Understanding Domestic Violence

Theories, Challenges, and Remedies

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Chapter Nine

Understanding Domestic Violence within a Latino/Hispanic/Latinx Context

Environmental, Cultural, and Ecological Mapping as a Culturally Relevant Assessment Tool

Caroline S. Clauss-Ehlers, Fred Millán, and Clare Jinzhao Zhao

INTRODUCTION

Latinos/Hispanics/Latinx[1] currently comprise the largest minority in the United States (U.S.), estimated at 57.5 million (data reflects July 1, 2015, to July 1, 2016; U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). In addition, the report *Fulfilling America's Future: Latinas in the U.S.*, 2015 (Gándara & The White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics, 2015) states that "One in five women in the U.S. is a Latina" (p. 7). Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities residing in the U.S. include people originating from twenty-two countries. Often connected through a love of the Spanish language, although not all Spanish speakers in the U.S. are Latino/Hispanic/Latinx, 35.8 million persons ages five years and older speak Spanish at home (Krogstad, Stepler, & Lopez, 2015). As such, Latinos have a significant impact on the United States' increasingly heterogeneous society.

It is also important to note the heterogeneity within Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities. Write Javier and Camacho-Gingerich (2004): "In the United States 'Latino' and 'Hispanic' are terms frequently used to identify an individual whose place of origin, either by birth or inherited culture, is a Latin American country or Spain. Many have attempted to group such a

diverse people under a single term or 'ethnic' category. Until recently many government agencies, educational and business institutions were using the term 'Hispanic' as a racial category. Some still do. They do not take into consideration the historical, geographical, racial, socio-economic, educational, linguistic, religious and other cultural factors that differentiate these groups of individuals not only from one country of origin to another but within the same country" (pp. 66–67).

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence is prevalent across demographic variables that include race, ethnicity, social class, and sexual orientation (American Psychological Association, 2017). Data at the end of the twentieth century, reported in population reports, found that approximately one-third of women worldwide suffer from intimate partner violence (IPV) or are physically/sexually abused by a family member (Heise, Ellsberg, & Gottemoeller, 1999a, 1999b). In the United States, at the recent turn of the twenty-first century, a national sample showed that approximately one quarter of women reported experiencing an act of violence by an intimate partner during their lifetime that included rape, physical assault, and stalking (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000a). Among women, 1.8 million reported being physically or sexually assaulted by current or former partners, and more than a million reported being stalked each year (Rennison & Planty, 2003; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000b). These startling figures call for both professional attention and that of society as a whole.

With regard to the nature of the violent acts that women reported and the length of time over which they occurred, Murdaugh, Hunt, Sowel, and Santana (2004) reported that violent acts included pushing, grabbing, beating, punching, and marital rape. These authors found that three-quarters of women reported victimization during the past 12 months. Forty-three percent of respondents reported having experienced physical violence often during the past year and shared that they were harmed, on average, six times per year (Murdaugh et al., 2004). Almost one-fifth (17%) of the women in the Murdaugh et al. (2004) study reported having been abused for 10 years or more. Similarly, Carcedo and Sagot (2002) found that between 60 and 78% of all female homicides were committed by a partner, ex-partner, or male relative.

In more recent findings, the *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010–2012 State Report*, published by the Division of Violence Prevention of the National Center for Injury and Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Smith et al., 2017), outlined "key findings for combined years 2010–2012 (average annual estimates)" in its executive summary (p. 1). With regard to prevalence data related to violence reported by Latina/Hispanic women the report indicated

that in the U.S.: "26.9% of Hispanic women . . . experienced some form of contact SV [e.g., sexual violence] during their lifetime"; "1 in 7 Hispanic (14.5%) women . . . experienced stalking at some point in their lives"; and "nationally, . . . 34.4% of Hispanic women . . . experienced contact SV, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime" (p. 3).

The purpose of this chapter is to explore domestic violence in Latino/ Hispanic/Latinx communities within the context of reference group identities such as culture, ethnicity, social class, gender, and sexual orientation (American Psychological Association, 2017). Guzman (2001) reported that Latinos living in the United States suffer disproportionately from poverty and have lower levels of educational attainment in comparison to non-Latinos. While a lack of financial support is commonly identified as a domestic violence risk factor, after controlling socioeconomic variables such as education and income, studies have often found that IPV does not occur more frequently among Latinos than among non-Latino Whites or African Americans (Aldarondo, Kantor, & Jasinski, 1994; McFarlane, Parker, Soeken, Silva, & Reed, 1999; Sorenson & Telles, 1991; Straus, Gelles, & Smith, 1990; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000b; Torres, 1991; Moracco, Hilton, Hodges, & Frasier, 2005). However, reports indicate that domestic violence tends to be reported more frequently in Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities than others (Moracco, Hilton, Hodges, & Frasier, 2005). Further, Sorenson and Telles (1991) indicated that U.S.-born Latinos reported higher rates of IPV than Latinos who immigrated to the United States. Despite existing research that demonstrates the negative impact that domestic violence has among Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities, as with other groups, we were surprised by the dearth of existing studies that address this critical topic. Our review of the status of research on domestic violence in Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities from 2004–2017, conducted on September 17, 2017, using an advanced PsychINFO search of PsychARTICLESJournals using the focus option with mapping terms "Latinos/Latinas" and "domestic violence" identified a mere 47 scholarly works focused on this topic. Of these, four works were authored or edited books, 29 were journal articles, and 14 were dissertations. This chapter discusses existing research and implications for diverse models of practice and intervention. It concludes with a framework that presents a culturally relevant way to assess domestic violence situations in Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities as well as a call to the profession to engage in research, teaching, and practice in this area.

