Masculinity's Role and Contribution to Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) Impacting Latino Men's Overall Health Equity

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BACKGROUND

- A higher incidence of intimate partner violence in Latino couples has been noted in comparison to non-Hispanic whites and non-Hispanic blacks. The current discussion of Latino masculinity often perpetuates negative stereotypes portraying Latino men as violent and aggressive.
- Latinos have been found to be more susceptible to the consequences of IPV, such as poor mental health outcomes, in comparison to other ethnicities.
- Machismo is a cultural concept most commonly associated with ideals of dominance and virility in Latino males, and is likely associated with intimate partner violence (IPV).

METHODS

- This literature review was a sub-set of a parent systematic literature review on Latino men's health.
- This review was conducted through the analysis of two search engines, PsycINFO and CINHAL.
- Only academic work with title references to intimate partner violence or domestic violence were kept after the initial first wave was completed.
- Only articles that included the word intimate partner violence (IPV), domestic violence, domestic abuse, or domestic assault in their title or abstract were included in the reviewed literature.
- Articles that fit the inclusion criteria were evaluated on whether they included a described health behavior relationship between a risk factor and IPV, separately discussed men, consisted of at least 75% Latinos, were peer reviewed science, and were not surveillance studies.
- Both heterosexual and homosexual couples were included in this study; however, results for the two groups were reported separately.
- Both immigrant and domestic-born Hispanic Americans were included, but reported separately.
- Table 1 lists the articles, with their authors and journals, that fit the criteria.

RESULTS

- Of the 109 total articles, 13 described masculinity as a risk factor for perpetrating IPV.
- Of the 13 articles which described masculinity as a risk factor for IPV cited machismo; 8 cited traditional gender roles; 7 articles cited both machismo and traditional gender roles as negative aspects of masculinity.
- 3 articles discussed “positive” aspects of masculinity—strong family ties, respect for mothers, and caballerismo—as protective factors against IPV.
- One article commented on both positive and negative aspects of masculinity.
- 5 of the 19 total articles included no analysis of gender roles.
- 17 of the 19 total articles included information on immigrant populations.
- 13 of the 15 articles that analyzed gender roles also reported immigration status.
- Of the 19 total articles, 16 included exclusively heterosexual couples, 2 included exclusively same-sex couples, and 1 article included both heterosexual and same-sex couples. No articles which met inclusion criteria addressed other types of LGBTQ relationships.
- The search on PsycINFO with the search terms resulted in 468 articles. Of these 468 articles, 2 fit the inclusion criteria; both of these were also captured in the CINHAL search.

CONCLUSIONS

- Lack of knowledge on protective factors that gender roles produce will significantly impede the cessation of IPV in Latino populations.
- Future research should include how psychosocial constructs like machismo, marianism, acculturation, etc. impact Latino men's behaviors involving IPV as well as studies that focus specifically on beneficial psychosocial constructs in Latino men's health.
- Limitations to this literature review include only using health behavior research from health search engines like PsycINFO and CINHAL; other limitations include the lack of studies including Latino men as a focus.
- Further reliable research needs to be gathered on social determinants that negatively impact Latino men's health in order to create health equity.
- Involvement of community-based interventions will be important to collecting future data on Latino gender roles as well as providing culturally sensitive information and following up with participants after data collection.