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Latino Pastors' Perceptions of Referring Intimate Partner Violence Victims to Secular

Esther M. Rios
Walden University

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Walden University

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Esther Mercedes Rios

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Walden University
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Abstract

Latino Pastors' Perceptions of Referring Intimate Partner Violence Victims to Secular
Organizations

by

Esther Mercedes Rios

MA, Forensic Psychology Walden University 2015

BS, Global Management, University of Phoenix 2013

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Forensic Psychology

Walden University

January 2022

Abstract

Information about intimate partner violence (IPV) perceptions within the Latino clergy population is scarce. This research study investigated perceptions, experiences, and biases, precluding Latino clergy in referring church members to outside resources. The research question focused on Latino pastors' perceptions about referring church members victims of IPV to secular organizations. Understanding clergy's IPV perceptions provided an opportunity for scholars to explore ways for clergy to discover other organizations contributions to IPV. Historical oppression was used as the framework for the study because Latino women victims of IPV experience severe victimization and are afraid to report the abuse. Previous research does not address Latino clergy in depth. Ten Latino clergy between the ages 45-60 years old who have served in a clergy position for at least 5-years and counseled IPV victims within their congregations were interviewed. The data were analyzed manually. Two themes emerged from the findings: (1) Traumatic experiences and effect in clergy's life, and (2) Cultural and religious influences. The two themes support the need for further investigation into clergy's cultural and religious biases in referring IPV victims to outside organizations, as posited in the research question. Furthermore, these findings indicate the need for educational resources and mentorship for clergy. The study is an essential contribution to the existing literature as an introductory exploration. The positive social change impact is that the community will create an atmosphere of cooperation with one common goal: decreasing the number of IPV victims.

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to all the survivors of intimate partner violence (IPV), who have shared similar journeys of restoration, and were able to overcome the daily challenges and struggles of their lived experiences. In addition, my babies Keyla Suhajili, Victor J, and my granddaughter Anika Tatiana. To the ones who completed their tour on this earth, leaving their footprints in my heart. I love you more: Rosa Luz, my youngest and the second to the older brothers Neftali Obed and Juan Antonio (forever in my heart brothers), Anita, Evelyn, my parents, my aunts, and uncles, my beloved Edwincito, Rubencito, Miguel Angel, Biviana, Joyce (China), Sharon, and uncles from both sides of the family, my cousins Elisa, Servando, and Frank, Orlando, and others that left this planet. I could not have achieved this without Dr. Jerrod Brown and my Lord.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The scholarly community has a clear definition of intimate partner violence (IPV). Abuse within relationships includes the spouse or boyfriend/girlfriend and other partners such as sexual partners or dating partners (Breiding et al., 2015). IPV causes many challenges to the structure of the family dynamics. IPV affects every member of a family, extended family, friends, and clergy. The aggressors include rape, physical violence, and stalking the IPV victim (Breiding et al., 2015). IPV can leave everlasting mental and physical scars. Society resources are depleting in treating IPV victims; hence, becoming victims becomes a burden to taxpayers. Caring for IPV victims becomes a burden in that the contribution from government resources is \$1 trillion of the charge, including treatment, medicine, legal, and victims' losses (Peterson et al., 2018).

There is a lack of research relevant to Latino IPV in religious beliefs, clergy guidance, and pastoral counseling. Latinos living in the United States hold one of the highest positions as IPV victims. In general, the Latino community has many barriers, such as cultural isolation due to migratory status, inability to communicate because of language, and low or no self-income (Harris et al., 2018). Another factor immigrant women risk is crossing the border between Mexico and the United States, exposing themselves to rape, assault, and harassment, all of which are primarily unreported. Half of the immigrants crossing the border are women (Johnson, 2018). Deserted areas along the way would provide a perfect setting for any type of sexual, mental, emotional, or any other kind of abuse (Johnson, 2018)

According to Stansfield et al. (2019), IPV homicides have continuously climbed for 5-years. For the most part, Latino males are in control and are jealous of their significant others. Perpetrators are using firearms as a way to kill their IPV victims (Stansfield et al., 2019). Although the United States approaches IPV with tenacity, very little research exists on Latino IPV victims. Colorado Latino immigrants very seldom report abuse, fearing deportation. My experience within the context of IPV within Spanish-speaking churches in El Paso County, Colorado, is that the damage goes primarily unreported because preachers do not encourage their Latino church members to report outside the church.