CULTURAL CONCEPTIONS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

As researchers examine how socioeconomic factors, cultural norms, immigration status, sexual orientation, and acculturation influence domestic violence, it appears that the very definition of the term varies among communities. For instance, many Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities tend to include both partner and intergenerational violence in their definition, whereas non-Hispanic American couples often limit their definition to intimate partners only (Aldarondo, Kantor, & Jasinski, 2002; Bauer, Rodriguez, Quiroga, & Flores-Ortiz, 2000; Caetano, Cunradi, Clark, & Schafer, 2000; Gabler, Stern, & Miserandino, 1998; Kantor, Jasinski, & Aldarondo, 1994; McFarlane et al., 1999; Pan, Daley, Rivera, Williams, Lingle, & Reznik, 2006; Perilla, Bakeman, & Rorris, 1994; Rodriguez, 1999; West, Kandor, & Jasinski, 1998). The broader definition of domestic violence among Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities may reflect a cultural approach that is more collectively focused as opposed to one that is individualistic in nature (Clauss-Ehlers, 2008; Vazquez & Clauss-Ehlers, 2005). Further, while mainstream American culture may view domestic violence in terms of physical, verbal, emotional, sexual, and spiritual abuse, Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities may generally focus on physical violence (Pan et al., 2006).

Across communities, an avoidance of involving law enforcement results in a decreased prevalence rate. Bograd (1999) suggests that domestic violence is not a monolithic phenomenon, stating that "intersectionalities color the meaning and nature of domestic violence, how it is experienced by self and responded to by others, how personal and social consequences are represented, and how and whether escape and safety can be obtained" (p. 276). The idea here is that patterns of violence may vary from the more widely recognized physical abuse to its less visible forms. An understanding of the seriousness of violence can also differ based on personal perceptions as well as the influence of family and community members. Understanding domestic violence from a cultural framework proposes that sociocultural variables and structural inequalities (i.e., inequalities across race, gender, and social class) be understood in the context of the individual's experience.

Gender Roles

In Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities, as in others, there may be differing cultural scripts for men and women. Among Latinos, understanding the cultural concept of machismo is vital to understanding distinctive traditional gender role expectations. Villereal and Cavazos (2005) note that machismo can be positive in the form of taking care of the family, showing valor among peers, working hard to support one's family, and taking pride in raising one's children. On the other side of the equation, negative aspects of machismo

may be associated with violence toward women and other men, alcoholism, and having sexual partners other than one's wife. Related beliefs include a focus on male dominance, the value of family privacy, and the centrality of family unity. Such values may collectively contribute to Latinas' victimization or prevent them from leaving abusive partners (Bauer et al., 2000; Jasinski, 1998; Perilla et al., 1994).

Vandello and Cohen's (2003) research supports this contention. Their research explores the notion of "honor as a cultural syndrome" (Triandis, 1994, p. 997) or the extent to which cultures value honor in terms of loyalty and generosity, as well as in terms of the man's reputation as being tough and a provider. Vandello and Cohen (2003) describe how the role for women in cultures of honor focuses on their not engaging in behaviors that might decrease the family's honor (e.g., adultery). Culture of honor refers to those cultures where interpersonal relationships are organized around status, precedence, and reputation. Cultures of honor tend to value generosity, hospitality, and loyalty, with different honor norms applied for males and females. In many Latino/Hispanic/Latinx cultures, for instance, traditional gender roles and strong familism (i.e., focus and commitment to family) characterize interpersonal and familial relationships. Males may play a dominant role and be expected to be tough and work hard to support their families. For females, behaviors may be seen as vital to determining the family's reputation. Women in cultures of honor may be socialized to be nurturing and submissive with the thought that they are required to keep their virginity before marriage and maintain silence about violence that occurs within the household (Vandello & Cohen, 2003, p. 998).

Vandello and Cohen (2003) explore three hypotheses: "(a) female infidelity will cause greater damage to a male's reputation, (b) this reputation can be partially restored through the use of violence, and (c) women are more often expected to remain loyal in the face of such violence" (p. 997). Their study included a sample of Brazilian and U.S. students who completed questionnaires that presented scenarios involving married couples. In the first scenario, the wife was depicted either as being unfaithful by having an affair that neighbors were aware of or as being faithful. In the second scenario, the husband's response to his wife having an affair was to either yell at her, yell and hit her, do nothing, or ask for a divorce. Study participants rated the husband based on two dimensions of honor: "trustworthiness or good character (trustworthy/untrustworthy, reliable/unreliable, selfish/unselfish, reasonable/unreasonable, good person/bad person, smart/dumb) and strength or manliness (masculine/feminine, strong/weak, cowardly/courageous, manly/not manly, timid/self-confident, macho/not macho, tough/wimpy, competent/incompetent, submissive/not submissive)" (Vandello & Cohen, 2003, pp. 1000–1001). Study findings supported the culture of honor interpretation in that culture influenced perceptions about the man who hit his wife upon

learning about her affair. The authors conclude: "A man was seen as less honorable (trustworthy, manly) if his wife had an affair. . . . However, this was particularly the case for the culture of honor, where the woman's infidelity seemed to reflect more negatively upon the man" (Vandello & Cohen, 2003, p. 1002).

Within this belief system, Latinas may be generally socialized to be nurturing and submissive, while men may be encouraged to play a dominant role. Thus men and women have distinct ways to maintain honor. *Marianismo* is the cultural counterpart to machismo for Latinas that refers to women's cultural and gender roles whereby they sacrifice their own needs and desires, putting those of family before their own (Gil & Vazquez, 1996; Kessler, McGonagle, & Zhao, 1994; Vazquez & Clauss-Ehlers, 2005). As described by Gil and Vazquez (1996), key components of *marianismo* include self-sacrifice, submissiveness to men, and being passive. While *marianismo* provides women with a valued role within their cultural context, this position is devalued through a domestic violence experience where the woman suffers partner abuse.

