural values of the adopted culture.

The degree and effectiveness of the acculturation process are influenced by a factor termed as "cultural distance," which signifies the dissimilarity between the culture of origin of immigrants and the prevailing culture of the dominant society. Extensive cultural disparities are associated with lower levels of acculturation among members of the immigrant community

(Smokowski et al., 2009). Furthermore, the extent of an individual's engagement and identification with their original culture, their proficiency in the language of the host society, and their active involvement in the cultural practices of the new dominant society also play pivotal roles in determining the magnitude and success of the acculturation process (Lara et al., 2005; Smokowski et al., 2008).

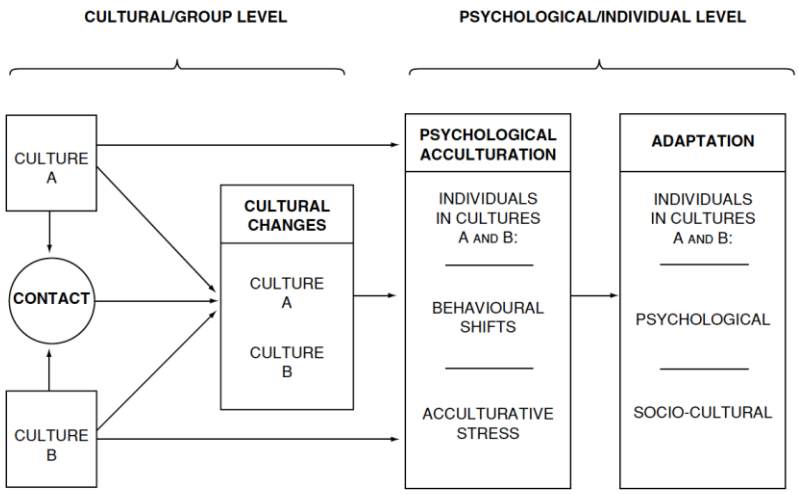


Figure 1.2: Acculturation theory as defined by Berry (Berry, 2006)

The phenomenon of cultural transformation and amalgamation between two distinct cultures gives rise to the concept of psychological acculturation, which encompasses the various challenges and strains associated with this process and the subsequent behavioral modifications individuals must undergo to alleviate perceived stress. It is through psychological acculturation that immigrants attain complete social, cultural, and emotional adaptation within the dominant culture.

The integration of a new culture into an individual's life often entails a significant change that commonly leads to heightened levels of stress. This aligns with the cognitive theory of stress

and coping presented by Lazarus et al., which posits that stress arises from the perception of insufficient resources and the perceived negative consequences on personal well-being resulting from the experience of encountering a new set of events (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984,Arbona et al., 2010).

Acculturative stress

Acculturative stress, as conceptualized by Berry (2006, 1997), encompasses feelings of uncertainty, anxiety, and depression that arise from the obligatory behavioral adjustments that individuals must undergo during the process of acculturation. These emotional responses are frequently associated with various challenges, including adapting to a new language, perceived intercultural discrimination, identity loss, and reconciling conflicting values (Araújo Dawson & Panchanadeswaran, 2010; Berry, 1997).

During the acculturation process, individuals begin to modify their expectations and interactions within their immediate family and peer groups, as well as their roles and beliefs regarding their responsibilities towards their family and community. This can lead to personal psychological conflicts and external conflicts within their immediate environment (Archuleta & Teasley, 2013). Similar to how heightened stress can have detrimental effects on an individual's physical and psychological well-being, elevated levels of acculturative stress present potential risks for self-harm and harm directed towards others, adverse physical and mental health outcomes, as well as challenges in achieving social integration (Smokowski et al., 2009).

Theoretical frameworks related to acculturative stress shed light on the specific characteristics that influence and shape the pathways of stress experienced during the acculturation process. These characteristics include individual factors such as age, gender, and

social support, as well as broader societal factors such as the political climate, cultural differences, and initiatives promoting structural integration (Berry, 1997). In the context of examining the predictors of acculturative stress, this section places emphasis on individual characteristics that are associated with acculturative stress, while acknowledging that structural factors fall beyond the scope of the current study.

Acculturating individuals who possess higher levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy tend to experience significantly lower levels of acculturative stress compared to those who hold negative self-perceptions (Guinn et al., 2011; Smokowski & Bacallao, 2007). In terms of gender differences, women tend to undergo a more rapid acculturation process in new cultures than men, leading to a renegotiation of interpersonal roles and increased conflict within couples (Archuleta & Teasley, 2013). This stress, stemming from incongruent cultural behaviors and values, extends to other close family members, resulting in heightened conflict within family structures (Archuleta & Teasley, 2013). Despite women's faster acculturation, their subordinate status and the multiple identities they assume as employees, mothers, wives, etc., contribute to increased acculturative stress. Conversely, men acculturate at a slower pace but often receive more family support for their personal and job-related challenges, leading to lower levels of acculturative stress despite their lower actual acculturation (Lueck & Wilson, 2011).

Immigrants who arrive at an older age generally experience elevated levels of acculturative stress in comparison to those who immigrate at a younger age. This can be attributed to the longer time older immigrants spend establishing connections in their country of origin, which increases the cultural distance they encounter upon immigrating, while younger immigrants have fewer ties to their country of origin (Hovey, 2000). The generational status of individuals also plays a significant role in acculturative stress, with first-generation immigrants

exhibiting higher levels of acculturative stress compared to subsequent generations within the same family (Kim et al., 2014). Lower income, underemployment, and lower educational levels are associated with increased self-reported levels of acculturative stress, primarily due to limited resources available to cope with stressors and conflicts (Archuleta & Teasley, 2013; Lueck & Wilson, 2011).

Migration from certain countries, particularly those afflicted by violent conflicts, represents a challenging and stressful experience due to both the violence experienced in the home country and the stressors associated with the process of immigration. Immigration stress encompasses pre-immigration experiences that may have necessitated relocation, as well as experiences during the journey to a new country (Beckerman & Corbett, 2008). Traumatic experiences encountered by immigrants can encompass a range of events, such as sexual or physical assault, witnessing violence, involvement in transactional sex, human trafficking, combat exposure, detention, deportation, chronic community violence, exposure to drug-related and political violence, or other types of traumatic incidents (Levers & Hyatt-Burkhart, 2012). In specific populations, such as those examined in this dissertation, pre-immigration stress often stems from seeking refuge from dangerous conditions, including gang violence, conflict, and war in their home countries, as well as witnessing violence against family and friends (Jolie et al., 2021; Peña-Sullivan, 2020).

In the analysis of this dissertation, three primary predictors of acculturative stress will be utilized to assess the level of stress experienced by individuals. These predictors include acculturative stress, language proficiency, and perceived discrimination in the country of settlement.

Perception of acculturative stress

The process of acculturation among immigrant groups often leads to changes in social norms, including ideas of masculinity and related norms. As societies change and women's roles expand beyond the household, traditional gender roles and hegemonic masculine norms are challenged, potentially leading to a power imbalance within dyads (Gonzalez-Guarda et al., 2023; Jewkes, 2002). This power imbalance may manifest in violence, as husbands may perceive their authority threatened by their wives' participation in work, leading to a "male backlash" in the form of IPV to reinstate the power in the relationship (An & Sh, 2021; Alesina et al., 2021).

Language proficiency

Language proficiency emerges as a significant predictor of reduced levels of acculturative stress. In this context, communication-related acculturative stress refers to the subjective stress reaction experienced by immigrants due to chronic difficulties in communicating with members of the mainstream cultural group (Byrom, 2021; Doucerain et al., 2015). This type of stress arises from breakdowns in intercultural communication, resulting in feelings of incomprehension and frustration among both native and non-native interlocutors. Notably, this form of acculturative stress may be particularly relevant in the United States due to the country's assimilationist attitudes toward immigrants, particularly those from Latine backgrounds (Lueck & Wilson, 2011). In cultures with higher assimilationist tendencies, immigrants are more likely to experience discrimination and disparagement related to their use of the native language. Furthermore, the process of acquiring a second language itself can be a stressful experience, particularly for foreign-language immigrants. Among Latine individuals adapting to life in the United States, higher English proficiency is strongly linked to lower levels of acculturative

stress. In contrast, slower language learning can negatively impact their physical and mental health by increasing acculturative stress. (Byrom, 2021; Lueck & Wilson, 2011).

Perceived discrimination

Immigrants commonly encounter ethnic discrimination, which refers to unfair and differential treatment based on their race or ethnicity by the majority population of the country they have settled in (Crengle et al., 2012). Extensive research has shown that both experiencing and perceiving discrimination have detrimental effects on the mental and physical health of individuals, primarily mediated through heightened levels of stress (Mallett et al., 2021; Sawyer et al., 2012). In fact, even the mere anticipation of discrimination or entering environments where discrimination may potentially occur can trigger a significant physiological stress response, which, for individuals perceiving it strongly, can manifest as chronic stress (Mallett et al., 2021; Sawyer et al., 2012). Perceiving discrimination against one's ethnic group can be particularly stressful, as it may instigate doubts regarding the degree of acceptance in mainstream society. Discrimination is an inherent part of the adaptation experience during the transition from being unacculturated to acculturated, making it closely linked to acculturative stress (Cabrera Tineo et al., 2022; Viruell-Fuentes, 2007). Acculturative stress exhibits significant associations with discrimination within immigrant communities (Baeza-Rivera et al., 2022; Bekteshi & Kang, 2020; Araújo Dawson & Panchanadeswaran, 2010; Torres et al., 2012). Among those facing perceived or actual discrimination, negative emotions such as anger and frustration are more pronounced, thereby impeding the process of adaptation (Baeza-Rivera et al., 2022).

Acculturative Stress and Intimate Partner Violence

The experience of stressful events can elicit negative emotions, such as anger, frustration, and anxiety, which may lead individuals to develop unfavorable coping mechanisms when they lack effective coping strategies.

Acculturation introduces a unique form of stress faced by immigrants and engaging in IPV can be viewed as an inadequate strategy for dealing with this stress (Cao et al., 2023; Lown & Vega, 2001). While the specific experiences of immigration vary, there are common stressors that are often shared by immigrants, including disenfranchisement, feelings of isolation due to relocation, language barriers in accessing services, and encounters with discrimination in interactions with social service and criminal justice systems (Amanor-Boadu et al., 2012; Sabri et al., 2018). The perpetration and victimization of IPV arise from a combination of stressors, including pre-migration stressors and the chronic stress associated with the acculturation process. (Cao et al., 2023; Njie-Carr et al., 2021).

Importantly, women who experience higher levels of acculturative stress report lower levels of life satisfaction when they simultaneously experience high levels of IPV compared to women who experience low levels of acculturative stress and IPV (Vo & Lee, 2022). Among couples after migration, a significant stressor arises from the incongruence between their own values, the socio-cultural norms of the origin country, and the norms of the host country. For example, immigrating families acculturating to the socio-cultural system of the U.S. may experience pressure to readjust their beliefs about women working outside the home to generate income and live independently, which can challenge traditional gender norms prevalent in their home countries (Njie-Carr et al., 2021). In fact, the transition to more equitable societies during

acculturation may exacerbate abusive behavior since male control and adherence to orthodox gender roles are contested (Klevens, 2007).

Higher rates of IPV are observed in immigrant couples when there is a greater disparity between traditional roles within the couple and the newly adopted acculturated behaviors of the host community (Martin & Garcia, 2011). Among couples immigrating from highly patriarchal societies, a shift from strong patriarchal roles in the United States, combined with conflicting endorsement of traditional gender roles can predict an increase in IPV (Denham et al., 2007; Maldonado et al., 2020; Sabina et al., 2015). Men who adhere to traditional values and beliefs regarding appropriate male gendered behavior may be particularly inclined to use IPV due to gender role conflict or the perception that violence fulfills traditional expectations for male behavior (Galvez et al., 2011).

Differential levels of acculturation within couples are also associated with a higher occurrence of IPV especially when the woman exhibits a high level of acculturation while the man experiences low acculturation but high stress (Kim-Godwin et al., 2014). Caetano et al. suggest that in cases where the male partner has low acculturation and experiences heightened acculturative stress, aggression, emotional, and physical IPV may occur, as the male's adherence to patriarchal values overrides the behavioral adaptations made by the woman (Caetano et al., 2007). Moreover, in situations where both partners experience high acculturative stress and increased social isolation, IPV is exacerbated due to the absence of accessible healthy coping mechanisms for both individuals (Caetano et al., 2007).

The lack of knowledge of and limited access to services contribute to the victimization of intimate partners, primarily due to constrained financial resources, a lack of linguistically appropriate information, and difficulties in accessing culturally relevant services (Nava et al.,

2014; Njie-Carr et al., 2021). Empirical evidence demonstrates that acculturation is negatively associated with experiencing IPV, which can be attributed to the heightened awareness and understanding of available resources (Alvarez et al., 2020; Nava et al., 2014). As immigrant women become more familiar with the new culture and acquire linguistic skills, they are more likely to access resources and adopt safer behaviors (Bernosky de Flores, 2010).

A potentially conflicting notion suggests that acculturation is associated with a higher occurrence of IPV (Alvarez et al., 2020). However, this claim requires further clarification, as it is not acculturation itself that directly contributes to an increased experience of IPV, but rather the increased reporting of such incidents (Alvarez et al., 2020).

Theories of Intimate Partner Violence Perpetration and Victimization

The phenomenon of IPV can be explained through the intersection of sociological, psychological, and anthropological theories. Therefore, it holds significance to examine several theories that can collaboratively contribute to the formulation of an explanatory model for IPV. Given the principal objective of this dissertation, which revolves around the connections between acculturation and IPV within immigrant communities, the selected theories for discussion are those that most pertinently address typical stressors inherent to migration. Specifically, emphasis is placed on theories that illuminate the dynamics of shifting social norms and the evolving power dynamics within dyadic relationships.

The first theory in consideration is the Social Relative Resource Theory (Goode, 1971), which hypothesizes IPV as a consequence of shifting dynamics within heterosexual relationships when immigrants assimilate into a new cultural environment. This transition may confront pre-existing traditional notions of power, thereby potentially challenging established power dynamics.

The next theory to be examined is the Theory of Normative Social Behavior (Rimal & Real, 2005). This framework posits that the occurrence of IPV can be predicted based on an individual's adherence to the norms prevalent within their community. Specifically, a correlation is proposed between more permissive norms endorsing violence and a corresponding propensity for casual attitudes towards engaging in violent behavior.

Finally, the Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping, developed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984), will serve as the primary theoretical foundation for this dissertation. This theory posits that IPV can be construed as a maladaptive coping mechanism arising from acculturative stress experienced by individuals within immigrant communities. This examination will shed

light on the intricate interplay between stress, coping strategies, and the manifestation of IPV, offering a nuanced understanding of its dynamics within the context of acculturation.

Social Relative Resource Theory

The social relative resource theory (Goode, 1971) stands as a prominent theoretical framework used to explain IPV(Larsen, 2016). This theoretical perspective posits that individuals possess a cognitive perception of specific reservoirs of resources, encompassing facets such as power and financial affluence. These social resources are defined as concrete or symbolic entities that can serve as objects of exchange within social interactions (Foa & Foa, 1980; Hesse-Biber & Williamson, 1984). They are dynamic constructs consistently observed to contribute to the enhancement and preservation of overall well-being. These resources include tangible items such as monetary assets, informational wealth, goods, and services, as well as intangible concepts including affectionate bonds and societal status (Webel et al., 2016).

Instances of IPV manifest when there is a dissonance in the distribution of resources, prompting the dominant partner (as conceptualized within this framework, typically male (Larsen, 2016)) to no longer perceive their resource strength as superior to those of their partner. This relative resource theory posits that it is not merely men's absolute dearth of resources that predicts the occurrence of spousal abuse, but rather their perceived inadequacy in comparison to their female counterparts (Atkinson et al., 2005). Empirical inquiries have substantiated this theory by showcasing that occurrences of violent behavior within intimate partnerships or from male spouses coincide with insufficiencies in resources such as income, educational attainment, and professional standing (Weitzman, 2018). Notably, acts of violence or the potential for violence can be strategically employed to enforce compliance and submission in the absence of

material resources. Hence, these acts of aggression are construed as compensatory reactions to the insufficiencies in the resources at their disposal (Atkinson et al., 2005; Basile et al., 2013; Fox et al., 2002). In a broader context, this theoretical framework underscores that disparities in resource availability, whether balanced or imbalanced within a dyadic relationship, represent a notable risk factor for IPV (Ince-Yenilmez, 2022).

The absence of perceived resources has been intricately linked to higher levels of stress; thus stress serves as an intermediary construct along the path from disparate resource allocation to the behaviors that constitute IPV (Basile et al., 2013). Notably, within the context of this theory's gendered framework, the identified cause of heightened stress is rooted in the destabilization of masculinity due to changing resource distributions (De Coster & Heimer, 2021).

Although the social relative resource framework offers insights into certain causal dimensions of IPV, it is characterized by a significant limitation, primarily its gendered orientation. This framework's focus predominantly revolves around explaining dynamics of violence perpetrated by men against women, neglecting to include instances of violence directed towards men or the potential for social resource imbalances in the opposite direction. Consequently, this theory presents an incomplete explanatory model for the entirety of the IPV phenomenon. As such, there exists a distinct need for a more comprehensive and inclusive theoretical framework capable of comprehensively addressing IPV across both genders.

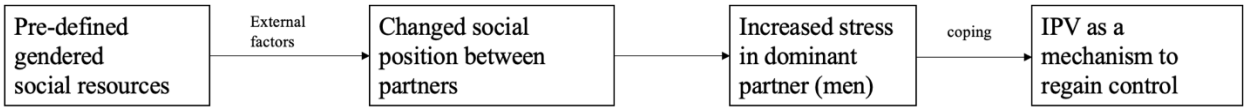


Figure 1.3: Social Relative Resource Theory

Theory of Normative Social Behavior

Social norms, as seen through the lens of social norms theory, are the collective and often unspoken regulations governing normal and appropriate conduct within a specific social group (Boyce et al., 2023). These norms are delineated into two categories: descriptive norms, pertaining to an individual's perception of prevalent behaviors within their community during a given situation, and injunctive norms, an individual's perception of community approval or disapproval regarding a particular behavior. Injunctive norms are further reinforced by fear of potential social repercussions (Rimal & Real, 2005). When an individual plans behavior so as to adhere to prevailing social norms, they conform to the collective norms of their community, regardless of their personal attitudes (Seff, 2022). Consequently, for the propagation of a social norm, it is not imperative for an individual to genuinely agree with it; rather, they practice the behavior solely to be in the same “in-group” as their community (Lilleston et al., 2017). Indeed, instances arise where there is incongruence between social norms and personal attitudes, in these situations influence of social norms on individual behaviors take precedence (Lilleston et al., 2017; Rimal & Real, 2005).

The sphere of social norms around IPV is profoundly shaped by the prevailing highly patriarchal contexts that an individual identifies as their "group" (Tonsing & Tonsing, 2019). Within these patriarchal contexts, gender norms, which prescribe distinct behavioral expectations

for men and women, often espouse notions of dominant masculinity and passive femininity. Consequently, these norms cultivate an environment that reinforces violent behaviors (Boyce et al., 2023; Seff, 2022; Webel et al., 2016). Furthermore, IPV tends to flourish in communities where social norms endorse violence as a conflict resolution mechanism and discourage external interventions in private family matters. On a societal scale, injunctive social norms that validate certain forms of abuse may contribute to a generational silence surrounding such behaviors (Sommer et al., 2018).

At an individual level, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors play a pivotal role in determining whether an individual engages in partner violence. Factors such as the justification of physical violence against a partner or adherence to masculine norms and roles contribute to the propensity for violent actions (McCarthy et al., 2018). Women's acceptance of violence is also intrinsically linked to the perceived social norms of the victim. In societies where violence against women is prevalent or a substantial proportion of the population condones abuse, women are more susceptible to experiencing, accepting, or rationalizing IPV (Mulla et al., 2022; González & Rodríguez-Planas, 2020). In connection to the perceived norms surrounding masculinity, as posited by the resource theory, men may resort to violence against both other males and female partners as a manifestation of their compulsion to adhere to an idealized masculine identity. For instance, a man may internally oppose hitting his spouse while feeling compelled to do so due to implicit social pressure from peers (McCarthy et al., 2018; Neighbors et al., 2010).

In light of these considerations, a potential causal framework for identifying the likelihood of an individual perpetrating or being victimized involves an exploration of their perceived descriptive and injunctive norms.

Social norms in violence against men

The progression of violence research should pivot towards non-gendered theories of IPV, given the persistent controversy and under-researched nature of men as victims of IPV, despite empirical substantiation of their exposure to such occurrences (Addis & Mahalik, 2003; Dim & Elabor-Idemudia, 2018). The inadequate attention towards men's encounters with IPV has led to a deficient understanding of how men perceive and conceptualize violence, consequently impacting the accurate representation of such perspectives within IPV measurement constructs (Scott-Storey et al., 2023)

One prospective theory that holds promise for application in this context involves an extension of the social norms' theory, as previously outlined. The societal norms imposed upon adult men prescribe a rigid conception of "masculine behavior," with three distinct negative social expectations: (1) the pursuit of power, (2) the repression of emotions, and (3) conformity to established social norms (Rivera & Scholar, 2020). The divergence of men from these normative masculine expectations is frequently associated with stigmatization and mistreatment (Addis & Mahalik, 2003).

The prevalence of hegemonic masculinity and its strong affiliation with the engagement in violent behavior could potentially contribute to the lack of recognition and understanding of experiences of victimization among heterosexual men (Hogan et al., 2022). For male victims of IPV, the process of acknowledgment and disclosure entails surmounting feelings of denial, shame, apprehension about being disbelieved, and the internalization of gender-based stereotypes (De Bem Machado et al., 2017). Men navigating the societal pressures to adhere to hegemonic masculine norms encounter a heightened risk of experiencing violence. Even in instances where male victims identify instances of IPV, the process of gender socialization often leads some men

to downplay or trivialize their encounters due to these norms (Entilli & Cipolletta, 2017; Scott-Storey et al., 2023). This reluctance to report is closely linked to an adherence to inflexible masculine social and cultural values, coupled with apprehensions of mockery, social isolation, and humiliation (Entilli & Cipolletta, 2017). Furthermore, the prevailing norms surrounding masculinity appear to serve as an inhibitory factor in reporting or communicating the risk of IPV, resulting in the prolongation of men's entanglements in unhealthy relationships and deterring them from seeking assistance (Corbally, 2015).

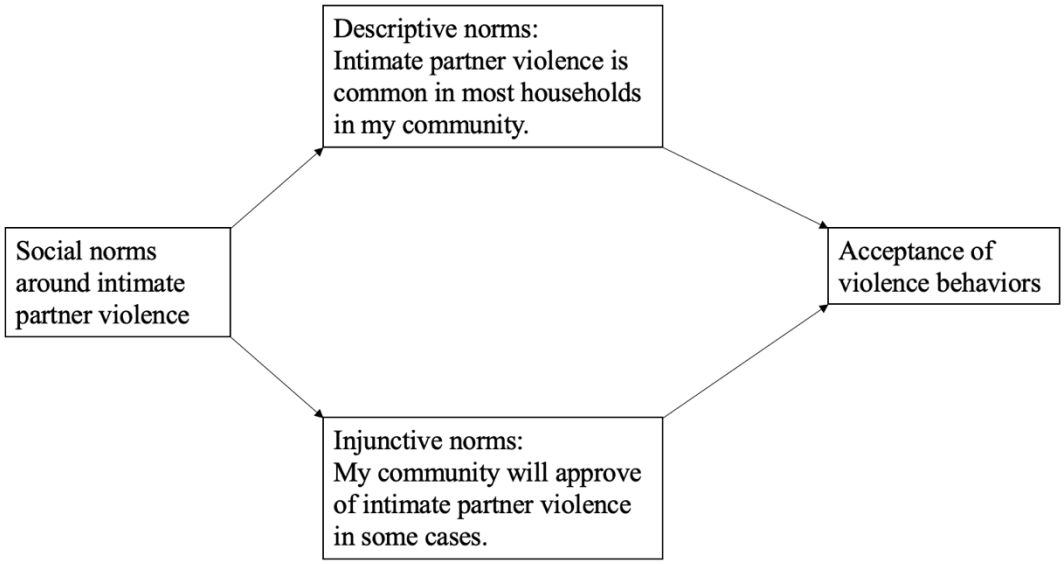


Figure 1.4: Theory of Normative Social Behavior (Rimal & Real, 2005)

Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping

This dissertation focuses on acculturation within immigrant families as the primary independent variable. Within these families, the prominent factors of interest include the dynamics of shifting social norms and evolving social resources. Immigrant families undergo a complex and inherently distressing process when transitioning from one cultural belief system to

another. This stress is notably heightened when the destination culture presents starkly contrasting socio-cultural frameworks. A comprehensive exploration of this specific stressor, referred to as acculturative stress, has been previously addressed earlier in this chapter. Within the context of this stressor, which include both the shifts in social norms as well as changes in gender and power dynamics, individuals endeavor to devise coping mechanisms to alleviate their discomfort. In certain instances, these coping strategies can assume maladaptive forms, with IPV serving as an illustration of such detrimental strategies.

Explaining stress as a dynamic process, Richard Lazarus formulated the Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping (TTSC), positing stress as an outcome of interactive transactions between an individual and their immediate environment (Lazarus, 2000). In this theoretical framework, stress is conceived as an interactive and dynamic connection, often referred to as a "transaction," between individuals and their surrounding environment.

Coping, within this framework, are the cognitive and behavioral endeavors aimed at managing specific external or internal demands perceived as overwhelming or surpassing an individual's available resources. Transactional theory underscores that the classification of events as stressors hinges on their relevance and significance to an individual's well-being.

The transactional model delineates three distinct types of appraisals: primary, secondary, and reappraisal.

- Primary appraisals have three possibilities after an individual’s analysis:
    - Deeming the event irrelevant and thus inconsequential for one's well-being
    - Attributing positive significance to the event,
    - Characterizing the event as stressful.

- Secondary appraisal pertains to evaluations of feasible actions to modify the stressful situation, involving assessments of available resources and coping capacity.
- Reappraisal, the third type, denotes alterations in primary or secondary appraisal consequent to shifts in the environment or an individual's responses.

The process of primary appraisal, which involves evaluating whether a situation is deemed stressful, is contingent upon two key factors: individual attributes such as personal values and goals, and contextual factors encompassing demands and available resources within the environment. Consequently, the appraisal process is inherently individualized, with each person assessing the stressfulness of a situation based on their distinct psychological, societal, and ecological circumstances (Keilholtz et al., 2023).

In the context of individuals resorting to violence, the general stress model offers a perspective where such acts can be interpreted as coping behaviors (Farrington, 1986). Within Lazarus's framework, two distinct categories of coping behaviors are delineated: (1) instrumental, problem-focused coping, entailing direct efforts to modify the stressful situation, and (2) emotion-focused coping, involving endeavors to regulate emotional reactions to a stress-inducing circumstance. IPV predominantly aligns with the latter category, constituting a form of emotion-focused coping (Capaldi et al., 2012; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

The management of acculturative stress is not universally maladaptive; rather, it hinges upon factors such as an individual's socio-cultural background, psychological resilience, and their self-perceived ability to effectively navigate and cope with stress. An individual's engagement in unfavorable behaviors is contingent upon their perception of the stress as being minimal or manageable, as well as their identification and utilization of adaptive coping mechanisms within their socio-cultural context (Williams et al., 2009).

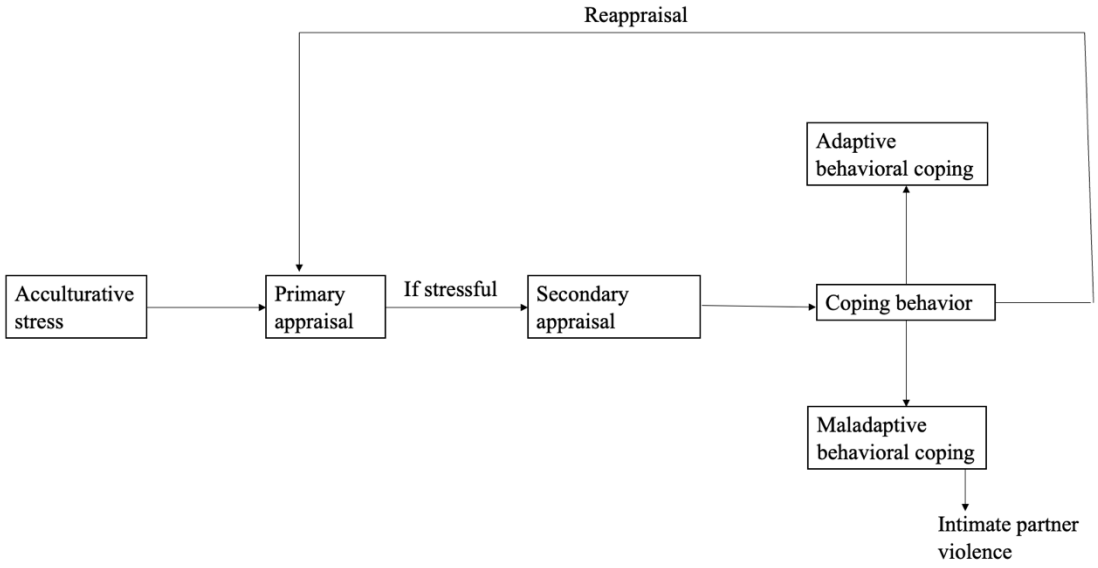


Figure 1.5: Theory of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984)

In Lazarus and Folkman's theoretical framework, coping mechanisms play a pivotal role in influencing various health or behavioral outcomes. Adaptive coping strategies are deemed essential for achieving positive health outcomes, and within this paradigm, an individual's quality of life is recognized as one such favorable health outcome that can be impacted by coping strategies (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Quality of Life (QOL) is commonly defined as an individual's subjective assessment of their position in life, considered within the cultural, social, and environmental context they inhabit, and relative to their personal goals, expectations, standards, and concerns (World Health Organization, 1995). QOL assessment encompasses a subjective evaluation of one's well-being and health status, embedded within cultural, social, and environmental contexts, with crucial dimensions including physical functioning, mental health, and social roles (Leung et al., 2005). The utilization of adaptive coping strategies in response to stressors has been associated with

higher levels of perceived quality of life, whereas frequent recourse to maladaptive coping strategies tends to correlate with poorer quality of life (Roming, 2018).

Due to its profound impact on physical, mental, and emotional health, the experience of IPV is linked to lower perceived quality of life for those who have experienced IPV (Laffaye et al., 2003; Leung et al., 2005; Sadler et al., 2000). This reduction in quality of life is not limited to the immediate aftermath of the violent incident but persists over extended periods. Victims of IPV often report a severely diminished health-related quality of life, marked by limitations in physical and emotional health, educational and financial attainment, and recurrent difficulties with work and social activities, even a decade after experiencing violence (Sadler et al., 2000).

For individuals contending with acculturative stress, the presence of positive coping mechanisms can serve to prevent them from perpetrating violence against others and enhance their personal ability to cope with stressors and their ensuing effects (Mengistu & Manolova, 2019; Warmling et al., 2017). IPV perpetrators are more likely to report unmet needs for mental health care and difficulties in adapting to stressful situations (Chesworth, 2018). The inability to regulate emotions effectively during coping processes has been associated with IPV perpetration, and an individual's capacity to manage concurrent negative emotions may determine their likelihood of engaging in IPV (Birkley & Eckhardt, 2019; Maloney et al., 2023). Quality of life is thus adversely affected for both victims and perpetrators of IPV. Victims experience direct physical and emotional health issues, while perpetrators exhibit reduced stress management capabilities and an increased propensity for maladaptive behaviors (Kleespies, 2016; Birkley & Eckhardt, 2019).