As ascertained by Velopus et al., 2019 a significant number of IPV perpetrators are the actual partner or ex-partners of the victim. Being so close to the perpetrator, I can comprehend how difficult it would be for the victim not to fear repercussions in reporting the abuse. Latino clergy encourage the forgiveness of sin in the combination of Latino culture, which trains women to obey their husbands at all times, hence not providing a safe way to escape the IPV situation (Velopus et al., 2019).

I conducted an exhaustive search of over 100 scholarly articles about Latino clergy and IPV. Within that search, less than 5% of those articles address Latino pastors. None of the materials addressed the relationship between Latino clergy and IPV. The Latino culture has a direct impact on how people solve family problems. Religion and culture become one definition within the Latino community; hence, separating one from the other is almost impossible (Morello, 2019). Religious beliefs pass from one

generation to the next. Latin America's religious beliefs are not understood when applying religion to the Latino culture (Morello, 2019).

Background of the Study

Religion plays an essential role in the lives of the Latino community. Faith in God is a source of family strength, upholding moral and behavioral values for the Latino community (Harris et al., 2018). Latino pastoral guidance is a poorly explored subject; literature is scarce and vague, limiting literature research. Studies have not fully explored the connection between religious beliefs and machismo within the Latino pastors and how they adhere to those beliefs (Casey et al., 2018). Thus far, the research's understanding is that Latinos are not reporting IPV to outside organizations as their White counterparts (Casey et al., 2018).

It is difficult to understand how Latinos perceive their position in complying with Latino Pastoral guidance on IPV. Furthermore, persuading them to keep their families together and not report IPV outside their church group could prove difficult given their indoctrination to follow pastors' advice. Latino church members could successfully overcome barriers to report IPV without fear of church discipline or rejection for not adhering to Latino pastoral counseling. A requirement to understand how to support Latino IPV families to interpret and make decisions about their Latino religious guidance is to explore the Latino clergy's perceptions on IPV and their own biases to include machismo and other cultural barriers. Latino church members are loyal to their pastors (Giron-Celada, 2018). The intricate process of the dynamics of obedience requires an essential acknowledgment of the power of retaining their Protestantism (Berhó et al.,

2017). The study is needed to cover a gap in understanding of the intricacies of Latino clergy's position on IPV referrals to secular professionals

Problem Statement

The Latino population continues to grow at an accelerated speed in the United States. Massey et al. 2016) ascertained that 17% of the United States population are Latinos. The birth rate for this population in the United States is 25% (Massey et al., 2016). Statistics show an alarming number of violent crimes, including IPV (Messing et al., 2015). Approximately 1,200 female victims of IPV die at the hands of their partners (Metz et al., 2019). IPV within the Latino community is higher than Whites-(Messing et al., 2015). Unfortunately, Latinos are not likely to report those violent crimes (Messing et al., 2015). For Latino female immigrants, the process of asking for assistance becomes difficult due to language barriers, religion, and fear of deportation, among other issues (Choi et al., 2016). Culture teaches young girls the importance of maintaining the family together. The burden of solving IPV is put on women by their pastors (Ames et al., 2011). Little boys learn about machismo, and they become dominant and manly men of the house (Soller & Kuhlemeier, 2017). Wives or partners assume a more submissive role as learned when growing up at home (Ames et al., 2011).