Cultural scripts of *machismo* and *marianismo* can be further understood in the context of research findings about views of domestic violence among Latinos and Latinas (Goddard & Wierzbicka, 2004). For instance, in their study with primarily immigrant participants, Moracco et al. (2005) found that both men and women believed it was wrong for a man to hit his partner even if he was angry; yet when it came to women hitting men when they were angry, men had a stronger objection than the women. This finding is consistent with the Pan et al. (2006) study conducted by staff involved with the Ahimsa for Safe Families Project. This project provided support for immigrant and refugee families affected by domestic violence in San Diego. Much of their work included outreach with Latino, Somali, and Vietnamese communities. Key issues identified by Pan et al. (2006) focused on gender equity issues (e.g., men could have more than one woman and women should accept this); economic stress; and immigration status (e.g., immigration status and threat of deportation being used as a way to control the women). Taken together, these studies have implications for rigid sex role differentiation.

On the other hand, acculturation processes also allow us to consider how traditional gender roles might support greater gender equity (Hancock & Siu, 2009). For instance, Hancock and Siu (2009) found an increased awareness among Latinos that women's contribution to the family in the domestic realm (e.g., cooking and cleaning) is vital and respectful. Other research indicates that acculturation and a bicultural experience have led to women's increased employment outside the home as their families adjust to life in the United States (Vazquez & Gil, 2006; Vazquez & Clauss-Ehlers, 2005).

Issues of intimate partner violence (IPV) are further complicated for diverse and multifaceted Latina LGBTQ+ communities because of stressors

created by homophobia and heterosexism. Sexual minority stress (SMS) includes distal experiences of violence, harassment, and discrimination, and proximal stressors related to concealment of sexual identity and negative feelings about one's self as a sexual minority individual (Meyer, 2003).

CAUSES

Cultural Scripts

An understanding of how cultural scripts can influence domestic violence provides a base from which to examine causative factors (Goddard & Wierzbicka, 2004). The literature indicates that Latino men and women hold different perceptions about the causes of IPV (Moracco et al., 2005). Latino men rated a lack of understanding or communication between couples as the primary reason for IPV, followed by jealousy, substance use, and male control (i.e., the male partner controlling the female partner; Moracco et al., 2005). In contrast, Latinas identified alcohol and drugs as the primary cause of domestic violence, followed by a lack of understanding or communication, male control, and jealousy (Moracco et al., 2005).

In another study, Murdaugh et al. (2004) found that Latinas reported jealousy and possessiveness, alcohol and drug use, as well as worrying about money and employment as top causes for abuse. Jealousy arising from infidelity or suspected adultery was a factor in IPV within Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities. Male control or possessiveness, as expected in traditional gender roles, was another contributing factor to domestic violence among Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities (Moracco et al., 2005; Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005). Heise and Ellsberg (2001) noted that in many cultures, violence against women is often justified when women do not follow traditional gender roles or norms.

Vandello and Cohen (2003) regard "honor" as having a meaning other than virtue and being connected to status, precedence, and reputation. As described above, these authors contend that several cultures are recognized as "cultures of honor," Latino/Hispanic/Latinx cultures being among them. Infidelity in many cultures is stigmatized and discouraged around the world. However, in a culture of honor, such as in Latino communities, even the suspected adultery of the woman is believed to harm her male partner. The potential damage to reputation that can come from the woman's infidelity may provide an eventual rationale for the husband's choice to use physical violence (Vandello & Cohen, 2003).

Immigration Status

Immigration status is another significant stressor that puts Latinas at risk for domestic violence (Perilla et al., 1994). Here the research contends that cultural factors are intertwined with structural inequities. For instance, among immigrant families, substantial stress combined with unemployment and economic hardship have been found to contribute to domestic violence situations within Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities (Cunradi, Caetano, & Schafer, 2002). Immigrant women without the family support and social networks they had in their countries of origin may largely depend upon their abusive partners for economic support (Gorton & Van Hightower, 1999). Although aware of it being illegal for their partners to beat them, fear of deportation may prevent Latinas from seeking out support from law enforcement and human service agencies. Research has also indicated that many undocumented immigrant women fear involving authorities such as the police due to experiences in their home countries (e.g., if they were subject to or feared political reprisal) or racism experienced in the United States (Bauer et al., 2000; Clauss-Ehlers, Acosta, & Weist, 2004; McFarlane et al., 1999).

Perceptions of Seriousness

Research indicates that Latino men and women differ in whether they perceived domestic violence as a problem. Moracco et al. (2005) interviewed 100 recent Latino immigrants in a rural North Carolina county, investigating knowledge and attitudes about intimate partner violence. This study found that men and women agreed that domestic violence had a long-term detrimental impact on children (Moracco et al., 2005). However, results suggested that male participants tended to believe that the children were often unaware the violent incidents had occurred, while the women in the study confirmed that their children knew what was going on in the household. These researchers concluded that this distinction was partially due to differing parental roles where mothers serve as primary caregivers, and fathers have respectively less direct contact with their children. In addition, children who witness a parent or close relative experience domestic violence receive a confusing message about relationships and intimacy. Exposure to domestic violence may remain with children with regard to their own gender-role expectations as well as their approach to relationships during childhood and later in life (Moracco et al., 2005).

Stressors Created by Homophobia and Heterosexism

Issues of IPV are further complicated for diverse and multifaceted Latina LGBTQ+ communities because of stressors created by homophobia and heterosexism. Sexual minority stress (SMS) includes distal experiences of

violence, harassment, and discrimination, and proximal stressors related to concealment of sexual identity and negative feelings about one's self as a sexual minority individual (Meyer, 2003). LGBTQ+ people may face barriers to seeking help that are unique to their sexual orientation and gender identity. These include:

- "Legal definitions of domestic violence that exclude same-sex couples
- Dangers of 'outing' oneself when seeking help and the risk of rejection and isolation from family, friends, and society
- The lack of, or survivors not knowing about, LGBT-specific or LGBT-friendly assistance resources
- Potential homophobia from staff of service providers or from non-LGBT survivors of IPV and IPSA with whom they may interact
- Low levels of confidence in the sensitivity and effectiveness of law enforcement officials and courts for LGBT people" (Brown & Herman, 2015, p. 3)

Lesbians of color also face two types of pressure that may be serious stressors in their lives. The first is from their cultural and ethnic norms, for example, if the internalized cultural norm for "happiness" is marriage to a man then a Latina lesbian must negotiate what it means not to meet that ideal. The second is the batterers' use of cultural/racial identity as a means of manipulation. If a Latina lesbian is experiencing IPV, her partner may use her past experiences of racism, internalized homophobia, and societal stereotypes to control her and maintain her fear. For example, if the abusive partner uses the societal stereotype that all Latino/Hispanic/Latinx are undocumented, the Latina may believe she has no rights—even if she is in the United States legally (Casa de Esperanza, 2008). Latinas may also experience discriminatory treatment from their Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities and families, particularly when they are trying to "come out" and be open about their sexuality, or when engaging in forms of social and political organizing.

