INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE ATTITUDES, ENDORSEMENT OF MYTHS, AND SELF-ESTEEM OF UNDERGRADUATE SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS: A QUANTITATIVE STUDY

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INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement
■ High Levels of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) are occurring in adolescence & young adulthood (Bonomi et al., 2012; Breiding et al., 2014).
■ Worldwide IPV prevalence for females between ages 15 & 19 was 29.4% (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2013).
■ Of 271 college students, 64.7% of females & 61.7% of males had experienced a type of IPV between ages 13 & 19 years old, rarely as a single occurrence (Bonomi et al., 2012).
■ Different types of IPV occur with younger ages and also vary by gender (Bonomi et al., 2012).

This Research
■ What are BSW students’ attitudes towards IPV?
■ How much do BSW students endorse myths regarding IPV?
■ How do these constructs vary by the level of self-esteem & the sociocultural/demographic factors of the BSW students?

Definition
■ Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) : “Physical violence, sexual violence, stalking and psychological aggression (including coercive tactics) by a current or former intimate partner (Breiding, Basile, Smith, Black & Mahendra, 2015, p.11)
SOCIAL WORK RELEVANCE

Social workers provide direct care & macro services to both survivors and perpetrators of IPV.

- SERVICE, SOCIAL JUSTICE, DIGNITY AND WORTH OF THE PERSON, IMPORTANCE OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS, INTEGRITY, AND COMPETENCE
- To improve the knowledge base regarding IPV beliefs and attitudes of undergraduate social work students.
- To help identify any areas of misunderstanding among BSW students that can be addressed in social work education or trainings.
- To aid in the development of specific & effective IPV interventions and psychoeducation, create awareness of the social problem, and inform legislation.
MULTICULTURAL RELEVANCE

- IPV variations by ethnicity/race surrounding prevalence, service referral sources, service needs, and attitudes and myth endorsement (Breiding et al., 2014; Cho, 2012; Grossman & Lundy, 2007; Nabors, Nabors, Dietz & Jasinski, 2006).
- Research has been inconsistent in their findings regarding IPV differences by ethnicity/race (Breiding et al., 2014; Cho, 2012; Grossman & Lundy, 2007).
- Higher levels of lifetime IPV found in the American Indian/Alaska Native and multiracial populations; lower levels of lifetime IPV found in the Asian/Pacific Islander population (Breiding et al., 2014).
- In a second study of females, the Black/African American population was found to have the highest percentage of victimization (17.3%), followed by the White and Latina populations (both at 15.2%), and again the Asian population was lowest (10.3%) (Cho, 2012).
- Possible Reasons: Demographic differences, cultural differences, statistical sampling methods differences.
- Important to assess ethnicity and race in any research regarding Intimate Partner Violence.
METHODS

- Descriptive, quantitative, survey research with close-ended questions.
- Anonymous, self-administered, online surveys.
- SCALES
  - The Intimate Partner Violence Attitude Scale-Revised (Fincham et al., 2008).
  - The Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale (Peters, 2008).
  - Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965).
  - Demographics questions created by researcher (age, gender, race, parent education level, etc.).

SAMPLE POPULATION

- Currently enrolled as an Undergraduate Social Work Student at CSULB.
- 18 years of age or older.

SAMPLING METHODS

- Non-Probability, convenience sample.

DATA COLLECTION

- Received Permission from CSULB IRB and the Undergraduate Program Advisor of the School of Social Work
- The Undergraduate Program Advisor used Surveymonkey.com to email the informed consent, the survey, and a list of available resources to all BSW students at CSULB.
- Respondents had a choice to enter a drawing for one of ten $5.00 Starbucks online gift cards chosen randomly by randompicker.com
DATA ANALYSIS

- Survey data were exported and analyzed using SPSS.
- Sample demographics were explored utilizing frequencies and percentages for each item.
- Reliabilities of the standardized instruments were assessed with the Cronbach's alpha statistical test.
- Respondents’ scores on standardized instruments were assessed with the mean, standard deviation, possible score range, and sample score range.
- Pearson’s $r$ tests were utilized to assess correlational relationships among the three scale scores and respondent age (asked at ratio level).
- Five $t$-tests were run to compare group differences on the three standardized scales by ethnicity (Hispanic/Latino(a) vs. other), highest parent education (less than high school vs. high school or more), household income (less than $20,000 vs. $20,000 or more), attendance at an IPV training/education program (had attended vs. had not attended), and respondent school year (junior year students vs. senior year students).
The sample \((n=42)\) had a majority of female respondents \((n=34, 89.5\%)\), more than half were between 20 and 25 years of age \((n=24, 66.7\%)\) and were ethnically Hispanic or Latino(a) \((n=26, 68.4\%)\).

Respondents had high self-esteem, low endorsement of myths related to IPV, and low levels of attitudes accepting of IPV.

- **Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES):** Respondents’ mean score (31.28) was higher than the scale’s midpoint (25), with higher scores indicating higher levels of self-esteem.

- **Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale (DVMAS):** Respondents’ mean score (38.5) was lower than the scale’s midpoint (72), with higher scores indicating higher levels of endorsement of common myths of IPV.

- **Intimate Partner Violence Acceptance Scale Revised (IPVAS-R):** Respondents’ mean score (24.33) was lower than the scale’s midpoint (51), with higher scores indicating more agreement with attitudes accepting of IPV.
RESULTS Continued...

- Pearson’s $r$ Correlations
  - Significant negative relationship between age of respondents & scores on the IPVAS-R ($r=-.37$, $p=.037$)
  - Positive correlation approaching significance between respondents’ scores on the DVMAS and the IPVAS-R scales ($r=.35$, $p=.057$).

- Independent Samples $t$-tests used to determine group differences on the three scale scores.
  - Results for the DVMAS were statistically significant ($t=2.23$, $p=.033$) regarding highest level of parent education. Respondents whose parents have completed less than a high school education (mean=42.69, s.d.=10.18) reported a higher level of endorsement of common IPV myths than respondents whose parents have completed a high school education or more (mean=34.57, s.d.=10.39)
  - No significant differences were found in scale scores by ethnicity/race, household income, if ever attended an IPV training, or school year.
DISCUSSION & SOCIAL WORK IMPLICATIONS

- BSW students at CSULB have low levels of attitudes accepting of IPV & low endorsement of IPV myths. This is positive as these students have a high likelihood of encountering IPV in their careers.

- Two common myths were found where there may be more confusion than others: that woman can leave easily and that a loss of temper causes most violence in men.

- Important to understand college age students’ attitudes & beliefs to better SW education and interventions surrounding IPV.

- Targeted IPV psychoeducational training for SW students (maybe students in general) whose parents have less than a high school education and who are younger in age.

- Findings consistent with other research that also found low overall attitudes accepting of IPV (Copp et al., 2016; Edelen et al., 2009; Postmus et al., 2011).

- Findings consistent with literature supporting a relationship between younger age and higher levels of attitudes accepting of IPV (Copp et al., 2016; McMullan et al., 2010).

- Literature mixed on levels of endorsement of IPV myths (Postmus et al. 2011; Nabors et al., 2006). This thesis found low levels of endorsement of IPV myths.

- Myths that had the highest endorsement were consistent with the literature. The themes were regarding women being able to leave an abusive relationship & physical abuse involving losing control of one’s temper. (Nabors et al., 2006; Policastro & Payne, 2013).

- No comparative literature regarding respondents’ parent education and the positive correlation between respondents’ scores on DVMAS and IPVAS-R scales.


