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# **Citation Details**

Manriquez, A. L., & Mankowski, E. S. (2024). Social ecological predictors and correlates of Latinos' IPV behaviors: A systematic review and critique of the research literature. American Journal of Community Psychology. Portico.

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#### EMPIRICAL REVIEW



# Social ecological predictors and correlates of Latinos' IPV behaviors: A systematic review and critique of the research literature

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#### Funding information

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Policy Fellows program; National Institute of General Medical Sciences of the National Institutes of Health, Grant/Award Numbers: RL5GM118963, TL4GM118965

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#### Abstract

The current paper utilizes an ecological level of analysis framework to review and critique the literature surrounding predictors, correlates, and antecedents of Latinos' intimate partner violence (IPV) behaviors. More specifically, the ecological levels of analysis framework was employed to demonstrate how Latino males' IPV perpetration is being understood and studied. A total of n = 34 peer-reviewed articles were reviewed and critiqued. Findings indicated that most IPV research is being conducted at and comprehended from the individual (n = 33; 97%) and microsystem/small group (n = 24; 71%) levels of analysis, while linkages to organizational, locality, and institutional levels of analysis are largely neglected. Researchers and interventionists appear to view Latinos' IPV behaviors through deficit models, employ decontextualized and homogenized representations of the population, and neglect higher ecological levels of analysis. These three shortcomings in IPV research as it pertains to Latino populations must be addressed in future research studies if investigators desire to end the stigmatization and demonization of Latinos as a cultural and people group, and to maximize battering intervention effectiveness and efficiency for men of Latino origin.

#### **KEYWORDS**

human diversity, intervention, intimate partner violence, Latinos, levels of analysis

#### Highlights

- We reviewed 34 studies of intimate partner violence behavior among Latino partners in the United States.
- The research examines variables at five different levels of analysis, but not evenly or consistently.
- Most studies examine the individual level (97%), but significantly fewer address other levels.
- Very few studies examine the organizational (3%), localities (12%), or macrosystem levels (15%).
- · The neglect of context leads to culturally blaming and homogenizing conclusions about Latino intimate partner violence.

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Some of the data reported here were presented at the 2023 meeting of the Society for Community Research & Action, Atlanta, GA.



Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a form of gender-based violence that is a public health issue and is widespread throughout the globe (Breiding et al., 2014; Fulu et al., 2013), affecting women and families across cultures, races, ethnicities, social classes, socioeconomic statuses, and nationalities (Olmsted, 2003; Perilla, 1999). Scholars debate the root causes of IPV (Chester & DeWall, 2018; George & Stith, 2014) and the most effective intervention strategies with couples experiencing IPV (Stith et al., 2004). Positions differ regarding the centering of victim safety and services, separating abusive intimate partners, and the design of rehabilitating programs for men who use IPV behaviors against their intimate partners (Areán & Davis, 2006; Feder et al., 2008; Gerbert et al., 2000). Empirical literature addressing IPV includes a focus on risk factors, interventions, and resources for women-identifying survivors of domestic violence, enhancing victim and child safety, survivor empowerment, and IPV victims' perspectives and lived experiences (Cummings et al., 2013). Researchers less often focus on men who perpetrate IPV and the gendered aspects of their abusive behavior (Mankowski & Maton, 2010), including investigation of the causes and predictors of men's IPV perpetration (Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2012; Mankowski et al., 2013). But for ethical reasons to avoid blaming victims and for the practical logic of effective prevention strategies, our focus is on abusive partners who initiate and cause IPV.

Notably, much of the research concerning the antecedents of men's IPV behaviors either focuses solely on white men or is comparative, such that white men and couples' patterns of IPV are compared against the patterns of IPV among men and couples of color (e.g., Lipsky et al., 2005; Schafer et al., 2004). This occurs commonly when research addresses rates and predictors of IPV among Latino couples (e.g., Caetano, Schafer, et al., 2001; Cunradi et al., 2000). Given the impact that peer-reviewed research has on informing policies and interventions related to IPV (Dutton & Corvo, 2006), it becomes increasingly important to take a critical examination of the literature surrounding IPV among Latinos. The aim of the current systematic literature review is to generate a critical and reliable synthesis of the research surrounding correlates, predictors, and other antecedents of Latinos males' IPV perpetration, using an ecological levels of analysis framework to provide a critique of the current understanding of the antecedents of Latinos' usage of IPV behaviors.

Conventional models of community-level responses to IPV (e.g., the Duluth model) are typically created by white practitioners, researchers, and advocates alike, and resultingly have been shown to lack cultural relevance to Latino men who batter (Handcock & Siu, 2009; Parra-Cardona et al., 2013; Perilla, 2007). Battering intervention programs (BIPs) that offer services for Spanish-speaking men (i.e., Latinos who batter) commonly only translate their curriculum from English to Spanish language, but do not tailor their programming to specifically meet the unique cultural customs, belief systems, ecologies, and needs of Latino men and their families (Perilla & Perez, 2002). Collectively, this information should build concern for how court-mandated programming for IPV works for Latino men, as interventions that are not centered around Latinos' lived experiences and cultural beliefs might actually be ineffective or even harmful to men and their families in some instances (Handcock & Siu, 2009; Perilla et al., 2012). Arguably, the lack of consideration for the social and political conditions, histories, and cultures of Latino men from mainstream models of partner abuse intervention programming is a manifestation of colorblind racism and white privilege that subtly positions whiteness as the norm and standard (Yosso, 2006), benefiting and centering white people as the primary unit of reference for the phenomena of IPV and its etiologies, along with avenues of IPV intervention and prevention. In particular, available research heavily relies on models of cultural and biological deficiencies, and also be largely decontextualized, uncritical, and/or person-blaming (e.g., Gonzalez et al., 2020; Klevens, 2007; Mancera et al., 2017).

A few studies have examined the role of cultural in partner abuse intervention programs for Latinos and the factors that promote their program enrollment, engagement, completion, and the cessation of IPV (Davis et al., 2020, 2021; Falconier et al., 2013), including some strengths-based research regarding Latinos who batter (Baker et al., 2001). This literature provides a start toward building an understanding of how systems of oppression (i.e., colonialism, classism, sexism, and racism), as well as other organizational and macro-level factors (e.g., the workplace and mass media), influence Latino males' partner-abusive behavior. However, further and more integrated understanding of the individual causes and predictors of Latinos' IPV behaviors is needed to guide and inform the creation and implementation of partner abuse intervention programs designed specifically for Latino males.

#### Ecological levels of analysis and IPV

The ecological levels of analysis framework in community psychology provides an approach for understanding how IPV perpetration in Latino communities transpires at or across specific levels of analysis, and also for deciding what the most appropriate level of analysis is for research and action (Kloos et al., 2021; Rappaport, 1977). This ecological levels of analysis framework is comprised of five primary ecological levels (i.e., individuals, microsystems, organizations, localities, and macrosystems), and each level of analysis holds its own set of assumptions for how a particular social problem is created or influenced as well as how to best define, examine, and intervene with the identified social problem (Kloos et al., 2021; Rappaport, 1977).