Social Support as a Moderator between Acculturative Stress and Intimate Partner Violence Experience

The process of immigration frequently gives rise to a sense of isolation and solitude among immigrants, leading to heightened stress levels. This phenomenon is particularly pronounced among immigrants originating from collectivist societies. In post-migration contexts, the impact of social isolation becomes more accentuated. Consequently, the presence of social support assumes a crucial role as a moderator or protective mechanism for individuals undergoing various forms of stress (Beeble et al., 2009; Fortin et al., 2012).

The conceptualization of social support, as delineated by House and Landis, includes a multidimensional framework. This categorization involves four distinct types of support: emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal (House et al., 1988). Emotional support pertains to the manifestations of solidarity and connectedness an individual receives from their family, friends, and broader community. Instrumental support is the provision of tangible resources or services to aid another individual or group. Informational support is characterized by the provision of relevant information during times of stress, while appraisal support involves offering advice or information to enhance an individual's self-efficacy in managing their life stressors (Cohen et al., 1985; House et al., 1988; Langford et al., 1997).

Research indicates that the combination of all four types of social support serves to mitigate stress levels through mechanisms such as bolstering self-esteem, influencing perceptions of stress-inducing events, and improving knowledge of effective coping strategies (Carlson et al., 2002, Fortin et al., 2012).

The mere existence of social support, while essential, does not inherently act as a buffer against an individual's stress response. Additionally, the individual must possess the ability to

recognize and acknowledge the presence of this support within their surroundings. Perceived social support is regarded as an individual's subjective assessment of the extent and quality of the assistance received from their social network. On the other hand, received social support entails a quantifiable measure of the actual help and aid received from one's social network (Dong et al., 2022). It is worth noting that the perception of social support can deviate from the tangible availability of such support, contingent upon an individual's subjective evaluation of the quality of the support rather than its concrete manifestation (McDowell & Serovich, 2007).

Perceived social support has demonstrated its significance as a more potent predictor of both physical and mental health compared to objective measures of social support (D'Antonio & Shin, 2009; Dour et al., 2014; Gülaçtı, 2010). In survey-based data collection, perceived social support is the metric typically measured. This approach recognizes that individuals can only respond to queries about social support based on their personal, subjective perceptions. Consequently, gauging the concrete extent of actual social support can present challenges (Wang et al., 2018).

Viewed through the lens of the stress and coping framework, social support assumes the role of fortifying an individual's innate sense of self-assurance and confidence. It functions as a catalyst that mobilizes effective coping mechanisms, whereas limited support can lead to distortions in one's coping efforts (Nurius et al., 1992). Within this context, it becomes meaningful to reconceptualize social support as a form of coping assistance, denoting the active involvement of significant individuals in aiding an individual's endeavors to manage stress (Haltom et al., 2023).

The active pursuit of social support can itself be construed as an adaptive approach to coping with stress during moments of crisis (Li & Peng, 2021). Functioning akin to coping

strategies, social support can assist an individual in modifying the situation, reframing the meaning attached to the situation, altering their emotional response to the situation, or effecting changes across all three domains. This not only diminishes stress but also diminishes the perception of stress itself (Pilcher & Bryant, 2016; Thoits, 1986).

In the context of this dissertation, the role of social support has been postulated as a moderating influence within the framework of acculturative stress and the occurrence of IPV. However, before establishing the intricate interplay among these three variables, it is imperative to initially delineate the individual associations between social support and acculturation, as well as between perceived social support and IPV.

Social support plays a pertinent role in alleviating the adverse effects of IPV on the mental and physical well-being of victims (Coker et al., 2003; Dias et al., 2019; Ogbe et al., 2020). IPV is often associated with feelings of isolation, detachment from personal and social connections, as well as diminished self-worth and self-esteem. Social support serves as a direct countermeasure against these associations by diminishing isolation and enhancing an individual's self-resilience (Coker et al., 2003). Notably, women who possess higher levels of social support report an improved quality of life and enhanced well-being, irrespective of the extent or severity of abuse they have experienced (Beeble et al., 2009). This form of support aids in mitigating the impact of violence by assisting victims in cultivating rational thoughts and thwarting inappropriate behavioral responses to the acute stress resulting from IPV (Fortin et al., 2012). Consequently, consistent social support contributes to the reinforcement of adaptive behaviors, reduction of emotional distress, and the fortification of resilience and efficacy in resisting violence.

Beyond addressing the health consequences of IPV, heightened levels of social support are correlated with a reduced frequency of victimization across various forms of IPV, applicable to both men and women (Dias et al., 2019). A comprehensive systematic review conducted by Ogbe et al. in 2020 demonstrated substantial evidence of the positive effects of social support interventions on mental health outcomes, and in certain cases, even a reduction in partner aggression or the occurrence of IPV altogether (Ogbe et al., 2020). Social support not only serves as a preventive measure against victimization from IPV but also fosters greater resilience in effectively managing the aftermath of IPV (Sigalla et al., 2017). Research studies by Farid et al. and Wright et al. evidenced that a heightened perception of familial and communal social support was associated with decreased experiences or non-experience of IPV (Farid et al., 2008; Wright, 2015).

In the context of the relationship between social support and IPV, the reciprocal nature is evident: lower levels of social support are consistently associated with a higher prevalence of IPV, regardless of other demographic factors (Dias et al., 2019; Fortin et al., 2012; Machisa et al., 2018; Ogbe et al., 2020). Consequently, individuals with limited perceived social support tend to experience exacerbated negative physical and mental health consequences associated with IPV (Machisa et al., 2018). It is worth noting that the association between IPV and social support is not unidirectional; studies indicate that women subjected to IPV often underestimate the available social support (Fortin et al., 2012; Thompson et al., 2002). Moreover, compared to non-victims, survivors of IPV frequently report diminished social support from both friends and family (Zapor et al., 2018), which underscores the importance of establishing robust social support networks before victimization occurs.

Revealing experiences of IPV represents a pivotal initial step in both preventing and addressing the detrimental aftermath of such experiences. Enhanced social connections are linked with increased disclosure to informal networks, coupled with potential access to more substantial practical support that may subsequently lead to greater engagement with formal support systems (Dias et al., 2019; Machisa et al., 2018; Mitchell & Hodson, 1983). Wright's findings demonstrated that women who had experienced victimization and reported having a larger social circle were consistently more inclined to share their experiences of violence compared to those with fewer social connections (Wright, 2015). Additionally, perceiving a supportive community environment towards IPV victims has advantageous implications for individuals' mental health, enhancing their potential for psychological resilience (Machisa et al., 2018).

Psychological resilience and community support emerge as pivotal factors in effectively managing the stressors associated with the process of immigration. Demonstrably, social support has been underscored as a mechanism capable of alleviating acculturative stress (Bai, 2016; Khan & Hasan, 2016; Salgado et al., 2012). The intricate journey of migration and acculturation often entails the disruption of established social networks, thereby the reconstruction of such networks directly contributes to mitigating the ruptures from previous affiliations (Vidal de Haymes et al., 2011). A supportive social network fosters feelings of security and connectedness, serving as a platform for individuals to grapple with the challenges of acculturation. These networks also serve as exemplars, guiding individuals in effective strategies to respond to and navigate experiences of discrimination (Brondolo et al., 2009; Chou, 2012). Notably, the availability of both emotional and instrumental support collectively moderates acculturative stress. Emotional support is instrumental in facilitating community assistance, while instrumental

support enables access to essential social services (Ajrouch et al., 2010; Crockett et al., 2007; Singh et al., 2015).

Racial discrimination, whether perceived or actual, is an exacerbating factor for acculturative stress. Thus, the coping mechanisms deployed to combat discrimination can significantly influence the extent of acculturative stress. Beyond its direct influence on mental well-being, perceived social support also crucially moderates the impact of perceived discrimination (Sung et al., 2018; Brondolo et al., 2009; Kim et al., 2022). Another dimension pertinent to heightened stress is cross-cultural adaptation. Social support plays a pivotal role in mitigating the strain of adapting to an unfamiliar cultural milieu, consequently bolstering both physical and psychological well-being during the process of cross-cultural transition (Sung et al., 2018; Ng et al., 2017).

Social support, which can stem from both established connections in the home country and newly forged relationships in the host country, carries distinct implications for an individual's experience. Local friends provide resources that aid in acquiring local cultural competence, thus enhancing cross-cultural adaptation and buffering against the detrimental effects of marginalization (Kristiana et al., 2022; Ng et al., 2017). Conversely, support from family members and fellow community members serves to uphold cultural identities and practices while diminishing feelings of disorientation (Kristiana et al., 2022).

Application to Immigrant Latine Communities

Latine immigrant communities possess unique traits that set them apart from other immigrant groups and those without immigrant backgrounds, making broad-based predictions less fitting for this particular group. These distinctive attributes include challenges like immigration and acculturation stress, as well as deeply held values such as *machismo* and *familismo*.

Migration to the United States presents heightened vulnerabilities for IPV within the Latine demographic. Threats involving immigration status, fears of deportation, limited linguistic abilities, and restricted access to essential official documents can serve as avenues for emotional abuse and coercive control (Moya et al., 2014). Latine immigrants often face acculturative stress due to issues like differences in marital acculturation, language obstacles, health-related challenges, and pressures related to parenting — all intricately linked to family dynamics (Cervantes et al., 2019).

Machismo and Marianismo

Machismo and its associated cultural norms promote qualities such as virility, bravado, and the responsibility of decision-making within the family, while *Marianismo* defines the traditional role of women as submissive, modest, and responsible for childcare (Cummings et al., 2013; Finfgeld-Connett, 2017; Galvez et al., 2011). In cultures that prioritize machismo, aggression against women is often normalized, and resistance to certain forms of violence becomes a private matter that does not require outside intervention. Some immigrant women may report negative experiences in their relationships but refrain from discussing them due to

their strong sense of family loyalty and adherence to machismo culture (Adames & Campbell, 2005; Cummings et al., 2013; Finfgeld-Connett, 2017).

Latine immigrants often hold traditional ideas about womanhood, emphasizing domestic and maternal functions. Immigrant families may discourage women from pursuing higher education and career skills, although these behaviors may change over generations, particularly with the increased need for Latina women in the U.S. workforce (Berry, 2006; Caplan, 2007; Martin & Garcia, 2011). Recent immigrant women experience a perceived increase in freedom and flexibility of responsibilities within the new cultural context, leading to changes in traditional roles. These changes and associated conflicts put Latina women at higher risk of acculturative stress, especially if they belong to traditional households (Caplan, 2007).

Familism and Social Support

Familism, a deeply felt sense of being interconnected within immediate and extended family, is influential among Latines and acts as a protective factor against acculturative stress and health disparities (Dillon et al., 2013; Sabina et al., 2015; Smokowski & Bacallao, 2007). Family structure also plays a predictive role in IPV among Latinas. A 2007 study conducted in North Carolina found that Latinas were more likely to be victims of IPV if they had children and were not married due to negative perceptions associated with them within traditional cultural structures (Denham et al., 2007). Latinas may be more likely to return to their abusers in order to maintain family structures, keep children in a family setting, and avoid the shame associated with leaving a relationship (Cao et al., 2023; Klevens et al., 2007).

Family cohesion, which refers to the level of close relationship bonds within the Latine family, plays a crucial role in acculturative stress. The erosion of family cohesion due to factors

such as distance, changes in personal beliefs, and struggles with a new cultural identity is linked to increased stress and mental health issues. This lack of family cohesion not only affects the individual's stress and mental health but also has significant impacts on perceived and actual physical health (Dillon et al., 2013). Higher levels of family cohesion among Latin Americans in the United States are associated with stronger adherence to the Spanish language, which can further add to the stress of immigration due to language barriers (Arbona et al., 2010). Despite changes in family cohesion upon immigration, it remains a protective factor against acculturative stress for newly arrived Latine families. Cohesive families serve as social networks for immigrants, providing emotional support and informal mechanisms to manage acculturative stress, including financial and practical assistance (Archuleta & Teasley, 2013; Dillon et al., 2013).

In cultures characterized by collectivist orientations, such as Latin cultures examined, the influence of social support is even more pronounced than in individualistic cultures prevalent in Western societies (Bacallao & Smokowski, 2007; Crockett et al., 2007). Latine cultures emphasize familial ties (familismo) and interpersonal relationships (personalismo), fostering strong attachments, shared identities, and loyalty among community members (Crockett et al., 2007). A systematic review conducted by Bekteshi & Kang underscores the substantial impact of support from familial and religious groups on reducing acculturative stress (Bekteshi & Kang, 2020). The extensive social networks within Latine communities, particularly in ethnic enclaves, generate emotional social support through heightened levels of community engagement, resulting in diminished acculturative stress (Sung et al., 2018; Vidal de Haymes et al., 2011). Such engagement is cultivated by maintaining transnational familial and communal connections

and establishing shared households with fellow immigrants from the same community of origin (Vidal de Haymes et al., 2011).

Acculturation and Acculturative Stress

A significant determinant of IPV among Latine immigrants is acute acculturative stress. This is marked by sensations of navigating cultural transitions, language proficiency challenges, and encounters with perceived discrimination. Limited language proficiency can also contribute to discrimination, as Latine immigrants with lower English language competency face higher levels of discrimination compared to those with higher English language competency (Maldonado et al., 2020).

Increased discrimination faced by Latine immigrants, particularly in the context of changing U.S. policies and anti-immigrant sentiment, contributes to maladaptive behaviors, mental health issues, and weakened self-efficacy. Discrimination is also a risk factor for alcohol and drug dependence, further exacerbating mental health problems within the community (Araújo Dawson & Panchanadeswaran, 2010; Lueck & Wilson, 2011; Maldonado et al., 2020).

It is important to acknowledge that the prevalence rates of IPV perpetration and victimization among Latine immigrants are likely to be underreported due to cultural and structural factors that deter individuals from seeking help or reporting abuse (Davila et al., 2021). Less acculturated Latina women may experience IPV but are less likely to disclose or report it compared to their more acculturated counterparts, as they may view IPV as acceptable within certain cultural contexts. A 2014 study found that more extreme cases of IPV were associated with lower acculturation levels, leading to delayed reporting of violence due to fear or a lack of understanding of available resources in the United States. The study also revealed that higher

levels of acculturation were associated with greater application of safety behaviors and access to resources (Nava et al., 2014). Another study in 2015 found that foreign-born immigrants experiencing IPV were more likely to be recent immigrants and face higher levels of acculturative stress and lower social support compared to those born in the United States (Millett et al., 2015). Nearly half of the Latinas who experienced IPV reported no social support, highlighting the challenges in accessing support within the community (Denham et al., 2007). Despite differential reporting, Latine immigrants of all types recognize that IPV and abuse are significant issues requiring intervention within the community, even if they may feel limited in their ability to report (Adames & Campbell, 2005; Sabina et al., 2015).

Help-seeking behaviors are not solely influenced by the self-efficacy of immigrant women but also involve structural barriers that hinder their access to available resources in the community. Concerns about immigration status and financial instability can prevent even highly acculturated immigrants from accessing support (Silva-Martínez, 2016). Moreover, fear of losing familial and immigration support often deters Latine immigrants from leaving abusive relationships, despite their knowledge of available resources (Davila et al., 2021; Finfgeld-Connett, 2017). Less acculturated immigrants who remain isolated from dominant cultures may downplay or perceive the abuse they experience as normal within their cultural context, further reducing the likelihood of reporting (Alvarez et al., 2016).

Differences in reporting IPV can be attributed to the varying societal conditions of acculturated and non-acculturated Latines. Latina women with a preference and fluency in English are three to four times more likely to report IPV compared to those who prefer communicating in Spanish (Sabina et al., 2015). Additionally, immigrants residing in urban

environments have 2.5 times higher odds of reporting IPV compared to those in rural areas which are associated with lower overall acculturation (Lown & Vega, 2001).

Metropolitan Washington D.C. Latine Community

The Washington, D.C. metropolitan area stands as a markedly diverse urban hub and has emerged as a magnet for an escalating influx of immigrants and refugees seeking settlement (Edberg et al., 2015). Constituting a mosaic of subpopulations, the D.C. area is home to African American, Caucasian, African immigrant, Latine (originating from Central America, South America, the Caribbean, and Mexico), Afro-Caribbean, Chinese, Filipino, Korean, South Asian, and Southeast Asian groups, with the Latine demographic accounting for 41% of the immigrant populace (US Census 2020). Notably, one in every seven inhabitants of D.C. is an immigrant, while approximately one in every nine residents is a native-born U.S. citizen with at least one immigrant parent (American Immigration Council, 2020).

Within the Latine immigrant community in the locale, a substantial majority, exceeding 60%, trace their origins primarily to El Salvador and other Central American nations (2020 Census: Information and Data | Op, 2021). The countries of birth for Latin American immigrants arriving in the Washington metropolitan area have undergone a transformation in the last quarter-century, transitioning from predominantly South American and Caribbean origins to a majority hailing from Central American nations. The most substantial contingent arises from El Salvador, predominantly of working-age adults (Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2007).

Although the Latine community has undergone remarkable expansion over the past two decades, the forces of gentrification and escalated housing costs have led to a gradual dispersion

of the Latine community from the district to proximate suburban domains. Nonetheless, pockets within the District, including areas such as Columbia Heights, Mount Pleasant, and Petworth/Brightwood Park, persist in harboring a notable Latine presence. Furthermore, suburban regions in Maryland also demonstrate a significant concentration of Latine residents (Urban Institute, 2018). As the impacts of gentrification reverberate, a sizeable segment of low-income Latine immigrants has sought refuge in suburban domains within the DMV region, with Langley Park, MD emerging as a prominent enclave for recent immigrant settlement. As of 2020, a remarkable 63% of Langley Park, MD residents were born outside the United States, highlighting the significant impact of the immigrant population. The demographic landscape of Langley Park is predominantly Latine, with 84.2% of the population reflecting this ethnicity (Data USA, 2020; US Census, 2020). Notably, a mere 6.9% of households within Langley Park identified English as their first language (US Census, 2020). Given that individuals from El Salvador and Guatemala constitute a substantial proportion of the research sample, comprehension of subgroup-specific factors catalyzing immigration, alongside post-immigration stressors, becomes pivotal. Table 1.2 compares the characteristics of the two largest immigrant groups represented in Langley Park's Latine community: foreign-born Salvadoran and Guatemalan immigrants. The median age of Salvadorans is 43.2 years, while Guatemalans have a younger median age of 36.1 years. A higher percentage of Salvadorans (36%) have become naturalized citizens compared to Guatemalans (27%). In terms of duration in the United States, 77% of Salvadorans have been in the country for more than 10 years, compared to 63% of Guatemalans. English proficiency is relatively low for both groups, with 31% of Salvadorans and 29% of Guatemalans reporting proficiency. Regarding educational attainment among those over age 25, 76% of Salvadorans and 80% of Guatemalans have a high school education or less, while

15% of Salvadorans and 13% of Guatemalans have some college education, and 9% of Salvadorans and 8% of Guatemalans hold a bachelor's degree or higher. The median personal income for Salvadorans is $30,000, compared to $25,000 for Guatemalans, and the median household income is higher for Salvadorans at $58,200 compared to $49,000 for Guatemalans. Poverty affects 17% of Salvadorans and 23% of Guatemalans, while the percentage without health insurance is 36% for Salvadorans and 50% for Guatemalans.

		Foreign born Salvadoran Immigrants	*Foreign born Guatemalan Immigrants*
Median age (yrs.)		43.2	36.1
Naturalized citizens (%)		36%	27%
Years in the US(%)	Less than 10 years	23%	37%
	More than 10 years	77%	63%
English proficiency (%)		31%	29%
Education attainment for over age 25 (%)	High school or less	76%	80%
	Some college	15%	13%
	Bachelors or more	9%	8%
Income ($)	Median personal	$30,000	$25,000
	Median household	$58,200	$49,000
Living below poverty line (%)		17%	23%
No health insurance coverage (%)		36%	50%

Table 1.2: Demographics of Foreign-Born Central American Immigrants in Washington D.C., 2020 (source: Institute for Immigration Research)

Chapter 2: Dissertation Overview

Manuscript 1

A Confirmatory Model of The Effect of Acculturative Stress and Social Support on Intimate Partner Violence Victimization and Perpetration: A Structural Equation Model Analysis

The first paper of the dissertation investigates the relationships between acculturation factors—such as acculturative stress, language proficiency, and discrimination—and intimate partner violence (IPV) victimization and perpetration among Latine immigrants. The relationship between acculturation factors and IPV is explored with the hypothesized moderating role of social support and investigates how gender shapes these dynamics. It hypothesizes that higher acculturative stress increases IPV, while greater social support reduces IPV and moderates the impact of stress.

Research Questions

a. What pathways exist, if any, between acculturation factors—such as acculturative stress, language proficiency, and discrimination—and the victimization and perpetration of intimate partner violence (emotional, physical, sexual, and stalking)?
b. What role does social support play, if any, in moderating the relationship between acculturation factors and intimate partner violence victimization and perpetration (emotional, physical, sexual, and stalking)?

c. How does gender influence the pathways between acculturation, social support, and intimate partner violence victimization and perpetration (emotional, physical, sexual, and stalking)?

The objectives of this paper are:

1. To identify and explore the relationship between acculturation factors and the victimization and perpetration of all major types of IPV amongst Latino immigrant men and women.
2. To evaluate and explore the moderating role of perceived social support in all types of IPV perpetration and victimization amongst Latino immigrant men and women.

The main hypotheses of this paper are

1) Higher acculturative stress is positively associated with increased IPV victimization (emotional, physical, sexual, and stalking) among both men and women.
2) Higher acculturative stress is positively associated with increased IPV perpetration (emotional, physical, sexual, and stalking) among both men and women.
3) Higher perceived social support is negatively associated with IPV victimization (emotional, physical, sexual, and stalking) among both men and women.
4) Higher perceived social support is negatively associated with IPV perpetration (emotional, physical, sexual, and stalking) among both men and women
5) Higher perceived social support is negatively associated with acculturative stress among both men and women

6) Social support moderates the effect of acculturative stress on violence victimization and perpetration.

Manuscript 2

Exploring Relationships Between Family and Relationship Norms and Acculturative Stress with Victimization and Perpetration of Intimate Partner Violence: A Mixed Method Analysis

The second paper of the dissertation focuses on understanding how family and relationship norms, along with acculturation factors, influence intimate partner violence (IPV) perpetration and victimization within immigrant communities. It examines how acculturative stress, language proficiency, discrimination, and shifting social norms affect IPV dynamics, aiming to further identify the roles of gender norms and acculturation in IPV through qualitative interviews on these topics.

Research Questions:

a. What are the associations between family and relationship norms with IPV perpetration and victimization (emotional, physical, sexual and stalking)?
b. What are the associations between acculturation factors such as acculturative stress, language proficiency and discrimination with IPV perpetration and victimization (emotional, physical, sexual and stalking)?
c. Which factors, such as acculturative pressures or family and relationship norms, play a more significant role in IPV perpetration and victimization (emotional, physical, sexual and stalking)?
d. How do immigration-related stress and changing social norms affect the dynamics of IPV within immigrant communities?

e. How do stress, cultural expectations, and violent behaviors intersect within immigrant communities?

The objectives of this paper are as follows:

1. To identify the connections between gender and relationship norms and the perpetration and victimization of IPV.
2. To identify which factors, such as acculturative pressures or family and relationship norms, play a more significant role in the perpetration and victimization of emotional, physical, sexual, and stalking forms of IPV.
3. To delineate prevalent themes emerging from qualitative interviews concerning acculturative stress and evolving norms, as experienced by individual interview participants.

Chapter 3: Study Design and Data Collection

Study Design/Overview

The secondary data used in this dissertation is from Project VOCES which was established on the foundation of an existing intervention research initiative in the target community known as SAFER Latinos (Seguridad, Apoyo, Familia, Educacion, y Recursos). VOCES was a collaborative endeavor involving the George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services Department of Prevention and Community Health (GWU), alongside the Maryland Multicultural Youth Centers (an extension of the Latin American Youth Center (LAYC), and the Latino Federation of Greater Washington (LFGW), formerly known as the Council of Latino Agencies. The goal of Project VOCES was to identify and create measures at the individual, household, home-country, cultural, and neighborhood levels that impact the risk and protection against gender-based violence among immigrant Latino males and females. It also aimed to explore how these factors contribute to the causes of such violence, evaluate the community's capacity to address these issues, and assess current interventions to identify gaps in available programs based on the developed etiological model

Study Population

This study was conducted in the Langley Park/Hyattsville area in Maryland (pop. 20,162). According to the 2000 US Census, this area exhibited the following characteristics: approximately 64 percent of the population identified as Latine, primarily originating from El Salvador and other Central American countries; nearly 80 percent of housing units were occupied by renters; around 34 percent of the adult population (aged 25 and older) had education levels below the 9th grade; approximately 64.5 percent were foreign-born; 72 percent of

households spoke a language other than English, with Spanish being the primary language for 62 percent of them. The population density of Langley Park was notably higher than the average for cities in the state of Maryland. In terms of crime indices, the area had a violent crime risk index and a property crime index of 7, compared to the national averages of 3 and 3.2, respectively. Langley Park shared characteristics with numerous growing immigrant Latine-majority suburbs, making it a suitable study location aligned with the stated research objectives.

Instruments

Instrument Development and Translation

The research team that was assembled possessed extensive experience in creating comprehensive interview instruments and translating these instruments into Spanish. After the final interview instrument was compiled through discussions within the research team and with our community partners, the newly developed or modified instruments underwent translation into Spanish:

1. The survey was translated by two independent translators who were native speakers and part of our study team.
2. Any discrepancies between the two translations were thoroughly reviewed by the translators, and a consensus was reached.
3. The translation agreed upon by consensus was then back translated into English by translators from our community partner. In cases where the back-translations did not align with the original English version, the translations were adjusted through consensus.
4. The translated instrument underwent a pilot testing phase.

Setting up and Pilot Testing the AUDIO-CASI Instrument

Once the final interview instrument was developed, it was transferred into an audio computer-assisted self-interviewing (A-CASI) format. The A-CASI touch screen interview was administered privately to maintain confidentiality. The use of this computer-based, touch screen interview aimed to obtain more reliable self-reported responses, particularly for sensitive data on gender-based violence (GBV), as supported by previous studies (MacMillan et al., 2006; Turner et al., 1998). Prior to administering the survey, the protocol underwent pilot testing with 20 respondents using the A-CASI system. Any issues identified during testing were addressed, and after each interview, respondents completed a modified cognitive interview to evaluate the consistency of question interpretation and the appropriateness of the interview process. It is important to note that while Project VOCES used GBV, this dissertation uses Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) to describe the variables collected as GBV variables.

Sampling and Data Collection

Survey

The study's eligibility criteria stipulated that participants needed to be Latine adults over age 18 with the capacity to provide informed consent and engage in the study. The purpose of the project was to recruit and interview a non-random purposeful sample with equal representation of males and females. Therefore, while initial recruitment efforts entailed the determination of random clusters (block group in census tracts), due to safety concerns and quota sampling for equal gender representation,

A cluster sampling approach was supplanted with volunteer quota sampling (Bernard, 2002). We worked collaboratively with two community led and community based organizations

who were trained in the methods and procedures of the project. Participants were recruited through the preexisting network of community organizations (including markets, clinics, community centers) and during community events. Although this study was not designed to be representative of the geographic area as a whole, this method of sampling was non-random and purposeful and therefore, there is the potential of introducing selection bias

Informed Consent

Prior to the survey or interviews' initiation, a comprehensive study description was furnished to all respondents. In cases where respondents lacked literacy in either English or Spanish, an oral description was provided. Otherwise, written material in either language, adjusted to an appropriate reading level, was included. Interviewers took measures to ensure that respondents had a thorough grasp of the overarching project, the specific data collection component(s) they were agreeing to partake in, the sensitive nature of the questions, as well as the safeguards for confidentiality and anonymity that pertained to the gathered data. It was important to communicate to respondents that they retained the right to abstain from answering any specific question or to withdraw from participation at any juncture, without incurring any negative consequences.

Upon verifying that the respondent had comprehensively grasped the full scope of participation, including the potential risks and benefits involved, verbal consent was secured from each participant. A request for a waiver of signed consent was submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB), as the signature served as the sole means of linking the participant to their responses. Trained study personnel then introduced the participant to the A-CASI system, a set of headphones was provided to the participant and their language of choice for survey

completion was provided. The survey items were shown on the privacy screen and participants noted their response via the touch screen. A member of the study team was available to answer any questions during the survey administration. The survey took an average of 45 minutes to complete, and participants were provided with a $50 gift card.

Data Management

Each survey employed a Survey Identification (ID) Number to maintain anonymity, without the inclusion of personal identifiers. During the qualitative component, the interviewer instructed respondents to use pseudonyms or first names only. All study-related documents, including focus group transcripts, records, and completed A-CASI survey interviews, were securely stored at the GW project site, with password protection ensuring access only by authorized research personnel. A-CASI survey interviews were promptly downloaded at the GW project site within 5 days of collection. Each interview was subsequently reviewed for both completeness and accuracy of responses.

Individual Interviews

The qualitative data collection process occurred in two distinct phases, comprising a total of 56 individual interviews with Latines residing in Langley Park, MD, spanning from 2009 to 2010. Semi-structured field guides were employed for the purpose of conducting hour-long interviews. Stringent measures were taken to ensure that these interviews took place within private settings and were conducted in the preferred language of each respondent, whether it be English or Spanish. The research protocols for the study were subject to approval by the Institutional Review Board at George Washington University.

Throughout the initial phase, which encompassed thirty-two interviews, three bilingual interviewers adeptly utilized convenience sampling to gather pertinent data. Respondents were strategically recruited through well-established partnerships with community-based organizations. All adults in a household above the age of 18 were eligible for the study. The main objective of this initial phase of interviews was to thoroughly assess the participants' understanding of IPV and to explore their related experiences within the contexts of both their home country and the United States. A comprehensive range of factors, spanning individual, family/partner, community, and social/cultural dimensions, was probed in relation to their association with IPV experiences in each respective context.

Subsequently, the ensuing phase comprised twenty-four individual interviews that employed purposive sampling, adhering to the methodological framework outlined by Bernard (2005). In this phase, respondents were recruited through a community-based organization dedicated to offering support to survivors of IPV. The eligibility criteria for participation in this phase were focused on individuals who had encountered IPV while residing in the U.S. This encompassed various forms of IPV, including physical, emotional, sexual, verbal abuse, as well as instances of control and manipulation. The interviews conducted in this phase delved deeply into the firsthand experiences of IPV victimization in both the home country and U.S. contexts. The inquiry specifically focused on the contributing factors to IPV across domains that were akin to those examined in the initial phase of the study.

The qualitative interviews were transcribed from the audiotapes, which were reviewed for completeness and accuracy.

Measures

The measures description of this dissertation focuses on the key domains of measurement, including IPV, acculturation, gender and relationship norms, and social support. These domains are central to the research questions and hypotheses. Although demographic data were collected as part of the survey, they are not covered in detail in this section, as the primary emphasis is on the variables directly related to IPV and the influencing factors examined in the study.

Intimate partner violence:

The prevalence of perpetration and victimization of IPV was assessed utilizing the Revised Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS2) developed by Strauss et al. (1996). The CTS2 scale includes 39 items, 23 of which were used in this survey. Each item inquiries about both the participant's own behaviors as well as those of their partner. The scale comprises five distinct domains: Negotiation, Psychological Aggression, Physical Assault, Sexual Coercion, and Injury (Strauss et al., 1996). The CTS2 scale includes 39 items, 23 of which were used in this survey.

To ascertain the occurrence of IPV in this study, a set of 23 items were used. Given that these items include inquiries pertaining to both victimization and perpetration, the resulting scale contained a total of 46 questions - one addressing victimization and the other addressing perpetration. These 46 items include emotional IPV (11 items each for perpetration and victimization), physical IPV (6 items each for perpetration and victimization), sexual IPV (3 items each for perpetration and victimization), and stalking (3 items each for perpetration and victimization) domains in the survey, questions pertaining to victimization employ a dichotomous response format, "yes" or "no" options, as responses to the statement, " My partner used my immigration status against me." Conversely, questions addressing perpetration also

utilize a dichotomous framework, in response to prompts such as, " I used my partner's immigration status against my partner." . The comprehensive scale and the allocation of items into their respective domains can be found in appendix A.