Although religious institutions have been a secure location and a place of refuge in times of trouble, clergy emphasize not separating the family (Cazarin & Grier, 2018). Latino female victims do not receive clergy encouragement to report IPV to nonreligious authorities (Choi et al., 2016). Perhaps the traditional pastor's machismo inhibits such disclosure to outside agencies. Machismo is prevalent in churches (Cazarin & Grier,

2018). The Bible also commands women to submit to their husbands. "Wives, submit yourselves to your husband as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior" (Ephesians 5:22-23 The New King James Version). Churches provide shelter for women and their children victims of IPV (Harris et al., 2018). Religious institutions encourage peaceful resolutions and adhering to cultural beliefs rather than reporting the abuse to secular institutions such as police, social workers, etc. (Harris et al., 2018). Often, Latino clergy advise abused Latino women to remain in the relationship to save their families (Choi et al., 2016). Men exercise physical and psychological acts upon their partners to demonstrate they are in control (Soller & Kuhlemeier, 2017).

Purpose of the Study

In this study, I identified self-reported behaviors and experiences precluding Latino pastors from asking their church members victims of IPV to report the issue outside the church. My goal was to equip Latino pastors with a better understanding of IPV's impact on families. Latino pastors will provide better guidance to seek secular help by understanding IPV victim needs. In turn, IPV victims could set aside any real or perceived language or other ethnic barriers by following pastoral advice to reassure church members that it is appropriate to seek outside help.

By understanding a Latino pastor's core beliefs, I documented the relationship of those beliefs to their ethnic identity. I explored and reported lived experiences and cultural influences affecting Latino pastors detaching themselves from masculinity or other biases. As the World Health Organization states, the IPV phenomenon is a costly

health issue affecting the lives of Latinos, too (Massey et al., 2016). By learning and analyzing what cultural and religious contributions precluded Latino pastors in a church setting, I interpreted other perceived IPV biases. Once a better understanding of cultural unattachment occurs, Latino pastors could easily refer IPV victims from their congregation to outside professionals.

Significance

Providing a better experience of Latino pastoral guidance on IPV could potentially improve Latino lives throughout the state of Colorado. The Latino population is growing accelerated (Massey et al., 2016), and IPV within the Latino population seems higher than the general population (Forster et al., 2017). A more in-depth study will help Latino clergy discern better guidance on reporting IPV outside the church confines.

The results from this study provided an insight into the lived experiences of Latino pastors who otherwise would not have a way to voice their perceived realities about IPV and reporting in the United States. The context of the transcription provided a better understanding of the Latino clergy's knowledge of outside agencies' assisting the Latino population. Latino pastors and other stakeholders, such as secular agencies, will use findings from this study to develop a network that will ultimately benefit IPV victims within a church setting. Better guidance from Latino pastors could securely and confidently report IPV among the Latino population, which seems not to occur. Furthermore, perhaps this study's findings would dispel distorted views such as non-reporting for fear of retaliation, discrimination, or other issues related to race (Forster et al., 2017).

Research Question

The research question for this study was: What are Latino pastors' perceptions about referring church members victims of IPV to secular organizations?

Nature of the Study

My goal in conducting this study, was to understand how Latino pastors' IPV guidance can successfully affect Latino church members reporting IPV to secular agencies. By disclosing real or perceived realities of self, the collected data from the clergy may help ~~add~~ member ~~input~~ to seek better guidance from their pastors. There is a need to describe the relationship between the understanding of the pastor's machismo and other natural or perceived lived experiences defining their guidance to church members victims of IPV in seeking assistance outside the church's confines. Immigrants are one of the most vulnerable groups for IPV (Altreuter, 2018). My goal was to discover the importance of actual or perceived barriers to changing the pastoral guidance approach to IPV.

I engaged in interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) to accomplish my goal for this study to explore perceived or real issues of Latino pastors' experience in counseling church members on IPV. Those issues may prevent the Latino clergy from referring their members to seek secular help. Husserl developed the IPA concept in the 20th century (MacLeod, 2019). The theory promotes a meaning to their experiences, hence the worthiness to study those meanings (MacLeod, 2019). I also considered Creswell's philosophical, ontological approach; I looked at the reality as seen by

participants in the study. As ascertained by Creswell and Poth, 2018 I gathered and analyzed participants' data to provide evidence of diverse perspectives.