Specifically, research conducted at the individual level of analysis largely centers how person's qualities contribute to IPV, while intervention approaches at this level often focus on enhancing capacity-building skills, positive coping mechanisms, and preventative strategies (Kloos et al., 2021; Rappaport, 1977). A prior review of literature on risk and protective factors for IPV perpetration and victimization in Latinx' populations from 2000 to 2012 (Cummings et al., 2013), showed that the majority of research assessed individual-level predictors, such as age, education, income, and number of children living in the home. These predictors tend to be static risk factors that are less modifiable or cannot be affected with interventions or other change strategies.

Research at the microsystem/small group level of analysis usually entails examining group-level deficits which give rise to the problem under investigation, and interventions aim at improving interpersonal communication, altering the socialization of groups, or may even take the form of group therapy or psychoeducation (Rappaport, 1977). This level of analysis was not addressed by a prior review (Cummings et al., 2013), which used a different, four-level analytic framework (Krug et al., 2002).

Research at the organizational level of analysis typically entails the exploration of how human behavior and well-being are impacted by organizational systems (Boyd & Angelique, 2007), and interventions often emphasize on program development or the introduction of new programming, assessment and refinement of organizational policies and practices, and improving personenvironment fit (Kloos et al., 2021; Rappaport, 1977). The conceptualization and measurement of IPV risk and protective factors at this level of analysis has been missing from prior reviews (Cummings et al., 2013).

Research surrounding localities regularly focuses on existing linkages between differing levels of analysis, such as examining how physical environments impact human behavior, cognition, affect, and even communities (Kloos et al., 2021). This place-based level of analysis is emphasized in community psychology, drawing attention to how neighborhood qualities as well as different kinds of residential communities (e.g., urban, rural) may be risk or protective factors for IPV. Finally, at the macrosystem ecological level of analysis (e.g., mandatory arrest policies), social problems are perceived as being created by these larger systems and institutions, and much of the research conducted around macrosystem-level factors focuses on creating positive changes in societal attitudes, values, goals, resources, cultures, and social policies (Rappaport, 1977). One prior review found this level of analysis (which was termed as "societal" in their model)



entirely neglected in studies of IPV risk and protective factors in Latinx populations (Cummings et al., 2013).

To inform better researchers' interdisciplinary conceptualization and measurement of IPV with Latino populations, we conducted a systematic review of risk factors in current research using this social-ecological levels of analysis framework (Kloos et al., 2021; Rappaport, 1977). Based on the findings of our review, we also evaluate and critique how the problem and causes of IPV in Latino communities is defined and operationalized and provide suggestions for future research to thoroughly inform the development and implementation of partner abuse intervention programs that aim to rehabilitate Latino men with histories of using IPV behaviors.

### METHOD

Google Scholar, PsycINFO, and EBSCOHost databases were used to locate and retrieve peer-reviewed journal articles from 1999 to 2020, inclusive. The database abstract and title fields were queried with the following three search terms: IPV (i.e., "IPV," or "IPV perpetration," or "abuse," or "assault," or "domestic violence"), antecedents (i.e., "correlates," or "predictors," or "causes"), and population (i.e., "Latinos" or "Hispanics"). All possible combinations of each of the three search terms were entered into databases in the following combinations. Articles were located in Google Scholar (n = 433), PsycINFO (n = 182), and EBSCOHost (n = 121). Articles that did not appear in the searches but were known by the primary author were added to the sample (n = 15), producing a total sample of N = 751.

#### Inclusion and exclusion criteria

As shown in the PRISMA flow diagram in Figure 1, a number of inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied to the initial full sample of studies for coding based on a review of each article title and abstract. First, duplicate articles were removed (n = 387). Following this exclusionary step, articles that only focused on Latinx children were omitted (n=8), as Latinx children were not the population of interest for this review. Second, articles not inclusive of Latinx/o/a communities were removed (n = 6). Third, papers not published in peer-reviewed journals (i.e., dissertations, theses, book chapters, poster presentations, and nonscholarly articles) were excluded (n = 60) because we wanted to limit our analysis to the most widely-read and cited work that defines and influences how scholars conceptualize and conduct research on IPV with Latinos. Excluding gray literature is a common practice in systemic literature reviews, which rarely impacts findings or conclusions reached (Hartling et al., 2017). Additionally, papers which addressed forms of abuse other than IPV

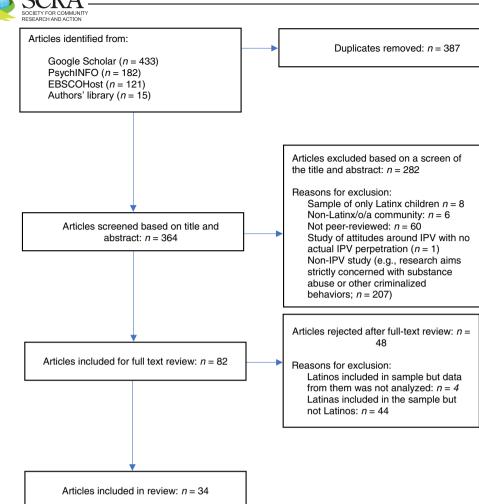


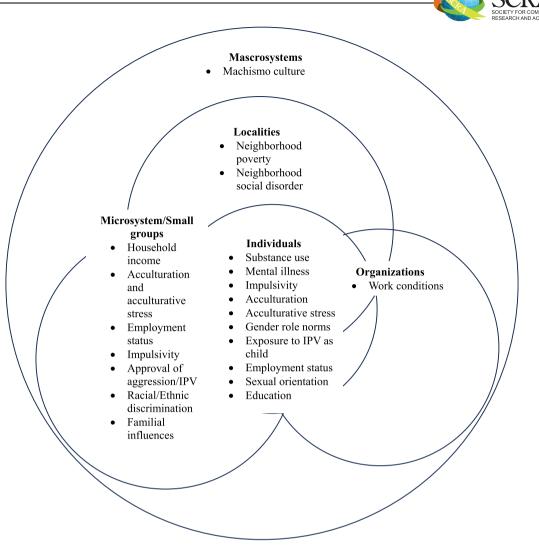
FIGURE 1 PRISMA flow diagram of sample.

were removed (n = 207). Finally, after a full text review, papers that included Latino males who batter in the total sample of the study but did not gather further any data nor analyze it independent of the rest of the sample were excluded (n = 4), as were empirical research articles that only included Latinas victimized by IPV in the sample (n = 44). These papers treat Latinas' IPV victimization as a proxy for Latino males' IPV behaviors, which is an unmerited assumption, as Latinas are not always intimately partnered with Latino males.

#### RESULTS

After employing the inclusion and exclusion criteria, n = 34 research journal articles were retained, all of which centered on the predictors and correlates of Latino males' IPV behaviors. Most quantitative studies relied upon variations of the Revised Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS2, Straus et al., 1996) to measure IPV as an outcome variable (n = 23), while others relied on unvalidated measures of IPV (Cunradi, 2009; Jennings et al., 2012; n = 2), the Work-Related IPV Survey (Mankowski et al., 2013; n = 2), the Partner Table (Gonzalez-Guarda et al., 2008; n = 1), or the Hurt, Insult, Threaten, and Scream (HITS) scale (Punukollu, 2003; n = 2) and records of spousal physical abuse in the Total Army Injury and Health Outcomes Database (Amoroso et al., 1997).