Acculturative Stress

Discrimination Scale

The American Psychological Association (APA) has provided a definition of discrimination as the inequitable or biased treatment directed towards individuals and collectives, grounded in attributes including but not confined to race, gender, age, or sexual orientation (APA, 2019). The present study utilized a discrimination scale derived from a previously validated scale developed by Diaz et al. (1998). The 7-item scale inquires about the frequency at which individuals have encountered instances of perceived discrimination in various social contexts such as public places and hospital settings. Each item is rated on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 4, where a rating of 1 indicates the absence of perceived discrimination and a rating of 4 corresponds to numerous occurrences of perceived discrimination. Higher scores on this scale indicate a greater prevalence of perceived discrimination in comparison to lower scores. Examples of question stems include "About how many times have you been verbally insulted because you are Latino?" and "About how many times have you been made to feel uncomfortable in a public place or stores because you are Latino?". The comprehensive scale can be found in appendix A.

Perceived Acculturative Stress Scale

The measurement of acculturative stress was conducted utilizing the "Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturative Stress" (SAFE) scale (SAFE; Mena, Padilla &

Maldonado, 1987). From the SAFE scale 5 items were employed as specified in the table provided below. The scale employed in this study is a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 to 5. A rating of 1 indicates an extremely stressful experience, while a rating of 5 signifies the absence of stress. Therefore, individuals with lower overall scores on the scale indicate a higher level of acculturative stress. Items include eliciting answers around the level of stress for questions such as “It bothers me that my close family members do not understand my new values” or “It bothers me when people pressure me to assimilate or live the Anglo-American way”. The comprehensive scale can be found in appendix A.

Acculturation: Language proficiency

The measurement of language proficiency-based acculturation was conducted using the "Short Acculturation Scale for Hispanics" (Marin et al. 1987). The Language-based Acculturation Scale aimed to assess the individual's level of comfort in using Spanish compared to English. Each question on the scale utilized a 10-item five-point Likert scale, where a score of 1 indicated a higher level of comfort with Spanish only, while a score of 5 indicated a higher level of comfort with English only. Consequently, a lower score on the scale indicated a lesser degree of comfort in utilizing English as part of the individual's acculturation process. Comfort of language use is gauged by questions such as “In which language(s) do you usually think” and “In general, in what language(s) is the music you prefer to listen to?”. The comprehensive scale can be found in appendix A.

Social Support

Social support has been measured by two measures, the first is perceived social cohesion, and the second is reciprocated exchange of social behaviors.

Social Cohesion

Social cohesion pertains to the strength of interpersonal connections and the perception of collective unity within the constituents of a community (Kawachi & Berkman, 2014).

To gauge social cohesion within the community, a 5-item scale was employed, adapted from the work of Sampson et al. (1999). The social cohesion scale measures the level of closeness and the extent to which an individual feels a sense of belonging to their community. Higher scores on the social cohesion scale imply a lower perception of social cohesion within the individual's community. Community cohesion is measured by measuring how much an individual agrees with statements such as “This is a close-knit neighborhood”, and “People in this neighborhood do not share the same values.” The comprehensive scale can be found in appendix A.

Reciprocal Exchange

Another aspect of social support examined was that of reciprocal exchange, which involves the reciprocal sharing of information, support, and positive actions among community members (Finfgeld-Connett, 2005). Perceived reciprocal exchange was assessed using a 4-item scale adapted from Sampson et al.'s Chicago Neighborhood study (Sampson, 1999). Similar to the previous scales, this instrument utilized a Likert scale, and higher scores on the reciprocal exchange scale indicate a lower level of social support. The comprehensive scale can be found in appendix A.

Family and Relationship Norms

Family Environment scale

The measurement of family environment perceptions was conducted using the 6-item Family Environment Scale, which aimed to assess individuals' views on their family's dynamics and support systems. Each question on the scale utilized a 4-point Likert scale, where a score of 0 indicated strong agreement with the statement, and a score of 3 indicated strong disagreement. For instance, items such as "In times of crisis we can cope better with the support of others" and "Each one is accepted for who they are" reflect positive perceptions of family support, while items such as "We avoid talking about our fears, feelings, worries, or sadness" were reverse coded to assess less supportive dynamics. The overall family environment score was used as a continuous variable, with reverse coding applied to specific items to ensure consistency in the interpretation of higher scores representing a less supportive environment. Consequently, higher overall scores on the scale indicated a less supportive family environment. The comprehensive scale can be found in appendix A.

Family norms scale

The measurement of family and relationship norms was conducted using an 11-item dichotomous scale, designed to assess individuals' attitudes toward traditional gender roles within families and relationships. Each item on the scale required respondents to indicate whether they believed a given statement was True or False, with higher overall scores reflecting more conservative or traditional norms regarding gender roles.

For example, items such as "The wife should have the primary responsibility of taking care of the home and the children" and "In a marriage, the husband should take the initiative in

making decisions" assess adherence to traditional gender roles within a household. The scale ranged from 0 to 10, with higher values indicating stronger support for conservative gender norms in family and relationship contexts. The comprehensive scale can be found in appendix A.

Violence Causes Scale

The measurement of violence acceptance beliefs was conducted using a Violence Causes Scale with 5 items, which aimed to assess the individual's level of endorsement of common myths and attitudes related to the causes of IPV. Each question on the scale utilized a 4-item Likert scale, where a score of 0 indicated strong disagreement with the statement, and a score of 3 indicated strong agreement. Consequently, a higher score on the scale indicated a greater acceptance of violence-causing beliefs. For example, items such as "Some women provoke their partners into being abusive" or "Partners abuse women to ease their frustrations" reflect victim-blaming attitudes and rationalizations for violence. The comprehensive scale can be found in Appendix A. In this analysis, overall acceptance beliefs was used as a continuous variable, with higher scores indicating stronger agreement with violence-supporting statements. The comprehensive scale can be found in appendix A.

Violence Justification variable

The measurement of violence justification was conducted using a dichotomous variable, aimed at assessing whether respondents justify acts of violence under certain conditions. Respondents were asked to indicate Yes or No for each of the 4 statements. Any endorsement of a justification for violence was coded as 1, indicating that the respondent justified the violent

behavior, whereas responses indicating no justification were coded as 0. The comprehensive scale can be found in appendix A.

Chapter 4:

A Confirmatory Model of The Effect of Acculturative Stress and Social Support on Intimate Partner Violence Victimization and Perpetration: A Structural Equation Model Analysis

Abstract

IPV affects a significant portion of the U.S. population, with higher rates observed among immigrant communities. Immigrants face stressors such as language barriers and discrimination, which increase their vulnerability to IPV. Acculturative stress, the psychological distress from adapting to a new culture, has been linked to IPV. This study explores the relationship between acculturative stress, social support, and IPV among Latine immigrants in Langley Park, Maryland. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to assess how social support moderates the relationship between acculturative stress and IPV victimization and perpetration.

The study involved 267 participants, equally divided between men and women. IPV was measured using the Revised Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS2), assessing emotional, physical, sexual violence, and stalking. Acculturative stress was measured using the Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturative Stress (SAFE) scale, along with language proficiency and discrimination. Social support was measured using the Social Cohesion and Reciprocal Exchange Scales. SEM was used to examine the direct and indirect effects of acculturative stress and social support on IPV.

Acculturative stress was significantly associated with emotional ($\beta = 0.184$, $p < 0.05$) and stalking victimization ($\beta = 0.195$, $p < 0.05$). Low language proficiency was linked to higher physical violence perpetration ($\beta = 0.325$, $p < 0.001$) and sexual violence victimization ($\beta = 0.242$, $p < 0.01$). Social support had a significant negative effect on acculturative stress ($\beta = -$

0.214, $p < 0.01$), but no direct effect on IPV. The SEM models showed no significant gender differences in the relationships between acculturative stress, social support, and IPV

Acculturative stress, exacerbated by language barriers and discrimination, plays a critical role in IPV dynamics among Latino immigrants. Social support indirectly reduces IPV by alleviating acculturative stress. By addressing acculturative stress, interventions could serve as a prevention mechanism for reducing violence, highlighting a critical area for public health initiatives and community-based programs aimed at supporting immigrant populations.

Introduction

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) remains a pervasive issue affecting a significant portion of the population in the United States, with 41% of women and 26% of men reporting experiences of IPV during their lifetime (CDC, 2022). IPV includes a range of abusive behaviors, including emotional, physical, sexual abuse, and stalking, impacting both perpetrators and victims. The prevalence of IPV is notably higher among immigrant populations, particularly among Latino women, where lifetime IPV rates range from 30% to 50% (Marrs Fuchsel & Brummett, 2021). This heightened vulnerability is shaped by unique stressors linked to the immigration experience, such as feelings of disenfranchisement, isolation from relocation, language barriers, and discrimination encountered in social services and criminal justice systems (Amanor-Boadu et al., 2012; Sabri et al., 2018).

The immigration journey introduces a variety of stressors that contribute to the emergence of IPV. Both perpetration and victimization of IPV are often linked to an interplay of pre-migration and post-migration stressors, including the chronic stress associated with acculturation. Acculturation is the process by which immigrants adapt to the dominant cultural norms, values, and behaviors of their new environment (Berry, 2006; Smokowski et al., 2009). According to Berry's theoretical framework, acculturative stress is characterized by psychological distress—such as uncertainty, anxiety, and depression—stemming from the challenges of adapting to a new culture. This stress often manifests through difficulties in language acquisition, experiences of perceived discrimination, and conflicts between cultural identities and values (Araújo Dawson & Panchanadeswaran, 2010; Berry, 1997).

For Latino immigrants in the United States, the process of acculturation can be particularly challenging, with increased vulnerability to IPV stemming from threats related to

immigration status, fears of deportation, limited language skills, and restricted access to essential services and official documents. These factors can create conditions conducive to emotional abuse and coercive control within intimate relationships (Moya et al., 2014). Language proficiency, in particular, emerges as a critical factor influencing levels of acculturative stress. Immigrants often experience significant stress due to communication difficulties with members of the host culture, a phenomenon referred to as communication-related acculturative stress (Byrom, 2021; Doucerain et al., 2015).

Ethnic discrimination is another critical stressor faced by many immigrants, defined as the unfair treatment based on race or ethnicity by the majority population (Crengle et al., 2012). Research consistently shows that both direct experiences of discrimination and the perception of being discriminated against can have detrimental effects on mental and physical health, primarily through elevated stress levels (Mallett et al., 2021; Sawyer et al., 2012). For Latino immigrants, limited English language proficiency is often linked to higher levels of discrimination compared to those who are more fluent, further compounding acculturative stress (Maldonado et al., 2020). The increased discrimination against Latino immigrants, exacerbated by shifting U.S. policies and rising anti-immigrant sentiment, contributes to maladaptive behaviors, mental health challenges, and reduced self-efficacy (Araújo Dawson & Panchanadeswaran, 2010; Lueck & Wilson, 2011; Maldonado et al., 2020).

Stressful experiences, such as those encountered during the immigration process, can provoke negative emotional responses, including anger, frustration, and anxiety. When effective coping mechanisms are unavailable, these emotions may lead individuals to resort to maladaptive coping strategies, such as engaging in IPV and thus being victimized by IPV. The theory of stress and coping by Lazarus et. al (1984) posits that managing acculturative stress

requires effective coping strategies; in this context, IPV can be viewed as a maladaptive coping response. Conversely, social support acts as a protective factor that strengthens an individual's resilience and confidence, thereby facilitating more adaptive coping strategies (Nurius et al., 1992). Social support, defined as the involvement of significant others in helping an individual manage stress, can mitigate the harmful effects of acculturative stress on mental and physical health, thereby reducing the likelihood of IPV (Haltom et al., 2023).

Social support is particularly relevant in alleviating the negative effects of acculturative stress among immigrant populations. IPV is often associated with isolation, loss of social connections, and diminished self-worth (Güler et al., 2022). Social support directly counters these effects by reducing feelings of isolation and enhancing self-resilience (Coker et al., 2003). In collectivist cultures, such as those predominant in Latin communities, the role of social support is even more pronounced compared to individualistic cultures (Bacallao & Smokowski, 2007; Crockett et al., 2007). In Latino communities, family cohesion—a measure of the strength of relational bonds within the family—plays a crucial role in managing acculturative stress. Cohesive families often serve as critical social networks, providing emotional support and informal resources to cope with stress, including financial and practical assistance (Archuleta & Teasley, 2013; Dillon et al., 2013).

This study is situated in suburban regions of Maryland, which are characterized by a significant concentration of Latino residents (Urban Institute, 2018). As gentrification reshapes urban landscapes, many low-income Latino immigrants have relocated to suburban areas within the DC-Maryland-Virginia (DMV) region, with Langley Park, MD, emerging as a notable settlement area for recent immigrants. As of 2020, approximately 63% of Langley Park residents were born outside the United States, and 84.2% of the population identifies as Latino (Data USA,

2020; US Census, 2020). This research aims to examine the relationship between acculturative stress and the victimization and perpetration of various forms of IPV among Latino immigrant men and women. Additionally, the study seeks to explore the moderating role of perceived social support in the experiences of IPV, offering insights into potential intervention strategies to reduce IPV and promote well-being within immigrant communities.

To achieve its objectives, this research utilizes Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine the theoretical framework of stress and coping, particularly focusing on the moderating role of social support in the relationship between acculturative stress and intimate partner violence. SEM is a powerful analytical technique well-suited for this study as it allows for the simultaneous testing of multiple relationships between observed and latent variables, which is essential for assessing complex theoretical models (Beran & Violato, 2010). SEM's ability to handle measurement errors and its capacity to evaluate the fit of the overall model makes it an ideal method for identifying the applicability and validity of theoretical models in diverse contexts, such as the experiences of Latino immigrants.

Methods

The main analytical method of this paper is a SEM model aiming to theorize a confirmatory model around IPV victimization and perpetration with acculturation related stressors and social support. The measures showcase the main dependent and independent variables used in the analyses.

Measures

The measures showcase the main dependent and independent variables used in the analyses.

Dependent variables

The prevalence of perpetration and victimization of IPV was assessed utilizing the Revised Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS2) developed by Strauss et al. (1996). Each item inquires about both the participant's own behaviors as well as those of their partner. The scale comprises five distinct domains: Negotiation, Psychological Aggression, Physical Assault, Sexual Coercion, and Injury (Strauss et al., 1996).

To ascertain the occurrence of IPV in this study, a set of 23 items were used. Given that these items include inquiries pertaining to both victimization and perpetration, the resulting scale contained a total of 46 questions - one addressing victimization and the other addressing perpetration. These 46 items include emotional IPV (11 items each for perpetration and victimization), physical IPV (6 items each for perpetration and victimization), sexual IPV (3 items each for perpetration and victimization), and stalking (3 items each for perpetration and victimization) domains in the survey, questions pertaining to victimization employ a dichotomous response format, "yes" or "no" options, as responses to the statement, " My partner used my immigration status against me." Conversely, questions addressing perpetration also

utilize a dichotomous framework, in response to prompts such as, " I used my partner's immigration status against my partner." . The comprehensive scale and the allocation of items into their respective domains can be found in appendix A.

In this analysis a total of 8 dependent dichotomous variables were used, derived from a single larger scale measuring violence victimization and perpetration. General violence victimization and perpetration was assessed using a 23-item scale that inquired about the experiences with violence. The scale was then divided into 4 based on the type of violence. Emotional violence (11 items), physical violence (6 items), sexual violence (3 items), and stalking (3 items) perpetration and victimization were assessed using dichotomized scales, with any reported violence coded as 1 and none as 0, excluding missing data.

Independent variables

Acculturative Stress

Perceived Discrimination

The American Psychological Association (APA) has provided a definition of discrimination as the inequitable or biased treatment directed towards individuals and collectives, grounded in attributes including but not confined to race, gender, age, or sexual orientation (APA, 2019). The present study utilized a discrimination scale derived from a previously validated scale developed by Diaz et al. (1998). The 7- item scale measures the frequency at which individuals have encountered instances of perceived discrimination in various social contexts such as public places and hospital settings. Each item is rated on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 4, where a rating of 1 indicates the absence of perceived discrimination and a rating of 4 corresponds to numerous occurrences of perceived discrimination. Higher scores on this scale indicate a greater prevalence of perceived discrimination in comparison to lower

scores. Examples of question stems include “About how many times have you been verbally insulted because you are Latino?” and “About how many times have you been made to feel uncomfortable in a public place or stores because you are Latino?”. The comprehensive scale can be found in appendix A. In this analysis, experienced discrimination was a dichotomous variable created from a scale measuring experiences of discrimination, where 0 signified no discrimination faced, and 1 signified any discrimination reported.

Perceived Acculturative Stress

The measurement of acculturative stress was conducted utilizing the "Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturative Stress" (SAFE) scale (SAFE; Mena, Padilla & Maldonado, 1987). From the SAFE scale, 5 items were employed as specified in the table provided below. The scale employed in this study is a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 to 5. A rating of 1 indicates an extremely stressful experience, while a rating of 5 signifies the absence of stress. Therefore, individuals with lower overall scores on the scale indicate a higher level of acculturative stress. Items elicited answers regarding the level of stress experienced in different situations such as “It bothers me that my close family members do not understand my new values” or “It bothers me when people pressure me to assimilate or live the Anglo-American way.” The comprehensive scale can be found in appendix A.

Acculturation: Language proficiency

The measurement of language proficiency-based acculturation was conducted using the "Short Acculturation Scale for Hispanics" (Marin et al. 1987). The Language-based Acculturation Scale aimed to assess the individual's level of comfort in using Spanish compared

to English. Each question on the scale utilized a 10-item five-point Likert scale, where a score of 1 indicated a higher level of comfort with Spanish only, while a score of 5 indicated a higher level of comfort with English only. Consequently, a lower score on the scale indicated a lesser degree of comfort in utilizing English as part of the individual's acculturation process. Comfort of language use is gauged by questions such as “In which language(s) do you usually think” and “In general, in what language(s) is the music you prefer to listen to?”. The comprehensive scale can be found in appendix A. English proficiency, in these analyses, was used as a dichotomous variable due to the skewness of the data where any English use was 1 and none was 0.

Social Cohesion

Social cohesion pertains to the strength of interpersonal connections and the perception of collective unity within the constituents of a community (Kawachi & Berkman, 2014).To gauge social cohesion within the community, a 5-item scale was employed, adapted from the work of Sampson et al. (1999). The social cohesion scale measures the level of closeness and the extent to which an individual feels a sense of belonging to their community. Higher scores on the social cohesion scale imply a lower perception of social cohesion within the individual's community. Community cohesion is measured by measuring how much an individual agrees with statements such as “This is a close-knit neighborhood”, and “People in this neighborhood do not share the same values”. The comprehensive scale can be found in appendix A.

Reciprocated Exchange

Another aspect of social support examined was that of reciprocal exchange, which involves the reciprocal sharing of information, support, and positive actions among community

members (Finfgeld-Connett, 2005). Perceived reciprocal exchange was assessed using a 4-item scale adapted from Sampson et al.'s Chicago Neighborhood study (Sampson, 1999). Similar to the previous scales, this instrument utilized a Likert scale, and higher scores on the reciprocal exchange scale indicate a lower level of social support. The comprehensive scale can be found in appendix A.

Analysis

A structural equation model with 3 latent constructs of social support, acculturative stress, and IPV (perpetration and victimization) were run to determine fit, strength and direction of the constructs. Social support and acculturative stress act as second level latent variables, consisting of constituent variables. Confirmatory Factor Analysis were run for each of the latent variable measures, one for acculturative stress and one for social support.

The SEM estimated direct and indirect effects from acculturative stress and social support to IPV. All parameters were estimated with a weighted least squares estimator which were standardized in all phases.

The coefficients of all the measured values have been reported with the standardized values. In all parameters, an alpha level of values below 0.05 were considered significant based on widely accepted statistical significance literature.

Data-Model Fit

The analysis will assess three fit categories: absolute, parsimonious, and incremental fits as defined by Mueller and Hancock (2019). Absolute fit evaluates how well the model covariances match observed data, with chi-square and SRMR indices used, aiming for lower

values and an SRMR under 0.08. Parsimonious fit balances model complexity and fit, with RMSEA values under 0.06 preferred, while incremental fit compares the model's performance against a null baseline model.

Two Group Model Analysis

The next stage of the analysis included a gendered analysis of the SEM defined previously to further identify the relationships between the constructs answering more granular questions relating to the hypothesis set.

a) Is acculturative stress linked differentially to higher reported IPV victimization? Is it different by gender?

b) Is acculturative stress linked differentially to higher reported IPV perpetration? Is it different by gender?

c) Is social support linked differentially to lower reported IPV? Is it different by gender?

e) Is social support linked differentially to lower acculturative stress? Is it different by gender?

The previously defined structural equation model was run separately across two gender groups, males and females, both with equality constraints, resulting in two models each for victimization and perpetration that were compared using both a likelihood ratio test and a chi-square ($\chi 2$) difference test. The first model was the benchmark model, which was unconstrained, allowing all the parameters to vary freely in both the male and female sub-group analyses. Then, a fully constrained model was run where all five structural relationships were constrained to compare the most rigid model to the other models with fewer constraints. The model comparison was conducted by comparing the modification indices of each subsequent model.

Models

Two separate SEMs were conducted: one for IPV victimization, which included the component parts of emotional violence, physical violence, sexual violence, and stalking, and another for IPV perpetration with similar components. The overall model structure and proposed relationships remained consistent across both models; thus, the figure below represents the model, which was run twice—once for victimization and once for perpetration. Additionally, gender-specific models were run independently for both males and females for both victimization and perpetration

Figure 4.1: Theorized SEM Model for violence victimization and perpetration

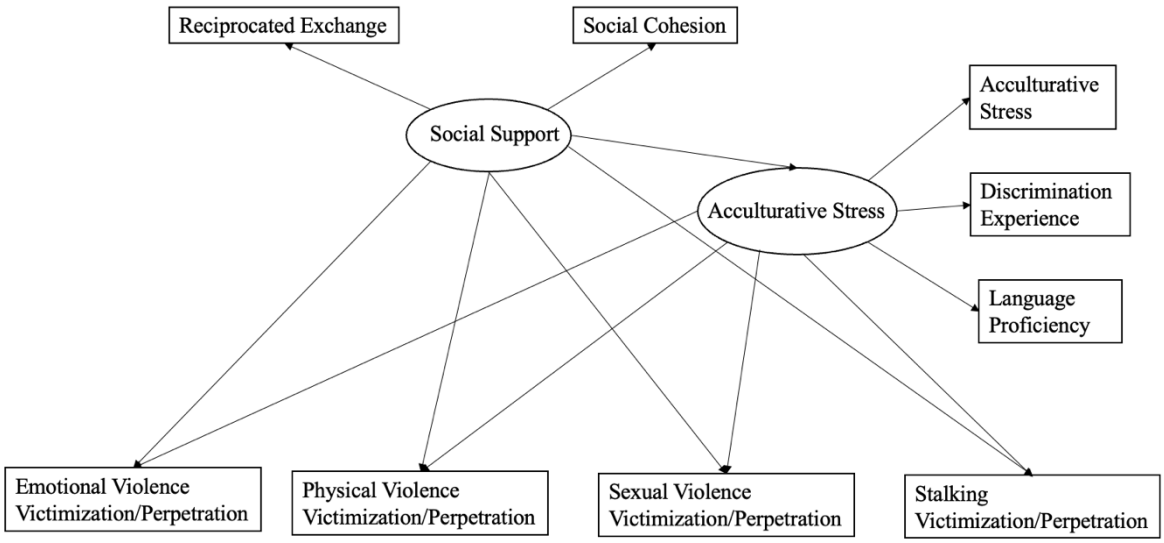


Table 4.1: Theorized pathways in the model:

Variable type	
Latent pathway	Social support ← Reciprocal exchange, social cohesion
	Acculturative Stress ← Acculturative stress scale, Discrimination Experience, Language Proficiency
Structural pathways	Social support → Acculturative Stress
	Social support → Emotional (V/P), Physical (V/P), Sexual (V/P), Stalking (V/P)

	Acculturative Stress → Emotional (V/P), Physical (V/P), Sexual (V/P), Stalking (V/P)

V/P: Violence or Perpetration depending on the model

Choosing model to report: Constrained vs. Unconstrained model

In SEM, the terms "constrained model" and "unconstrained model" refer to how parameters (such as factor loadings, variances, covariances, and path coefficients) are handled across different groups or conditions within the model in an unconstrained model, parameters are allowed to vary freely across different groups or conditions. This means that the model estimates these parameters separately for each group, without any restrictions. In a constrained model, certain parameters are set to be equal (or fixed) across different groups or conditions. This means that the model assumes these parameters do not vary between groups, and a single estimate is used for all groups. Thus a constrained version simplifies the model by reducing the number of parameters that need to be estimated, which is efficient when sample sizes are limited. It also helps in testing the hypothesis of parameter invariance across groups. A constrained model is simpler and more parsimonious with fewer parameters is generally preferred if it fits the data well because it is easier to interpret and less likely to overfit; a model of this type is also more generalizable in a broader context.

Analyses rationale

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed in this analysis due to its ability to examine both direct and indirect effects within pre-defined causal relationships. This approach is particularly useful here because the goal is to confirm the hypothesized pathways from latent and measured variables to different forms of violence. SEM allows for the rejection of the null hypothesis if parameters significantly differ from the null, indicating that the hypothesized

pathways exist. Furthermore, by testing both constrained and unconstrained models for gender, this method enables the determination of whether separate models are necessary for males and females or if a single model can be applied across genders. SEM was selected as the most appropriate method to confirm the theorized relationships in this study due to its flexibility in modeling complex relationships and its ability to validate the fit of theoretical models. Structural equation models (SEMs) stand out from other modeling methods by enabling the examination of both direct and indirect effects within pre-specified causal frameworks. Moreover, SEM provides a means for researchers to evaluate the accuracy and fit of a theoretical model.

Results

The victimization and perpetration models were run for a sample size of 267 (134 men and 133 women), representing an even split between the sexes. Acculturative stress was tested as a latent variable with scales of acculturation stress, level of English proficiency, and discrimination experience, but since all the scales were not significant with the latent variable, they were considered individually in the model as a measured variable. Table 4.2 shows the actual model tested in the analysis, with figure 4.2 showing the relationships in their directionality in detail.

Figure 4.2: Actual Model for violence victimization and perpetration

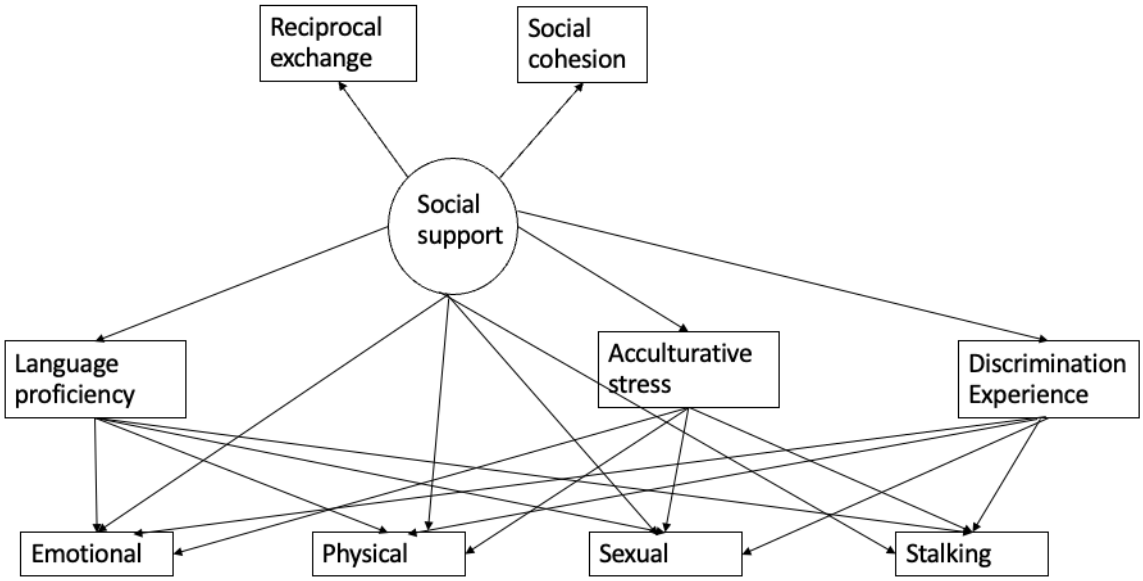


Table 4.2: Pathways in the model:

Variable type	
Latent pathway	Social support ← Reciprocal exchange, social cohesion
Structural pathways	Social support → Acculturative stress, Discrimination Experience, Language Proficiency

	Social support → Emotional (V/P), Physical (V/P), Sexual (V/P), Stalking (V/P)
	Acculturative Stress → Emotional (V/P), Physical (V/P), Sexual (V/P), Stalking (V/P)
	Language Proficiency → Emotional (V/P), Physical (V/P), Sexual (V/P), Stalking (V/P)
	Discrimination Experience → Emotional (V/P), Physical (V/P), Sexual (V/P), Stalking (V/P)

V/P: Violence or Perpetration depending on the model

As shown in Table 4.3, social support was operationalized as a latent variable constructed from two observed scales: the Social Cohesion Scale and the Reciprocated Exchange Scale. It was hypothesized that lower scores on these scales would correspond to higher levels of perceived social support, as they inversely represent the concept of social support.

Table 4.3: Social support latent variable fit

	Social support
Social cohesion scale	-0.805***
Reciprocated exchange scale	-0.603***

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

The measurement model, assessed through confirmatory factor analyses, provided evidence for the validity of this construct. Both the Social Cohesion Scale (SSE= -0.805,p<0.001) and the Reciprocated Exchange Scale (SSE= -0.603, p<0.001) were found to be highly significant contributors to the latent variable of social support. This indicates that both scales effectively capture the intended construct, making them appropriate measures for the latent variable in this model.

In both the SEMs, the unconstrained models were not significantly better than the constrained models thus the constraints imposed on the model do not lead to a significant loss of fit. This implies that the measurement model (e.g., factor loadings, intercepts) and structural

relationships are consistent across the groups being compared thus there is little evidence of modification related to gender.

Multigroup model for Violence Victimization

The results of the multigroup SEM analysis for violence victimization are presented in this section. Two models were examined: one with all paths unconstrained and another with all paths constrained across groups. The comparison between the unconstrained and constrained models revealed no significant improvement in fit for the unconstrained model, indicating that the constrained model provides an equally good fit to the data. The fit statistics for the model indicate a significant chi-square test of model fit with a value of 51.535. When broken down by gender, the contribution to the chi-square value is 24.868 for males and 26.668 for females.