Application of a Cross-Cultural Perspective

An examination and application of a cross-cultural perspective to domestic violence provides a foundation from which to compare and contrast existing models in the domestic violence treatment literature. To this end, the following paragraphs discuss Duluth/feminist, and environmental/cultural/ecological models. This discussion is followed by a clinical case that illustrates relevant cultural and treatment approaches when working with a Latino/Hispanic/Latinx family experiencing domestic violence. We conclude with a professional call to action that proposes a comprehensive research, training,

and practice agenda to increase responsiveness to domestic violence within Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities.

DULUTH MODEL/FEMINIST MODELS

Historically, much of the domestic violence treatment literature has been grounded in a Western middle-class perspective that has been universally applied to all populations (Perrilla, Lavizzo, & Ibañez, 2007). A common theoretical foundation for these treatment programs has been the Duluth model that is based upon feminist theory and posits domestic violence as a function of patriarchal structure where men exert control over women (Pence & Paymar, 1993; Wray, Hoyt, & Gerstle, 2013). More specifically, programs based on the Duluth model view battering "as a pattern of actions used to intentionally control or dominate an intimate partner" and will actively work to "change societal conditions that support men's use of tactics of power and control over women" (Domestic Abuse Prevention Programs, n.d.).

Perilla et al. (2007) argue that the conceptualizations of domestic violence proposed by models like the Duluth model are not only ineffectual because they do not account for the norms and values of everyone involved, but also that they may actually contribute to stress and potentially create a re-victimization situation for Latinas experiencing domestic violence as well as for their children. The goal of dividing the family and making the woman equal to the man may not necessarily be therapeutic or productive to Latino/Hispanic/Latinx families who may see this as contrary to their own values. This has generated reluctance among some Latinas to seek help from mainstream domestic violence organizations because of the programmatic emphasis on separating women from their husbands and promoting living independently (Lown & Vega, 2003; Menjivar & Salcedo, 2002; Murdaugh, Rivera, Williams, Lingle, & Reznik, 2004; Yoshioka & Choi, 2005).

Such strong cultural and familial values can potentially be pathologized within these models if the entire context is not considered and there is an overinvestment in individualism. The *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010–2012 State Report* (Smith et al., 2017) addresses the need for culturally adaptive domestic violence prevention efforts among diverse groups. The report states: "Sexual and intimate partner violence prevention programming may differ for different audiences, and should be culturally relevant and tailored to specific groups and evaluated within those groups. For example, there may need to be specific, culturally informed prevention program development and implementation for historically marginalized groups, such as racial/ethnic minorities, individuals who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning (LGBTQ), individuals with disabilities, and other marginalized groups" (Smith et al., 2017, p. 204).

COMMUNITY-BASED INTERVENTION MODELS IN WORK WITH DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

More recent literature looks to contextualize domestic violence within a social-emotional-political context to understand the many variables that have an impact on the behaviors of those involved. This has been described as a social structural (Hancock & Ames, 2008; Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005) and ecological approach to domestic violence (Ramirez Hernandez, 2002). Stressors associated with domestic violence that reside in the social, political, and economic environments of low-income, newly arrived immigrants suggest the utility of environmental interventions (Hancock & Ames, 2008). Sokoloff and Dupont (2005) argue that factors such as age, employment status, residence, poverty, social embeddedness, and isolation combine to explain rates of abuse more than race or culture. They also describe the importance of not confusing patriarchy with culture but emphasize looking at how patriarchy operates differently in different cultures.

Perilla et al. (2007) view domestic violence as a violation of fundamental human rights that needs to be approached from a societal perspective. There is support that culturally relevant practice with immigrant populations requires both community-based and individually oriented interventions (Budde & Schene, 2004; Yoshioka, Gilbert, El-Bassel, & Baig-Amin, 2003).

The following presents several community-based intervention models for working with domestic violence within a Latino/Hispanic/Latinx context, including the role of the church, and opportunities for partnerships. This section is followed by a presentation of a clinical case composite (i.e., details reflect a combination of case experiences and also hypothetical information) that presents key issues highlighted throughout the chapter.

Many authors emphasize the need for ongoing community dialogue to engage, understand, and empower Latinos receiving services (Bonilla, Morrison, Norsigian, & Rosero, 2012; Cervantes & Cervantes, 1993; Pan, Daley, Rivera, Williams, Lingle, & Reznik, 2006; Perilla et al., 2007). Hancock and Ames aim to "build on Latino cultural and familial strengths to protect Latinas from abuse and help their partners stop the abuse" (2008, p. 625). This may present particular challenges for Latinos in rural areas that might have difficulty navigating the distance from service locations and who may experience an overall sense of isolation.

Models that Help the Victims

Caminar Latino (Perilla et al., 2007; Perilla et al., 2012) offers group treatments in separate programs for Latinos/Latinas and children whose home lives are affected by domestic violence. The model is "an integration of an ecological human rights framework, U.S. feminist therapy, theory from Lati-

no scholars and the voices of participants" (Perilla et al., 2012, p. 102). Authors reference the work of liberation psychology's Martín-Baró (1994) and Freire (1997, 1978) as the foundational theorists of their perspectives.