All retained papers were coded and sorted into the five levels of analysis, as defined by Kloos et al. (2021): individual level (n = 33; 97%), microsystems or small group level (n = 24; 71%), organizational level (n = 1;3%), localities level (n = 4; 12%), and macrosystems or institutions level (n = 5; 15%) (see Figure 2). Considering that the ecological levels of analysis framework aims to identify the linkages between differing levels of analysis in creating or affecting a social problem (Kloos et al., 2021; Rappaport, 1977), and given the multilevel nature of IPV and its complex dynamics (e.g., Murphy et al., 2014), many of the same studies could be coded and categorized into multiple levels of analysis. Consequently, the sum of the percentage of studies at each level of analysis exceeds 100%. Moreover, many studies examined the exact same constructs as each other, but were



**FIGURE 2** Risk factors for intimate partner violence perpetration among Latinos measured in published literature and coded into Kloos et al.'s (2021) ecological levels of analysis framework.

conceptualized and assessed at different ecological levels of analysis. Studies used quantitative (n = 28), qualitative (n = 5), and mixed methodologies (n = 1).

#### Individual-level of analysis

The vast majority of the reviewed research literature about the correlates, predictors, and other theorized antecedents of Latino males' IPV behaviors represented an individual level of analysis (n = 33; 97%). At this level of analysis, constructs and variables that were explored and found to be predictors and/or antecedents of Latino males' IPV perpetration included frequencies and levels of substance use, mental illness symptomology and disorders, acculturation, acculturation stress, immigrant status, adherence to or endorsement of gender role norms, exposure to domestic violence during childhood, employment status, income levels, sexual orientation, and education levels. Note that some of these constructs and variables were measured at other ecological levels of analysis as well, and these will be presented later in our analysis.

#### Frequencies and levels of substance use

One of the more commonly studied topics pertaining to the antecedents of Latino males' IPV behaviors were related to levels and frequencies of alcohol and drug usage (Bell et al., 2006; Grest, Amaro, et al., 2018; Grest, Lee, et al., 2018; Jennings et al., 2012; Kim-Godwin & Fox, 2009; Klevens et al., 2007; Lipsky et al., 2005; Mancera et al., 2018; Moracco et al., 2005; Ramisetty-Milker et al., 2007). For example, Kim et al. (2009) hypothesized that a relationship existed between alcohol consumption and IPV tendency among Latino migrant and seasonal farmworkers, but their data did not support this hypothesis. Contrastingly, other researchers have detected heavy drinking and drinks per week in the past year to be predictive of Latinos' IPV perpetration (Lipsky et al., 2005). Lipsky et al. (2005) also found that Latino males' illicit drug use within the past year to be predictive of IPV behaviors. Moreover, partner-abusive Latino males who have participated in qualitative interviews have described alcohol and drug usage as contributing factors to their IPV behaviors (Klevens et al., 2007; Mancera et al., 2018). Additionally, Latinos impacted by the effects of IPV have also discussed in qualitative interviews and focus groups that drug and alcohol usage impacts men's decisions to perpetrate IPV (Klevens et al., 2007; Moracco et al., 2005).

Longitudinal data conducted at the individual level of analysis also supports the aforementioned relationship between substance use and IPV among Latinos. Jennings and co-investigators (2012) found that marijuana and alcohol use during adolescence put Latino boys at higher risk of being both a perpetrator and victim of IPV in early adulthood. In a longitudinal study involving Latino males, conducted by Grest, Lee, et al. (2018), it was found that engaging in cumulative past 30-day heavy episodic drinking during adolescence was predictive of experiencing bidirectional psychological IPV in emerging adulthood. In the same study, cumulative past 30-day marijuana usage during adolescence was revealed to be a predictor of experiencing bidirectional sexual IPV in emerging adulthood among Latinos (Grest, Amaro, et al., 2018). Similarly, Grest, Lee, and colleagues (2018) discovered that Latino boys who had a higher lifetime frequency of alcohol use by the 10th grade had higher odds of using psychological and physical IPV behaviors during emerging adulthood.

# Mental illness symptomology and disorders

Another frequently studied area of antecedents for Latinos' IPV behaviors are factors related to mental illness and disorders (Duke & Cunradi, 2011; Kim-Godwin et al., 2014; Lipsky et al., 2005; Maldonado et al., 2020; Saez-Betacourt et al., 2008). For instance, Duke and Cunradi (2011) uncovered that Latino male farmworkers' alcohol use disorders were predictive of any IPV behaviors perpetrated within the past year. Similarly, US-born and immigrant Latinos' IPV perpetration has been found to be positively correlated with alcohol dependence and drug dependence symptoms (Maldonado et al., 2020). Additionally, research demonstrates for both US-born and immigrant Latinos, higher levels of alcohol and drug dependence is associated with an increased likelihood for using IPV behaviors (Maldonado et al., 2020). Qualitative data also supports these patterns of results, as some Latino men with histories of perpetrating IPV have disclosed that being addicted to alcohol or drugs influenced their decisions to perpetrate IPV (Saez-Betacourt et al., 2008).

Symptoms of mental illness, such as depressive, anxiety, and posttraumatic stress symptomologies, have

been occasionally examined by researchers. Kim-Godwin and co-authors (2014) demonstrated that Latino male migrant and seasonal farmworkers' symptoms of depression were predictive of their IPV behaviors, and vice versa. Further, Lipsky and colleagues (2005) revealed that Latino males' states of depression predicted their use of IPV behaviors. Depressive and anxiety symptomologies have also been shown to be predictive of both US-born and immigrant Latinos' IPV perpetration; however, the relationship between symptoms of anxiety and IPV perpetration has been found to be stronger among US-born Latinos (Maldonado et al., 2020). Interestingly, Maldonado et al. (2020) also found that a relationship between posttraumatic stress symptoms (PTSS) and IPV perpetration existed among Latino immigrants but not among US-born Latinos, and that the association between alcohol dependency and IPV perpetration was greater for immigrant Latinos. Such results indicate the importance of gathering more contextual and descriptive information regarding the dynamics of Latinos and IPV behaviors, as the diversity of Latinos as a people group adds much more nuance and complexity than is typically captured or acknowledged in this realm of research.

# Impulsivity

Three studies assessed the role of Latino males' impulsivity level as a predictor of their use of IPV behaviors (e.g., Caetano et al., 2004). Over the course of a 5-year period, Caetano et al. (2004) inspected the rates of change in Latinos' IPV behaviors as they were influenced by various sociocultural, economic, and psychological factors (including impulsivity) at two different points in time (years 1995 and 2000 to be exact). Latinos who positively reported impulsivity levels at time one were nearly twice as likely to use IPV behaviors against their intimate partners at time two relative to those who did not positively report impulsivity levels at time one (Caetano et al., 2004).

# Acculturation

While acculturation is a rather popular topic in the field of IPV research as it pertains to Latino/a/x communities, most studies rely upon self-reports from Latinas victimized by IPV and in turn use those self-reports as a faulty proxy for Latinos' IPV perpetration (Alvarez et al., 2020). Given that the current review only incorporated peer-reviewed articles that included Latino males in the sample, most studies examining the association between acculturation and IPV will not be covered in this paper. However, there are a handful of studies that examine the relationship between Latinos' IPV behaviors and acculturation at the individual-level of analysis, utilizing data collected from Latino males with histories of perpetrating IPV (Galvez et al., 2015; Grest, Amaro, et al., 2018; Maldonado et al., 2020). When examining the association between acculturation and work-related IPV behaviors (e.g., stalking an intimate partner at their workplace) among men of Mexican origin, Galvez et al. (2015) found that acculturation positively predicted Mexican men's overall work-related IPV behaviors. Additionally, in the same study, men's country of birth (a proxy for acculturation) was also found to positively predict Mexican men's overall work-related IPV behaviors (Galvez et al., 2015).