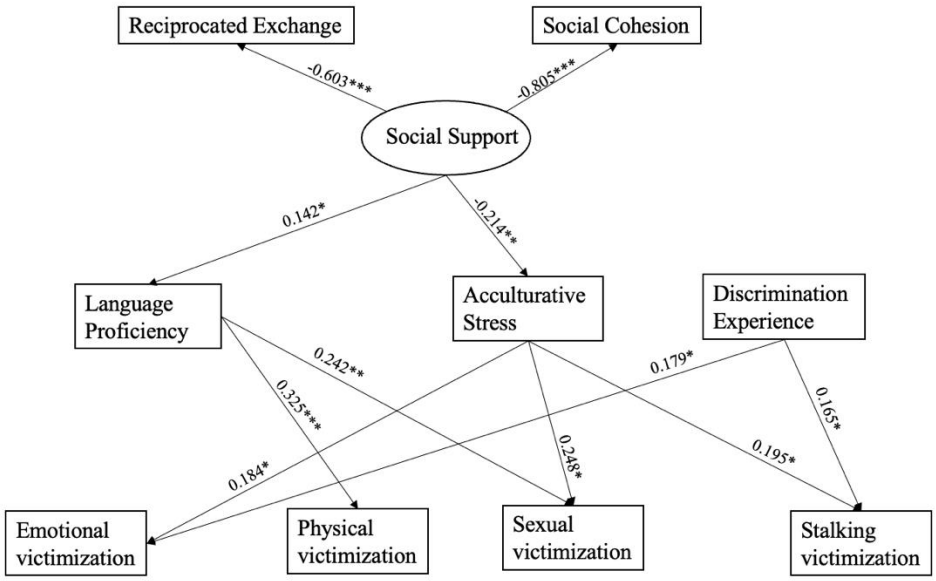
The structural model is showcased in Figure 4.3 with significant pathways presented. The Chi-square test of difference testing between unconstrained and constrained model:25.585 (p=0.1422), thus the unconstrained model is not significantly more explanatory than the constrained model. The constrained model demonstrated an overall good fit, as indicated by several fit indices as seen in Table 4.4. The RMSEA, the CFI, the Chi-square test of the baseline model and the SRMR were all better than the recommended values.

Table 4.4: Fit indices for violence victimization model

		Absolute			**Parsimonious**	**Incremental**
	Df	χ^2	p-value	SRMR	RMSEA	CFI
Cutoff criteria			<0.05	<0.08	<0.06	>0.95
	19	426.122	0.000*	0.077*	0.052*	0.962*

*Indicates good fit

Figure 4.3: SEM Model for violence victimization with significant pathways only



The model's pathways revealed significant relationships between various factors and types of violence as in Table 4.5. Specifically, acculturative stress was significantly associated with increased emotional violence victimization, sexual violence victimization, and stalking victimization. Low language proficiency was significantly linked to higher levels of physical violence victimization and sexual violence victimization. Additionally, experiences of discrimination were significantly associated with increased emotional violence victimization and stalking.

Table 4.5 : Victimization Standardized Structural Equation Estimates (n=267)

Type of victimization	*Emotional*	*Physical*	*Sexual*	*Stalking*
Social Support	0.085	-0.236	-0.029	-0.004
Acculturative stress	0.184*	0.182	0.248**	0.195*
Less Language proficiency	0.073	0.325***	0.242**	0.044
Discrimination	0.179*	0.120	0.172	0.165*

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Furthermore, as seen in Table 4.6, social support was found to have a significant negative association with acculturative stress, suggesting that higher levels of social support are linked to reduced acculturative stress. Importantly, the model did not show differences between genders, as the paths were constrained across groups. This finding suggests that the relationships between the variables of interest and violence victimization are consistent across genders in this sample.

Table 4.6: Acculturation and Social Support Standardized Structural Equation Estimates

	Acculturative Stress	Language Proficiency	Discrimination Experience
Social Support	-0.214**	0.142*	0.117

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Multigroup model for Violence Perpetration

The findings from the multigroup SEM analysis for violence perpetration are as follows. Two versions of the model were tested: one allowing all parameters to vary freely, and the other with parameters fixed across groups. The comparison showed no significant improvement in fit when using the model with free parameters, indicating that the constrained model is just as effective and does not vary by gender.

The structural model for perpetration, illustrated in Figure 4.4, highlights the significant pathways. A chi-square difference test comparing the two models yielded a result of 22.100 ($p = 0.3793$), showing that the unconstrained model does not provide a significantly better explanation than the constrained model. Fit statistics for the overall model indicated a significant

chi-square value of 48.882. When broken down by gender, males contributed 21.061 and females contributed 27.821 to this value.

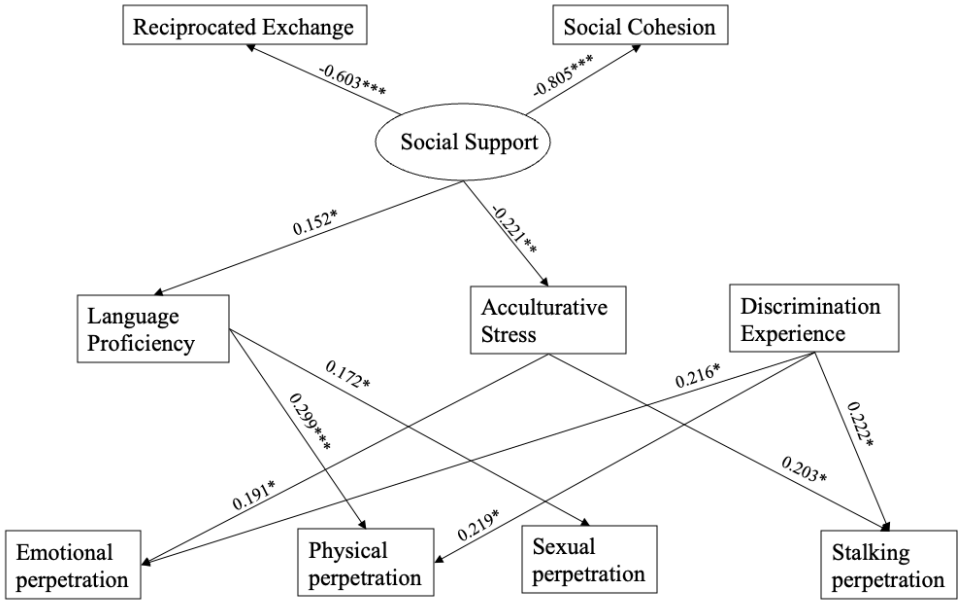
The constrained model demonstrated good fit, as shown in Table 4.7, based on multiple fit indices. The RMSEA was within acceptable limits, and the CFI was 0.972, meeting recommended benchmarks. Although the SRMR was 0.080, which is on the upper edge of acceptability, it suggests the model is nearing ideal fit. In sum, three out of four fit indices supported the model's adequacy.

Table 4.7: Fit indices for violence perpetration model

		Absolute			**Parsimonious**	**Incremental**
	Df	χ^2	p-value	SRMR	RMSEA	CFI
Cutoff criteria			<0.05	<0.08	<0.06	>0.95
	19	459.99	0.000*	0.080	0.046*	0.972*

*Indicates good fit

Figure 4.4: SEM Model for violence perpetration with significant pathways only



The model's pathways demonstrated significant associations between various factors and different forms of violence, as shown in Table 4.8. Specifically, acculturative stress was strongly linked to an increase in emotional and stalking perpetration. Limited language proficiency was significantly associated with higher occurrences of physical and sexual violence perpetration. Additionally, experiences of discrimination were significantly correlated with increased emotional, physical, and sexual violence perpetration.

Moreover, as displayed in Table 4.9, social support showed a significant negative relationship with acculturative stress and a positive association with enhanced language proficiency, indicating that greater social support is related to lower acculturative stress.

Table 4.8: Perpetration Standardized Structural Equation Estimates (n=267)

Type of perpetration	*Emotional*	*Physical*	*Sexual*	*Stalking*
Social Support	0.067	-0.209	-0.034	0.117
Acculturative stress	0.191*	0.178	0.181	0.203*
Low Language Prof.	0.113	0.299***	0.172*	0.138
Discrimination	0.216**	0.219*	0.222**	0.015

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Table 4.9: Acculturation and Social Support Standardized Structural Equation Estimates

	Acculturative Stress	*Language Proficiency*	*Discrimination Experience*
Social Support	-0.221**	0.152*	0.120

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

The pathways identified in the model revealed significant associations between key variables. Acculturative stress was significantly linked to both emotional violence perpetration and stalking perpetration. Low language proficiency was associated with increased perpetration

of physical and sexual violence. Additionally, experiences of discrimination were found to be significantly associated with higher levels of emotional, physical, and sexual violence perpetration. Moreover, the pathway between social support and acculturative stress was significant, with higher social support correlating with reduced acculturative stress.

Discussion

This study investigated the relationship between acculturative stress, social support, and IPV. Acculturative stress, which includes challenges such as language barriers and discrimination, has been shown to significantly contribute to both victimization and perpetration of violence (Alvarez et al., 2020; Cao et al., 2023; Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2012). However, social support is recognized as a critical mechanism that can alleviate acculturative stress (Bai, 2016; Khan & Hasan, 2016; Salgado et al., 2012), thereby potentially mitigating violence outcomes indirectly.

Migration and acculturation often disrupt established social networks, increasing feelings of isolation and stress. Rebuilding these networks is crucial to countering the ruptures that arise from moving to a new cultural environment (Vidal de Haymes et al., 2011). While previous research highlights the importance of social support in reducing stress, its direct impact on violence remains less clear. This study demonstrates that while social support significantly reduces levels of acculturative stress, it does not directly correlate with violence victimization or perpetration. Instead, social support influences violence outcomes indirectly through its ability to mitigate acculturative stress. Additionally, the study finds that gender-undifferentiated models of IPV are as effective as gender-differentiated models, supporting the notion that similar stressors affect both men and women in immigrant communities (Savalei & Kolenikov, 2008). The findings are framed within the stress and coping model (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), which explores how individuals' responses to stress, including violence, are shaped by their coping mechanisms.

Role of Acculturative Stress in Violence Outcomes

In this study, acculturative stress—encompassing language barriers, discrimination, and cultural challenges—was significantly linked to various forms of IPV, including emotional, sexual, and stalking victimization, as well as emotional and stalking perpetration. These findings suggest that both men and women experience similar stressors, which are connected to both victimization and perpetration, consistent with previous studies (Alvarez et al., 2020; Cao et al., 2023; Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2012).

Discrimination, in particular, was found to be associated with both victimization and perpetration of violence, reflecting its pervasive influence. This phenomenon has been noted in Forster et al. (2017), who linked racial discrimination to perpetration of violence. Importantly, these findings are not unique to immigrant communities; Reed et al. (2010) highlight how discrimination also influences violence among racial minorities more broadly, underscoring the pervasive impact of racial discrimination on both victimization and perpetration of violence, irrespective of immigrant status.

The co-occurrence of IPV victimization and perpetration is likely driven by the shared stressors within relationships. Stress related to language barriers and discrimination creates tension, increasing the likelihood of conflict between partners, a finding supported by prior research on IPV dynamics (Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2012). Such bidirectionality is emblematic of relationships where external stressors, such as acculturation challenges, exacerbate conflict, leading to cycles of violence.

No Gender Differentiation in Models

This study also finds that gender-undifferentiated models fit the data just as well as gender-differentiated models, indicating that acculturative stress and its related factors impact both men and women similarly. The unconstrained model, which allows for gender differences, did not significantly improve the model's fit over the constrained model, which assumes no differences between men and women. This suggests that the factors contributing to violence outcomes—such as language barriers, discrimination, and acculturative stress—affect both genders in comparable ways.

The findings align with Savalei & Kolenikov's (2008) research, which suggests that constrained models are valid when unconstrained models do not provide additional insights. This implies that shared stressors, such as discrimination, impact men and women equally in immigrant communities, leading to similar patterns of victimization and perpetration. Thus, interventions aimed at reducing IPV may be equally effective for both men and women, focusing on alleviating shared stressors such as acculturative stress and discrimination rather than addressing gender-specific dynamics.

Stress and Coping Framework

The stress and coping framework (Lazarus and Folkman,1984) offers a valuable perspective for understanding the link between acculturative stress and violence outcomes. In this model, violence is seen as a maladaptive coping mechanism that arises in response to significant stressors like language barriers and discrimination. According to Farrington's (1986) general stress model, individuals who face overwhelming stress are more likely to resort to

maladaptive behaviors, including violence, as a way of managing their frustration and emotional distress.

In immigrant communities, the pressures of adapting to a new culture—learning a new language, dealing with discrimination, and navigating unfamiliar social norms—can provoke intense feelings of isolation and helplessness. These feelings often manifest as violence when individuals lack constructive coping strategies to manage their stress. This aligns with the findings of Alvarez et al. (2020) and Cao et al. (2023), who also documented the strong connection between acculturative stress and IPV among immigrants.

However, when individuals have access to positive coping mechanisms, such as social support, they are better able to manage these stressors. Studies by Mengistu & Manolova (2019) and Warmling et al. (2017) highlight the importance of social support in reducing the likelihood of violence by providing healthier ways to cope with stress. In this study, social support emerged as a critical buffer, reducing the effects of acculturative stress and lowering the risk of both victimization and perpetration.

Role of Social Support on Acculturation and Violence

The findings emphasize the indirect role of social support in reducing violence outcomes through its ability to alleviate acculturative stress. While social support was not directly linked to violence, it was significantly associated with lower levels of acculturative stress, which in turn influenced violence outcomes. This aligns with the stress and coping framework which identifies social support as a mechanism that enhances individuals' capacity to manage stress.

Social support has been consistently recognized as a key factor in reducing acculturative stress (Bai, 2016; Khan & Hasan, 2016; Salgado et al., 2012). The process of migration and acculturation often disrupts established social networks, heightening stress and isolation. Rebuilding these networks is crucial in mitigating the ruptures caused by migration, as noted by Vidal de Haymes et al. (2011). By fostering social connections, immigrants can regain a sense of security and belonging, which helps them navigate the challenges of acculturation more effectively.

Moreover, social support plays a critical role in facilitating access to essential resources, such as healthcare. Research has shown that ethnic minorities living in homogeneous neighborhoods are more likely to use healthcare services compared to those in heterogeneous communities (Haas et al., 2004; Mulvaney-Day et al., 2007). This suggests that strong social ties within culturally homogeneous communities can help reduce barriers to accessing healthcare, which is a key factor in overall well-being and violence prevention. However, the absence of robust social networks can lead to increased stress and conflict within immigrant families, particularly in Hispanic communities. The negotiation of cultural values in such situations may exacerbate stress, leading to a higher risk of partner violence, as observed by Yoshioka et al. (2003).

Limitations

The study has several limitations that must be considered when interpreting the findings. Firstly, the sample size, comprising 269 participants (134 women and 135 men), is limited in the ability to detect sample may weaken the statistical power of the study, which could limit the broader applicability of the results. Additionally, incomplete responses from some participants

introduced missing data, potentially leading to bias and reducing the robustness of the findings. The implications of these limitations suggest that caution should be used when generalizing the results to larger or more diverse populations.

The study did not account for participants' immigration status (i.e., legality), which could have significantly impacted acculturative stress levels. Future research should include this variable to better understand its influence on stress and related behaviors, as factors such as legality, substance use, and other risk factors could serve as confounders. Moreover, the use of self-reported data raises the possibility of biases, including social desirability bias, where participants might underreport or misrepresent sensitive experiences such as IPV, or recall bias, where participants inaccurately remember events. These biases may impact the reliability of the findings.

The cross-sectional nature of the data presents a challenge in establishing cause-and-effect relationships, as it captures information from a single point in time. This limitation raises the possibility of reverse causality, where the experience of IPV could lead to increased acculturative stress, rather than acculturative stress contributing to IPV experiences. Longitudinal data would be required to make stronger inferences about the directionality of these relationships.

Although the data was collected before the COVID-19 pandemic, the structural model remains relevant, as the socio-political context surrounding immigration and its associated stressors has evolved only slightly, allowing for meaningful insights to be drawn from the study. However, language translation posed another limitation. Translating the quantitative survey data from Spanish to English may have introduced subtle nuances and challenges in interpretation, potentially impacting the accuracy of responses and the overall interpretation of the results.

Future Directions

The findings of this study suggest that gender does not play a significant role in the relationships observed in the structural equation model SEM. This indicates that further research is needed to explore the gender neutrality of IPV research to better understand common behaviors and the potential for bidirectional violence. Such investigations could provide a more nuanced understanding of IPV dynamics across different genders. This lack of gender difference challenges the notion that IPV studies should always be gender specific. It implies that a broader, non-gendered approach might be more appropriate in understanding IPV within immigrant communities, as the key latent and structural variables affect both genders similarly.

Additionally, the results underscore the importance of social support interventions in reducing acculturative stress. By addressing acculturative stress, these interventions could serve as a prevention mechanism for reducing violence, highlighting a critical area for public health initiatives and community-based programs aimed at supporting immigrant populations.

Chapter 5:

Exploring Relationships Between Family and Relationship Norms and Acculturative Stress with Victimization and Perpetration of Intimate Partner Violence: A Mixed Method Analysis

Abstract

Latine immigrant communities face unique challenges, including acculturative stress—linked to adapting to a new culture and norms—and traditional family norms that have the potential to increase the risk of experiencing intimate partner violence (IPV). This study examines the relative role of acculturative stress and family norms in IPV perpetration and victimization among 269 Latine immigrants, using both quantitative and qualitative methods

Nested logistic regressions were performed to understand the relationships between acculturative stress, norms, and IPV. Additionally, 47 qualitative interviews provided insight into the lived experiences of participants in the context of IPV and stress.

Quantitatively, the study found that acculturative stress is a significant factor for physical and sexual abuse victimization and stalking perpetration, while conservative family and relationship norms are associated with sexual abuse victimization and perpetration. Emotional violence perpetration was influenced by both factors independently. Qualitative results underscored how economic pressures and shifts in gender roles, particularly women entering the workforce, exacerbated stress and IPV risks. Participants reported that machismo and traditional gender role expectations often fueled IPV, as men struggled with perceived shifts in household power dynamics.

Acculturative stress and shifting family norms significantly contribute to IPV within Latine immigrant communities. Both victimization and perpetration are tied to how individuals navigate acculturation stressors and familial conflict, with bidirectional violence present in many cases. Culturally sensitive interventions that address both stress and gender norms are necessary for reducing IPV among Latine immigrants.

Introduction

Cultural and social norms exert an important influence on individual behavior, including the use of violence. Changing norms, particularly those related to gender, can either positively or negatively influence people's stress and their propensity for perpetrating IPV (Shakya et al., 2022; Nnyombi et al., 2022). Societal gender inequities and patriarchal family structures create an environment where IPV is tolerated (Fine et al., 2021). Research across cultures suggests that societies with stronger ideologies of male dominance tend to have higher rates of IPV (Jewkes, 2002).

Within this framework of male dominance, the cultural constructs of *machismo* and *marianismo* further shape gender roles and expectations, often reinforcing power imbalances. Machismo promotes ideals such as virility, bravery, and male authority, while marianismo emphasizes women's submission, modesty, and responsibility for child-rearing (Cummings et al., 2013; Finfgeld-Connett, 2017; Galvez et al., 2011). In cultures that prioritize machismo, aggression against women is often normalized, and resistance to certain forms of violence becomes a private matter that does not require outside intervention. Some immigrants may report negative experiences in their relationships but refrain from discussing them due to their strong sense of family loyalty and adherence to machismo culture (Adames & Campbell, 2005; Cummings et al., 2013; Finfgeld-Connett, 2017).

Latine immigrants often hold traditional ideas about womanhood, emphasizing domestic and maternal function (Ertl et al., 2019). Immigrant families may discourage women from pursuing higher education and career skills, although these behaviors may change over generations, particularly with the increased need for Latino women in the U.S. workforce (Berry, 2006; Caplan, 2007; Martin & Garcia, 2011). Recent immigrant women experience a perceived

increase in freedom and flexibility of responsibilities within the new cultural context, leading to changes in traditional roles. These changes and associated conflicts put Latino women at higher risk of relationship stress, especially if they belong to traditional households (Caplan, 2007). The impact of *machismo* can also affect men in this community, as shifting norms and changing power dynamics may lead to them perceiving themselves as not adhering to traditional masculine expectations, which in turn can make them vulnerable to violence. (McKenzie et al., 2018).

It is important to acknowledge that feminist theories of IPV tend to overlook violence faced by men in intimate partnerships, as they focus primarily on violence against women (Anderson, 2002). In fact, the patriarchal hegemonies play a negative role even in the IPV experience of men since the ideas of masculinity prevent men from reporting or even acknowledging IPV due to the fear of being considered "weak" or "less manly" (Bates, 2020). Studies have shown that male victimization is prevalent across different racial and socioeconomic groups (Anderson, 2002; Hines & Douglas, 2009).In addition to social norms, for immigrant communities, acculturation and acculturative stress can be linked to experiencing IPV.

Acculturation is the phenomenon denoting the transitional mechanism wherein individuals originating from immigrant backgrounds assimilate to the ideological systems, conventions, and behavioral patterns prevalent within the dominant culture of the host society to which they have relocated (Berry, 2006; Smokowski et al., 2009). The integration of a new culture into an individual's life often entails a significant change that commonly leads to heightened levels of stress. This aligns with the cognitive theory of stress and coping presented by Lazarus and Folkman, which posits that stress arises from the perception of insufficient resources and the perceived negative consequences on personal well-being resulting from the

experience of encountering a new set of events (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Arbona et al., 2010).

Acculturative stress, as conceptualized by Berry (2006, 1997), is defined as the feelings of uncertainty, anxiety, and depression that arise from the obligatory behavioral adjustments that individuals must undergo during the process of acculturation. These emotional responses are frequently associated with various challenges, including adapting to a new language, perceived intercultural discrimination, identity loss, and reconciling conflicting values (Araújo Dawson & Panchanadeswaran, 2010; Berry, 1997). While the specific experiences of immigration vary, there are common stressors that are often shared by immigrants, including disenfranchisement, feelings of isolation due to relocation, language barriers in accessing services, and encounters with discrimination in interactions with social service and criminal justice systems (Amanor-Boadu et al., 2012; Sabri et al., 2018). The perpetration and victimization of IPV arise from a combination of stressors, including pre-migration stressors and the chronic stress associated with the acculturation process (Cao et al., 2023; Njie-Carr et al., 2021).

Migration to the United States presents heightened vulnerabilities for IPV within the Latine demographic. Threats related to the immigrant status in the U.S., fears of deportation, and restricted access to essential services can facilitate vulnerability to emotional abuse and coercive control (Moya et al., 2014). Latine immigrants often face acculturative stress due to issues like differences in marital acculturation, language obstacles, health-related challenges, and pressures related to parenting—all intricately linked to family dynamics (Cervantes et al., 2019). The dynamics of IPV within immigrant communities are complicated by the intersection of cultural expectations, economic pressures, and legal uncertainties.

Traditional Latine cultural norms that emphasize male authority and female subordination may conflict with more egalitarian views prevalent in the U.S., leading to power struggles within

households (Cervantes et al., 2019). Additionally, economic hardships faced by immigrant families can increase stress levels, contributing to the likelihood of IPV. The fear of deportation among undocumented immigrants can also be a tool of control used by abusers, who may threaten to report their partners to immigration authorities as a means of maintaining power and control (Moya et al., 2014).

The intersectionality of gender, immigration status, and socio-economic conditions creates a unique context for IPV. Understanding these intersecting factors is crucial for developing effective interventions and support systems for IPV victims within these communities. It is essential to consider culturally sensitive approaches that address the specific needs and challenges faced by immigrants, including legal support, language services, and mental health resources tailored to their experiences (Cervantes et al., 2019; Sabri et al., 2018).

This study is situated in suburban regions of Maryland, which are characterized by a significant concentration of Latine residents (Urban Institute, 2018). As gentrification reshapes urban landscapes, many low-income Latino immigrants have relocated to suburban areas within the DMV region, with Langley Park, MD, emerging as a notable settlement area for recent immigrants. As of 2020, approximately 63% of Langley Park residents were born outside the United States, and 84.2% of the population identifies as Latino (Data USA, 2020; US Census, 2020).

The purpose of this study was to deepen the understanding of IPV within immigrant communities to identify the associations between IPV perpetration and victimization with acculturative stress and family or relationship norms. This includes understanding which factors, such as the pressures of acculturation or specific cultural norms around violence, play a more significant role in different types of IPV. Additionally, the study aimed to qualitatively explore

the contextual factors surrounding the impact of immigration-related stress and the prevailing social norms regarding violence. This approach provides a deeper contextual understanding of how these intersecting issues affect IPV dynamics and contribute valuable information for designing culturally sensitive interventions that address the distinctive challenges faced by immigrant populations.

Methods

The main analytical methods of this paper are a nested regression model that explores the differential relationship between acculturation related stressors and relationship norms. In addition to this qualitative analyses is conducted to add context to the findings.

Dependent variables

The prevalence of both IPV perpetration and victimization was measured using the Revised Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS2)**,** developed by Straus et al. (1996**)**. This scale assesses both the respondent's own behaviors and those of their partner. It consists of five distinct categories: Negotiation**,** Psychological Aggression**,** Physical Assault**,** Sexual Coercion, and Injury (Straus et al., 1996).

For the purposes of this study, 23 items were selected to measure the occurrence of IPV. Since these items address both victimization and perpetration, the final scale contained 46 questions—one for each experience of victimization and one for perpetration. These items were organized into eight subscales, measuring emotional IPV (11 items each for victimization and perpetration), physical IPV (6 items each for victimization and perpetration), sexual IPV (3 items each for victimization and perpetration), and stalking (3 items each for victimization and perpetration). Each item was dichotomized to reflect whether the respondent had experienced a particular form of IPV, and composite measures were subsequently derived. A full breakdown of the scale and item allocations can be found in Appendix A**.**

Independent variables

Acculturative Stress: Discrimination

The current study employed a discrimination scale adapted from a previously validated measure by Diaz et al. (1998). This scale consists of seven items designed to assess the frequency with which individuals have experienced perceived discrimination in various social settings, including public places and healthcare environments. Each item is rated on a 4-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating no experiences of perceived discrimination and 4 representing frequent occurrences of discrimination. For the purpose of analysis, the total score was converted into a dichotomous variable, where 0 indicated no reported discrimination and 1 signified any reported experience of discrimination.

Perceived Acculturative Stress

The measurement of acculturative stress was conducted utilizing the "Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturative Stress" (SAFE) scale (SAFE; Mena, Padilla & Maldonado, 1987). The 5-item summative scale employed in this study used a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (extremely stressful experience) to 5 (absence of the stressor). The comprehensive scale can be found in appendix A.

Acculturation: Language proficiency

Language proficiency-based acculturation was measured using the "Short Acculturation Scale for Hispanics" developed by Marin et al. (1987). The scale assesses an individual's comfort level with Spanish compared to English. Each of the ten items is rated on a five-point Likert scale, where a score of 1 represents a strong preference for Spanish only, and a score of 5 reflects

a preference for English only. Therefore, lower scores on the scale suggest a lesser degree of comfort with English, indicating a lower level of acculturation into English-speaking environments.

The scale includes items that gauge language comfort in different contexts, with questions such as “In which language(s) do you usually think?” and “In general, in what language(s) is the music you prefer to listen to?”. The full version of the scale is available in Appendix A**.** Due to skewed data distribution, English proficiency was treated as a dichotomous variable in this analysis, where any reported use of English was coded as 1, and no use of English was coded as 0.

Family and Relationship Norms

Family Environment The measurement of family environment perceptions used a 6-item Family Environment Scale, which aimed to assess individuals' views on their family’s dynamics and support systems. Each question on the scale utilized a 4-point Likert scale, where a score of 0 indicated strong agreement with the statement, and a score of 3 indicated strong disagreement.

For instance, items such as "In times of crisis we can cope better with the support of others" and "Each one is accepted for who they are" reflect positive perceptions of family support, while items such as "We avoid talking about our fears, feelings, worries, or sadness" were reverse coded to assess less supportive dynamics. The overall family environment score was used as a continuous variable, with reverse coding applied to specific items to ensure consistency in the interpretation of higher scores representing a more supportive environment.

Family Norms

The measurement of family and relationship norms was conducted using an 11-item dichotomous scale, designed to assess individuals' attitudes toward traditional gender roles within families and relationships. Each item on the scale required respondents to indicate whether they believed a given statement was true or false, with higher overall scores reflecting more conservative or traditional norms regarding gender roles.

For example, items such as "The wife should have the primary responsibility of taking care of the home and the children" and "In a marriage, the husband should take the initiative in making decisions" assess adherence to traditional gender roles within a household. The scale ranged from 0 to 10, with higher values indicating stronger support for conservative gender norms in family and relationship contexts.

Violence Causes

The measurement of violence belief acceptance was conducted using a Violence Causes Scale with 5 items, which aimed to assess the individual's level of endorsement of common myths and attitudes related to the causes of IPV. Each question on the scale utilized a Likert scale, where a score of 0 indicated strong disagreement with the statement, and a score of 3 indicated strong agreement. Consequently, a higher score on the scale indicated a greater acceptance of violence-causing beliefs. For example, items such as "Some women provoke their partners into being abusive" or "Partners abuse women to ease their frustrations" reflect victim-blaming attitudes and rationalizations for violence. The comprehensive scale can be found in

Appendix A. In this analysis, overall belief acceptance was used as a continuous variable, with higher scores indicating stronger agreement with violence-supporting statements.

Violence Justification

The measurement of violence justification was conducted using a dichotomous variable, aimed at assessing whether respondents justify acts of violence under certain conditions. Respondents were asked to indicate Yes or No for each of the 4 statements. Any endorsement of a justification for violence was coded as 1, indicating that the respondent justified the violent behavior, whereas responses indicating no justification were coded as 0.

Demographics

The demographic variables used as controls in the analyses were gender, age, country of origin, partnership status, high school completion, dichotomous employment status, and dichotomous variable on whether annual individual income is over $10,000

Analysis

A mixed-method analysis was employed as a concurrent mixed-method analysis, specifically concurrent triangulation. The purpose of concurrent triangulation designs is to use both qualitative and quantitative data to more accurately define relationships among variables of interest (Castro et al., 2010).

The analysis began with univariate descriptive statistics for all explanatory, dependent, and independent variables. Means were calculated for continuous variables, while frequencies were determined for categorical and dichotomous variables.

Next, bivariate chi-square tests were conducted to examine the relationship between gender and types of IPV perpetration, IPV victimization, and the victim or perpetrator status. These tests aimed to identify any significant gender-based differences in the distribution of IPV.

Following the chi-square analyses, bivariate regressions were performed as part of the Block 0 analysis. This step involved regressing the dependent variable on each control variable, as well as on all scales and variables related to acculturation and family and relationship norms, individually. This approach helped to assess the impact of each factor on IPV independently.

A nested logistic regression analysis was conducted using three blocks. The first block consisted of selected demographic variables. The second block included the family and relationship norms variables in addition to the variables from the first block. Finally, the third block incorporated acculturation-related variables along with the variables from the previous blocks. By constructing regression models that analyze each block individually, as well as a combined model incorporating both blocks, a deeper understanding can be gained regarding whether acculturative stress, family and relationship norms, or both, have a stronger association with the type of violence experienced or perpetrated.

The first block served as a control, containing only the demographic variables. The purpose of adding variables in blocks was to determine whether the newly added variable blocks demonstrated a significant improvement in the pseudo-R^2 value, which represents the proportion of variance in the dependent variable explained by the independent variables in the model.

The model exhibiting a significantly higher change in pseudo-R^2 value from one model to another was considered the most explanatory.

The statistical analytic models were as follows:

Overall model composition:

Block 1- Demographic variables- Age, Education, Household Income, Gender

Block 2- Scales measuring Family/gender norms and relationship norms

Block 3- Scales measuring: Acculturative stress, Language proficiency, Perceived discrimination, and Acculturative stress.

IPV victimization (vIPV):

Model 1: $vIPV_i = a + ß_i[\text{Demographics block}] + e_i$

Model 2a: $vIPV_i = a + ß_i[\text{Demographics block}] + ß_i[\text{Family/gender and relationship norms block}] + e_i$

Model 2b $vIPV_i = a_i[\text{Demographics block}] + ß_i[\text{acculturative stress block}] + e_i$

Model 3: $vIPV_i = a + ß_i[\text{Demographics block}] + ß_i[\text{Family/gender and relationship norms block}] + ß_i[\text{acculturative stress block}] + e_i$

IPV perpetration (pIPV):

Model 1: $pIPV_i = a + ß_i[\text{Demographics block}] + e_i$

Model 2: $pIPV_i = a + ß_i[\text{Demographics block}] + ß_i[\text{Family/gender and relationship norms block}] + e_i$

Model 3: $pIPV_i = a + ß_i[\text{Demographics block}] + ß_i[\text{Family/gender and relationship norms block}] + ß_i[\text{acculturative stress block}] + e_i$

All the analysis was conducted on Stata 17.