The *Caminar Latino* perspective challenges the service provider to engage in an ongoing dialogue with the community being served so that members can develop a critical awareness of their situation and learn how to write their own histories. There is a reciprocal learning process between community members and service providers that enriches both parties and meaningfully informs the treatment model that evolves from the interaction. Groups for women who have been victims are facilitated by women advocates who are considered participants and share equally as do other group members. The sharing of experiences and mutual support create the intervention. Additionally, *Caminar Latino* has a *Men's Program* (see below) and a number of group programs for the children of different ages from homes affected by domestic violence.

Bonilla et al. (2012) described another program where they conduct health education workshops with Latina immigrants based on participatory education and critical consciousness. Participants share their experiences, discuss the social and political structures that have an impact on the information they receive, and develop a body of knowledge that is directly relevant and useful for their lives.

Models that Treat the Batterers

Saez-Betancourt, Lam, and Nguyen (2008) affirm the benefits of participation in a batterers' program for Latino immigrant batterers. They also emphasize the need for community education about existing domestic violence services available to the Latino/Hispanic/Latinx community. Throughout, they discuss the importance of considering cultural norms and gender role expectations when developing treatment programs geared toward working with perpetrators of domestic violence.

In the *Caminar Latino Men's Program*, intervention is specifically geared to work with men who have battered their partners. The *Caminar Latino Men's Program* is a 24-week, state-licensed group that uses a two-level format. The first level is a 10-week curriculum that provides basic information about domestic violence in a structured format. Men can move to the next level if they have not been violent during this time and pass an oral test on the material. The second level allows men to explore the material in more depth (Perilla et al., 2007).

Hancock and Siu (2009) propose a program for immigrant men who have engaged in domestic violence behaviors that aims to "stop the abuse, preserve partner relationships and strengthen family life" (p. 209). Their program specifically does not intend to equalize power between male and female

partners but seeks to help the men change their attitudes and attain skills for respectful relationships. They found that a treatment model that directly challenged the newly arrived immigrant man's view of masculinity (that is, did not incorporate a view of self as family leader and authority figure) interfered with the development of a therapeutic alliance. Rather, their view was to help the men gain the attitudes and relationship skills needed for respectful and compassionate family leadership.

The *Centro de Capacitación para Erradicar la Violencia Intrafamiliar Masculina* (CECEVIM—*Training Center to Eradicate Masculine Intrafamily Violence*; See http://www.cecevim.org) is a program that is theoretically based on feminist gender analysis, ecology, and ancient native spiritual concepts (Ramírez Hernandez, 2002). CECEVIM is divided into four phases that consist of 17 two-hour sessions each. Program objectives are for Latino men who have been perpetrators of domestic violence to: (1) learn how and why they are violent in the home and develop strategies to stop being abusive; and (2) learn how to create "intimate, cooperative, supportive, equal, democratic, and nonviolent relationships" (Ramírez Hernandez, 2002, pp. 12–17). CECEVIM attempts to facilitate participants' in-depth discussion about the roots of violence against women and provides strategies to change both the patriarchal culture and patriarchal masculine identities.

Considerations for Interventions with Latina LGBTQ+ Communities

Lewis, Mason, Winstead, and Kelley (2017) suggest that addressing external and internal minority stressors and relationship issues in lesbians' individual and couple's counseling may be useful. As with heterosexual couples, identification and treatment of alcohol use and related problems should play a significant role in addressing problems of relationship violence among lesbian women. Also, helping lesbian women appreciate the connections between stressors, anger, and IPV may assist them in breaking these links and/or developing mechanisms to cope with stressors in less destructive ways.

Service providers are encouraged to implement cultural competency trainings that actively confront and educate providers around not only the unique life experiences of Latina LGBTQ+ women, but also on the pervasive attitudes of racism, sexism, biphobia, transphobia, and homophobia/heterosexism. Service providers can develop programs that both take seriously and sustain a sense of wellness among Latina LGBTQ+ women (*Amigas Latinas*).

Based on their review of the IPV literature related to the experiences of self-identified lesbians in same-sex couples, Badenes-Ribera, Bonilla-Campos, Frias-Navarro, Pons-Salvador, and Moterde-i-Bort (2016) suggest developing programs that: (1) account for the specific characteristics of abuse

in sexual minority couples; (2) teach strategies for coping with discrimination and stress experienced in a heterosexist society; (3) train providers not serving LGBTQ+ populations about same-sex and sexual minority IPV; and (4) increase knowledge about same-sex couple abuse aimed at the LGBTQ+ community itself.

Mixed Interventions

Wray et al. (2013) describe a pilot intervention for IPV among mutually violent couples that offers a dyadic curriculum in equivalent but separate forms for each partner. Participants attended 12 closed, psycho-educational men's and women's groups based on cognitive behavioral principles with dyadic intervention components. Participant self-reports of their own and their partner's behavior at the end of treatment indicated decreased IPV incidents.

Working with Church Leaders

Involving community organizations to address domestic violence in Latino/ Hispanic/Latinx communities is critical. The church is one such organization. The church can be a particularly relevant resource to address domestic violence in rural areas where a lack of Spanish-speaking services may result in Latino clergy serving multiple functions such as addressing mental health, financial, and career needs (Behnke, Ames, & Hancock, 2012). Evidence suggests abuse rates for immigrant Latinas in rural areas may be significantly higher than national prevalence rates, even though much of the research has involved urban populations (Murdaugh, Hunt, Sowell, & Santana, 2004).

Hancock and Ames (2008) propose a three-part model that utilizes lay ministers to "build on Latino cultural and familial strengths to protect Latinas from abuse and help their partners stop the abuse" (p. 625). The Hancock and Ames (2008) model is more appropriate for mild and moderate abusers. Mild and moderate abuse is defined as "a pattern of failed interactional, recursive sequences driven by thoughts and feelings translated into conflict tactics (behaviors) that may be initiated by either partner simultaneously or at different points in time to resolve differences" (Horwitz, Santiago, Pearson, & LaRussa-Trott, 2009, p. 254). The model assumes that: (a) church leaders have a professional and ethical obligation not to sacrifice the health and emotional well-being of abused women to preserve family units; (b) wives have the right to be protected from physical and emotional abuse; and (c) male perpetrators of abuse are responsible for stopping the violence.