While utilizing a longitudinal design to investigate the relationship between acculturation and IPV perpetration among Latinos, Grest, Amaro, et al. (2018) found that Latino adolescents who were higher in US-oriented acculturation had increased odds of perpetrating physical IPV in emerging adulthood, while Latinos higher in Hispanic orientation (i.e., enculturation) during adolescence had decreased odds of perpetrating IPV as emerging adults. Intriguingly, when looking at US-born and immigrant Latinos separately, a positive relationship between language-based acculturation and IPV behaviors has been detected among both subgroups (Maldonado et al., 2020).

## Acculturation stress

Acculturation stress was reviewed in separation from acculturation, as acculturation is not a valid proxy for acculturation stress, as not all Latinos who undergo the process of acculturation experience acculturation stress (Caetano et al., 2007). However, only one study (i.e., Galvez et al., 2011) was coded as acculturation stress at the individual-level of analysis. In focus group interviews with men of Mexican origin enrolled in BIPs, men discussed acculturative stressors arising from acculturating to the United States (e.g., dealing with language barriers and being met with contradicting cultural norms) as influences on their decisions to perpetrate IPV behaviors (Galvez et al., 2011). Besides the one study conducted by Galvez et al. (2011), no other studies were found at this ecological level of analysis, indicating a need for more individual-level research that relies on samples of Latino males to investigate the association between acculturation stress and IPV perpetration.

# Adherence to or endorsement of gender role norms

A few studies have explored the role of Latinos' adherence to or endorsement of gender role norms at the individual level of analysis (Grest, Amaro, et al., 2018; Mancera et al., 2018; Saez-Betacourt et al., 2008). This should not be confused with studies the examine the influence of cultural norms and expectations on Latinos'



intimate relationships and its relation to IPV, which will be discussed in subsequent sections. In a qualitative study conducted by Mancera et al. (2018) involving men of Mexican origin with histories of IPV perpetration, men partially ascribed their adherence to traditional gender role norms in influencing their decisions to use partner-abusive behaviors as it was considered a means of fulfilling their roles as traditional Mexican men. Likewise, immigrant Latinos of Guatemalan and Mexican origin who have been incarcerated for domestic violence-related charges have also attributed their roles as being traditional men as a primary factor in influencing their decision to perpetrate IPV (Saez-Betacourt et al., 2008). These contextual data generated from qualitative studies can also be further supported by findings derived from quantitative studies, as Grest, Amaro, et al. (2018) revealed that Latino adolescents who were higher in traditional gender role attitudes had greater odds of using physical and psychological IPV behaviors as emerging adults.

# Exposure to domestic violence during childhood

A smaller number of studies have explored Latino males' experiences of being subjected to domestic violence (either child abuse or witnessing IPV between parents) during childhood as an antecedent of IPV perpetration during adulthood (Caetano, Field, et al., 2005; Caetano, Ramisetty-Mikler, et al., 2005; Grest, Amaro, et al., 2018; Montalvo-Liendo et al., 2018; Schafer et al., 2004). Latinos' IPV perpetration has been found to be linked with witnessing IPV transpire between parents during one's own childhood (Caetano, Field, et al., 2005; Caetano et al., 2004; Grest, Amaro, et al., 2018). Additionally, researchers have found a link between being physically abused during childhood and using IPV behaviors as an adult (Caetano et al., 2004; Caetano, Schafer, et al., 2000). Furthermore, Caetano, Schafer, et al. (2000) revealed that Latinos who were exposed to IPV or other forms of domestic violence during childhood were twice as likely to report to perpetrating IPV in adulthood than those who were not subjected to any form of domestic violence as a child. Moreover, in extensive qualitative interviews conducted with men of Mexican origin who use IPV behaviors, men discussed how commonplace abuse had been in their lives, with many of them discussing experiences of being physically, sexually, or psychologically abused during childhood by family members or caregivers (Montalvo-Liendo et al., 2018).

#### Employment status

Latinos' employment status (unemployment in particular) has been consistently shown to be a strong predictor of men's use IPV behaviors against an intimate partner across multiple studies. We coded studies at the individual level if they assessed employment in abusive partners only (Caetano, Field, et al., 2005; Caetano, McGrath, et al., 2005; Caetano, Nelson, et al., 2001; Caetano, Schafer, et al., 2000, 2001), but not studies that assessed it among abused partners or both partners, which were coded rather as assessing employment at the microsystem level. By way of illustration, Caetano, Schafer, et al. (2001) found that Latino who reported to being unemployed were increasingly likely to also report to perpetrating IPV behaviors against their intimate partners. It is worth noting that while unemployment has been shown to be a consistent predictor of Latinos' IPV behaviors, its influence does not appear to differ for men from other racialized backgrounds (Caetano, Field, et al., 2005; Caetano, McGrath, et al., 2005).

### Income

Concerning the relationship between income levels and IPV behaviors among Latinos, only three studies were categorized into the individual-level of analysis (e.g., Galvez et al., 2015). Galvez et al. (2015) examined if the relationship between country of birth (a proxy for acculturation) and overall work-related IPV behaviors changed as a function of income. It was found that for participants born in Mexico (low levels of acculturation), higher levels of income were positively associated with higher rates of work-related IPV behaviors perpetrated, but for US-born Mexican men (higher levels of acculturation), the opposite relationship existed (Galvez et al., 2015). Although Galvez et al. (2015) was the only income-related study that could be coded as being at this particular ecological level of analysis, a major strength that this study holds is its use of income as a moderator variable as a means of contextualizing the relationship between acculturation and work-related IPV behaviors among men of Mexican origin.

### Sexual orientation

Only one study explored the role of sexual orientation in relation to IPV perpetration among Latinos (Gonzalez-Guarda et al., 2013). Gonzalez-Guarda and co-authors (2013) investigated the effect that sexual orientation has on IPV perpetration among Latinos and discovered that men who identified as being bisexual were nearly four times as likely to report to perpetrating IPV in their most recent relationship compared to Latinos who identified as being homosexual. Additionally, in the same study, it was found that Latinos who identified as being bisexual were at higher odds of reporting to perpetrating IPV and also being victimized by IPV compared to Latinos who self-identified as being homosexual (Gonzalez-Guarda et al., 2013).

### Education levels

A small number of studies have explored and uncovered the relationship between Latinos' education levels and IPV perpetration; however, the connection between these two constructs remains rather vague (Bell et al., 2006; Maldonado et al., 2020; Moracco et al., 2005). Among immigrant Latinos, a negative relationship between IPV perpetration and education levels has been detected (Maldonado et al., 2020). Additionally, in qualitative interviews with Latino/a/x community members impacted by IPV, participants noted Latino males' lack of education as a contributing factor to their IPV perpetration (Moracco et al., 2005). More research that addresses the specifics of the exact types of education (e.g., cultural) that has a relationship with IPV is needed.