Qualitative analysis

Using an approach described by Strauss and Corbin (2008), 47 qualitative interview transcripts underwent coding and thematic analysis to identify concepts and themes that captured the complexities of situations, lived experiences, and perspectives, while also discovering concordance among participant responses that might indicate patterns or shared experiential

phenomena. The primary focus of this process was on identifying and analyzing key themes related to individuals' experiences migrating to the U.S., particularly the dynamics surrounding changes in family/gender and relationship norms, the process of acculturation and related stressors, changes in social support, and the influences these factors may have had on IPV perpetration and victimization.

Codebook Development and Thematic Analysis

In this study, most codes were pre-determined based on the original VOCES study. However, the codebook was iteratively expanded to address specific nuances that emerged during the analysis. For instance, new codes were introduced to classify distinct types of violence—emotional, physical, sexual, and stalking—as these distinctions were central to the research questions and were not fully represented in the original codebook. Additional codes for alcoholism, substance use, and infidelity were also incorporated as these themes recurred frequently in the data, highlighting their relevance to the participants' experiences. The preliminary codebook was initially developed based on the interview guide and then expanded throughout the coding process, allowing the inclusion of topics emerging outside the predetermined areas of inquiry but deemed significant to the research focus. All transcripts were double-coded, with the primary researcher completing an initial round and a secondary researcher conducting an independent review. The coding process involved collaborative efforts to resolve discrepancies and incorporate emergent codes, while Dedoose (Sociocultural Research Consultants, LLC, 2024) was used for coding and data management, enabling systematic analysis.

In this dissertation, thematic analysis was employed rather than content analysis. Thematic analysis emphasizes, identifying broader patterns or concepts that capture meaningful insights related to the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It does not rely on frequency but focuses on the significance of themes, making it particularly suitable for smaller datasets and studies centered on meaning and interpretation. In contrast, content analysis is more quantitative or systematic, often used to count and categorize specific words, phrases, or concepts within the data (Krippendorff, 2004; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Thematic analysis allows for a richer understanding of patterns and meanings within the data, producing thematic maps or narratives that explore "what" is being said and "why" it matters, while content analysis typically results in quantitative metrics or categorical summaries.

The thematic analysis process began with familiarization, as the coders immersed themselves in the data by repeatedly reading transcripts individually and collaboratively. Initial deductive coding was guided by pre-existing theoretical frameworks, followed by inductive coding to capture emergent themes directly from the data (Nowell et al., 2017). Following coding, node reports were generated for each code, containing all related excerpts from the interview transcripts. These node reports were reviewed systematically by the primary researcher to identify patterns in responses and categorize congruent ideas as distinct themes. Codes were grouped into broader themes and refined iteratively to ensure they captured the essence of the data while maintaining coherence and distinction.

Reflexive peer debriefing and detailed documentation of decision-making processes were employed throughout to enhance rigor and transparency in the analysis (Nowell et al., 2017; Braun & Clarke, 2019). Strategies such as data triangulation, peer debriefing, and member

checking further validated findings and enhanced trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Representative quotes were selected carefully to illustrate key findings and themes, ensuring that the data presented authentically captured participants' voices and experiences. A summary of qualitative findings, organized by themes, is provided in the results, with the full interview guide and codebook available in Appendix B.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity in qualitative research emphasizes the critical examination of researchers' positionality and how their perspectives may shape the research process. It involves an ongoing effort to assess one's values, assumptions, and potential biases to ensure that the research is credible and transparent (Finlay, 2002; Berger, 2015). This is particularly significant when analyzing sensitive topics such as IPV, where researchers must navigate complex sociocultural definitions and biases.

In this work, I adopted a reflexive stance as a co-constructor of knowledge, striving to minimize the risk of imposing preconceived notions on participants' experiences. The research process was guided by qualitative theoretical perspectives and sociological frameworks, which served to mitigate individual biases (Denzin, 2012). Engaging with participants from immigrant Latine communities, who often face structural barriers such as language access and marginalization, required further sensitivity. As researchers from different cultural or linguistic backgrounds, we must navigate the tension between imposing external interpretations and overlooking nuanced differences in shared cultural experiences (Merriam et al., 2001). In this study, reflexivity also guided us toward avoiding deficit-based narratives that frame immigrant

or Latine experiences solely through victimization, instead highlighting their resilience, agency, and diversity (Cervantes et al., 2018; Delgado Bernal, 1998).

Throughout the research process, my team of 3 secondary coders and I identified and addressed several challenges related to bias. For example, we contended with defining emotional violence in ways that differed from the perceptions of participants, recognizing that some forms of violence we identified were not perceived as such by participants themselves. Additionally, linguistic differences sometimes obscured the full meaning and implications of participants' words. To address these challenges, we employed peer debriefing (Finlay, 2002) to discuss findings, challenge assumptions, and ensure accountability. These weekly collaborative sessions introduced multiple perspectives, reducing the dominance of a single viewpoint. We also extensively reviewed literature on machismo and marianismo to confront biases during double-coding sessions.

As an immigrant researcher and a survivor of violence, I brought a unique perspective shaped by experiences of acculturative stress, which expanded my understanding of the sociocultural contexts of participants. By integrating diverse perspectives within the team and dedicating significant time to reviewing relevant literature, we enhanced our capacity to navigate biases and produce ethical, nuanced findings.

Results

Qualitative results from the coded transcripts provide an overview of stressors that potentially enhanced individuals' vulnerability to both victimization and perpetration of violence. The quantitative results will granulate these themes further by identifying which stressors, acculturative or family and relationship norms, are more associated with specific types of violence.

The qualitative results are presented first to highlight the main themes related to acculturative stress and social norms, providing a broad overview of the types of violence encountered without focusing on specific types of violence. Following this, the quantitative results will delve deeper into these themes, examining in greater detail how the qualitative findings connect to specific instances of violence perpetration and victimization.

Qualitative Results

A total of 47 participants were interviewed and were asked to describe IPV in their current community. Many participants drew comparisons with their experiences in their home countries, emphasizing stark contextual differences and the challenges of adapting to life in the U.S., particularly the effects that these significant shifts had on their relationships and family dynamics. Throughout this section, quotes are presented to illustrate findings with the associated de-identified participant IDs.

The qualitative analysis examined potential drivers of IPV through the lens of the acculturation process and evolving socio-cultural norms. Although shifting socio-cultural norms can be viewed as part of the broader acculturation process, the results are presented into two key areas. The first focuses on individuals' interactions with external changes occurring outside the

home in the host country that increases stress, while the second examines the impact of evolving norms within the family and intimate relationship on the couple's dynamics and IPV experiences.

Acculturative Stressors Unique to the Immigrant Experience

Language barriers and social isolation

Participants described how language barriers were one of the most significant contributors to acculturative stress. The inability to communicate effectively in the host country's language hindered their ability to access essential services, secure employment, and build social connections. Language barriers hindered immigrants' social integration and establishment of meaningful relationships, resulting in social isolation as compared to their experiences in their home country.

> *"I liked the United States a lot, but as the days passed, it was very different because of discrimination, especially when one does not speak English"- Salvadoran female aged 36 (3g)*

> "*"At first, I thought it didn't affect me. I was focused on working, and I felt things were easy; they understood me with signs at work. But in the long run, over time, I realized that speaking English is very fundamental."- Salvadoran female aged 26 (3f)*

> *"Well, first there's the language. Secondly, that you don't know anyone. You get lost"- Salvadoran female aged 23 (1y)*

Issues with English fluency were described by a few participants as perpetuating feelings of inferiority, self-doubt and inability to adjust to surroundings.

"If you feel in a place where you don't speak the language, that's the problem that makes it different. If you don't have command of the language, sometimes you can't communicate. You feel like you're lower, uglier, like you're worth less."- Guatemalan male aged 24 (1ad)

"But when school started, it was another change that began to affect me. I felt humiliated because people didn't accept me for who I was. They made fun because I couldn't speak English, things like that. It was tough."- Salvadoran male aged 31 (3t)

"School was very difficult because I didn't know English. Everyone laughed at me, said things to me, and I had many problems in school because the girls made up stories that I said bad things to them"- Salvadoran female aged 18 (3d)

A lack of language proficiency led to immigrants to be confined to jobs with few prospects for advancement. Furthermore, the inability to communicate effectively limited their ability to advocate for themselves and access legal protections. The quote below by the Honduran female participant aged 24, relayed an experience where she was unable to access or trust police help for violence complaints because of the language barriers.

"[it is difficult to trust police] because here they answer you in English, and that's when you can't respond." – Honduran female aged 24 (1x)

Discrimination and Social Marginalization

Participants discussed the challenges and discrimination they faced as immigrants in the U.S., highlighting themes of racism, disrespect, and hardship. They emphasized the widespread racism against Latines at all levels of society. An overarching theme was that participants lived with fewer material resources, and more embarrassment in their daily lives.

"In this country, there are—from the top to the bottom—always people who don't think well of Hispanic people here."- Salvadoran male aged 60 (1a)

"One suffers a lot, morally. One wonders if the suffering of coming is worth it. But when you start working, you distract yourself. When you receive money, you want to help your family and yourself"- Honduran female aged 38 (3o)

The below quote specifically compares the marginalization with the feelings of control in the home country that makes the difference much starker. Comparisons with the home country were a common theme when discussing social marginalization and discrimination, showing what causes stress for the individual as well as their families.

"....because in your own country they don't look at you like you're worth less. A lot of racism [in US], whereas in your country you have ownership of everything, but not here."- Honduran female aged 24 (1x)

"We lived better [in Bolivia]; my daughter was younger and didn't notice. There wasn't as much humiliation as in this country."- Bolivian female aged 55 (3c)

"The difference is that over there, there's more communication with other people, whereas here it's different; you don't know anyone, you're alone. In my country, in the streets, you say hello to one friend, then another; that's how it goes."- Guatemalan male aged 39 (1l)

Economic and financial hardships

Many participants reflected the emotional and psychological struggles faced upon arriving in the U.S., as they came with high hopes of financial success and stability, only to encounter unexpected hardships such as unemployment, isolation, and lack of familiarity with their new environment. Participants discussed how economic difficulties revolved around the pressures

they felt to constantly work in order to afford basic living expenses, such as rent. Many participants expressed that in their home countries, while poverty existed, there was less pressure because people often owned their homes or did not face the same rent demands.

In the U.S., missing a day of work can result in job loss, leading to an inability to pay rent, which was a major source of stress. Additionally, this fear of losing economic and housing stability was described as a reason why some immigrants may choose to continue in a relationship where IPV was present.

> *"Here, if you don't work, you can't survive; how are you going to pay rent, feed your children)? Here, it's not like our country; if we don't work, we can survive. We can go out to work, but there's no pressure, no stress, and most people own their homes. Here, most people rent, and we end up hanging on to each other because of rent."- Guatemalan female aged 45 (3j)*

This relentless need to work, pay rent, and survive was the reason many participants felt trapped and disillusioned, and questioned why they came to the U.S. in the first place.

> *"I think, why did I come here if it's so bad, if the party here is over, I came too late."- Nicaraguan female aged 45 (1f)*

Another significant theme is the cultural and emotional disconnect that left participants feeling morally conflicted, wondering if the pursuit of economic opportunities justified the hardships they endured.

> *"We believe we come here to make money with a shovel. When we are in our country, we say, "Oh, the U.S.A., how beautiful the United States is." There, you make money, but in reality, one doesn't know that you pay to live here"- Salvadoran female aged 26 (3f)*

Legal barriers and immigration status

Legality, especially having an undocumented status, was a consistent theme in the participant interviews that centered on the fear and vulnerability that undocumented immigrants faced in the U.S., particularly when it came to navigating work opportunities and interactions with law enforcement. Undocumented status was described as a major barrier to obtaining and keeping employment, as well as a barrier to seeking help for violence since victims feared deportation or further legal complications.

> *"Jobs came her way, but since she didn't have documents, she lost them. I think it's more challenging for women in that sense."- Salvadoran male aged 35 (3v)*

One participant who was in the process of obtaining permanent residency was discouraged from leaving an abusive partner for risk of jeopardizing approval of the application.

> *"I went to the immigration lawyer, and I told him this [IPV] is happening, don't do it [divorce] until the [immigration] papers come out, when they come out you do whatever you want, because they are in the immigration process you can't have a bad record."- Bolivian female aged 51 (3b)*

Another key theme was the fear of law enforcement, driven by racism, deportation concerns, and a general lack of trust in the legal system. Many participants believed that reaching out to the police could result in deportation, either for themselves or their partners, further complicating situations of domestic violence.

> *"..... but that's [reporting] also a serious problem because they don't have papers, and there is a lot of deportation. People just call the police, and they don't take them for domestic violence but because they are illegal, and they deport them."- Guatemalan female aged 43 (3l)*

"Maybe don't go to the police; they might not help you. They might just arrest the guy, and then they deport him. Things like that [arrests] can make the situation more complicated, and it might hinder the help they could start providing to the family."- Peruvian female aged 43(3s)

Social and relationship norm shifts

Social norms play a significant role in shaping behaviors, attitudes, and interactions within any community. For Latino immigrant communities, these norms are rooted in cultural traditions, gender roles, and familial expectations that have been passed down through generations from their country of origin. While these norms provide a sense of identity and continuity, they can also perpetuate harmful behaviors and attitudes, particularly around issues such as gender roles, IPV, and machismo.

A main theme in participant responses was the influence of traditional gender roles and machismo on relationship and family dynamics in their home countries. Many participants expressed that in their home countries, men are seen as the primary breadwinners, while women are expected to stay home and tend to household duties. This division of labor and the dominance of men over women are deeply ingrained in cultural norms, often leading to women accepting or becoming accustomed to subservient roles and even abuse.

"In my country, in my town, I've seen that most men work, and women stay at home, dedicating themselves to household chores without obligation or force to work."- Guatemalan male aged 51 (3x)

"There was machismo. The man shouldn't let the woman overpower him, and if the woman rises, she will have to endure it [violence]. The woman doesn't say anything"- Salvadoran male aged 35 (3v)

After migrating to the U.S., traditional gender norms often shift, with women having a relatively easier time and more likely to join the workforce and contribute to the household in ways that extend beyond traditional homemaking roles. Men, in turn, may feel threatened by changing expectations when they migrate, particularly as women gain more independence and opportunities in the U.S. This shift can lead to conflicts and tensions in relationships, as men struggle to maintain the control, they had in their home countries.

> *"Yeah, you bring in the money to the household. The money, the food, and everything, and she's in charge of everything in the house. That's why here you're different, because [there] you feel more machista, but here we're all equal."- Guatemalan male aged 31(1p)*

> *"I believe so [women have it easier than men] because most women can find jobs in restaurants and cleaning houses or similar jobs that are more available now, and men don't want to do those jobs."- Peruvian female aged 28 (3q)*

> *"Because as a woman, in terms of labor, it's more open than for men; you can develop any kind of job skills here, even if it's a man's job, whereas for men, there are jobs he doesn't do, like in the kitchen, because he doesn't want to."- Salvadoran female aged 24 (1w)*

This shift in economic contribution allowed women to become more independent and self-sufficient, which contrasted with traditional norms in their home countries, where men were typically seen as the primary breadwinners. Women's ability to access a wider range of employment opportunities, including jobs that were traditionally male dominated, such as construction, reinforced the sense of gender equality in the U.S., a stark difference from their experiences back home.

"Here there's equality, whereas in our home countries, no, it's the man who's in charge. Here everything is equal, painting jobs, jobs that men do in El Salvador but not women, here women can do them."- Salvadoran female aged 24 (1w)

"Here you can do more work than in El Salvador. You can do men's jobs, like construction, there you can't."- Salvadoran female aged 36 (1ae)

Many male participants expressed frustration over the difficulty in finding jobs, especially compared to women as they perceived themselves to be limited to jobs in construction or other labor-intensive fields, and perceived that women obtained better job perks and pay.

"The preferential treatment women have, men don't have. For example people will employ women in their home and provide housing, and they don't provide men with housing."- Salvadoran male aged 57 (1h)

"In my case, they made me work with two women, and they were paid more than me.... in the end, you have to accept it."- Salvadoran male aged 31 (3t)

This perceived imbalance created a sense of shame and inadequacy for men, who felt pressure to fulfill their traditional role as providers but struggled to do so in a new environment where their job options were more restricted.

"*In my case, as you say, I, as a man, feel ashamed of not having a job and not providing for my family."- Guatemalan male aged 51 (3x)*

Many men expressed frustration and discomfort with women becoming more independent in the U.S., especially due to finding jobs. The newfound economic opportunities also led to instabilities within couples, who described stress from changes in traditional roles and power balances. Participants, both male and female, expressed that as women gained more rights

and freedoms in the U.S., the balance of power within households shifted, sometimes resulting in conflict when traditional expectations clashed with new realities.

> *"Well, sometimes, women feel they have many rights because here both of us work. So, she wants to go out, and if one doesn't participate, when one comes home, one doesn't find her. Then one calls, and she doesn't answer the phone. It depends on that; the discomfort arises. Women here feel they have the right to complain."- Salvadoran male aged 32 (3u)*

> *"There are women who work, and sometimes men lose their jobs. Men do what we do, and on the weekends, the woman goes out with friends, and the man stays at home. There's always a problem."- Guatemalan female aged 28 (3r)*

> *"Well, they [women] go to work, and as more doors open for them, they make new friends; they forget the traditions from there, and they no longer pay attention to their husbands, and they do what they want, and conflicts arise."- Guatemalan female aged 45 (3j)*

This shift in employment patterns and power balance within couples was also described as a threat to male agency within the relationship, creating fears among men of losing their partner.

> *"Men are used to being the breadwinners, and they are afraid of losing their wives due to machismo."- Guatemalan male aged 31 (3w)*

The effect of these changing norms was profound as participants grappled with the new cultural reality. Male participants were often raised with the belief that they must assert dominance and control in their households, which led to significant emotional strain when they felt unable to fulfill this role.

"*They [men] were told, 'You are the man, and you must establish order in your home. Don't let yourself be trampled by a woman. Being trampled is a shame for them because a woman cannot say anything, and you must have the final word*.'"- *Peruvian female aged 40 (3s)*

While unemployment or loss of authority led to shame and frustration, cultural norms discouraged men from expressing vulnerability or seeking help. While gender norms prevalent in the home country may have outwardly empowered men, they also trapped them in a cycle of unrealistic expectations, unaddressed emotional needs, and societal pressures that increased stress.

"*The machismo one sometimes has and the reluctance to let others see that one is suffering. People tend to keep it to themselves and avoid seeking help from anyone..... for a man, it's tough to talk about these things. I tell my friends, and they say, 'You're not a man because you don't stand up*.' – *Guatemalan male aged 31 (3v)*

"*In my case, perhaps due to honor and shame, because I have been a man of a certain latitude, and I consider myself with too much honor, dignity, and value. as a man, feel ashamed of not having a job and not providing for my family."– Guatemalan male aged 51 (3x)*

Control and IPV

This shift in power dynamics in relationships exacerbated partner violence as men attempted to rebalance power through aggression or by asserting control where they perceived it had been lost.

“Yes, many cases where sometimes the woman works, and the man does not. Sometimes the man becomes aggressive and complacent, and the woman has to take care of the house and the children. She gets a bit more stressed because of it."- Honduran female aged 18 (3o)

This often manifested in controlling behavior, such as dictating a woman's actions, appearance, or social interactions.

"*He wants to control me; he wants to go out, and I shouldn't. He wants me to stay at home while he goes out. He doesn't want me to cut my hair short. Sometimes I insult him because of that. He gets very angry; he gets angry for no reason."- Salvadoran female aged 18 (3d)*

Other attempts to reassert power came in the form of lowering a partner’s self-esteem coupled with the emotional distress furthered the cycle of abuse and violence in relationships.

"*He lowers her self-esteem, makes her feel that she is worthless, that she is ugly, she is abused, she is common in abuse, here and everywhere. The man tries to lower the woman's self-esteem, that she is worthless, that she is of no use."- Bolivian female aged 51 (3b)*

Overall, shifting norms created stress by disrupting traditional views of masculinity, which are closely tied to the culturally informed role of being a provider. This challenge is compounded by the immigrant experience, where individuals come to the U.S. seeking economic opportunities, but face a loss of personal worth when unable to find work and live life in the way that is more culturally relevant to them.

Shifting legal landscapes

In addition to changes in gender and relationship norms due to differences in employment opportunities and roles, the changing legal landscape also added stress within relationships. Compared to the U.S., participants perceived their home countries as places where justice and protection for victims of IPV were severely lacking. Many noted that in their countries, women's voices were often ignored when they sought help, and law enforcement was slow to respond or indifferent to reports of abuse. In some cases, the authorities either didn't show up at all or failed to take any action when they did. Participants also described a culture of impunity, where even serious cases of violence go unpunished, leaving victims vulnerable and unprotected.

> *"In our countries, it's difficult to get help, or they don't listen to you. That's why there are so many women who end up being killed, mutilated because they went to the police station to file a complaint, and nothing was done."- Guatemalan female aged 45 (3j)*

> *"There, it's difficult; most women don't seek help. It takes two hours for the police to reach the villages, and many times, they don't arrive. It's challenging; the majority of women there don't seek help."- Salvadoran female aged 26 (3f)*

Participants highlighted the significant role of corruption in their home countries, where justice can be bought. Men who had financial resources or connections with the police were able to evade punishment, even in cases of severe abuse. Women, particularly those without money, often found that they could not access justice, as the system favored those who could pay.

> *"But there, in Guatemala, they will only help you if you have money. If you don't have money, they won't help you. Even if you've been beaten, some women burn, throw anything at them, the man will pay. And worse if he's friends with the police, they pay him. Then when it gets to court, he goes free, and that keeps happening"- Guatemalan female aged 28 (3r)*

In contrast, participants recognized that the U.S. had stronger laws and protections against domestic violence, although some noted that fear of deportation or language barriers still prevented them from fully utilizing these protections. Many women expressed a sense of safety and trust in the police in the U.S. compared to their home countries since law enforcement responded quickly and provided support and protection for victims of violence.

> *"If you call the police, they arrive quickly, and that saves you. When you call, they come urgently, and in your home country, it's the opposite."-Honduran female aged 27 (3m)*

> *"Here, we are safer because when you ask for help here, they help you in every way."- Guatemalan female aged 28 (3r)*

However, male participants expressed concerns about how they were treated by law enforcement in similar cases of domestic violence. Several male participants felt that the system was biased toward women, and that men were not given the same attention or support when they experienced abuse. Some men described feeling shamed or dismissed when trying to report abuse, with one individual sharing that he was jailed instead of receiving justice.

> *"Unfortunately, this country has its laws and does not allow abuse against women. They protect women more because I was an abused man, and instead of getting justice for me, they locked me up in jail."- Guatemalan male aged 51 (3x)*

As individuals transitioned from their countries of origin to new environments in the U.S., the traditional gender norms they brought with them often conflicted with the expectations and roles in their new context. This cultural clash resulted in individuals and couples struggling to align their established beliefs with the realities of their new lives. Beyond these cultural stressors, Latino immigrant participants also faced added pressures related to acculturation, such

as language barriers, fears surrounding immigration status, discrimination, and social marginalization. These factors, combined with the challenges of adjusting to life in the U.S. while managing relationship difficulties, heightened stress and created conditions where violent behavior could more easily occur.

Shifts in Types of Violence Faced

Participants identified domination and control, threats, stalking, as well as verbal and financial abuse, as common forms of IPV in Langley Park.

> *"He doesn't want me to talk to friends, male or female. If he sees me talking to someone, he starts taking away my phone."- Honduran Female aged 27 (3m)*

> *"I am sometimes afraid for him because I already feel constrained. I can't speak freely because if I speak, he gets angry. If I don't speak, he gets angry. If I tell him, it's okay, he gets angry. I sometimes feel like I'm in a dead end." – Guatemalan Female aged 45 (3j)*

One crucial difference between IPV experienced in the U.S. and the home country was that male victimization was reported to occur in the U.S., although to a lesser extent than females, whereas male victimization was rare in home countries. These cases primarily involved verbal abuse and control or manipulation, and in a few cases, physical abuse.

> *"I would leave the house with bruises on my arms and legs; there was no respect, nothing"- Bolivian male aged 55 (3c)*

> *"I endured and lowered my head when she was insulting me. Not everyone can endure that."- Salvadorean male aged 35(3v)*

There was a difference in the type of violence faced by participants in their home country and the U.S. Many noted that in their countries, incidents of physical abuse are more frequent and severe.

> *"In my country, he can beat you now, and they'll look for him and won't find him. I have all the documents from my country where he hit me with the car, where he physically abused me, and they never did anything"- Guatemalan female aged 28 (3i)*

> *"He never left me alone at home, and when he came back, I was angry, and we started fighting. That's when the physical abuse started, with bad words. He began pushing and hitting me. It started then, and the baby was only a few months old"- Guatemalan female aged 43 (3l)*

In the U.S., participants observed a shift in the forms of violence they experienced, moving from primarily physical violence in their home countries to emotional abuse and stalking. Many reported controlling behaviors, such as partners limiting their social interactions or monitoring their activities, leading to emotional distress. Stalking and harassment, especially in the workplace or home, were also common, with some individuals reporting threats and obsessive behaviors from their partners. This shift is confirmed in the quantitative results, where acculturative stressors are associated with higher emotional violence and stalking perpetration, showing congruence in the mixed methods findings.

> *"If she called me, and I didn't answer, she would treat me badly, little things like that. For example, I would tell her I didn't like what she was doing, and she would get angry about that"- Salvadorean male aged 35 (3v)*

> *"He always told me that we would die together, that he would rather die than see me with another husband. There was a lot of harassment, threats, and he even started stalking me at my workplace."- Guatemalan female aged 45 (3j)*

"I left his house, he would come looking for me at the house where I lived, climb in through the window, get aggressive, grab me by the neck, and I was afraid. He would say, "You have to come back to me." The obsession was so intense that I told him he had to change, and he said he would"- Guatemalan female aged 28 (3i)

Quantitative Results

Participant Demographics

The study analyzed data from 269 participants (Table 5.1), with an almost equal gender distribution of 50.19% men and 49.81% women. The mean age of the participants was 39.73 years. The majority of the sample hailed from El Salvador (40.91%) and Guatemala (26.89%). In terms of socioeconomic status, more than half of the participants were employed (51.59%), and a similar proportion reported an annual income exceeding $10,000 (53.62%). Additionally, 33.72% of the participants had completed high school. The family environment scale had a mean of 2.02 in a scale from 0-3 with higher values representing more supportive family norms. The mean of the family norms scale was 4.71 in a scale from 0-10 with higher values representing more conservative family norms. The mean of family cause scale is 1.42 (0-3) with higher values representing fewer explanations of violence provided. Finally, the dichotomous violence justification was 52.81% implying the % of the sample that agrees with any justification of violence.

Table 5.1: Sample Demographics (n=269)

Variable		
Gender n(%)	Male	135 (50.19)
	Female	134 (49.81)
Age mean(SD)		39.73 (10.99)

Country of origin n(%)	El Salvador	108 (40.91)
	Guatemala	71 (26.89)
	Mexico	33 (12.50)
	Other Central American	32 (12.12)
	Other	20 (7.58)
Employed n(%)		130 (51.59)
Income more than $10,000 n(%)		126 (53.62)
Partnered n(%)		143 (85%)
High School Completed n(%)		87 (33.72)
Acculturative stress scale mean(SD) (Range 0-3)		1.48(0.87)
Some English Proficiency n(%)		189(71.05)
Any discrimination faced n(%)		195 (73.03)
Family environment scale (mean(SD) (Range- 0-3)		2.02 (0.52)
Family norms scale (Mean(SD) (Range 0-10)		4.71 (2.52)
Violence cause scale (Mean(SD) (Range 0-3)		1.42 (0.44)
Violence justified n(%)		141 (52.81)

Table 5.2 shows a gender stratified distribution of IPV victimization, perpetration as well as victim perpetrator status. In terms of victimization, a higher percentage of men than women reported experiencing emotional violence (75.78% vs. 68.80%) and stalking (39.34% vs. 24.00%). While women reported slightly higher rates of physical violence (19.20% vs. 15.97%) and sexual violence (15.57% vs. 12.20%) than men, though these differences were relatively small. There was a significant difference in stalking victimization based on the chi-square test, but the others were not significant.

For perpetration, men reported more emotional violence than women (74.19% vs. 68.55%). Men were also more likely to report sexual violence perpetration (20.17% vs. 6.35%), and stalking perpetration was more common among men than women (30.65% vs. 27.20%). Physical violence perpetration was reported by 15.13% of men compared to 12.80% of women. Sexual violence perpetration was significantly higher for men than women, but the other differences were not statistically significant. Overall, men consistently reported more perpetration across all forms of IPV than women.

When it comes to victim and perpetrator status, a substantial portion of both men and women reported being both victims and perpetrators of IPV, with 66.42% of men and 58.65% of women falling into this category. Only a small percentage of participants were classified as victim-only (8.96% of men and 8.27% of women) or perpetrator-only (5.22% of men and 6.77% of women).

Table 5.2: Chi square of IPV victimization and perpetration by gender

	Overall n(%)	**Male n(%)**	**Female n(%)**
Any victimization?			
Emotional violence	183 (72.33)	97 (75.78)	86(68.80)
Physical violence	43 (17.62)	19 (15.97)	24 (19.20)
Sexual violence	34 (13.88)	19 (12.20)	15 (15.57)
Stalking**	78 (31.58)	48 (39.34)	30 (24.00)
Any perpetration?			
Emotional violence	177 (71.37)	92 (74.19)	85 (68.55)
Physical violence	34 (13.93)	18 (15.13)	16 (12.80)
Sexual violence***	32 (13.06)	24 (20.17)	8 (6.35)
Stalking	72 (28.92)	38 (30.65)	34 (27.20)
Victim or Perpetrator status			
Victim only	23 (8.61)	12(8.96)	11(8.27)
Perpetrator only	16 (5.99)	7(5.22)	9(6.77)

Both victim and perpetrator	167 (62.55)	89(66.42)	78(58.65)
Neither victim nor perpetrator	61 (22.85)	26(19.40)	35(26.32)

Overall nested regression results

Table 5.3 shows the blocks contributing the most explanatory power for each victimization and perpetration behavior. For emotional violence victimization, adding the family and relationship norms block significantly improved the explanatory power of the acculturation-only model. In emotional violence perpetration, both the acculturation-only and family and relationship norms-only models significantly improved over the explanatory power demographics-only model. However, the combined addition of both blocks did not significantly improve thus indicating their independent not collective effects. For physical violence victimization, the acculturation norms block significantly boosted the explanatory power of both the family and relationship norms-only model and the demographics-only model.

The analysis of sexual violence victimization demonstrated substantial contributions from both acculturation and family and relationship norms. The inclusion of both blocks significantly raised the explanatory power of the overall model. For sexual violence perpetration, adding the acculturation block to the demographics-only model and the family and relationship norms model significantly improved the explanatory power. Additionally, the family and relationship norms block alone significantly elevated the explanatory power when added to the acculturation-only and demographics-only models.

For stalking perpetration, the acculturation norms block markedly enhanced the model's explanatory power when added to the family and relationship norms-only model or the demographics-only model.

Overall, the acculturation block is a significant explanatory set of variables for physical and sexual violence victimization and stalking perpetration, while the family and relationship norms block are significantly explanatory for sexual violence victimization and perpetration. Emotional violence perpetration shows significant individual contributions from both blocks.