Theoretical Framework

Historical oppression is the framework that I used to build on how Latino clergy respond to and address IPV within their congregation without outside help. Migrant Latino women in the United States face many challenges: language, separation from family members (familismo), and sometimes working outside the home to provide for their extended family members in their country of origin (Hinojosa, 2018). The migrant Latinas' expectation of working outside their homes fulfills their nurturing responsibilities (Hinojosa, 2018).

A vital issue in violence is gender inequality, an integral part of the Latino culture (Gasman & Alvarez, 2018). Latino women and men have roles assigned to them before they are born. Those roles are machismo and marianismo, appointing role expectations for men and women (Nuñez et al., 2016). I wanted to discover the link, if any, between cultural expectations such as machismo in Latino pastors attempting to solve their female members' IPV issues with only religious practice, without involving outside agencies' intervention.

Definition of Terms

Coyote: Person committing human smuggling or importing people illegally to the U.S.-Mexico border for money (Spener, 2009).

Culture: the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group also: the characteristic features of everyday existence (such as

diversions or a way of life) shared by people in a place or time (Dietrich & Schuett, 2013).

Machismo: This definition refers to the attitudes and performance of Latino males, which describes them as lovers, status-seeking among their peers by displaying dominating features toward females. The term further refers to men oppressing their female partners, showing insufficient emotional maturity, aggressiveness, and promiscuity (Araújo, 2020).

Marianismo: Latino culture expects certain behaviors from Latina females following their ancestor behavior. Some of those behaviors are how they dress, act, and respect other family members. Marianismo refers to the hope that Latinas will act in a manner conforming to their overall well-being (Piña-Watson et al., 2014).

Patriarchy: The father in the family is in charge of all family-related decisions. Father supremacy in the context of a family clan is remarkable. Men share most of the family power in terms of hierarchy by being male (Ali et al., 2017).

Religious values Are those actions or beliefs individuals consider advantageous and recommendable and that such person holds on to despite any situation or another person (Berhó et al., 2017). Religious values take precedence over any other benefits for a Christian (Stephens, 2015).

Assumptions

My first assumption was that the participants felt secure and confident enough to answer questionnaire questions willingly and accurately based on their lived experiences. I assured the participants that their participation in the study and the responses to the

questionnaires would remain anonymous. Furthermore, participant names remained unknown for this study. I encouraged participants to provide truthful and candid answers regarding their lived and perceived experiences by providing anonymity. Emphasizing the importance of receiving accurate information establishes the seriousness and significance of obtaining critical and precise information, providing reliable and credible data to other scholars.

Scope and Delimitations

A significant gap existed in exploring IPV and Latino clergy, specifically referring church members to secular agencies. The opening provides an opportunity to conduct further studies. Those studies could examine IPV and Latino clergy's understanding of giving churchgoers information to solve the increasingly IPV phenomenon. Many studies with research designs in conjunction with theoretical viewpoints are available for further research. None of the studies addressed specific ways in reaching Latino clergy to understand better the lack of church members' referral to secular agencies. I attempted to receive enough information to understand the need for further studies. Those studies are related to the clergy's preventing Latino clergy from allowing their church members to seek outside assistance. I chose to study the existing gap to clarify Latino clergy's understanding of IPV and external resources. I obtained definitions of IPV and gained some trust from the participants. Furthermore, I received concise data for other scholars to use in future studies regarding the subject. I reduced biased by candidly explaining the object of the interviews straightforwardly.

The limitation of the scope included a small number of participants. As stated before, Latinos are hesitant about engaging in any psychological endeavor because it is well-documented that in most Latin countries' psychologists are for “crazy” people. Latinos place a stigma on patients seeking psychological help by believing they have to be “mad” if they ask for help. The stigmatization of mental health care negatively affects immediate family members and friends, hence precluding the person from obtaining psychological (Salinas-Oñate et al., 2020).