#### Microsystems/small-group level of analysis

While not as common as the individual level of analysis, more than half of published studies addressed the smallgroup level of analysis (n = 24; 71%). While a number of the IPV antecedents reviewed at this level could also be conceived as individual-level variables, they typically occurred when participants were involved currently in an intimate relationship with a romantic partner. With this in mind, constructs and variables that were examined at the small microsystem/small group level of analysis included household income, acculturation and acculturation stress (measured at the group level), employment status of the partner, impulsivity levels, approval of aggression/violence, racial/ethnic discrimination, and familial influence.

#### Household income

A small number of studies have explored the role of household income on IPV perpetration among Latino couples (Caetano, Cunradi, et al., 2000; Caetano, Schafer, et al., 2000; Cunradi et al., 1999, 2000, 2002). For Latino couples, household income has occasionally been shown to be associated with men's IPV perpetration, as Cunradi et al. (2000) revealed that for each increase of \$1000 in Latino couples' household income, a decrease of 3% in reports of men's IPV perpetration followed. In another study by Cunradi et al. (2002), they explored the relative strength of association between a comprehensive set of 20 individual-level demographic, socioeconomic, personality, and other static and dynamic risk factors and IPV among couples in the US Latino couples' annual household income was the strongest predictor of Latinos' IPV behaviors. Similarly, Caetano, Schafer, et al. (2000) discovered that Latino couples' household income under \$20,000 was predictive of Latino males' IPV perpetration. Furthermore, when

comparing Latino couples with household incomes of less than \$20,000 to those with a household income exceeding \$40,000, Cunradi et al. (1999) found that Latino couples who reported the lower household income were more likely to report instances of a Latino male using IPV behaviors.

#### Acculturation and acculturation stress

Very few peer-reviewed articles examined the role of Latinos' acculturation levels and experiences of acculturation stress on Latino males' IPV perpetration by analyzing data gathered from Latino males and/or Latino couples (Caetano, Schafer, et al., 2000; Caetano et al., 2007; Galvez et al., 2011). Latino couples that hold medium levels of acculturation have been found to be highest at risk for experiencing IPV behaviors used by a male partner. For example, Caetano, Schafer, et al. (2000) found that Latinos couples in which one partner has a medium level of acculturation are three times as likely to experience male perpetrated IPV compared to couples in which both people are low in acculturation. Similarly, Caetano et al. (2007) found among Latino couples in which female partners who were highly acculturated while their male partners were low in acculturation and high in acculturation stress were at risk for conflict influenced by this simultaneous acculturation gap and acculturation stress, which ultimately led to male perpetrated IPV. In focus group interviews conducted with immigrant men of Mexican origin enrolled in BIPs, men described their intimate partner's acculturation to the United States and their partner's simultaneous gain in independence negatively, and furthermore described this factor as influencing their decision to perpetrate workrelated IPV behaviors (Galvez et al., 2011).

#### Employment status

A handful of studies at the small-group level of analysis also explored the impact of Latino couples' employment status on men's IPV perpetration, with female employment and male unemployment often being described as a source of turmoil and antecedent of IPV among Latino couples (Caetano, Cunradi, et al., 2000; Caetano, Nelson, et al., 2001; Cunradi et al., 1999, 2000; Galvez et al., 2011; Ulibarri et al., 2019). Studies were categorized into the microsystem level of analysis if they measured abused female partner's employment status or both abused and abusive partner's employment status to predict men's perpetration of IPV. In one study, Cunradi et al. (1999) showed that Latino couples in which the male partner was reported as being unemployed were more likely to experience male-perpetrated IPV than those with an employed male partner. In the same study, females who maintained employment outside of the home were more likely to experience male-perpetrated

IPV (Cunradi et al., 1999). Interestingly, female partners' retirement status has also been found to be a protective factor against Latino males' risk for IPV perpetration is (Caetano, Schafer, et al., 2000), such that men with retired female partners were less likely to abuse them.

In separate study conducted by Cunradi et al. (2000), Latino couples in which males were reported to being unemployed were at least twice as likely to experience male perpetrated IPV behaviors compared to those with males reporting to maintaining employment. Additionally, it was found among Latino couples in which Latinas reported to being retired were at less risk for male perpetrated IPV behaviors compared to those with employed Latinas (Cunradi et al., 2000). In a mixedmethods study involving semi-structured interviews with female sex workers victimized by IPV and their male intimate partners in Mexico, couples described male unemployment and female employment to be a source of conflict, as it shifted household responsibilities to men, while women acquired more power in their relationship and became the primary financial providers (Ulibarri et al., 2019). Furthermore, in focus group interviews conducted with Latino male BIP participants, men discussed using work-related IPV behaviors to sabotage their intimate partner's employment status, as they perceived their intimate partner's maintenance of employment to obstruct the traditional Latino family system and familial roles (Galvez et al., 2011).

#### Impulsivity levels

Latinos' impulsivity levels have frequently been explored in research concerning predictors of IPV among couples within the United States (Caetano, Cunradi, et al., 2000; Caetano, Schafer, et al., 2000; Caetano, Schafer, et al., 2001; Cunradi et al., 2000, 2002; Field & Caetano, 2003; Schafer et al., 2004). We categorized impulsivity in the microsystem of the male Latino participants (as we did within the individual level) because the majority of studies that assessed impulsivity measured either their abused female partner's impulsivity level or both her and the abusive partner's impulsivity levels, and these scores were used to predict male-to-female perpetrated IPV among Latino couples. Thus, the majority of studies measured impulsivity external to the abusive partner, relying on information from either the partner or the couple jointly. We determined this level of measurement best represented the microsystem of the abusive partner rather than strictly the individual abusive partner. Among Latino couples, men's level of impulsivity relative to other men has been associated with increased levels of male perpetrated IPV behaviors (Caetano, Schafer, et al., 2000). Additionally, female partner's higher level of impulsivity has also been positively related to men's IPV perpetration (Caetano, Schafer, et al., 2000 2001; Cunradi et al., 2000, 2002; Schafer et al., 2004).



### Approval of relationship aggression/violence

Few peer-reviewed articles have explored the role of Latino couples' approval of aggression or violence within intimate relationships (Cunradi et al., 2000; Kim-Godwin & Fox, 2009). By way of example, Latino couples in which both partners approve of marital aggression have been shown to be at seven times higher risk for experiencing male perpetrated IPV behaviors relative to couples who do not approve of aggression (Cunradi et al., 2000). Similarly, Kim-Godwin and Fox (2009) explored the role of religious approval in IPV perpetration. The authors found that Latino couples who believed spouses should remain together simply because it was God's will, despite male perpetrated IPV occurring in the relationship, were more likely to experience IPV.

### Racial/ethnic discrimination

Unfortunately, only two peer-reviewed articles explicitly studied the impact of racial/ethnic discrimination on Latinos' IPV perpetration (i.e., Forster et al., 2017; Maldonado et al., 2020). Racial/ethnic discrimination was coded and categorized at the group level of analysis as the measures of racial/ethnic discrimination that studies utilized were largely interpersonal in construction, nature, and description (Forster et al., 2017; Maldonado et al., 2020). Forster et al. (2017) explored the impact of perceived discrimination on risk of IPV perpetration among Latino young adults. Each standard deviation increase in perceived discrimination was associated with a 37% increase in the odds of experiencing bidirectional IPV. Further, in the same study, it was shown that higher scores in perceived discrimination were associated with higher odds of perpetrating IPV for foreign-born Latinos compared to US-born Latinos (Forster et al., 2017). Contrastingly, Maldonado and co-investigators (2020) only observed a relationship between discrimination and IPV perpetration among US-born Latinos but not among Latinos of immigrant status. Moreover, the relationship between discrimination and IPV among Latino immigrants was mediated by PTSS and drug dependence symptoms, but for US-born Latinos, this relationship was instead mediated by anxiety, alcohol dependence, and drug dependence symptoms (Maldonado et al., 2020).