The first part of the model helps church leaders identify material (e.g., food banks, emergency financial assistance, clothing), social (e.g., assistance to family members, linkages to domestic violence services), and educational

.(via sermons, family life, parenting programs) supports to aid Latino couples at risk of/or experiencing domestic violence. The second part of the model assesses the severity of the abuse, evaluating the abuser's potential for change and making appropriate referrals. In the third part of the program, church leaders offer constructive counseling or advice to help deal with domestic violence situations.

THALIA: DOMESTIC ISOLATION AS A FORM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The following case study explores the experience of a Latina who immigrated to the United States and was confronted with a domestic violence situation. It illustrates several of the cultural/community issues presented throughout the chapter. The case is a composite and hypothetical, integrating the lived experiences of several individuals while also adding hypothetical information into the case presentation. Identifying information has been changed or omitted to protect confidentiality. An analysis of the case follows that provides an integration of key concepts and theoretical approaches, as well as the first author's development of a new model to address domestic violence issues within a Latino/Hispanic/Latinx context. The case presentation and theoretical application utilizes the terms clinician, service provider, and professional interchangeably given the range of professionals that might implement the proposed model in clinical work.

Thalia* was a 26-year-old Guatemalan woman who attended a parenting workshop given by the first author. The workshop, delivered in Spanish and English, was held at a community center. Its focus was positive discipline, presenting ways that parents could set age-appropriate limits with their children, promote personal growth, and engage in positive modeling. Participants learned of the program through local postings.

Participants spent an hour talking about ways to engage in authoritative rather than authoritarian discipline styles with their children (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). They were interested in taking a supportive rather than a punitive approach to child rearing. Many of the participants, men and women who ranged in age from their 20s through their 60s, shared how their own parents had been physically abusive with them, and how they often witnessed their mothers being abused by their fathers. Participants talked about how they wanted something different for their children and grandchildren.

As the group came to a close, participants began to leave, and organizers started to clean up the meeting space. It was at this time that Thalia approached the presenter. Initially hesitant to talk, the presenter was struck by the fact that Thalia continued to look behind her as she spoke. She talked quietly, sharing that her boyfriend and the father of her 4-year-old daughter,

was just outside the building. Thalia explained how her boyfriend followed her everywhere and didn't like her leaving the house. At times he monitored her activities so intensely that she didn't leave her home for weeks.

Thalia heard about the workshop through a friend and was desperate to learn more about potential options. She was not in the United States legally, so deportation was a constant fear. She shared that her boyfriend was a U.S. citizen and often threatened to contact immigration if she tried to leave the household or disobey him. Even more frightening than potential deportation was the fear of a long-term separation from her daughter, who was born in the United States, should her partner report her to the authorities. After hastily but quietly sharing this information, Thalia said she needed to go. She asked how to contact the presenter in the future, but was adamant about leaving before her partner came to find her, and possibly learn about her participation and conversation.

AN INTRODUCTION AND APPLICATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL, CULTURAL, AND ECOLOGICAL MAPPING

An application of environmental, cultural, and ecological approaches helps us understand Thalia's experience. Figure 9.1 illustrates what the first author calls *environmental, cultural, and ecological mapping* (ECEM) to understand Thalia's experience of domestic violence within a cultural framework. The main tenet of this approach is to examine domestic violence within a social-political context to fully understand the many factors that have an impact on the individual. The first author identifies 6 ECEM components that capture individual and/or familial experience: *ecological factors embedded in program implementation*; *social/emotional stressors*; *political stressors*; *personal strength/resilience*; *point of contact with the human service provider*; and *ecological factors in the provision of future support*. While this is an initial conceptualization of the ECEM approach and no empirical evidence of the model has been conducted as of yet, it is thought that the model's application can be effectively used with Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities as it incorporates cultural values (e.g., language of service delivery), political histories, immigration experiences, and resilience, while also examining the interplay of these factors in the relationship with human service providers and their organizations. Future investigations that explore the application of the ECEM approach with Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities are encouraged.

Personal Strength and Resilience
- Initiative to attend the workshop
- Presence of a social network (e.g., a friend referred her to the workshop)
- Motivated to learn about options for change
- Plans to contact mental health professional in the future and seeks out contact information

Point of Contact with Human Service Provider
- Professional is responsive to Thalia's pace; this develops trust, doesn't push Thalia to share before she is ready, while also checking in about Thalia's safety
- Outcome: This approach sets a different conversational tone, one that is respectful of Thalia's process, this in contrast to Thalia's being pushed by her boyfriend
- Note that Thalia never says openly that there is domestic violence in the home

Ecological Factors in Provision of Future Support
- Professional is empathic to Thalia's need to leave the workshop, contact information is provided
- Professional can provide supportive counseling for Thalia focused on trauma and her safety
- Professional can act as a liaison for Thalia, connecting her with legal and social serives
- Note that these supports are critical to mental health outcomes as Thalia's fears are connected to her legal and social status

Ecological Factors Embedded in Program Implementation
- Parenting workshop offered in Spanish
- Outcome: Community outreach and information provided for Spanish speaking participants that promotes accessibility to Spanish speaking populations
- Workshop offered in a community center
- Outcome: Workshop is accessible and community atmosphere promotes a sense of trust, reflects a key community resource

Social/Emotional Stressors
- Unsupportive, coercive boyfriend/father of Thalia's child
- Extremely isolated and fearful
- Threats by boyfriend to report her to the authorities regarding legal status that coerces Thalia into a submissive position

