

# **Battered Latina Immigrants Barriers and Interventions**

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# Overview

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- Barriers/Risk Factors
- Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) 1994
- Ideology Behind the Protection of Abused Women
- Role of Culture and Immigrant Status
- Interventions with Battered Latina Immigrants

# Battered Latina Immigrants

## Problem Definition

Any Latina immigrant who has experienced domestic violence in their intimate relationship

# Prevalence of Problem

Few prevalent intimate partner violence in Latinas.

Sokoloff, 2008: 17% of Latina Immigrants victims of Domestic Violence

Yoshihama, 2008

Studies show lower rates of IPV for Latinas compared to women of other races and ethnicities.

Latinas have higher risk of homicide in general than U.S. born

# Barriers/Risk Factors

- Language barriers
- Economic Dependence
- Low level of education and income
- Poor knowledge about services/location
- Fear of spouse
- Undocumented status
- Lack of support system

# Barriers/Risk Factors (cont.)

- Lack of bilingual/bicultural services
- Lack of access to services
- Lack of transportation
- Culture
- Lack of acculturation to mainstream
- Immigration experience

# Violence Against Women Act VAWA (1994)

- Address discrimination that battered women faced when they tried to find help from criminal justice system

# Ideology Behind the Protection of Abused Women

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- “Private matter within the couple”



# Role of Culture and Legal Immigrant Status

Raj & Silverman (2002)

Two types of abuse among Immigrant Women

- A. Immigrant-related
- B. Cultural-related

# Role of Culture and Legal Immigrant Status (cont.)

## Perilla (1999)

- Abusers used lack of knowledge about the justice system
- Social workers need to understand the concept of “centrality of the family” when helping Latina victims of domestic violence

# Role of Culture and Legal Immigrant Status (cont)

## Postmus (2007) Recommended

- Culturally competent and culturally-specific
- interventions for immigrant women victims of domestic violence whose cultures emphasizes FAMILY PRESERVATION ABOVE ALL.

# Role of Culture and Legal Immigrant Status (cont.)

## Ingram (2007)

- Self-reported study evaluated help seeking behavior between Latinos and Non-Latinos
- Non-Latinos sought access to shelters more often than Latinos, immigrant status played a role on help-seeking behavior in Latinos. Also, language barrier, and lack of knowledge about availability of services.

# Interventions with Battered Latina Immigrants

Klevens (2007)

- Role strain, as a result of immigration and acculturation may be UNIQUE to Latinos

Rodriguez (1999)

- Migrant farm workers: educated themselves about domestic violence

Maciak et al. (1999)

- A partnership “La Vida” established in Detroit to prevent Intimate partner violence among Latinas

# Interventions with Battered Latina Immigrants (cont.)

- Latinas victims of domestic violence need alternative services rather than the formal services and shelters.
- Latinas better serve by community outreach programs, support groups and individual counseling with bilingual-bicultural staff trained in domestic violence issues.
- MacFarlane et al., (2000) found that:
- Just screening Latinas for domestic violence was the most effective tool to prevent abuse

# Interventions with Battered Latina Immigrants

## What do we have to take into account as social workers ?

- Role play by Latino culture
- Barriers they confront
- Centrality of the family
- Develop cultural tools
- Education on domestic violence, legal rights and protection available through VAWA

# Interventions with Battered Latina Immigrants

## What do we have to take into account as social workers ? (Cont.)

- Services already available for Latinas
- Competent bilingual-bicultural staff with education on domestic violence issues.
- Latina women needs for housing, child care, economic stability, career development, job training, and physical/emotional safety



# THANK YOU FOR COMING

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