# Familial influence

There were four studies that explored the function of familial influence on Latino males' decisions to use IPV behaviors (i.e., Galvez et al., 2011; Klevens et al., 2007; Mancera et al., 2018; Montalvo-Liendo et al., 2018). For example, in qualitative interviews with men of Mexican origin about contributing factors of IPV, men have described the negative male role models in their families

who continue the intergenerational cycle of family violence by modeling IPV behaviors for boys (Mancera et al., 2018). Correspondingly, in a qualitative interview study conducted with partner-abusive men of Mexican origin, men discussed how their fathers normalized IPV perpetration during their childhood and demonstrated controlling and violent behaviors toward intimate partners as part of being a man (Montalvo-Liendo et al., 2018).

## Organizational level of analysis

Interestingly, and in contrast with a prior analysis (Cummings et al., 2013), the organizational level is the most neglected ecological level of analysis in our review. Surprisingly, only one study (i.e., Duke & Cunradi, 2011) addressed this ecological level of analysis, by examining work conditions as a predictor of Latinos' IPV perpetration.

### Work conditions

Duke and Cunradi (2011) investigated the influence of Latino farmworkers' work conditions on their IPV behaviors and found that poor working conditions (e.g., being exploited by employers or not being able to drink adequate amounts of water during work hours) was positively correlated with men's IPV perpetration within the past year. Disappointingly, apart from the aforementioned study, no other studies were found to examine the roles of organizational policies, practices, or systems' impact on Latino males' IPV perpetration. This rather concerning, considering that there is a growing body of literature which suggests IPV perpetration among Latinos has the capacity to spillover from their home lives into work lives (Galvez et al., 2011, 2015; Mankowski et al., 2013).

### Localities-level of analysis

Although explored to a much lesser extent relative to the individual and group levels of analysis, antecedents of Latinos' IPV behaviors have been studied from the localities-level of analysis more than the organizational level of analysis included neighborhood poverty and neighborhood social disorder. Cultural shifts that occurred with transitions in location (e.g., culturally prescribed gender role norms according to location of country) were considered as macrolevel factors, and thus, were not analyzed from this level of analysis.

# Neighborhood poverty

When exploring the role of neighborhood-level poverty on Latino couples' risk for perpetrating IPV behaviors, Caetano, Schafer, et al. (2001) found that Latino couples living in impoverished neighborhoods were nearly twice as likely to report female perpetrated IPV compared to other Latino couples not living in impoverished neighborhoods, but it was not predictive of Latino males' IPV perpetration. Similarly, Cunradi et al. (2000) also investigated the relationship between neighborhood-level poverty and Latino males' IPV perpetration and did not find any association between the two variables. No other studies that were retained for the current paper examined this phenomenon.

# Neighborhood social disorder

Cunradi (2009) investigated the influence of neighborhood social disorder (defined as perceived level of neighborhood problems) on Latino males' IPV perpetration and revealed that it was predictive of Latino males' IPV perpetration and victimization. In qualitative interviews with men of Mexican origin regarding IPV risk factors, men discussed how living in neighbors riddled with violence and stressful conditions (e.g., substance abuse and lack of communication between neighbors) aided in normalizing IPV and making it a conventional event in their lived environment (Mancera et al., 2018). Such dynamics have been shown to contribute to Latino neighbors' lack of involvement and intervention with occurrences of IPV (Klevens et al., 2007; Mancera et al., 2018).

#### Macrosystem institutions level of analysis

Surprisingly, the only peer-reviewed papers that could be coded into and categorized at the macro or institutional level of analysis (n = 5) were either purely qualitative or qualitative components of mixed methods studies (Galvez et al., 2011; Mancera et al., 2018; Montalvo-Liendo et al., 2018; Saez-Betacourt et al., 2008; Ulibarri et al., 2019). Based on the LatCrit theory that Latinos' experiential knowledge is valid data (Valdes, 1997), we describe Latinos' personal experiences surrounding macrolevel variables/factors as being antecedents of IPV behaviors in this section. From this ecological level of analysis, machismo culture was the primary construct that was explored and discussed as an antecedent of Latino males' IPV perpetration.

### Machismo culture

During qualitative interviews, Latino males have frequently discussed the negative aspects of machismo culture as being contributing factors to their partner-abusive behaviors (Galvez et al., 2011; Mancera et al., 2018; Saez-Betacourt et al., 2008). For instance, in focus group



interviews with Mexican immigrants enrolled in BIPs, men conversed about how machismo as a construct delineated gendered familial roles for males and females, and contradictions to such culturally prescribed gender roles ultimately gave rise to IPV (Galvez et al., 2011). When interviewed, men of Mexican origin with histories of IPV perpetration have also described machismo as being extremely influential on their drinking behaviors and subsequent perpetration of IPV that followed intoxication (Mancera et al., 2018). Moreover, Latinos who have been incarcerated on a domestic violence charge have disclosed that machismo partly led to them becoming a controlling and abusive figure in their own homes (Saez-Betacourt et al., 2008).

# DISCUSSION

This systematic literature review sought to describe and assess the current state of IPV research on the antecedents and predictors of Latino males' IPV preparation, and to critique how researchers measure and understand the various influences of Latinos' decision to use IPV behaviors, by employing an ecological levels of analysis framework in community psychology (Kloos et al., 2021; Rappaport, 1977). We drew on the framework to situate the findings and pinpoint the ways in which researchers' have described and assessed specific constructs being associated with Latino males' perpetration of IPV.

# Summarizing predictors and antecedents of Latinos' IPV behaviors

Consistent with one finding from a prior review of the literature on Latinx populations' IPV (Cummings et al., 2013), our study demonstrates that the vast majority of research on Latinos' IPV is conceived and measured at the individual level, and to a lesser extent, the microsystem level of analysis. Comparatively far fewer studies were conceptualized at the organizational, localities, and macro levels of analysis combined. This distribution reflects and contributes to overly individualized accounts of IPV among Latinos and their families. Consequently, researchers' current understanding of Latinos' IPV perpetration and the antecedents of their behaviors substantially neglects whether and how systems of oppression may ultimately also give rise to their abuse. Commonly, studies assessed predictors that were centered around deficits pertaining to men's personhood, lack of psychosocial and financial resources, familial systems, and adherence to certain belief systems. At the individual-level of analysis, this included frequencies and levels of substance use, mental illness symptomology and disorders, acculturation, and acculturation stress, adherence to or endorsement of gender role norms, exposure to domestic violence during childhood, income, sexual orientation, and formal



educational level. At the small group level of analysis, risk factors were similar to those studied at the individual level, such as household income, acculturation and acculturation stress, employment status, impulsivity level, approval of relationship aggression/violence, racial/ethnic discrimination, and familial influence.