Political Stressors
- Not in the U.S. legally
- Fear of deportation
- Given child born in the U.S., Thalia fears separation if she is deported and the child remains in the U.S.
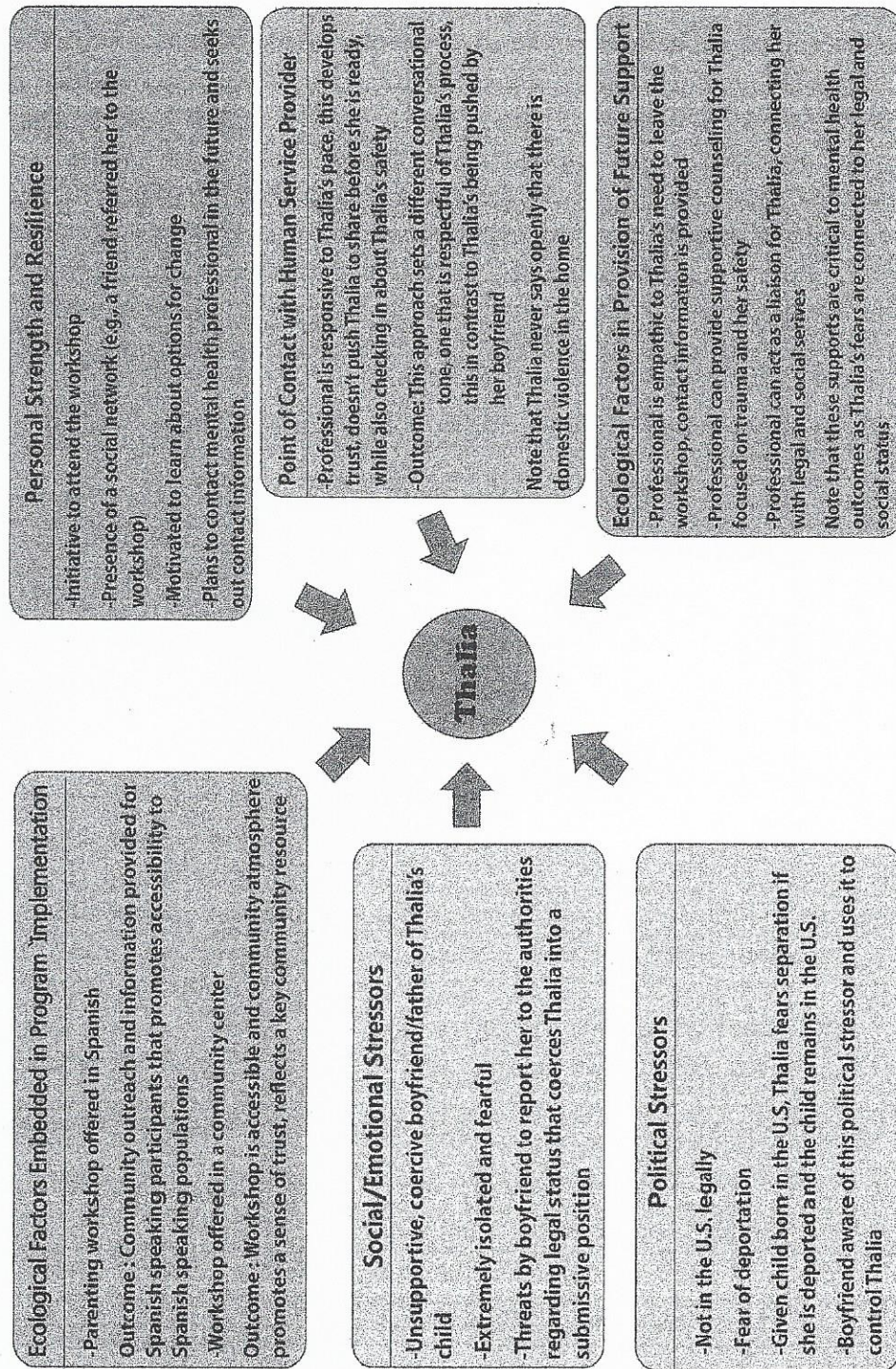- Boyfriend aware of this political stressor and uses it to control Thalia

Thalia

Figure 9.1. Environmental, Cultural, and Ecological Mapping to Understand the Experience of Domestic Violence within a Latino/Hispanic/Latinx Context. Created by the authors

In the first domain, *ecological factors embedded in program implementation*, the clinician identifies how services are responsive to the cultural needs of the individual/family and/or community being served. At the same time, mapping ecological program factors helps clinicians identify the ways in which services can be adapted to better meet the needs of the community being served. Examples of the ecological factors embedded in the workshop Thalia attended included it being offered in Spanish, delivered in a community setting, and involving participants across generations.

The second component of the model examines *social/emotional stressors* from an environmental/cultural/ecological perspective. Thalia's experience of domestic violence is understood in the context of a situation where her boyfriend threatens to reveal her illegal status to authorities, thus keeping her in a position of being coerced by him. The social/emotional stressors center on Thalia's fear of deportation should her boyfriend report her illegal status and the potential separation from her child. This fear keeps Thalia trapped in an abusive relationship.

An examination of *political stressors*, the third factor, allows clinicians to consider how legal factors and political situations influence domestic violence and help seeking behaviors. For instance, Thalia's experience of domestic violence is fueled by the understandable fear that if she is deported, she will be separated from her daughter who was born in the United States. Again, this reality enhances her partner's ability to control and manipulate the situation (Clauss-Ehlers & Akinsulure-Smith, 2013).

Identifying social and political stressors is followed by an examination of *personal strength and resilience*, the fourth factor in the model. A strength-based perspective allows the clinician to consider interventions that build on strengths and promote resilience. Thalia's insight about her situation, desire to change, and efforts to seek out help are all strengths that can positively influence the helping process (Clauss-Ehlers, 2008; Clauss-Ehlers, Yang, & Chen, 2006). This aspect of the ECEM encourages clinicians to identify client resources that facilitate the helping process.

The fifth component considers the extent to which the *point of contact with the human service provider* is responsive to the client's environmental, ecological, and cultural experience. In work with Thalia and others in domestic violence situations, it is imperative that the helping professional engages the client in a supportive, empathic manner that promotes rapport between counselor and client. The reader will note, for instance, that Thalia never fully reveals a domestic violence experience. Rather, it is implied by the dynamic she describes. The professional in this situation must be responsive to Thalia's pace, not pushing her to disclose too soon (thus creating a respectful, collaborative relationship dynamic in contrast to the one she has with her partner), while also letting Thalia know that the clinician is committed to her safety.