Table 5.3: Nested Logistic Regression – model-by-model Pseudo-R^2 comparison

Violence prevalence	**Model 1: Only demographics**	**Model 2a: Acculturation block**	**Model 2b: Family and Relationship norms block**	**Model 3: Acculturation + Family and relationship norms**
Any emotional IPV victimization				
Overall	0.0360	0.0566		**0.1024***
(Fam)	0.0360		0.0788	0.1024
Any emotional IPV perpetration				
Overall	0.0268	**0.0660***		0.1007
(Both)	0.0268		**0.0708***	0.1007
Any physical IPV victimization				
Overall	0.0222	**0.1209*****		0.1435
(Acc)	0.0222		0.0552	**0.1435****
Any physical IPV perpetration				
Overall	0.0296	0.0756		0.1075
	0.0296		0.0731	0.1075
Any sexual IPV victimization				
Overall	0.0231	**0.1017****		**0.2224*****
(Both)	0.0231		**0.1563*****	**0.2224***
Any sexual IPV perpetration				
Overall	0.0558	0.0859		**0.1660***
(Fam)	0.0558		**0.1402***	0.1660
Any stalking victimizations				
Overall	0.0195	0.0492		0.0559
	0.0195		0.0295	0.0559
Any stalking perpetration				
Overall	0.0379	**0.0768***		0.0947
(Acc)	0.0379		0.0592	**0.0947***

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Types of violence and associated stressors

Emotional violence

In the case of emotional violence victimization in Table 5.4, the violence cause scale was significantly associated within the family and relationship norms model (Model 2b OR=0.37, $p<0.05$) and maintained its significance in the combined model (Model 3 OR=0.36, $p<0.05$).

Table 5.4: Nested Logistic Regression Analysis: Emotional IPV Victimization (n=255)

Any Emotional IPV violence victimization	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 3
Age	1.01 (0.98,1.04)	1.02 (0.99,1.05)	1.03 (0.99,1.06)	1.03 (0.99,1.06)	1.03 (0.99,1.06)
Income over $10,000	1.77 (0.97,3.25)	1.92 (0.96,3.81)	1.91 (0.95,3.84)	**2.06* (1.00,4.23)**	2.06 (0.99,4.29)
Education level	1.31 (0.73,2.40)	1.36 (0.65,2.82)	1.31 (0.601,2.85)	1.42 (0.63,3.22)	1.23 (0.52,2.91)
Female	0.70 (0.40.1.23)	0.86 (0.44,1.67)	0.91 (0.45,1.83)	1.10 (0.54,2.25)	1.21 (0.57,2.59)
Acculturative Stress	1.34 (0.95,1.89)		1.42 (0.96,2.08)		1.43 (0.95,2.14)
Some English Proficiency	1.32 (0.73,2.41)		1.33 (0.60,2.92)		1.39 (0.61,3.16)
Any discrimination faced	**1.99* (1.08,3.66)**		1.50 (0.69,3.24)		1.73 (0.76,3.93)
Supportive Family Environment	0.63 (0.36,1.12)			0.61 (0.30,1.24)	0.60 (0.29,1.25)
Conservative family norms scale	1.01 (0.91,1.13)			1.11 (0.94,1.32)	1.11 (0.93,1.31)
Violence cause scale	**0.49* (0.26,0.95)**			**0.37* (0.16,0.85)**	**0.36* (0.16,0.85)**
Any violence justified	0.95 (0.55,1.65)			0.57 (0.27,1.20)	0.46 (0.21,1.02)
Pseudo-R^2 Model 2a		0.0360	0.0566		**0.1024***
Pseudo-R^2 Model 2b		0.0360		0.0788	0.1024

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

For emotional violence perpetration in Table 5.5, the acculturative stress scale was significant in the acculturation-only model (Model 2a OR=1.55, $p<0.05$) but not in the combined

model. Conversely, the violence cause scale was significant in both the family and relationship norms model (Model 2b OR=0.39, p<0.05) and the combined model (Model 3 OR=0.39, p<0.05).

Table 5.5: Nested Logistic Regression Analysis: Emotional IPV Perpetration (n=250)

Any Emotional IPV violence perpetration	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 3
Age	0.98 (0.96,1.01)	0.99 (0.96,1.02)	0.99 (0.96,1.03)	0.99 (0.97,1.02)	0.99 (0.97,1.03)
Income over $10,000	1.61 (0.88,2.95)	1.77 (0.90,3.49)	1.68 (0.84,3.36)	1.83 (0.91,3.70)	1.74 (0.85,3.55)
Education level	1.50 (0.82,2.74)	1.73 (0.83,3.62)	1.62 (0.74,3.56)	1.81 (0.79, 4.16)	1.59 (0.66,3.81)
Female	0.76 (0.44,1.32)	0.95 (0.49,1.83)	1.08 (0.54,2.18)	1.12 (0.55,2.28)	1.30 (0.61,2.77)
Acculturative Stress	1.36 (0.97,1.93)		**1.55* (1.05,2.28)**		1.43 (0.96,2.15)
Some English Proficiency	1.58 (0.87,2.86)		1.71 (0.77,3.77)		1.68 (0.74,3.82)
Any discrimination faced	**2.20* (1.20,4.06)**		1.84 (0.86,3.95)		1.89 (0.85,4.21)
Supportive Family Environment	0.73 (0.42,1.27)			0.83 (0.42,1.63)	0.82 (0.40,1.66)
Conservative family norms scale	1.02 (0.91,1.14)			1.06 (0.90,1.25)	1.05 (0.89,1.25)
Violence cause scale	**0.44* (0.23,0.86)**			**0.39* (0.17,0.89)**	**0.39* (0.17,0.89)**
Any violence justified	**1.75* (1.01,3.06)**			1.38 (0.67,2.85)	1.15 (0.54,2.47)
Pseudo-R^2 Model 2a		0.0268	**0.0660***		0.1007
Pseudo-R^2 Model 2b		0.0268		**0.0708***	0.1007

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Physical violence

Regarding physical violence victimization in Table 5.6, both the acculturative stress scale (Model 2a OR=1.79, p<0.05) and the discrimination variable (Model 2a OR=6.18, p<0.01) were

significant in the acculturation-only model and remained significant in the combined model (Model 3 OR=1.77, p<0.05 for acculturative stress; OR=5.88, p<0.05 for discrimination). Being of female gender was significant in all models indicating that being female has a higher odds of physical violence victimization than males.

Table 5.6: Nested Logistic Regression Analysis: Physical IPV Victimization (n=246)

Any physical IPV violence victimization	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 3
Age	0.99 (0.97,1.03)	1.00 (0.96,1.04)	1.01 (0.97,1.05)	1.01 (0.96,1.05)	1.01 (0.97,1.05)
Income over $10,000	0.70 (0.34,1.46)	0.90 (0.41,1.98)	0.85 (0.37,1.97)	0.74 (0.31,1.77)	0.74 (0.31,1.77)
Education level	0.50 (0.23,1.12)	0.55 (0.22,1.32)	**0.34* (0.12,0.92)**	**0.31* (0.10,0.97)**	**0.32* (0.10,0.97)**
Female	1.25 (0.64,2.42)	1.78 (0.81,3.92)	**2.63* (1.08,6.43)**	**2.76* (1.08,7.03)**	**2.76* (1.08,7.03)**
Acculturative Stress	1.47 (0.97,2.22)		**1.79* (1.06,3.00)**		**1.77* (1.02,3.06)**
Some English Proficiency	1.45 (0.67,3.12)		2.40 (0.84,6.90)		2.24 (0.77,6.50)
Any discrimination faced	**5.41** (1.60,18.17)**		**6.18** (1.63,23.53)**		**5.88* (1.54,22.46)**
Supportive Family Environment	0.70 (0.37,1.30)			0.48 (0.22,1.07)	0.48 (0.22,1.11)
Conservative family norms scale	1.04 (0.91,1.19)			1.02 (0.85,1.24)	1.01 (0.82,1.24)
Violence cause scale	0.83 (0.39,1.75)			0.67 (0.28,1.62)	0.67 (0.26,1.71
Any violence justified	1.92 (0.97,3.82)			1.53 (0.66,3.58)	1.12 (0.46,2.74)
Pseudo-R^2 Model 2a		0.0222	**0.1209*** **		0.1435
Pseudo-R^2 Model 2b		0.0222		0.0552	**0.1435** **

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

However, no significant variables emerged within the family and relationship norms block or acculturation block for physical violence perpetration as seen in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7: Nested Logistic Regression Analysis: Physical IPV Perpetration (n=246)

Any physical IPV violence perpetration	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 3
Age	0.98 (0.94,1.01)	0.98 (0.94,1.02)	0.99 (0.94,1.03)	0.98 (0.94,1.02)	0.98 (0.94,1.03)
Income over $10,000	1.55 (0.71,3.41)	2.30 (0.95,5.55)	2.47 (0.99,6.18)	2.34 (0.93,4.90)	2.42 (0.93,6.29)
Education level	0.66 (0.29,1.49)	0.71 (0.28,1.79)	0.60 (0.23,1.61)	0.96 (0.33,2.76)	0.80 (0.27,2.40)
Female	0.82 (0.40,1.70)	0.76 (0.32,1.79)	0.91 (0.37,2.24)	0.88 (0.35,2.17)	1.06 (0.41,2.74)
Acculturative Stress	1.32 (0.85,2.05)		1.69 (0.97,2.94)		1.48 (0.82,2.67)
Some English Proficiency	1.74 (0.72,4.20)		2.24 (0.71,7,07)		2.02 (0.63,6.46)
Any discrimination faced	2.32 (0.86,6.27)		2.14 (0.67,6.84)		2.20 (0.66,7.35)
Supportive Family Environment	0.86 (0.43,1.73)			0.54 (0.23,1.23)	0.56 (0.24,1.28)
Conservative family norms scale	1.14 (0.98,1.32)			1.15 (0.94,1.42)	1.17 (0.94,1.45)
Violence cause scale	0.61 (0.26,1.45)			0.69 (0.25,1.89)	0.68 (0.24,1.92)
Any violence justified	**2.59* (1.18,5.68)**			1.59 (0.62,4.05)	1.25 (0.46,3.28)
Pseudo-R^2 Model 2a		0.0296	0.0756		0.1075
Pseudo-R^2 Model 2b		0.0296		0.0731	0.1075

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Sexual violence

For sexual violence victimization, as seen in Table 5.8 the acculturative stress scale (Model 2a OR=1,97, p<0.05) and the discrimination variable were significant in the acculturation-only model (Model 2a OR=5.59, p<0.05). In the combined model, the discrimination variable remained significant (Model 3 OR=6.85, p<0.05), while the acculturative stress scale did not. The family environment scale was significantly associated with sexual IPV

victimization in both the family and relationship norms model (Model 2b OR=0.23, p<0.01) and the combined model (Model 3 OR=0.22, p<0.01). Additionally, violence justification was significant only the family and relationship norms model and not in the overall model (Model 2b OR=2.72, p<0.05).

Table 5.8: Nested Logistic Regression Analysis: Sexual IPV Victimization (n=247)

Any sexual IPV violence victimization	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 3
Age	1.01 (0.97,1.04)	1.02 (0.98,1.06)	1.01 (0.97,1.06)	1.01 (0.97,1.06)	1.03 (0.98,1.08)
Income over $10,000	1.77 (0.81,3.82)	1.80 (0.78,4.19)	1.57 (0.63,3.94)	1.57 (0.63,3.94)	1.46 (0.56,3.83)
Education level	1.12 (0.52,2.41)	1.05 (0.44,2.51)	1.28 (0.44,3.72)	1.28 (0.44,3.73)	1.20 (0.38,3.83)
Female	0.75 (0.36,1.56)	0.78 (0.34,1.82)	0.80 (0.31,2.10)	0.80 (0.31,2.09)	0.78 (0.28,2.20)
Acculturative Stress	1.47 (0.94,2.32)		**1.97* (1.11,3.50)**		1.84 (0.97,3.49)
Some English Proficiency	1.39 (0.60,3.24)		1.08 (0.38,3.08)		0.78 (0.25,2.40)
Any discrimination faced	**6.51* (1.51,28.00)**		**5.59* (1.19,26.05)**		**6.85* (1.36,34.53)**
Supportive Family Environment	**0.49* (0.25,0.98)**			**0.23** (0.09,0.57)**	**0.22** (0.08,0.56)**
Conservative family norms scale	**1.17* (1.01,1.35)**			1.12 (0.89,1.38)	1.09 (0.86,1.38)
Violence cause scale	0.44 (0.19,1.02)			0.40 (0.14,1.15)	0.33 (0.11,1.03)
Any violence justified	**3.68** (1.59,8.49)**			**2.72* (1.02,7.29)**	2.19 (0.79,6.11)
Pseudo-R^2 Model 2a		0.0231	**0.1017****		**0.2224*****
Pseudo-R^2 Model 2b		0.0231		**0.1563*****	**0.2224***

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

For sexual violence perpetration (Table 5.9), violence justification was significant in the family and relationship norms model (Model 2b OR=3.48, p<0.05) and remained significant in

the combined model (Model 3 OR=3.29, p<0.05). Being of female gender was significant in all models showing that being female has much lower odds of sexual violence perpetration than males

Table 5.9: Nested Logistic Regression Analysis: Sexual IPV Perpetration (n=247)

Any sexual IPV violence perpetration	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 3
Age	0.98 (0.95,1.02)	0.98 (0.95,1.02)	0.99 (0.95,1.03)	0.98 (0.94,1.02)	0.98 (0.93,1.03)
Income over $10,000	0.80 (0.36,1.77)	0.89 (0.35,2.23)	0.90 (0.35,2.27)	0.93 (0.35,2.44)	0.95 (0.36,2.54)
Education level	1.10 (0.50,2.40)	1.38 (0.54,3.52)	1.42 (0.53,3.84)	2.78 (0.88,8.78)	2.98 (0.88,10.12)
Female	**0.27** (0.12,62)**	**0.28* (0.10,0.75)**	**0.26* (0.09,0.95)**	**0.27* (0.10,0.78)**	**0.27* (0.09,0.80)**
Acculturative Stress	1.19 (0.75,1.88)		1.45 (0.83,2.52)		1.12 (0.63,2.00)
Some English Proficiency	1.27 (0.54,2.98)		0.87 (0.28,2.67)		0.69 (0.21,2.25)
Any discrimination faced	2.02 (0.74,5.50)		2.81 (0.74,10.67)		3.71 (0.84,16.34)
Supportive Family Environment	1.02 (0.50,2.12)			0.77 (0.30,1.96)	0.76 (0.30,1.95)
Conservative family norms scale	**1.32** (1.13,1.55)**			1.23 (0.97,1.55)	1.28 (0.99,1.65)
Violence cause scale	0.59 (0.25,1.40)			0.93 (0.31,2.85)	0.81 (0.26,2.50)
Any violence justified	**2.83* (1.25,6.41)**			**3.48* (1.23,9.83)**	**3.29* (1.14,9.44)**
Pseudo-R^2 Model 2a		0.0558	0.0859		**0.1660***
Pseudo-R^2 Model 2b		0.0558		**0.1402***	0.1660

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Stalking

In terms of stalking victimization (Table 5.10), the acculturative stress scale was significant in the acculturation-only model (Model 2a OR=1.50, p<0.05) but did not remain significant in the combined model.

Table 5.10: Nested Logistic Regression Analysis: Stalking Victimization (n=249)

Any stalking victimization	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 3
Age	0.98 (0.96,1.01)	0.99 (0.96,1.02)	0.99 (0.97,1.02)	0.99 (0.96,1.02)	0.99 (0.97,1.02)
Income over $10,000	1.06 (0.60,1.88)	1.16 (0.63,2.17)	1.16 (0.62,2.20)	1.21 (0.64,2.28)	1.21 (0.63,2.32)
Education level	0.94 (0.53,1.66)	1.08 (0.56,2.07)	1.01 (0.50,2.03)	1.29 (0.62,2.69)	1.16 (0.54,2.49)
Female	**0.48* (0.28,0.84)**	**0.52* (0.28,0.97)**	0.54 (0.28,1.04)	0.57 (0.30,1.10)	0.61 (0.31,1.20)
Acculturative Stress	1.33 (0.96,1.85)		**1.50* (1.02,2.18)**		1.43 (0.97,2.12)
Some English Proficiency	1.39 (0.76,2.57)		1.31 (0.61,2.82)		1.30 (0.60,2.80)
Any discrimination faced	**1.98* (1.02,3.84)**		1.90 (0.87,4.16)		2.00 (0.90,4.45)
Supportive Family Environment	1.07 (0.64,1.79)			0.97 (0.53,1.78)	0.99 (0.54,1.81)
Conservative family norms scale	1.10 (0.99,1.23)			1.09 (0.94,1.26)	1.08 (0.93,1.26)
Violence cause scale	0.75 (0.40,1.38)			0.80 (0.39,1.63)	0.79 (0.38,1.65)
Any violence justified	1.32 (0.77,2.26)			1.10 (0.57,2.13)	0.91 (0.46,1.81)
Pseudo-R^2 Model 2a		0.0195	0.0492		0.0559
Pseudo-R^2 Model 2b		0.0195		0.0295	0.0559

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

For stalking perpetration as in Table 5.11, both the acculturative stress scale (Model 2a OR=1.61, p<0.05) and the English proficiency variable (Model 2a OR=2.34, p<0.05) were significant in the acculturation-only model and only English proficiency was significant in the combined model (Model 3: OR=2.37, p<0.05 for English proficiency)

Table 5.11: Nested Logistic Regression Analysis: Stalking Perpetration (n=251)

Any stalking perpetration	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 3
Age	**0.96** (0.94,0.99)**	**0.96* (0.93,0.99)**	**0.96* (0.93,0.99)**	**0.96* (0.93,0.99)**	**0.96* (0.93,0.99)**
Income over $10,000	1.19 (0.67,2.13)	1.70 (0.89,3.25)	1.78 (0.91,3.49)	1.89 (0.96,3.71)	1.98 (0.98,3.99)
Education level	0.87 (0.48,1.57)	0.96 (0.49,1.89)	0.88 (0.43,1.83)	1.26 (0.58,2.74)	1.09 (0.48,2.44)
Female	0.85 (0.49,1.46)	0.74 (0.39,1.42)	0.84 (0.43,1.66)	0.89 (0.46,1.76)	1.04 (0.51,2.13)
Acculturative Stress	1.35 (0.97,1.89)		**1.61* (1.07,2.40)**		1.52 (0.99,2.30)
Some English Proficiency	1.82 (0.95,3.49)		**2.34* (1.03,5.36)**		**2.37* (1.02,5.52)**
Any discrimination faced	1.17 (0.62,2.21)		1.29 (0.58,2.89)		1.45 (0.63,3.33)
Supportive Family Environment	1.28 (0.75,2.19)			1.09 (0.58,2.04)	1.09 (0.57,2.05)
Conservative family norms scale	**1.13* (1.01,1.26)**			1.14 (0.97,1.33)	1.13 (0.95,1.34)
Violence cause scale	0.66 (0.35,1.24)			0.66 (0.31,1.39)	0.65 (0.30,1.41)
Any violence justified	1.09 (0.63,1.89)			0.95 (0.48,1.89)	0.77 (0.38,1.59)
Pseudo-R^2 Model 2a		0.0379	**0.0768***		0.0947
Pseudo-R^2 Model 2b		0.0379		0.0592	**0.0947***

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Scales within blocks

In this section each of the scales within the blocks will be looked at separately to add granularity to the results.

Acculturation Block

Acculturative Stress Scale

For emotional violence perpetration (Table 6.5), the acculturative stress scale was significant in the acculturation-only model (Model 2a, OR = 1.55, p < 0.05) but did not retain significance

in the combined model. Physical violence victimization (Table 4) was significantly associated with the acculturative stress scale in both the acculturation-only model (Model 2a, OR = 1.79, $p < 0.05$) and the combined model (Model 3, OR = 1.77, $p < 0.05$).

The acculturative stress scale also showed significance in predicting sexual violence victimization (Table 7) in the acculturation-only model (Model 2a, OR = 1.97, $p < 0.05$). For stalking victimization (Table 9), the acculturative stress scale was significant in the acculturation-only model (Model 2a, OR = 1.50, $p < 0.05$) but not in the combined model. Stalking perpetration (Table 10) was significantly associated with the acculturative stress scale in both the acculturation-only model (Model 2a, OR = 2.34, $p < 0.05$) and the combined model (Model 3, OR = 2.37, $p < 0.05$).

Discrimination Variable

The discrimination variable demonstrated significant associations with various outcomes. It was significantly associated with physical violence victimization (Table 5) in the acculturation-only model (Model 2a, OR = 6.18, $p < 0.01$) and this significance remained in the combined model (Model 3, OR = 5.88, $p < 0.05$). Similarly, the discrimination variable was significant for sexual violence victimization (Table 7) in both the acculturation-only model (Model 2a, OR = 5.59, $p < 0.05$) and the combined model (Model 3, OR = 6.85, $p < 0.05$).

One independent variable regression with violence and any discrimination faced was significant for emotional violence victimization (Model 0: OR=1.99, $p<0.05$), emotional violence perpetration (Model 0: OR= 2.20, $p<0.05$), and stalking victimization (Model 0: OR= 1.98, $p<0.05$). These associations are not significant upon the addition of other scales of the acculturative stress block and the control variables

Language Proficiency

For stalking perpetration (Table 10), English proficiency was significant in the acculturation-only model (Model 2a, OR = 2.34, $p < 0.05$) and the combined model (Model 3, OR = 2.37, $p < 0.05$). However, the language proficiency variable did not show significant associations with any of the other outcomes.

Relationship and Family Norms Block

Supportive Family Environment Scale

The family environment scale was significantly associated with sexual violence victimization (Table 7), with significance observed in the family and relationship norms model (Model 2b, OR = 0.23, $p < 0.01$) and maintained in the combined model (Model 3, OR = 0.22, $p < 0.01$).

Conservative Family Norms Scale

One independent variable regression with violence and conservative family norms was significant for sexual violence victimization (Model 0: OR=1.17, $p<0.05$), sexual violence perpetration (Model 0: OR=1.32, $p<0.01$) and stalking perpetration (Model 0: OR=1.13, $p<0.05$). These associations are not significant upon the addition of other scales of the relationship and family norms stress block and the control variables

Violence cause Scale

The violence cause scale showed significant associations with both emotional violence victimization and perpetration. It was significantly associated with emotional violence victimization (Table 3) in the family and relationship norms model (Model 2b, OR = 0.37, $p < 0.05$) and the combined model (Model 3, OR = 0.36, $p < 0.05$). Similarly, for emotional violence

perpetration (Table 4), the violence cause scale was significant in the family and relationship norms model (Model 2b, OR = 0.39, $p < 0.05$) and the combined model (Model 3, OR = 0.39, $p < 0.05$).

Violence justification

Any violence justification is significantly associated with sexual violence victimization (Table 7) in the family and relationship norms model (Model 2b, OR=2.72, $p<0.05$), but this did not persist in the overall model. For sexual violence perpetration (Table 8), it was significant in the relationships and family norms model (Model 2b, OR=3.48, $p<0.05$), which persisted in the overall model (Model3, OR=3.29, $p<0.05$).

One independent variable regression with violence and any violence justifications was significant for emotional violence perpetration (Model 0: OR=1.75, $p<0.05$), and physical violence perpetration (Model 0: OR= 2.59, $p<0.01$). These associations are not significant upon the addition of other scales of the relationship and family norms stress block and the control variables.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide insight into how acculturative stress and shifts in social norms contribute to IPV perpetration and victimization among Latine immigrants. By integrating qualitative and quantitative data, the study captures the complex dynamics that influence IPV in this population. The qualitative analysis highlights that stress related to acculturation and the shifting of family and relationship norms increases individuals' vulnerability to experiencing IPV. This is contextualized by the quantitative data, which demonstrates how acculturative stress and changes in norms specifically influence the types of violence reported, offering a more detailed understanding of the relationship between these stressors and IPV.

Moreover, the nested regression analysis identifies which groups of variables are most effective in explaining the occurrence of different types of violence. The combined results show that aspects of acculturative stress and shifting norms have unique effects on various forms of violence. Specifically, the acculturation block significantly explained physical and sexual violence victimization and stalking perpetration, while the family and relationship norms block were a key predictor of sexual violence. Additionally, emotional violence perpetration was influenced by both acculturation and family norms.

A valuable insight from the quantitative analyses is the comparable rates of violence perpetration and victimization between men and women. While men demonstrated higher overall levels of perpetration, this was only significant for sexual violence. The reported levels of victimization were remarkably similar across genders, with men reporting higher levels of victimization in emotional violence and stalking cases. These findings challenge the conventional narrative, prevalent in IPV literature, that frames men primarily as perpetrators and women as victims (Hine et al., 2022; Kimmel, 2002). Notably, around 60% of both men and

women in the sample reported being both victims and perpetrators of violence. However, it is important to recognize that this does not specify whether the types or severity of violence experienced or perpetrated were equivalent.

Role of Acculturative Stress

The qualitative analysis revealed that acculturation-related stress played a key role in promoting violence and perpetration. Participants frequently described the challenges of adapting to new cultural expectations and the stressors associated with these changes, which often led to power imbalances within relationships and manifested as various forms of violence (Linda, 2005). This was further supported by the quantitative analyses where the acculturation block significantly explained physical and sexual violence victimization and stalking perpetration. While many studies in the literature address acculturation broadly without linking it to specific forms of IPV, this analysis offers a more detailed examination. Previous research has identified a similar relationship between acculturation and physical violence victimization among immigrant youth (Sanderson et al., 2004; Messinger et al., 2012), but such studies have not focused on adult populations. Likewise, investigations into sexual violence victimization and acculturation factors have primarily centered on adolescents, where comparable relationships were observed (Decker et al., 2007). The examination of stalking perpetration is particularly unique to this dissertation, as few studies include stalking in their IPV measures.

The quantitative analysis adds granularity to these insights by examining how different types of violence are associated with specific acculturative stressors. For example, physical and sexual violence victimization were closely linked to the broader acculturative block, emphasizing how the stress of cultural adaptation can make individuals more vulnerable to these forms of

violence. The quantitative data further underscored how discrimination and language barriers, as forms of acculturative stress, isolated individuals, preventing them from seeking help and facilitating susceptibility to ongoing victimization. Previous studies have confirmed these findings in both genders, showing that social marginalization is linked to IPV experiences (Hulley et al., 2023, O'Neal & Beckman, 2017, Taylor et al., 2022).

IPV vctimization is related to acculturative stress, such as discrimination, language barriers, and documentation status. Quantitatively, the acculturation-related stressors were significantly associated with victimization, particularly in the context of physical and sexual violence. The stress of adapting to a new culture, coupled with a perceived lack of support and inability to take control of situations, makes individuals more susceptible to victimization. The relationship between IPV victimization and acculturative stress has been confirmed by an exhaustive amount of prior research (Alvarez et al., 2020, Cao et al., 2023, Gonzalez-Guarda et al., 2023), which bolsters this finding within the context of this population. For instance, emotional violence and stalking victimization were closely tied to experiences of discrimination, which often lead to isolation and a reluctance to seek help due to fears of negative consequences outside the home. These findings underscore the isolating effects of discrimination and language barriers, which not only prevent individuals from reporting violence but also inhibit their ability to defend themselves against such violence. This isolation is further exacerbated by socioeconomic stressors, which compound the challenges faced by immigrants.

Influence of Shifting Gender and Relationship Norms

The study's findings indicate that acculturation involves not only the adoption of new cultural norms but also the navigation of existing norms, such as conservative family beliefs and

justifications of violence. These existing norms, when challenged by acculturative processes, can disrupt family functioning and gender roles, leading to increased conflict and, in some cases, IPV. This is supported by the work of Sabina et al. (2015), who noted that the acculturative process and new economic demands often challenge traditional gender roles and power dynamics within immigrant families.

For perpetration behaviors, both quantitative and qualitative findings underscore the significant impact of evolving cultural norms and the stress associated with these changes on various forms of IPV, including emotional, sexual, and stalking behaviors. Quantitatively, the data suggest that cultural transitions, particularly those related to shifting gender roles and relationship values, contribute to power imbalances within couples. These imbalances, exacerbated by cultural stress, can lead to maladaptive coping mechanisms, including the perpetration of violence (Gudiño et al., 2018, Kuo, 2014). This pattern was reflected in the reluctance of some Latine men to accept new gender roles and power dynamics, leading them to assert authority through IPV. This finding is consistent with previous research by Adames and Campbell (2005) and Postmus et al. (2014), which highlight how traditional gender expectations can intensify the stress of cultural adaptation.

Qualitatively, participants described how the stress of adapting to new cultural norms manifested in behaviors such as stalking or physical violence. For instance, IPV incidents were sometimes triggered by tensions at work or interactions with co-workers, illustrating the combined effects of acculturative stress and shifting social norms. These narratives align with the quantitative findings, further illustrating how acculturative stress, particularly in contexts involving emotional or stalking perpetration, can lead to maladaptive responses. The need to

reassert control in disempowering situations, often intensified by experiences of discrimination, was a recurrent theme in the qualitative data.

The family and relationship norms block significantly explains sexual violence victimization and perpetration. Although conservative patriarchal attitudes have been linked to sexual violence in Latine groups globally, this perspective is not always examined exclusively within the immigrant Latine context. Research has shown that both victimization and perpetration are associated with explanations and justifications for violence (Ahrens et al., 2010; Huerta, 2014; Hernandez, 2019; Serrano, 2021). However, most studies focus solely on victimization among Latine women. In contrast, this study highlights that sexual violence victimization also affects male victims, who have often been overlooked in previous research.

A theme in the qualitative data was the impact of women's participation in the workforce on IPV. The qualitative findings revealed that some men perceived their partners' need to work outside the home for financial security as a threat to their traditional roles as men and primary breadwinners. This perception often exacerbated frustration and led to IPV (Clare et al., 2021, Mancera et al., 2017, Nagoshi et al., 2024, Sanchez, 2014). This theme, which resonates with the findings of Grzywacz et al. (2009), underscores the tension between the adoption of more liberal ideas and the persistence of existing cultural structures.

Lack of Gender Differentiation of Victimization and Perpetration

Another finding from this study reveals the patterns of IPV victimization and perpetration challenge the traditional gendered assumptions about perpetration and victimization. The quantitative results indicate that rates of perpetration and victimization do not significantly differ by gender within the sample, suggesting a high prevalence of bidirectional violence. In fact,

further analysis shows that 64% of the sample had experienced both victimization and perpetration, indicating that these risk factors operate in tandem to explain behavior.

As individuals navigate the challenges of acculturation, they experience increased stress and a sense of disempowerment in their new environment, making them more vulnerable to violence. Simultaneously, the consequences of shifting social norms compound this stress, leading to maladaptive coping mechanisms (Aldwin, 2009, Turanovic & Pratt, 2013). Although these factors may differentially predict specific types of violence, they are interconnected and must be considered together to fully understand the dynamics of IPV in immigrant populations.

The findings challenge the conventional notion that perpetrators are typically male and victim's female. Both quantitative and qualitative data reveal that men and women alike experienced IPV. Qualitative interviews highlighted how men and women expressed feelings of victimization due to these role changes, with pervasive patriarchal norms discouraging both genders from reporting violence due to shame. For men, the stress of altered gender roles often led to increased perpetration, as their perceived role within the household was directly challenged. Conversely, women who found themselves in positions of power may have also perpetrated violence, as power dynamics played a functional role in the manifestation of IPV.

These findings suggest that focusing solely on gender or examining IPV behaviors in isolation fails to capture the full complexity of IPV. Understanding IPV among immigrants requires a more holistic approach that takes into account the interplay between acculturative stress, shifting norms, and the bidirectional nature of violence. While this comprehensive perspective is essential, the differentiation in types of violence still provides important insights. For example, gender was significantly associated with sexual violence perpetration in this sample, with men more likely to be involved in sexual perpetration than women. This

differentiation highlights the importance of considering both broad contextual factors and specific behaviors when studying IPV.