Unfortunately, research conducted at the organizational level of analysis was nearly nonexistent, with the exception of one study, which assessed the influence of poor working conditions on Latinos' IPV perpetration (i.e., Duke & Cunradi, 2011). This finding contrasts to a certain extent with Cummings et al.'s (2013) review, which identified several studies that were categorized at the *community* level of analysis. The difference appears to be due to Cummings et al.'s inclusion of studies measuring risk and protective factors for both IPV perpetration and victimization among both men and women, and their categorization of income and employment at the community level, whereas Kloos et al.'s (2021) levels of analysis model that we use breaks out the community level into separate organizational and localities levels. Our review also includes nine additional recent years of publications, suggesting that newer studies and those focused specifically on IPV perpetration may attend even less to the organizational level.

Research conducted from the localities-level of analysis examined and found the following constructs to be related to Latinos' perpetration of IPV behaviors: neighborhood poverty and neighborhood social disorder. Finally, the only studies that were found to be centered around the institutional macrosystem level of analysis were qualitative investigations pertaining to the influence of machismo culture and ideology on Latinos' IPV perpetration (i.e., Galvez et al., 2011; Mancera et al., 2018; Saez-Betacourt et al., 2008).

Based on this set of findings, we identify several limitations of the research literature surrounding Latino males' usage of IPV behaviors that need to be addressed to inform partner abuse interventions and policies: (1) use of deficit models in IPV research with Latinos; (2) decontextualized and homogenized group-level analyses; (3) absence of higher levels of analysis. While many of the same risk factors identified in this review are also found in studies with other populations, the unique meaning and impact of these factors on IPV may be different when assessed in the intersectional context in which Latino men in the US experience their lives. Finally, we conclude with discussion of several implications of the analysis for future IPV research and practice with Latinos.

### Deficit models in IPV research with Latinos

A sizeable amount of the literature reviewed stems from public health frameworks, which rely heavily on deficit models to pinpoint and explain a variety of healthrelated problems (e.g., IPV) among certain populations (e.g., immigrant Latinos) who could benefit from social services and other resources to address their dire needs (Morgan & Ziglio, 2007). Although a public health research model has certainly helped in identifying factors which influence Latino males' IPV behaviors, it has also led to the construction of a mechanistic body of research which contributes to the stigmatizing portrayal of Latino males as individuals who are dependent upon substances and aggressive batterers who are somewhat powerless against the negative influence of more immediate environmental stressors (Cauce & Domenech-Rodríguez, 2002; Saracho & Spodek, 2007). For instance, by measuring alcohol and drug use behaviors among Latino couples as a predictor for men's IPV perpetration, researchers unintentionally uphold overexaggerated and negative stereotypes of Latinos as men who are abusers and alcoholics who lack in caring for their family members (Mirandé, 1991; Saracho & Spodek, 2007). Additionally, when substance-related behaviors are the predominant focus, numerous other health-related variables that likely give rise to IPV among Latinos remain unexamined (e.g., their differential access to healthcare). Therefore, not only is the stigmatization of Latino males in research being perpetuated by some common practices in the field of public health, but the ultimate goal to eradicate barriers to achieving health equity for Latinos is currently being undermined by not investigating other health-related factors which impact the likelihood of IPV occurring among Latino communities.

Another pitfall of employing deficit models in exploring antecedents of IPV among Latino males is the practice of looking at Latinos' culture as being a potential risk factor for partner-abusive behaviors. While it is of great importance not to deify nor romanticize the negative and/ or harmful aspects of Latino culture (Perilla, 2007), it has become a common occurrence in IPV research to attribute Latino males' IPV behaviors to machismo culture, without any prior measurement of machismo as a construct (e.g., Kim-Godwin & Fox, 2009). This is a hazardous practice as it has the potential to essentialize Latino males as inherently being "machistas" or men who endorse risky behaviors that have been stereotyped and negatively associated with typical behaviors among Latinos. Moreover, machismo is not a one-dimensional construct that is only defined by destructive behaviors and sexist ideologies, but instead, it actually may be a two-dimensional construct that includes a dimension of positive Latino masculinity, which entails culturally specific, prosocial behaviors that prioritize one's individual and familial well-being (i.e., caballerismo; Arciniega et al., 2008). Although machismo is often discussed among disciplines rooted in the social and health sciences, it is largely being discussed in an inadequate manner that lacks this nuance (Hurtado & Sinha, 2016) and this is certainly the case with IPV-related research that relies on explanations pertaining to Latino masculinity to make sense of patterns of IPV among Latinos. Furthermore, there are a number of other relevant

constructs related to traditional Latino culture and masculinity (e.g., respeto and familism) that remain neglected in this area of research, limiting our understanding of how prominent cultural factors may be related to IPV among Latinos. In short, IPV research may be more beneficial to Latinx communities by exploring positive, protective aspects of Latino culture to further uncover the complex dynamics of IPV they experience, rather than continuing sole assessment of the negative aspects of Latino culture which are already overrepresented in the literature.

# Decontextualized and homogenized group-level IPV research with Latinos

Disappointingly, a majority of the empirical journal articles reviewed did not discuss the social positioning of Latinos nor the various oppressions Latinx communities suffer throughout the Americas when attempting to justify the need to measure potential predictors of Latinos males' IPV behaviors. Additionally, since most researchers did not consider the forms of oppression that Latinos are subjected to when building and presenting their theoretical rationales for possible antecedents of men's IPV perpetration, measures that would help in drawing any connections between oppression and Latinos usage of IPV behaviors were not utilized. Therefore, the outcome of such research practices resulted in decontextualized data surrounding patterns of IPV among Latinos. This can be seen in the multiple studies that examined the association between substance use and IPV behaviors among Latinos (e.g., Caetano, Schafer, et al., 2000; Schafer et al., 2004) without any prior or subsequent exploration of reasons for Latinos' usage of substances in the first place. For instance, Caetano, Schafer, et al. (2000) explored alcohol use as a predictor of Latinos' IPV perpetration without simultaneous examination of the underlying mechanisms influencing their initial use of alcohol. The results generated from this type of decontextualized research occasionally led to suggestions for interventions which are devoid of cultural relevance and primarily focus on men's substance use and partner-abusive behaviors, when the propelling force behind Latino males' harmful behaviors might be partly rooted in external and internalized oppression that remains unaddressed by such efforts (Handcock & Siu, 2009; Perilla, 2007).

Most of the research literature we reviewed did not distinguish between subgroups of Latinos, treating Latinos as a monolithic group and often failed to account for the vast heterogeneity among this diverse group of people (Perilla, 1999; Perilla et al., 2012). When examining predictors of IPV among Latinos, few researchers examined how subgroups of Latinx people were impacted by varying degrees. By way of illustration, studies by Caetano, Field, et al. (2005) explored alcohol consumption behaviors as predictors of IPV among couples but did not differentiate Latinos by their ethnicity, country of origin, socioeconomic status, or citizenship



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status as related to the potential association between alcohol consumption and IPV. This ultimately ties the patterns revealed in the outcome data to Latinos as a monolithic group, rather than illuminating how there may be nuance in the ways in which alcohol consumption impacts diverse Latinx communities. This human diversity potentially requires more precise prevention and intervention efforts. Contrastingly, Maldonado et al. (2020) explored how mental health issues and substance use behaviors differentially impacted Latinos' IPV perpetration according to immigration and citizenship status. Accounting for such differences among Latinos, despite how trivial they may seem at first glance, can reveal a great deal about the complex dynamics of IPV among Latinx communities and should become a common practice in this area of research.