It is from this empathic base, along with an acknowledgment of social and political stressors, and individual and familial strengths, that the sixth component of the model emerges: consideration of *ecological factors in the provision of future support*. Future support does not simply involve individual counseling; it also addresses social and political stressors, and seeks connections with social and legal services. Determinations about the nature of these supports can be made in part by examining dynamics within the relationship affected by domestic violence and whether they are exacerbated by political and social factors. Understanding domestic violence within an ecological context can help the service provider connect Thalia with relevant services.

CONCLUSION: A CALL TO THE PROFESSION

It warrants repeating that our review of the literature identified 47 publications through an advanced PsychINFO, PsychARTICLESJournals focused search using terms "Latino/Latina" and "domestic violence" for years 2004–2017 (Please note that these were the mapping terms that the search listed through the advanced search mechanism). That only 47 works were identified over a 13-year span indicates a lack of research in this area and presents an important call to the profession to fill this gap. We urge the helping professions to take a comprehensive approach in response to the experience of domestic violence in Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities that incorporates research, training, and practice. Figure 9.2 provides a visual depiction of what this approach looks like across the helping professions.

Our comprehensive approach addresses the fact that there can be many points of access to support services for individuals who experience domestic violence. For Thalia, access to support occurred in a community setting with a mental health professional. For others, access to support may occur through interactions with nurses in hospital settings, doctors in emergency rooms, clergy in religious institutions, school personnel, social service providers, and community outreach workers, to name a few.

Our call to the human service professions involves a tripartite model that includes research, training, and practice. As spelled out in figure 9.2, our research agenda encourages researchers to conduct empirical studies that examine the impact of domestic violence within Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities through an exploration of the following variables: correlates of domestic violence, helping seeking behaviors, barriers to support, gender roles, impact of immigration, efficacy of domestic violence intervention programs, and efficacy of community supports to address domestic violence. It is our hope that exploration in these areas can facilitate the beginnings of a comprehensive national research agenda that fills the current gap in knowledge.

RESEARCH AGENDA

A research program that addresses the experience of domestic violence among Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities through exploration of the following: correlates of domestic violence, helping seeking behaviors, barriers to support, gender roles, impact of immigration, efficacy of domestic violence intervention programs, and efficacy of community supports to address domestic violence.

TRAINING

Training at all levels of the graduate school experience that includes a focus on Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities, cultural competence, identifying signs and symptoms of domestic violence, understanding gender roles, and encouraging supportive community resources. Spanish as a language requirement to decrease gaps in service related to a dearth of Spanish speaking professionals.

PRACTICE

Culturally competent practice in hospitals, clinics, community centers, private practice, and school settings, among other clinical venues, that demonstrates appropriate intervention in work with Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities/families experiencing domestic violence. This includes practice that is culturally and linguistically relevant, that connects those experiencing domestic violence with community resources as needed, that understands environmental, cultural, and ecological mapping (ECEM) relevant to working with those affected by domestic violence, that provides childcare while parents are receiving services, and that is geographically accessible.

Figure 9.2.   A Call to the Profession: Addressing the Need for Research, Training, and Practice in Domestic Violence Awareness and Intervention among Latino/Hispanic/Latinx Communities. Created by the authors

The importance of a comprehensive research agenda is further underscored by the fact that having an empirical base provides insight into effective training and practice. Without process and outcome research that explores the efficacy of specific interventions geared to address domestic violence in Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities, the provision of evidence-based services is limited.

Like the call for research, the training component of the agenda is presented broadly—referring to training across human service programs. As mentioned in figure 9.2, training can occur at all levels of the graduate school experience (e.g., master's and doctoral levels) and includes a focus on Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities, cultural competence, identifying signs and symptoms of domestic violence, understanding gender roles, and integrating supportive community resources. Making Spanish as a second language a graduate school requirement is one strategy that will promote the training of bilingual clinicians and promote an increase in Spanish-speaking human service professionals.

Practice is the final component of the agenda. Clinical practice builds on training and seeks to incorporate the development of an evidence base. Figure 9.2 highlights how practice aims to be culturally and linguistically relevant, to connect those experiencing domestic violence with community resources as needed, to incorporate ECEM in work with those affected by domestic violence, to provide childcare while parents receive services, and to promote geographic accessibility.

In sum, given the experience of domestic violence among Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities, along with the need for linguistically and culturally relevant intervention, we encourage the human services professions to explore a tripartite research, teaching, and training agenda that builds on ECEM.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What implication does the culture of honor concept have for gender roles in Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities? How do these implications influence the potential for domestic violence?
2. What are the major causes of domestic violence in Latino/Hispanic/Latinx communities?
3. What are some of the stressors that Latinas who identify as LGBTQ+ may confront as they seek support to help them deal with domestic violence?
4. Discuss gender role–based challenges that treatment programs need to confront as they address domestic violence among Latinos/Latinas. How can these challenges have an impact on treatment?

5. What are the advantages of contextualizing domestic violence among Latino/Hispanic/Latinx individuals within a broader cultural and societal context?

6. How can the application of Environmental, Cultural, and Ecological Mapping inform one's approach to case conceptualization, intervention, and treatment?

7. How would you incorporate notions of personal strength and resilience in clinical work with Latinas who have experienced domestic violence?

*Name has been changed to protect confidentiality.

Note: Correspondence regarding this article should be sent to Caroline S. Clauss-Ehlers, PhD, Graduate School of Education, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 10 Seminary Place, New Brunswick, NJ 08901, caroline.clauss-ehlers@gse.rutgers.edu.

NOTE

1. The term Latinos/Hispanics/Latinx is used to capture the range of geographical, sociohistorical, political, and intersectionality variables that span the group and is used to describe the community. However, we have also attempted to use the original terms of choice by authors of cited works.

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