Overall, focusing on reducing acculturative stress could empower victims to seek help and extricate themselves from abusive situations, while targeting social norm education around empowerment could clarify the harmful effects of violence to potential perpetrators. The quantitative data on emotional violence perpetration and sexual violence victimization highlight the importance of addressing both acculturation-related stress and entrenched social norms.

Limitations of the Study

While this study provides valuable insights into the dynamics of IPV among Latino immigrants, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, although the sample was equally balanced with regard to gender, the relative sample sizes may have precluded the determination of statistical significance due to limited power to detect small effect sizes. Another limitation is the cross-sectional nature of the data. Because the data was collected at a single point in time, it does not allow for the analysis of changes over time or the establishment of causal relationships. Additionally, the data is self-reported, which can be challenging to analyze due to potential biases such as social desirability or recall bias, where participants may not accurately remember or may underreport sensitive information such as IPV experiences. However, as the questionnaire was administered without any collection of identifiers and through an A-CASI interface in the participants preferred language, we are assured these would not pose significant limitations to the interpretation of the data. This is further supported by the work of others who have found that this form of data collection garners more accurate results than interview administered questionnaires.

Although the data were collected pre-COVID, the examined factors—such as acculturative stress and shifting social norms—remain relevant to immigrant experiences in 2024. Still, societal contexts have evolved, and the findings may not fully reflect the current realities. Updating the study with more contemporary data could yield more accurate and actionable insights.

Additionally, in order to maintain the safety and privacy of the participants, the study did not include questions about legal immigration status, even though immigration status can significantly moderate the relationship between IPV and stress. Including such questions could have provided deeper insights into how immigration status influences violence behaviors.

Recommendations for Future Research

To enhance the robustness of future research, several key improvements should be considered. Firstly, expanding the sample size would be crucial in increasing the statistical power of the study, allowing for more reliable analyses and broader generalizability of the findings. In addition to increasing the sample size, updating the study to reflect the societal context of 2024 is essential. Given the evolving nature of immigrant experiences and the socio-political landscape, conducting the study with current data would provide insights that are more relevant.

Chapter 6: Discussion

This discussion synthesizes findings from the two studies exploring the complex dynamics of IPV among Latine immigrants. The research examines the roles of acculturative stress, shifting socio-cultural norms, and social support in shaping IPV experiences. These papers provide a comprehensive look at how different factors influence IPV, highlighting the importance of considering cultural and social contexts in understanding and addressing the issue.

This section will be organized into parts to discuss these findings effectively. It will explore the value of studying IPV as a gender-neutral act, supporting the rationale for this approach. It will examine the impact of acculturative stress and its dimensions on IPV and analyze how shifting cultural and traditional gender norms affect IPV. Finally, the discussion will consider the role of social support in IPV through the lens of the stress and coping theory. An important point to consider is that while shifting cultural norms are a component of acculturative stress, this discussion aims to separately address gender and relationship norms within the Latine community. This approach allows for a more detailed examination of behaviors specific to the community, beyond the broader concept of acculturation.

The second paper emphasizes the prevalence of violence in a non-gendered way, where both men and women perpetrate and experience IPV. Research has shown that bidirectional violence (i.e. violence is perpetrated by both individuals in a dyad) is the most common form of IPV (Grest et al., 2018). Violence perpetrated by any partner has detrimental effects on relationship cohesion, mental health outcomes, and child-rearing, making it crucial to recognize some level of gender symmetry in IPV outcomes. Traditionally, IPV research has differentiated between genders, often based on social beliefs of women as victims and men as perpetrators. However, such gender asymmetry is often overstated. While there are differences in the types of

victimization and perpetration committed by each gender, evidence suggests a greater degree of gender symmetry in IPV than previously assumed (Straus, 2009).

This perspective necessitates moving beyond the conventional focus on men as perpetrators and women as victims, advocating instead for a dyadic approach to partner violence that considers both partners' roles in the IPV dynamic, as theorized by Capaldi et al. (2004). Providing a voice to male victims is equally important, as men and women often have different styles of disclosing IPV experiences. Researchers agree that gender differences in reporting violence can significantly influence research findings and conclusions (Chan, 2011; Morgan & Wells, 2016). Across various studies, the prevalence rates of IPV perpetration indicate that women are more likely to report using physical aggression against intimate partners than men (Archer, 2000; Herrera et al., 2008). In this sample of 269 participants, 64% reported experiencing both victimization and perpetration, reflecting bidirectional violence. These findings are consistent with a large-scale meta-analysis conducted by Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al. (2012), which found that 57.5% of the overall sample experienced bidirectional violence. Additionally, the sample in this dissertation supports findings from other research indicating that women are more likely to commit physical violence, whereas men are more inclined toward sexual violence (Fiebert, 2014; Whitaker, 2014).

Stress and Coping Framework

In this dissertation, the stress and coping framework proposed by Lazarus et al. (1984), alongside Farrington's (1986) general stress model (See Figure 7.1), provides a comprehensive understanding of IPV, suggesting that individuals may resort to violence as a maladaptive coping mechanism in response to acculturative stress and other significant stressors. Latine immigrants

experiencing elevated levels of stress thus undergo physiological and psychological changes that increase their susceptibility to maladaptive behaviors in the absence of moderating or positive coping behaviors (González-Guarda et al., 2011).

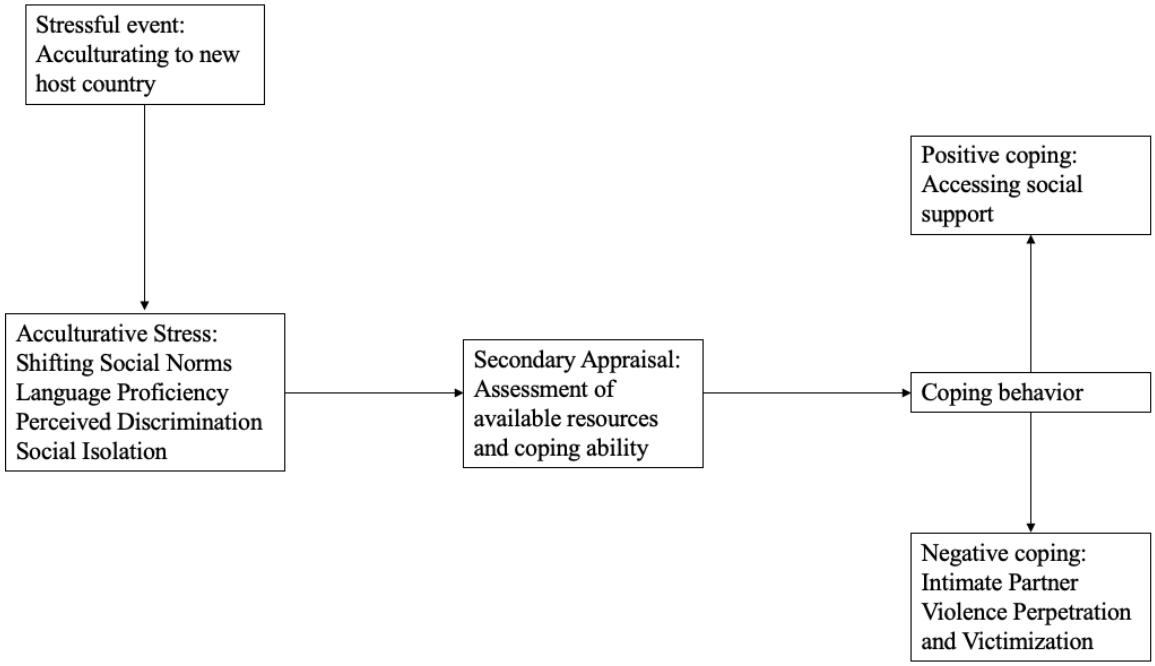


Figure 6.1: Findings in the Context of Theory of Stress and Coping (Lazarus 1984)

The findings from both studies suggest that individuals experiencing high levels of acculturative stress may perceive violence as a way to regain control or assert authority in an environment where they feel disempowered. This behavior aligns with the stress and coping model's theory of maladaptive coping. The presence of constructive coping strategies, however, can significantly alter this trajectory. Research by Mengistu & Manolova (2019) and Warmling et al. (2017) suggests that individuals with access to positive coping mechanisms are less likely to resort to violence, instead managing their stress in healthier, non-violent ways.

Social support refers to the function and quality of social relationships, encompassing both the perceived availability of assistance and the support actually received. This type of support occurs through an interactive process and may be influenced by factors such as altruism, a sense of obligation, and the perception of reciprocal support. Social support can facilitate an individual's self-regulation by enhancing their adaptive capabilities to confront challenges and overcome adversity. Additionally, social support may serve as a symbolic experience in which network members provide verbal assurances of the recipient's competence to handle problems (DeLongis & Holtzman, 2005).

Social support enhances self-efficacy by reducing negative self-image, which mediates their relationship. Benight and Bandura (2004) demonstrated that perceived social support boosts self-efficacy in managing challenges, while Schwarzer and Knoll (2007) suggest it fosters resilience in the context of IPV.

In this dissertation social support is operationalized with two components: social cohesion and reciprocated exchange. While theories of social support operationalize it in four ways: instrumental, informational, emotional, and appraisal(Schwarzer & Knoll, 2007); the survey in these analyses focuses mainly on emotional and appraisal support since the questions concern cohesiveness and trust within the community and not around access to resources and knowledge as a form of support.

Acculturative Stress and IPV

This research explores the significant role of acculturative stress—defined as the psychological impact of adapting to a new culture (Berry, 2006)—in contributing to IPV among Latine immigrant communities. Acculturative stress includes various challenges such as

language barriers, discrimination, and the pressures of navigating new cultural norms. In this dissertation, acculturative stress is measured through a scale that captures a range of experiences, including discomfort or conflict related to family expectations and cultural assimilation, resistance to pressures to conform to the Anglo-American lifestyle, perceptions of being viewed as unsociable due to language barriers, and a sense of having more obstacles to overcome compared to others. Both qualitative and quantitative findings highlight that acculturative stress is strongly linked to IPV victimization and perpetration.

The qualitative data suggest that acculturative stress increases vulnerability to IPV by exacerbating feelings of isolation, helplessness, and frustration. Participants frequently reported that adapting to new cultural expectations often led to power imbalances within relationships, which could manifest as various forms of violence (Linda, 2005). Quantitatively, the studies demonstrated that specific types of violence, such as physical and sexual victimization, are closely associated with acculturative stress, which heightens vulnerability to these forms of violence. As outlined in Paper 1, acculturative stress is linked to both violence victimization (emotional, sexual, and stalking) and perpetration (emotional and stalking). This observation aligns with findings in the mixed-methods paper and suggests that acculturative stress influences both victimization and perpetration, highlighting the importance of stress management in both prevention and intervention strategies for IPV.

Acculturative stress not only predicts violence but also leads to lower rates of violence reporting (Gupta et al., 2010). The qualitative findings indicate that fear of deportation and legal repercussions makes individuals less likely to report violence, particularly self-reported perpetration, which is seen as a risk.

Discrimination and language barriers—key components of acculturative stress—were found to isolate individuals from support systems, preventing them from seeking help and increasing their susceptibility to ongoing victimization. These stressors affect both genders, with previous research confirming that social marginalization impacts all IPV experiences (Hulley et al., 2023; O'Neal & Beckman, 2017; Taylor et al., 2022). The association between acculturative stress and both IPV victimization and perpetration suggests that these stressors similarly affect both genders, leading to bidirectional violence.

Higher perceptions of discrimination have been linked to both victimization and perpetration among Latine individuals (Araújo Dawson, 2009; Forster et al., 2017), a finding supported by this dissertation. The negative effects of stress are linked to the perpetration of violence through various pathways, such as increased anger and hostility (often associated with female perpetration) and heightened rejection sensitivity, fear of negative evaluation, low empathy, and low self-esteem (often linked to male perpetration) (Dardis et al., 2014). Perceived discrimination creates a heightened sense of vulnerability, increasing allostatic load and leading to maladaptive coping strategies like IPV (Cho et al., 2014; Forster et al., 2017; Gupta et al., 2010; Reyes et al., 2021).

While this study did not directly measure ethnic belonging, previous research suggests that a stronger sense of ethnic belonging is associated with lower social stress, implying that fostering a positive self-identity that includes one's ethnic or cultural identity could reduce IPV risk. In multicultural settings and among minoritized groups, a positive self-identity is crucial for healthy development and positive adjustment (Forster et al., 2017). Thus, combating discrimination or creating supportive mechanisms for cultural expression may serve as protective factors against IPV (Unger et al., 2014). Overall, these findings emphasize the importance of

addressing both external factors like discrimination and internal factors such as cultural self-identity in developing effective IPV prevention strategies within immigrant communities.

Perceived discrimination, as a component of acculturative stress, is also associated with negative impacts on mental health and self-esteem. Higher levels of acculturation are often linked to lower experiences of depression (Araújo Dawson, 2009). Theoretically, a positive self-identity, particularly one that includes ethnic or cultural elements, is a key component of healthy development and positive adjustment in multicultural settings and among minoritized groups (Forster et al., 2017). Experiences of discrimination can erode this positive self-identity, leading to internal stress. Promoting a positive "cultural self" and encouraging individuals to explore the meaningfulness of their ethnic group membership could benefit IPV prevention efforts (Forster et al., 2017; Smokowski & Bacallao, 2006; Unger et al., 2014).

English language proficiency is another significant factor affecting acculturative stress levels. Greater linguistic integration allows individuals to be more vocal within their communities and more capable of seeking support from legal and social structures (Doucerain et al., 2015; Lueck & Wilson, 2011). Limited language skills can lead to breakdowns in intercultural communication, fostering feelings of misunderstanding and frustration that heighten stress. This dissertation finds that lower English proficiency is linked to both physical and sexual violence victimization and perpetration, as demonstrated in the final structural equation models in Paper 1. This relationship is consistent with previous studies showing similar patterns between language proficiency and IPV (Cunradi et al., 2021; O'Neal & Beckman, 2016; Reyes et al., 2021).

Importantly, the relationship between IPV behaviors and language proficiency extends beyond the experience of violence to include the challenges faced by those seeking help. Studies

consistently identify language proficiency as a significant barrier to support within immigrant communities, as lack of proficiency often prevents victims from accessing necessary resources and perpetuates cycles of violence (Alvarez & Fedock, 2018; Gonzalez-Guarda et al., 2013; Rizo & Macy, 2011). In some cases, English proficiency is associated with higher rates of self-reported victimization, likely due to increased ability to report incidents rather than language skills per se (Cho et al., 2014; Garcia et al., 2005; Gonzalez-Guarda et al., 2013; Martin & Garcia, 2011). Thus English language proficiency acts as a protective factor to prevent future abuse.

Overall the findings confirm that hypothesized factors such as discrimination, language barriers, and social marginalization are shown to exacerbate stress and contribute to IPV dynamics. A dynamic of acculturation not elaborated above is the process of shifting of family and relationship norms which plays a significant role in IPV behavior.

Shifting Socio-Cultural Norms and IPV

In immigrant communities, shifting socio-cultural norms, particularly those related to gender roles and relationship dynamics, play a significant role in contributing to IPV. The findings from this study suggest that acculturation is a complex process involving the adoption of new cultural norms alongside the negotiation of existing norms, such as conservative family beliefs and justifications for violence. These established norms can be destabilized by acculturative pressures, disrupting family functioning and traditional gender roles, thereby increasing the risk of conflict and IPV.

The data, both qualitative and quantitative, illustrate the impact of evolving cultural norms on IPV dynamics within this dissertation as relationship and gender norms play significant

roles in associations with specific types of victimizations and perpetrations of IPV. Other studies confirm that cultural transitions—especially those related to changing gender roles and relationship values—create power imbalances within couples. These imbalances, compounded by cultural stress, can lead to maladaptive coping strategies, including the perpetration of violence (Gudiño et al., 2018; Kuo, 2014). This dynamic is particularly evident among Latino men, some of whom resist adopting new gender roles and power dynamics, instead choosing to assert authority through IPV. The likelihood of IPV is higher when one partner is highly acculturated while the other remains low in acculturation but experiences significant stress (Cao et al., 2023; Kyler-Yano & Mankowski, 2021). Alternatively, IPV is more likely when both partners suffer from substantial acculturation stress, impairing their ability to manage relationship conflicts effectively (Kim-Godwin et al., 2014). Gender imbalances arising from the process of acculturation, such as increased assimilation of American cultural values and norms, can heighten stress levels within Latino immigrant families.

Qualitative narratives further highlight how the stress of adapting to new cultural norms can manifest in behaviors like stalking or physical violence. For example, IPV incidents are sometimes precipitated by tensions arising from work or interactions with co-workers, underscoring the combined effects of acculturative stress and shifting socio-cultural norms. These findings reflect the tension between adopting more egalitarian ideas and adhering to traditional cultural structures, confirming that IPV in immigrant communities often stems from conflicts between old and new cultural expectations. Family stress also emerges as a critical factor, characterized by disagreements among family members, feelings of isolation or loneliness, and the inability to prioritize family needs. This stress reflects Latine immigrants' struggles to practice the cultural value of familism—emphasizing family needs over individual

interests—and their consequent inability to benefit from its protective effects against adverse outcomes (Cao et al., 2023).

Cultural shifts may threaten traditional male gender roles, creating tension and conflict. Women, on the other hand, may move from viewing violence as acceptable to deeming it unacceptable, potentially increasing the likelihood of reporting abuse (Gonzalez et al., 2020; Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2012). Thus, this shift may not necessarily indicate a higher prevalence of IPV but rather a higher level of reporting. In this study, many qualitative interviews where women disclosed their victimization revealed a tendency to rationalize it using traditional family views, generational violence, and individual partner factors. This indicates a level of acceptance of violence in relationships, closely aligned with the ideas of Machismo and Marianismo (Mancera et al., 2017).

Both resource theory and relative resource theory propose that possession of material resources is a primary predictor of abuse in marriages, viewing violence as an alternative resource (Reynolds, 2021). These theories argue that men who lack resources are more likely to abuse their wives than those who possess resources. This dynamic relates to acculturation to the "American" way of life and the perceived "loss" associated with a more equal societal status (Atkinson et al., 2005; Mancera et al., 2017). This study finds that some men view their partners' need to work outside the home for financial reasons as a challenge to their traditional roles as men and primary breadwinners. This perception, likely shaped by machismo, often heightens frustration and leads to IPV as supported by the findings of Grzywacz et al (2009) exemplified by the finding that men who consider themselves to have more traditional values who cannot provide economic support for their families may turn to violence to validate their masculinity due to resistance in accepting new gender roles and power dynamics, (Atkinson et al., 2005;

Mancera et al., 2017; Peralta & Tuttle, 2013, Sabina et al. 2015). The findings from this research, suggest that cultural transitions contribute to power imbalances within couples that lead to maladaptive coping strategies such as the perpetration of violence (Gudiño et al., 2018; Kuo, 2014).

Within this sample, we observe a role reversal, where individuals perceive that women have more readily available opportunities in the workforce. The findings from the qualitative interviews confirms this multiple times, as both men and women describe how key household arguments revolve around job status and relative economic standing. Male interviewees expressed feelings of shame related to their inability to be the primary or sole breadwinner, while women shared experiences of fear and threats in the family dynamic due to their new societal positions—both factors setting the stage towards contributing to an increased risk of violence.

The findings support that violence against men within the community is linked to adherence to patriarchal ideas associated with the home country. Many men in the sample have experienced significant experiences of IPV victimization, with qualitative data expanding on this issue by discussing the reversal of power dynamics within relationships. Patriarchal beliefs can become a risk factor for violence against men when issues such as unemployment or the inability to manage household responsibilities threaten "family honor," a concern felt by both men and women. The threat of damaging "family reputation" is a salient factor in an individual's self-image and perceived social image (Dietrich & Schuett, 2013). Women who are more likely to adhere to strict cultural norms may feel stressed by the shifting dynamics, contributing to the prevalence of IPV. These observations are consistent with earlier studies by Adames and Campbell (2005) and Postmus et al. (2014), which emphasize that traditional gender expectations can heighten the stress of cultural adaptation.

Overall, this dissertation confirms some findings from the literature around the shifting relationship and family dynamic being a predictor in IPV behaviors. It further provides possible explanatory mechanisms around the behavior by identifying specific shifts such as changing employment status, changing of *machismo* norms, and shifts around perceived family "reputation" and "honor".

Building on these findings, the role of help-seeking for IPV becomes essential in understanding how individuals respond to and navigate IPV, especially in the context of Latine immigrants. Help-seeking for IPV takes many forms, ranging from formal services such as medical, legal, or counseling professionals to informal support systems like family, friends, or online resources (Liang et al., 2005; Satyen et al., 2019). In Latine culture, strong gender role expectations and familism often influence these behaviors, with concepts such as shame playing a significant role. Seeking help from external authorities can be perceived as damaging to the family's reputation within the community, leading many Latinos to rely more on family for support rather than formal agencies (Dietrich & Schuett, 2013). This reluctance to seek external assistance is often exacerbated by adherence to honor, where individuals who highly value familismo disapprove of help-seeking from outside sources. For men, societal expectations complicate help-seeking further, as experiencing IPV is often seen as "unmanly," and many believe that men cannot be victims of violence (Morgan & Wells, 2016). Male victims who attempt to seek help often face negative reactions, including ridicule or being wrongly identified as the primary aggressor by law enforcement (Douglas & Hines, 2011). Studies have shown that men report twice as many negative outcomes as positive ones when seeking help, with these challenges compounded by acculturative stressors (Douglas & Hines, 2011). This study's qualitative findings align with these themes, as several male participants reported not being taken

seriously by law enforcement, ridicule from their communities, and, in one case, imprisonment despite being the victim. These barriers create significant challenges for male victims seeking assistance.

In overcoming these barriers, social support plays a critical role by providing victims of IPV with both coping mechanisms for stress and the confidence to seek help, knowing they have a supportive community. Social support is particularly vital in immigrant communities, where couples often face extended adjustment periods. It not only helps victims identify available resources but also familiarizes them with the norms and beliefs surrounding help-seeking in their new country, which they might not have otherwise known. This network of support is essential for navigating the complex landscape of help-seeking for IPV in immigrant populations.

Social Support as a Coping Mechanism

Social support is recognized as a crucial coping mechanism for reducing acculturative stress, which is closely tied to IPV outcomes. Research shows that greater levels of social support can diminish feelings of isolation and emotional distress, two key contributors to acculturative stress (Dias et al., 2019). The current study demonstrated that while social support was not directly associated with the occurrence of IPV, it significantly lowered acculturative stress, which in turn was directly linked to less IPV victimization and perpetration. This indirect relationship highlights the importance of maintaining strong support networks to foster resilience, reduce stress, and promote healthier interpersonal dynamics (Coker et al., 2003; Bai, 2016). The findings are consistent with previous studies suggesting that social support fosters

positive interactions and participation in social activities, providing emotional and practical assistance during times of need (Ogbe et al., 2020; Khan & Hasan, 2016; Salgado et al., 2012).

Specifically, within Latine immigrant communities, social cohesion and strong familial ties are protective factors against acculturative stress. Family and social networks are often disrupted by migration, leading to increased discomfort and stress (Caplan, 2007; Finch & Vega, 2003; Lueck & Wilson, 2011). This study corroborates earlier findings, showing that within Latine immigrant samples, social support networks—especially those rooted in familial and community structures—are vital in mitigating acculturative stress (Raghavan et al., 2009; Rivera et al., 2008; Sabina et al., 2015). Bekteshi and Kang (2020) similarly underscore that Latine immigrants often perceive social support in the U.S. to be weaker compared to their home countries, where friendships are more intimate and frequent. Environments with high ethnic density, such as the one in the present sample, can serve as protective spaces where social support networks can thrive, buffering individuals against the negative effects of migration-related stress (Taskin et al., 2023).Latine immigrants who maintained robust social networks, formed relationships with community members, and supported each other were better protected against experiences of violence. Mooney (2003) highlights that migrants often maintain familial and community ties by sharing households and social support networks with others who have also migrated, thereby reinforcing the sense of protection through social connection.

Moreover, social support may facilitate cultural attitudes regarding the disapproval of violence within relationships. Individuals embedded in communities with stronger social cohesion were more likely to adopt non-violent norms and reject IPV as a form of conflict resolution (Dietrich & Schuett, 2013). In line with this, individuals who formed positive

relationships and relied on their social networks felt less vulnerable to violence and more empowered in their relationships.

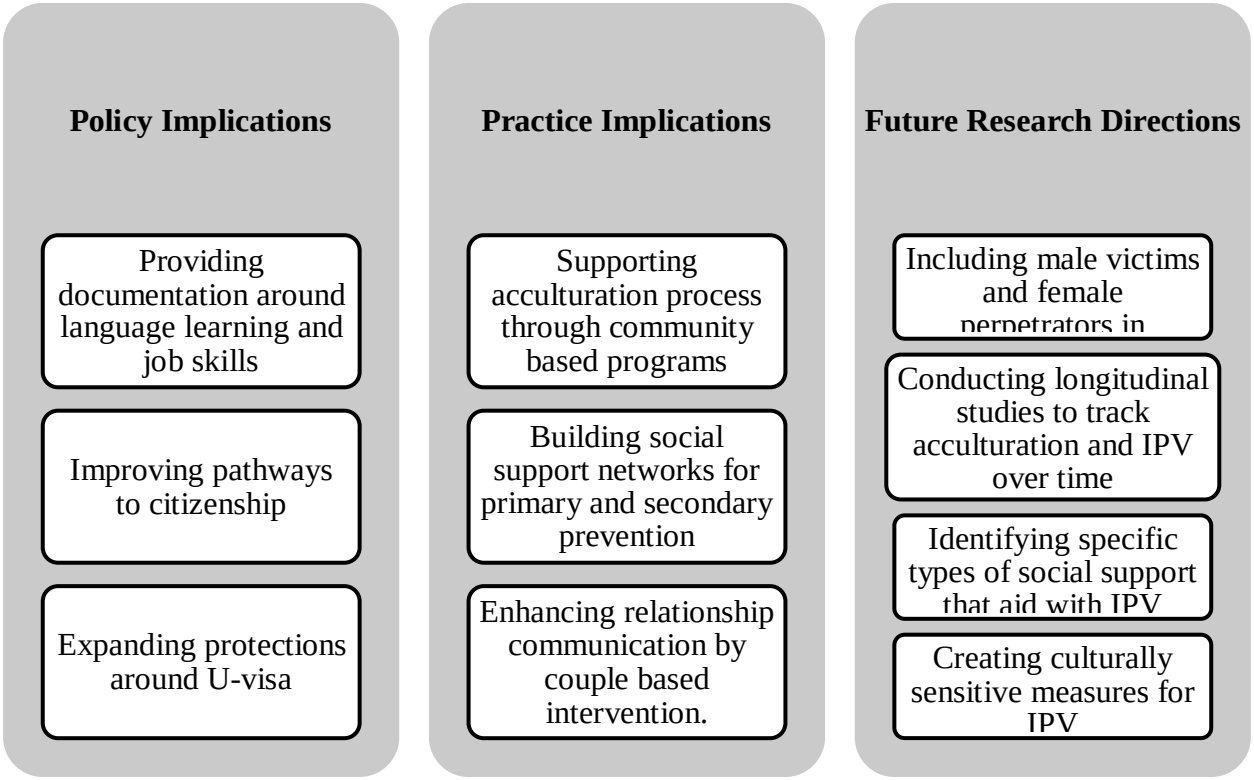
Overall, the study's findings support the notion that the engagement of strong social relationships and cultural values offers significant protection against IPV. The importance of social networks, both within the immediate family and the wider community, cannot be overstated in its role of preventing violence and promoting emotional well-being (Gonzalez-Guarda et al., 2013; Sabri et al., 2018).

Overall, the findings from this dissertation highlights the critical influence of acculturative stress and shifting socio-cultural norms on IPV behaviors within Latine immigrant communities and the role of social support in that dynamic.

Implications of Research

The implications of the research will be discussed through three lenses: policy, practice and research. The figure below summarizes major recommendations provided in this section:

Figure 6.2: Implications of Research



Policy Implications

Although most recommended interventions target the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels, local, state, and federal policies can also be utilized to decrease the perceived stress and decrease IPV for Latine immigrant communities.

Supporting Acculturation for New Immigrants

An effective approach to enhancing immigrant's acculturation would be to ensure opportunities is to combine language training with skill documentation to improve employment chances, similar to Denmark's Competency Card system (Danish Maritime Authority, n.d; Huang, 2019) which tracks immigrant skills and language proficiency.

Another approach would be to improve paths to citizenship policy which would increase job mobility for migrants as they would be able to work in industries that are facing labor shortages which would lead to both economic stability and integration.

National Immigration Policy

The U nonimmigrant status (U visa) was created to protect victims of certain crimes, such as domestic violence, who have suffered mental or physical abuse and are willing to assist law enforcement in investigations or prosecutions (USCIS, n.d.). Established under the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act in 2000, the U visa supports both victims and law enforcement efforts. It aims to protect undocumented immigrant victims of IPV without regard to their relationship status with the abuser or the abuser's immigration status (Levine & Peffer, 2012; Murshid & Bowen, 2018). U-Visa holders can remain in the U.S. for four years and apply for permanent residency after three years, while those on the waitlist are granted work authorization, providing economic independence for IPV victims (USCIS, n.d.). While petitioners are typically required to cooperate with law enforcement, exceptions are made if testifying would endanger them. Despite offering a path to lawful status, the visa's requirement for law enforcement cooperation can be challenging for many survivors (Nanasi, 2019). Additionally, concerns about safety, loss of support, and retaliation may discourage victims from seeking a U-Visa, as obtaining certification from a law enforcement or government official is

necessary to qualify (Kelly, 2009;Murshid & Bowen, 2018). Since a resource like the U-Visa through VAVA already exists, it would be realistic to make policy changes within the existing law.

Some strategies to make the process more supportive to immigrants would be to increase awareness and outreach about these protections of this policy. Studies have found that many individuals eligible for U-Visa protection remain unaware of this option until informed by advocates, attorneys, or law enforcement (Atkinson & Wong, 2018,Kerwin & Warren, 2017). Efforts should be made to raise awareness through more accessible channels. Social workers and other frontline professionals, who are key in assisting IPV victims, should be well-equipped to educate petitioners about their options, risks, and the steps they can take to enhance their security. Additionally petitioners need to be informed about all available legal protections, such as orders that prevent alleged offenders from contacting them, and the potential risks, including deportation, if their U-Visa is denied or if they encounter ICE agents (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2022)

In addition, the process of obtaining a U-Visa should ensure the physical and emotional security for petitioners, including protection from perpetrators, deportation, and be allowed all protections afforded under the Violence Against Women's Act for confidentiality and protections to seek assistance without the fear of retaliation or exposure.

- Civil orders of protection should be expanded to include restrictions on third-party and online contact. T

- Those eligible for the U-Visa should have protection from deportation throughout the application process, especially given the heightened vulnerability of individuals leaving abusive relationships.
- Ensure that women who apply for U-Visa benefits are protected under VAWA's confidentiality provisions (Department of Homeland Security, n.d.), helping them seek relief without fear of retaliation or exposure.
- The U-Visa's annual cap of 10,000 applications is insufficient to cover all eligible victims (Levine & Peffer, 2012). Thus to ensure safety and security, expansion programs should be implemented.

Public Health Programs and Practice

Public health programs are essential in supporting the acculturation process and addressing IPV among immigrants. Acculturation-based interventions help bridge cultural gaps and reduce stress, while programs offering language learning, job training, and legal services empower individuals to seek support. Building strong social support systems, both in-person and virtually, enhances access to resources and fosters resilience. Relationship communication interventions that engage couples and families are particularly effective in addressing gender imbalances and preventing IPV. Together, these programs provide crucial tools for promoting health and reducing violence in immigrant communities.