The lack of context that researchers provide when investigating potential antecedents of Latinos' IPV behaviors also contributes to the marginalization and stigmatization of Latino males. A prime example of this can be seen in how researchers typically establish connections between machismo and Latinos' partner-abusive behaviors. In the few studies that obtained data to support claims of an existing relationship between machismo culture and men's IPV behaviors (e.g., Mancera et al., 2018), an ahistorical analysis is given in explaining the connection between these two constructs, omitting the role that colonization has in shaping the observed interplay between machismo and IPV perpetration (Espín, 1997). While an ahistorical analysis of this relationship may appear to be innocuous, it undermines the impact of the racism, sexism, and periods of genocide suffered by Indigenous peoples, perpetrated by Spanish colonizers, and the aftereffects it has on Latino/a/x communities experiencing IPV today.

#### Absence of higher levels of analysis

Less than one-third of the articles in this review addressed ecological levels of analysis beyond the individual and group levels of analysis (n = 10). This neglect may reflect researchers' assumptions that IPV among Latino couples is largely due to individual and grouplevel deficits and lack of resources, rather than being a result of systemic and historical oppression. Overlooking the roles of organizations, localities, and macrosystem or institutions in shaping the dynamics of IPV among Latino/a/x people may contribute to the marginalization and stigmatization of Latinx communities impacted by IPV. That is to say, by leaving higher ecological levels of analysis unexplored, IPV perpetration is seen to be primarily influenced by Latinos' personness and group characteristics, rather than being the result of organizational and institutional-level oppressions.

While the higher ecological levels of analysis deserve more investigation in this area of IPV research, the lower levels of analysis do not become of less importance or value to explore (Rappaport, 1977). Still, IPV research centered almost entirely around the individual and group levels of analysis has these drawbacks and would benefit from an application of critical perspectives when exploring antecedents of Latino males' IPV behaviors. Therefore, instead of conducting fewer investigations at lower levels of analysis, more critical research conducted at multiple levels of analysis is essential for making research findings as beneficial as possible for Latinos with histories of IPV perpetration and for the liberation of Latinx people impacted by the social systems and environments which ultimately give rise to occurrences and recurrences of IPV.

# Implications and recommendations for future research and practice

Given the identified shortcomings of the current state of research as it pertains to correlates, predictors, and other antecedents of Latino males' IPV behaviors, there is much room for improving how this subgroup of men are studied and understood by researchers and interventionists alike. This effort can start with an intentional effort to address the various drawbacks of conducting studies that heavily rely on deficit models, decontextualize Latinos' histories and lived experiences, or omit the exploration of higher ecological levels of analysis. More specifically, when designing research to assess the causes and influences of Latino males' IPV perpetration, researchers should strongly consider utilizing assets models and strengthsbased approaches in conjuncture with or in place of deficit models (Morgan & Ziglio, 2007). An assets model approach to IPV research could potentially help in identifying which factors mitigate the risk of men perpetrating IPV, in addition to aiding in the creation and promotion of Latinos' health and well-being (Morgan & Ziglio, 2007).

More generally, strengths-based approaches and perspectives in IPV intervention research build upon the strengths of abusive men's attributions or characteristics, such as their competencies, desires, aspirations, resources, and skills, for rehabilitative and transformative purposes (Bolton et al., 2022). Unfortunately, very few strengths-based approaches are applied when intervening with Latino males with histories of perpetrating IPV behaviors, even though Latino males hold a multitude of strengths that remain untapped and undervalued by researchers and practitioners alike (Perilla, 2007). For instance, Latino males with children have been shown to highly value their social roles as fathers, as they are exceedingly involved in the lives of their children, and also display higher levels of investment in their children's education and socioemotional development (Behnke et al., 2008; Quiñones & Kiyama, 2014)

Methodologically, there are a few practices that researchers can engage in to improve how Latino males are depicted and understood within IPV literature. First, IPV researchers who utilize quantitative methods in their work with Latinos should attempt to measure the constructs and subsequently model the variables which they assume to be driving forces in men's perpetration of IPV. While this suggestion might sound obvious and assumed to be commonplace, various researchers that discuss aspects of Latino culture (e.g., machismo) in relation to Latinos' IPV perpetration often do so without any measurement tools to assess such constructs (Kim-Godwin & Fox, 2009). This is a problematic practice in IPV research as some investigators rely on general, and sometimes faulty, assumptions about Latinos' culture and lived experiences to explain observed patterns of men's IPV behaviors without any empirical data to support such extrapolations. Throughout the years there has been an increase in the variety of available measurement tools to assess constructs relevant to Latinos' culture and lifeworld, such as the marianismo beliefs scale (Castillo et al., 2010), the Latino/a values scale (Kim et al., 2009), and the traditional machismo and caballerismo scale (Arciniega et al., 2008). In short, there are few reasons why researchers should not measure the constructs and statistically model the variables that they believe to influence Latinos' usage of IPV behaviors, especially when theorizing about the relationship between men's IPV perpetration and Latinos' culture and lifeworld.

Second, researchers can increase efforts to incorporate critical and decolonizing methodologies into their own investigations concerning Latinos who batter and the environments that foster the conditions which ultimately give rise to IPV among Latino couples (Manriquez & Mankowski, 2024). More specifically, integrating qualitative methodologies that are centered around storytelling may be a promising avenue to highlighting and challenging the various forms of oppression which partner-abusive Latinos experience (Sonn et al., 2013), in addition to providing insight into the relationship between experiencing oppression and deciding to perpetrate IPV behaviors. For instance, critical race theory and LatCrit both emphasize the methodology of critical race counterstorytelling, which entails marginalized individuals formulating narratives in which majoritarian stories are contested and systems of oppression are criticized, allowing for oppressed members of marginalized groups to experience increases in empowerment and critical consciousness (Delgado, 1989; Martinez, 2014).

## CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review and critique utilized a social-ecological, levels of analysis framework to synthesize and problematize our current understanding of the predictors, correlates, and antecedents of Latinos' IPV perpetration. The findings indicate that IPV research concerning partner-abusive Latinos relies substantially on deficit models that typically portray Latinos' cultures and personness to be risk factors for perpetrating IPV behaviors. In addition, the literature commonly decontextualizes partner-abusive Latinos, with work almost exclusively centered around the individual and group levels of analysis, uncritical in its assumptions and extrapolations about the factors influencing men's IPV perpetration. However, there are many practices researchers can engage in as a means of improving the quality of IPV research that is used or intended to inform the development and implementation of partner-abuse intervention programs that work with Latino populations. These practices include, but are not limited to, utilizing asset and strengths-based models of problem definition and representation, and being intentional about description and quantitative measurement of culture. Research and interventions may be least likely to cause epistemic and representational harm when they are guided by conceptual and methodological approaches that incorporate critical perspectives and decolonizing research methodologies.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Support for this publication was partly provided by a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Policy Fellows program. Adrian Luis Manriquez is a 2021 Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Fellow. Research reported in this publication was supported in part by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences of the National Institutes of Health Award Numbers RL5GM118963 and TL4GM118965. This manuscript has been made open access through support provided by Portland State University Library. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health. Special acknowledgment is given to Tiffany Pham for assistance with manuscript preparation.

#### CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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How to cite this article: Manriquez, A. L., & Mankowski, E. S. (2024). Social ecological predictors and correlates of Latinos' IPV behaviors: A systematic review and critique of the research literature. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12766