Aiding of Acculturation Process

Supporting individuals with acculturation can significantly reduce stress, enabling interventions to focus on bridging cultural gaps and easing the transition into a new society. Acculturation-based prevention programs recognize the importance of culture in interventions,

aiming to alleviate the stress of assimilation while enhancing bicultural social skills. Interventions addressing IPV could benefit from integrating immigration services—such as access to attorneys and specialists—which would incentivize individuals to engage in IPV educational services. By improving awareness of available resources and legal rights, immigrants can adopt an empowered approach to seeking IPV support. This approach has been successful in programs like *Sí, Yo Puedo*, where legal services were introduced through police departments, empowering participants (Marrs Fuchsel, 2020). Expanding such efforts by fostering positive relationships between immigrant communities and law enforcement, through community-police programs, can increase the likelihood of IPV reporting despite fears of deportation (Messing et al., 2015).

Other sources of acculturative stress include language barriers and limited economic opportunities. Studies have shown, interventions that support language learning and job training would enhance self-esteem and provide individuals with skills to cope with stress (Galanakis et al., 2016; Kim et al., 2014). Job training programs, particularly those offered at community centers or schools, can equip new immigrants with marketable skills, increase their employability, and provide them with certification in fields where they may already have experience. These programs also offer opportunities to improve English proficiency and foster a deeper understanding of the U.S. workplace and social environment. Previous research demonstrates that acquiring job skills and learning a second language significantly boosts individuals' self-confidence and autonomy, which in turn facilitates their settlement and integration into their host country (Flores et al., 2011; Heller & Mumma, 2023; Wong et al., 2001).

Building social support systems

IPV interventions that incorporate social support have the potential to enhance health-seeking behaviors, improve access to resources, and positively impact the mental health outcomes of survivors. In building social networks within immigrant communities, it is essential to recognize the nuanced role of cultural values. Collective values can act both as protective factors—fostering resilience—and as risk factors, potentially exacerbating IPV victimization and its consequences (Cardenas et al., 2024). Therefore, programs should facilitate healthy conversations among community members to build a foundation for reducing violence. One promising approach is through group therapy sessions with individuals from the same community. Group sessions with fellow immigrants facing similar challenges have been shown to increase self-awareness, empowerment, and peer support, all of which are crucial for building resilience and addressing shared issues (Alvarez et al., 2016; Hansen et al., 2014). Additionally, research suggests that Latine cultures are more receptive to group-format interventions due to their preference for social and community-based support (Marrs Fuchsel & Brummett, 2021; Morales-Campos et al., 2009; Rayle et al., 2006). With the involvement of therapists and facilitators, these sessions provide opportunities for insights into violence prevention and help-seeking strategies. Programs such as the *Moms' Empowerment Program (MEP*), which supports victimized Latina women, have demonstrated success in improving physical and mental health outcomes through such approaches (Clark et al., 2018).

In the digital age, creating social support systems can also be achieved virtually, allowing individuals who may feel physically isolated from the community to connect with supportive networks. A virtual IPV social support intervention, *weWomen/ourCircle* was culturally adapted for the Māori and immigrant communities in New Zealand, connecting

indigenous women to create safety plans, discuss coping mechanisms, and address IPV in a culturally appropriate manner (Sabri et al., 2019). Based on the findings of this dissertation, adaptations to a virtual support program for the Langley Park population could include connecting individuals with others from the same country of origin living in the DMV area. This approach would allow them to share their stories more comfortably with people outside their immediate community, providing support beyond Langley Park. Additionally, creating mentorship programs that link newer immigrants with those who have been in the U.S. for a longer period could help ease their integration into social circles and offer guidance based on personal experiences.

Relationship communication interventions

IPV is a dyadic process, meaning that focusing interventions on only one partner can be short-sighted, as such interventions tend to be less effective than those that target the entire couple or family unit (Braithwaite & Fincham, 2014; Moffitt et al., 2001; O'Leary, 2008). The RESPECT framework, created by UN Women and WHO, includes the strategy "Relationship Skills Strengthened," which builds interventions that work with couples and other adult family members in the household. This strategy aims to address power imbalances and gender inequalities, showing promise in reducing intimate partner violence, as demonstrated in early systematic reviews (Emalia et al., 2023; WHO, 2020). It is particularly useful in immigrant settings, where couples often experience shifts in gender norms as they adjust to new cultural contexts as seen in this study. Family-based interventions play a crucial role in bridging value system gaps, reducing stress, and managing conflict, which helps families navigate cultural transitions and lowers the risk of violence (Chandarana et al., 2024).

Relationship communication-based interventions can take several forms, including couples therapy, group workshops, role-playing to manage conflicts, and building self-efficacy. For instance, programs like *SEPA (Salud, Educación, Promoción y Autocuidado*) have shown positive outcomes in improving communication and health education for Hispanic couples in Chicago, particularly around HIV prevention (Peragallo et al., 2012). The RESPECT framework highlights global interventions like *Indashyikirwa* in Rwanda and Stepping Stones in South Africa, which address key drivers of IPV such as drug use, jealousy, and household role management. These participatory workshops focus on gender dynamics and healthy relationship building, making them particularly relevant for immigrant couples who may need to redefine household roles. Additionally, couples therapy sessions often target dysfunctional relationship patterns, communication challenges, and conflict resolution, making these approaches well-suited for reducing IPV in immigrant families.

Given that many individuals in immigrant communities juggle multiple jobs and childcare duties, delivering interventions in a virtual format could be highly effective. Programs like ePREP, a computer based IPV prevention intervention, have demonstrated significant reductions in physical and psychological aggression over a year, largely due to its focus on communication skills and recognizing red flag behaviors (Braithwaite & Fincham, 2014). Adapting such programs to the cultural context of Latine immigrants and incorporating relevant life modules can further expand their reach. Offering these interventions in Spanish or bilingual formats and utilizing interactive or gamified approaches can reduce the formal nature of the programs, increase participation, and ensure broader access to IPV prevention resource

Implications for Future Research

This study highlights several important areas for future research on IPV amongst Latine immigrant populations. First, the inclusion of male victims and the exploration of both perpetration and victimization is a significant contribution. The study found that victimization levels were similar across genders, though the types of victimization varied, with women more often experiencing sexual violence. These findings suggest that violence is not solely a gendered issue but one rooted in power dynamics and social structures (Bates, 2016; Fincham et al., 2013; Reed et al., 2010). Future research should move away from a solely gendered approach and instead focus on identifying prevalence data for male victimization and female perpetration through larger surveys, which would provide a clearer understanding of the issue.

The role of acculturative stress and related factors, such as language proficiency, in both victimization and perpetration was also identified. However, as the social and political landscape has worsened for immigrants, particularly undocumented ones, due to increased anti-immigrant rhetoric (Morey, 2018; Roman & Sagás, 2020; Verea, 2018), future research should examine how this rhetoric has impacted IPV rates among immigrant communities. Discrimination and acculturative stress have increased (Almeida et al., 2016; Findling et al., 2019), and understanding its direct effects on IPV would provide essential insights for future interventions and policy.

The study found that social support can reduce acculturative stress, yet it remains unclear which types of social support—emotional, instrumental, informational, or appraisal—are most effective in reducing IPV. Moreover, identifying whether family-based or peer-based support is more protective against IPV remains debated (Richardson et al., 2022; Wright, 2015; Page et al., 2021; Ridings et al., 2018). Future research should focus on clarifying which sources and types

of social support are most effective, particularly since certain types of support may exacerbate IPV, as indicated by qualitative findings on cultural attitudes like "machismo" among Latinas and shame among Latino male victims.

Further research is also needed to examine longitudinal or cohort studies that could track the long-term effects of acculturation on IPV. Although cross-sectional studies, like this one, have found significant relationships, causality cannot be established. Longitudinal studies could better assess how IPV victimization and perpetration evolve as immigrants spend more time in the U.S., shedding light on the specific stages of acculturation that influence IPV rates. These studies could also track help-seeking behaviors over time, which would aid in designing interventions to promote support-seeking.

Future research should delve into the distinct drivers of acculturative stress and discrimination among this population to better understand their unique challenges. Culturally adapted IPV measures for Latine individuals are another critical area for future research. Developing scales that account for social norms within minority communities would improve the reliability and validity of IPV assessments (Dyar et al., 2019; White et al., 2012). Culturally sensitive measures could reveal more accurate prevalence rates and provide insights for targeted interventions. Finally, studying the influences of socio-cultural norms on first-generation immigrant youth would be important for identifying where beliefs around violence are shaped. As U.S.-born youth may develop different norms than their immigrant parents, research could help prevent cycles of violence by identifying where early interventions can be most effective, particularly in adolescence.

Future research should prioritize the accurate identification of all victims through culturally tailored prevalence studies, as this is crucial for providing adequate support. Collecting

accurate prevalence data is the foundational step toward understanding and addressing IPV across diverse communities and populations. By ensuring that research reflects the unique cultural contexts of various groups, we can develop more effective interventions and support systems tailored to the needs of all victims in all their diversity.

Strengths and Limitations

While the findings of this study elucidate areas for future research and intervention, each study is not without limitation. This study presents several limitations that may impact its validity and generalizability. The first limitation arises from the reliance on secondary data, which was initially collected for a different research purpose. Although the dataset is comprehensive, encompassing key metrics and validated tools relevant to the study objectives, the fact that the data was not specifically collected by the current researchers imposes certain restrictions. Nevertheless, the breadth and depth of the dataset allow for robust secondary analysis and the testing of multiple hypotheses, making it suitable for addressing the research questions at hand.

Another notable limitation is the cross-sectional nature of the study design, which restricts the ability to infer causality (Wang & Cheng, 2020). Data was collected at a single point in time, providing only a snapshot of participants' experiences. This design prevents researchers from drawing definitive conclusions about the directional relationships between variables. For example, while the study can highlight associations between acculturative stress and IPV, it cannot confirm whether stress causes IPV or if IPV exacerbates stress. However, the primary objective of the study was not to establish causality but to explore associations, which the cross-sectional design achieves effectively. Despite the limitation, the study still offers valuable insights into the interplay between acculturative stress, social norms, and IPV.

The age of the dataset also presents a challenge. The data, collected between December 2010 and January 2012, and although the experiences of Latino immigrants regarding societal pressures and systemic challenges have remained consistent, there have been significant changes in the political and social landscape over recent years, particularly with the rise of anti-

immigrant rhetoric (Noe-Bustamante et al., 2021; Almeida et al., 2016). This evolving context may affect the current relevance of the data, as the pressures facing immigrant communities have intensified. Nonetheless, the demographic trends of the Latine population, which has grown significantly since the data was collected, ensure that the findings remain important for understanding this rapidly expanding group (Nadeem, 2022).

Another limitation relates to the sample size. With 269 participants, evenly split between 134 women and 135 men, the sample may not be adequately powered to detect small effect sizes.

The omission of legal status as a variable also constrains the study's scope. Immigration status, whether documented or undocumented, plays a crucial role in shaping the experiences of acculturative stress and IPV. Including this variable could have provided a more nuanced understanding of how legal status interacts with stress and violence dynamics. Future research should address this gap by integrating immigration status as a key factor in understanding IPV experiences among immigrant populations (Levine & Peffer, 2012).

The reliance on self-reported data is another inherent limitation. Participants may underreport their experiences of IPV due to stigma, fear, or recall bias, where individuals may not accurately remember or may minimize sensitive information (Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2012). Perpetrators may also downplay or justify their actions, and victims, especially those still living with their abusers, may not feel comfortable fully disclosing their experiences. With that limitation in mind, it is important to consider that an Audio Computer-Assisted Self-Interviewing (A-CASI) is considered one of the best methods in terms of reporting IPV.

Lastly, translating survey data from Spanish to English posed another potential limitation. Subtle nuances in language could have impacted participants' responses, leading to variations in the interpretation of questions. Language barriers may also influence the accuracy and depth of responses, especially in the context of complex experiences like IPV and acculturative stress.

The study possesses several notable strengths that enhance its robustness and contribute to a deeper understanding. One key strength is the equal gender representation in the sample, with both men and women equally represented. This is particularly important because many studies on IPV focus primarily on women, often excluding male perspectives.

Another significant strength is the comprehensive measurement of IPV, which includes multiple questions addressing emotional, physical, sexual, and stalking victimization and perpetration. By utilizing a detailed and multifaceted approach to measuring IPV, the study is able to examine the distinct effects of risk factors on each type of violence. For instance, emotional abuse has different correlates compared to physical violence, and this differentiation enhances the depth of the analysis.

Additionally, the study employs multiple measures of family and relationship norms, including assessments of the family environment, attitudes toward violence justification, and perceived causes of violence. The inclusion of various dimensions of family and relationship norms ensures that the study captures the complexity of these influences, rather than relying on a single measure.

A final strength of the study is the large number of qualitative interviews analyzed over 45 in total. This is particularly noteworthy, as qualitative studies often rely on smaller sample sizes due to the time-intensive nature of data collection and analysis. By including such a large number of interviews, the study gains greater credibility and allows for a broader range of

perspectives and experiences to be captured. This strength also supports the study's ability to draw more generalizable conclusions about the experiences of IPV among Latine immigrants.

In sum, the equal gender representation, comprehensive IPV measures, robust assessment of family and relationship norms, and large qualitative sample size all contribute to the strength of the study, allowing for a more thorough and nuanced exploration of IPV in this population. These features provide a strong foundation for the study's findings and offer valuable insights for future research and intervention efforts.

Conclusion

This research has provided valuable insights into the complexities of IPV among Latine immigrants, emphasizing the importance of understanding the role of acculturative stress, cultural shifts, and social support in IPV dynamics. By adopting a gender-neutral lens, this study highlights the prevalence of bidirectional violence, where both men and women engage in IPV perpetration and victimization. This finding challenges the traditional gendered framework, where men are often viewed solely as perpetrators and women as victims. In this sample, 64% of participants experienced both victimization and perpetration, underscoring the need for a more inclusive understanding of IPV, as supported by other studies showing high rates of bidirectional violence in similar populations (Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2012).

The research underscores the pivotal role of acculturative stress in shaping IPV experiences, where stressors such as language barriers, discrimination, and conflicting cultural expectations exacerbate tensions in relationships. Both qualitative and quantitative findings suggest that acculturative stress not only contributes to IPV but also hinders help-seeking behaviors, with individuals fearing legal repercussions, such as deportation, if they report violence. These stressors affect both genders, similarly, leading to a higher prevalence of bidirectional IPV, were power imbalances and stress lead to maladaptive coping behaviors, including violence.

Shifting socio-cultural norms, particularly those related to gender roles, also play a significant role in IPV within Latine immigrant communities. The research finds that changes in traditional gender expectations, especially when women take on breadwinner roles, can lead to heightened conflict and violence. This disruption of established power dynamics, often

compounded by stressors of cultural assimilation, suggests that IPV prevention strategies must address these gender role shifts and their impact on relationship dynamics.

Finally, the findings support the importance of social support in mitigating the effects of acculturative stress and reducing IPV. While social support did not directly prevent violence, it played a critical role in lowering stress levels, which in turn reduced IPV incidents. Strengthening social networks within immigrant communities, particularly through familial and community-based support systems, can provide a protective buffer against the negative impacts of acculturative stress and promote healthier coping mechanisms.

In conclusion, this study advances the understanding of IPV among Latine immigrants by highlighting the intertwined roles of acculturative stress, shifting socio-cultural norms, and social support. Future research should continue to explore these dynamics while incorporating longitudinal designs and larger sample sizes to strengthen the findings and develop more targeted interventions that address the unique needs of immigrant populations.

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Appendix A: Quantitative Measures

IPV Measures

Emotional IPV victimization

1. My partner prevented me from doing things I wanted to do
2. My partner called me names
3. My partner ignored me or refused to speak to me
4. My partner accused me of paying too much attention to someone or something else
5. My partner told me I could not manage by myself
6. My partner became very upset with me because dinner, housework, or laundry was not ready when partner wanted it or was not done the way my partner thought it should be
7. My partner told me I was a bad parent or a bad lover
8. My partner compared me to others and said that I was not good enough
9. My partner talked badly about me to members of the community
10. My partner used my children to threaten me
11. My partner used my immigration status against me

Physical IPV victimization

1. My partner made me do something humiliating or degrading
2. My partner became physically hurtful when drinking
3. My partner beat me so badly I needed to seek help or should have sought medical help
4. My partner threatened to or did hit or throw something at me
5. My partner pushed, slapped, grabbed, kicked, choked or pulled my hair.
6. My partner used or threatened to use a knife, gun or other weapon

Sexual IPV victimization

1. My partner tried to get (me) pregnant when I did not want to
2. My partner refused to use a condom when I wanted to use them
3. My partner pressured me to have sex in a way that I didn't like or want

Stalking victimization

1. My partner checked up on me to make sure I was where I said I would be
2. My partner made unwanted phone calls, left me unwanted messages, emails or texts.
3. My partner followed me from a distance, or showed up at places when I didn't want them to be there.

Emotional IPV perpetration

1. I prevented my partner from doing things they wanted to do
2. I called my partner names
3. I ignored me or refused to speak to my partner
4. I accused my partner of paying too much attention to someone or something else
5. I told me my partner could not manage by themself
6. I became very upset with my partner because dinner, housework, or laundry was not ready when I wanted it or was not done the way I thought it should be
7. I told my partner that they a bad parent or a bad lover

8. I compared my partner to others and said that they were not good enough
9. I talked badly about my partner to members of the community
10. I used my partner's children to threaten me
11. I used my partner immigration status against them

Physical IPV perpetration

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3. I followed my partner from a distance, or showed up at places when they didn't want me to be there.

Acculturative Stress Measures

Discrimination Scale

Discrimination Experiences: (Adapted from Díaz, 1998)				
	Never	Once/ Twice	Several times	Many times
1. About how many times have you been verbally insulted because you are Latino?	1	2	3	4
2. About how many times have you been hit or beaten because you are Latino?	1	2	3	4
3. About how many times have you been treated as inferior because you are Latino?	1	2	3	4
4. About how many times have you been discriminated against at work/school because you are Latino?	1	2	3	4
5. About how many times have you been bothered by the police because you are Latino?	1	2	3	4
6. About how many times have you been made to feel uncomfortable in a public place or stores because you are Latino?	1	2	3	4
7. About how many times have you been treated badly in a medical setting because you are Latino?	1	2	3	4

Acculturative Stress Scale

The following questions ask about any stress you may have experienced in different situations because of being (Hispanic/Latino).

Response Options:
1 Extremely Stressful 2 Very Stressful 3 Somewhat Stressful 4 Not very stressful 5 Not at all Stressful

1. It bothers me that my close family members do not understand my new values.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Close family members and I have conflicting expectations about my future.	1	2	3	4	5
3. People think I am unsociable when, in fact, I have trouble communicating in English.	1	2	3	4	5
4. It bothers me when people pressure me to assimilate or live the Anglo-American way.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I have more barriers to overcome than most people.	1	2	3	4	5

Acculturation: Language proficiency

Acculturation (Adapted from Marin et al. 1987) The following questions ask about what language (Spanish/English) you use in different situations. Response Options:					
	1	2	3	4	5
1. In general, what language(s) do you speak?	Only Spanish	Spanish better than English	Both equally	English better than Spanish	English Only
2. In general, what language(s) do you read?	Only Spanish	Spanish better than English	Both equally	English better than Spanish	English Only
3. What was the language(s) you used when you were very young?	Only Spanish	Spanish better than English	Both equally	English better than Spanish	English Only
4. What language(s) do you usually speak at home?	Only Spanish	Spanish better than English	Both equally	English better than Spanish	English Only
5. In which language(s) do you usually think?	Only Spanish	Spanish better than English	Both equally	English better than Spanish	English Only
6. What language(s) do you usually speak with your friends?	Only Spanish	Spanish better than English	Both equally	English better than Spanish	English Only
7. In general, in what language(s) are the T.V. and radio programs you prefer to watch and listen to?	Only Spanish	Spanish better than English	Both equally	English better than Spanish	English Only
8. In general, in what language(s) is the music you prefer to listen to?	Only Spanish	Spanish better than English	Both equally	English better than Spanish	English Only
9. Your close friends are:	All Latinos	More Latinos than Anglos	Equally	More Anglos than Latinos	All Anglos
10. The persons you visit or who visit you are:	All Latinos	More Latinos than Anglos	Equally	More Anglos than Latinos	All Anglos

Social Support Measures

Social Cohesion and Trust

How much do you agree that:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. People around here are willing to help their neighbors	1	2	3	4
2. This is a close-knit neighborhood	1	2	3	4
3. People in this neighborhood can be trusted	1	2	3	4
4. People in this neighborhood generally don't get along with each other	1	2	3	4
5. People in this neighborhood do not share the same values	1	2	3	4

Reciprocal Exchange

How often do you and people in your neighborhood:	Often	Sometimes	Not Usually	Never
1. Do favors for each other?	1	2	3	4
2. Ask each other advice about personal things such as child rearing or job openings?	1	2	3	4
3. Visit each other's homes or on the street?	1	2	3	4
4. Watch over others' property?	1	2	3	4

Family and Relationship Norms Measures

Family Environment Scale

	Statement
1	In times of crisis we can cope better with the support of others*
2	Each one is accepted for who they are*
3	We avoid talking about our fears, feelings, worries or sadness
4	There are many bad feelings within the family or we don't get along
5	Making decisions is a problem for our family
6	We are capable of deciding how to resolve our problems*

1-Strongly Agree 2-Agree 3-Disagree 4-Strongly Disagree

Family and Gender Norms

1	The wife should have the primary responsibility of taking care of the home and the children	True	False
2	In a marriage, the husband should take the initiative in making decisions	True	False
3	Women should worry more about their obligation of raising children and taking care of the home than with their careers or professional aspirations	True	False
4	As family leader, the husband should have more responsibility than the wife with the family's financial plans	True	False
5	Religious instruction for the children is the mother's special responsibility	True	False
6.	Boys should not be allowed to play with dolls or other toys for girls	True	False
7.	Parents should keep a stricter control over their daughters than their sons	True	False
8.	A wife should never contradict her husband in public	True	False
9.	No matter what people say, women like dominant men	True	False
10.	I would be more comfortable with a male boss than a female boss	True	False
11.	A man would lose respect if he talked about his problems	True	False

Violence Cause Scale

	Statement
1	Partners abuse women to ease their frustrations
2	Men don't have the intention of using force (like holding) a woman to have sex but they can't help it sometimes
3	Some women provoke their partners into being abusive
4	Many times a woman is raped because she did not say "no" clearly
5	If they don't have sex with their girlfriends, men will look for someone else to have sex

1-Strongly Agree 2-Agree 3-Disagree 4-Strongly Disagree

Violence Justification Scale

A man hitting his partner is justified if:

1. She disobeys him? Yes No
2.. If she refused to have sex with him? Yes No
3. If she asks if he has other engagements? Yes No
4.. If he suspects that she is unfaithful? Yes No

Appendix B: Qualitative Interview Guide and Codebook

Introduction: Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. I want to assure you that anything you tell me today will be kept confidential and no one will know what you have told me. What we want to do in this interview is to get an idea of relationships in Langley Park. I have a couple of questions I want to ask you. You can feel free to answer any of them that you want to, and you can also ask me questions as well. We can stop this interview at any time. Do you have any questions before we start?

1. When you think about people in a romantic relationship as a 'couple', how would you describe a 'good relationship'? How can you tell when a couple has a good relationship?

2. Now on the other hand, how would you describe a bad relationship? What are words that are used to describe a bad relationship? How can you tell when a couple has a violent or abusive relationship?

3. How do you know when arguing between a couple turns into what you would consider 'domestic violence'? How does fighting start in a relationship?

4. In your neighborhood, do you think violence between men and women (adults and teenagers) is a serious problem?

5. Thinking about your friends and family in Langley Park, how many have been in a violent relationship? How do you know this?

6. Does experiencing violence growing up in a family affect how a person sees their romantic relationship?

7. In Langley Park, why do you think couples fight? What are major sources of stress for couples that lead to couple's arguing?

8. In your experience have you found that gender roles between men and women are a source of stress for couples? Have you found this to lead to couple's arguing?

9. How do they fight (yelling, name calling, physical, sexual)?

10. What are some of things women do to avoid getting into a fight with their partner? What do you think works? What are some things that don't work?

11. How do women talk about the men in LP? Do you think men and women want the same thing in a relationship?

12. Let's talk about the community again. Do you think Latino partners and families fight more in LP than they do in other places? IF YES: Why? What's going on? IF NO: Is there anything about living in LP that would make partners and families fight? [IF THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND, PROBE WITH: Things like money problems, or they don't have friends…IF RESPONDENTS NOD OR AGREE, ASK: And are these things that happen more in Langley Park? *[Looking for community characteristics]*

Comparison to Home Country/Gender Dynamics

13. Is growing up in [home country] any different for women than growing up here in LP? IF YES: In what way?

14. Do women in [home country] experience more or less violence than they do here in LP? Or is it about the same? IF MORE, OR LESS: In what way?

15. When Latina women from [home country] first arrive in the U.S., how are they treated? [PROBE: With respect? Do men try to take advantage of them? Or?] *[looking for language barriers, isolation, controlled by male partners, vulnerability]*

16. When families or couples fight, does it usually happen at particular times during the day? Month? Year? Why? [PROBE: What is it like at home when a father and mother both come home from work? What is dinnertime/the evening like? *[we have been told that a lot of conflict emerges during dinnertime]*

17. Is there a difference in the kind of violence that happens between teenage couples and older couples? IF YES: What is the difference? What about between adult couples who are married or not married? *[looking for business/social contract relationships]*

18. We know that asking people about violence in their relationship is difficult. How would you ask a friend if she was being abused? Are there certain words that should be used? Are there certain words that should not be used?

Id	Parent Id	Title	Description
1		**CommunityCapacity**	
2	1	AddressGBV	what are things being done to address GBV in community
3	1	BarrierstoAddress	what are challenges/barriers to addressing GBV
4	1	Channels	channels to reach LP residents with programs
5	1	FirstStep	what needs to happen first before GBV is addressed
6	1	GBVPriority	where does GBV fall on priority list for LP residents
7	1	HelpAwareness	Awareness (or lack thereof) about resources/help/support around GBV
8	1	LegalExp	experience with court/legal system for GBV
9	1	RaiseAware	what can be done to raise awareness
10	1	ResidentsDo	what can community members do to address GBV
11	1	ServiceExp	experience with GBV services in LP
12		CommunityNeighborhood	Community and neighborhood factors
13	12	CNDelYouth	Delinquent youth groups
14	12	CNDemoFac	Demographic factors
15	12	CNEconFac	Economic factors
16	12	CNFeelComm	Sense of community/problem'-'solving capacity
17	12	CNFight	How often you hear people fighting in your community/different than home country/reasons
18	12	CNGBVNorm	Do you think these fights are normal part of life
19	12	CNGBVServ	Perceptions of services that limit their use
20	12	CNIneqOpp	Inequality/opportunities
21	12	Gang	reporting knowledge/contact with gangs in Langley Park
22	12	PolicePerc	What is perception of police in community/how different from home
23	12	Religion	mention of religion
24	12	WhoTrust	Who are people you trust in the community/how different from home
25	12	YouthVio	Youth violence
26		**FamilyHousehold**	
27	26	DisagreeHome	What happens when people disagree in family/household/romantic
28	26	FamEconStress	Family economic stressor
29	26	FamStress	Family stress and family relationships that add stress to several factors
30	26	HFamSep	Household/family separation
31	26	HFCohesion	Household/family cohesion
32	26	HFDemoFac	Household/family demographic factors
33	26	HFGBVNorm	Household/family gender'-'based violence norms
34	26	HFMaleControl	Household/family male control and decision'-'making
35	26	HFSeqFac	Household/family sequential migration
36	26	HFStructFunc	Household/family structure and functioning

37	26	Infidelity	infidelity general mention
38	26	LivingCondStress	Stressors caused by living conditions
39	26	Lovebombing	The action of showering another person with attention or objects to win them over
40	26	Machismo	
41	26	PartnerEcon	Partnership dynamics influenced by economic factors
42		**GenRole**	**Current gender role**
43		**HomeExp**	**Home country experiences**
44	43	HomeCountry	
45	44	HCElSalvador	
46	44	HCGuatemala	
47	44	HCHonduras	
48	43	HomeProb	Problems in home country
49	48	HomeProbLaw	Problems in home country with law
50	48	HomeProbSoc	Problems in home country with social services
51	43	HomeSocNorm	Home country social norms
52	51	HomeGenRole	Home country gender role/relationship norms
53	43	MissHome	Things missed from home country
54	43	NoMissHome	Things not missed from home country
55		**Immigration**	**Immigration to the US**
56	55	ChallUS	Experiences in the US
57	55	HowUS	How you came to the US
58	55	LikeLangley	Things you like about living in Langley Park
59	55	NoLikeLangley	Things you don't like about living in Langley Park
60	55	Transition	changes experienced upon arriving to LP/US
61	55	TransStressor	Transition stressors
62	55	Trip	details of experiences traveling to the US
63	55	WhenUSA	
64	55	WhoKnowUS	Who did you know in the US when you got here
65	55	WhyUS	Why you came to the US
66		**LatinosUS**	**How is it being a Latino in the US**
67	66	HomeDiffHome	How is it different being Latino man/woman in US than in home country
68	66	HowEasyUS	How is it easier being a Latino man or woman in US
69	66	HowHardUS	How is it harder being a Latino man or woman in US
70	66	Rules	What are rules to being a man/woman in your family/household/romantic
71		**USExperiences**	
72	71	Alcohol	Alcohol US
73	71	PoliceCompare	What is perception of police in community/how different from home
74	71	ResRel	occurrence of resilience relationships/purposeful partnering
75	71	SubstanceUse	Drug/alcohol use
76	71	USLegal	Experience with US Legal system

77	71	USWomanRights	women’s rights in US/legal'-'law enforcement for GBV
78	71	USWomanStatus	The autonomy and rights of a woman in the US
79	71	WhereHelpUS	Where help is availble in the US
80	71	WhyGBVLatinos	why does GBV happen among Latino couples
81	71	WhyStayTogether	Why stay together in GBV relationship
82	71	WomanJob	dynamics between couples with differential employment status
83		**Violence**	**Violence**
84	83	Abuse	abuse other than GBV
85	83	CopingMech	Coping mechanisms for GBV
86	83	EmotBarriers	Emotional barriers or internal barries that prohibit addressing GBV
87	83	Femicide	Killing or death of woman related to GBV
88	83	GBV	Experience with GBV, either as victim or witness
89	83	GBV Type	Types of GBV
90	89	Emotional Violence	
91	89	Physical Violence	
92	89	Sexual Violence	
93	89	Stalking	
94	83	GBVAdvice	If friend came to you and told you being beaten, what advice?
95	83	GBVCause	Causes of GBV
96	95	GBVCauseEcon	Economic stressors as a cause of GBV
97	95	GBVCauseInfid	Infidelity as a cause for GBV
98	83	GBVCompare	comparison of GBV in US to GBV in home country
99	98	GBVDifferent	frequency/reasons for GBV different in US/home country
100	83	GBVEconBarrier	economics as barrier to seeking help
101	83	GBVFear	Fear of GBV
102	83	GBVFreq	Frequency of GBV
103	83	GBVHelp	Where would you tell your friend to get help
104	83	GBVHomeCountry	GBV in Home country
105	104	HomeGBVExp	Home country GBV experiences
106	104	HomeGBVNorm	Home country gender'-'based violence norms
107	104	HomeWomanRights	women’s rights in country/legal'-'law enforcement for GBV
108	83	GBVIllegal	Being undocumented as barrier to seeking help
109	83	GBVImpact	Impact of GBV
110	83	GBVLatinosCommon	is GBV a common occurrence in Latino couples (in LP)
111	83	GBVLP	heard about abuse in relationship in LP/what is happening
112	83	GBVStress	Stress due to GBV
113	83	GenViolence	Generational violence experienced or witnessed
114	83	PerceiveGBV	do people perceive GBV to be a problem
115	83	RelationshipDyn	Emotional partnership dynamics between couples
116	83	SelfEsteem	Positive or negative feelings about oneself in relation to GBV

Codebook