Limitations, Challenges, and Barriers

In this study, I explored Latino male clergy's process when approaching IPV situations with their congregations. Furthermore, I wanted to explore any insights as to why clergy attempt to address IPV without proper training. By understanding how Latino clergy describe their lived or perceived experiences when dealing with IPV, I developed a more comprehensive approach by enhancing existing knowledge about existing barriers in referring their flocks to outside agencies. A considerable challenge is that immigrants treat the church as an all-knowing source to solve issues (Rauer & Volling, 2015).

The biggest challenge I encountered was resistance from the Latino clergy in understanding the importance of revealing their knowledge on IPV and the relationship between clergy and professionals to assist their church members better. Many Latino couples and singles seek solutions to their family problems through religion (Rauer & Volling, 2015). The perception of standards in the Latino culture may differ from other cultures in that family relationships take center stage. Latino families engage in many activities together; they share good news and bad news and rely on each other for support

(Campos & Kim, 2017). Seeking outside help for family problems is seldom allowed because such matters are strictly discussed with Latino clergy. Latino priests and pastors are the only trusted sources that some Latinos will approach without hesitation or fear (Campos & Kim, 2017).

Another challenge I encountered was convincing Latino pastors to participate in a face-to-face interview. Latinos do not open up in front of other people for the most part (Campos & Kim, 2017). However, Latino pastors share experiences among themselves and their close-knit group. One of the limitations was the lack of willingness to cooperate with the study yielded a small sample of Latino pastors in churches around El Paso County, Colorado. The results of the findings cannot be generalized to a more extensive selection of Latino clergy. A barrier I expected to encounter was the long-established lack of trust from the Latino clergy toward psychologists and counselors. Both tradition and culture within the Latino community dictate that “*la ropa sucia la lavamos en la casa*” (we wash the dirty clothes at home); hence, outside interference is not always appropriate (Goncalves & Matos, 2016). For most immigrants, the Latino clergy is the place to go if in need of counseling. As a Latina, I grew in the unwritten rules and regulations of Latino culture and traditions. Because I am Latina, I had better access to the Latino clergy; hence I expected candid and valuable responses.

Summary

The WHO decries IPV and includes abuse against women, and IPV is one of them. Furthermore, The WHO considers IPV a worldwide phenomenon and a public health issue impacting individuals and society (Goncalves & Matos, 2016). Latino

immigrants cross the borders searching for a new life in the United States, bringing their religion, customs, ideas, and the essence of their culture to the new destination. As asserted throughout this document, Latinos rely on faith to solve most problems, including IPV (Rauer & Volling, 2015).

My goals included developing a better understanding of specific knowledge of Latino clergy about referring their flocks to secular organizations for mental health assistance. The Latino clergy's lived, or perceived experiences provided a better perception of how to guide the Latino clergy to advise the church members to seek professional secular assistance. By understanding Latino clergy's opinions about outside help, I gathered insights in preventing IPV individual, economic, and societal damage. By developing a better understanding of perceptions of Latino clergy knowledge of secular resources for the church members, I have enhanced ongoing research within the scholarly community.

Additionally, I developed new insights about the approach IPV within the Latino religious community by using the theoretical approach. The results may also become a valuable tool for counselors to approach Latino Christian IPV victims better. It is imperative to know how the Latino clergy approach to IPV can connect with counselors to understand the stigma attached to seeking outside help from the church member's perspective. Latino patients are not keen to seek assistance outside the church; hence knowing how to approach their fears will enhance the patient-counselor interaction. Latinos attribute mental illnesses to punishment by God; thus, Latinos fuse religiosity with mental illness. Religion is supposed to heal churchgoers from the stigma of mental

issues (Caplan, 2019). Furthermore, engaging with Latino patients and understanding why they do not open themselves to others may dispel any biases or fears instilled by the Latino culture.

Chapter 2 explores and describes the literature and cultural values affecting potential exposure to secular agencies. Secular agencies must understand the stigma attached to church members about seeking outside help. Latino clergy exercise an incredible influence on their church members; hence, they take their words to heart. Exploring and discovering how to develop training sessions for Latino pastors to collaborate with secular agencies will alleviate some of the church members' fears.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

IPV affects people throughout the world. While processing or relieving the abuse by their perpetrator, the victims may not report the damage (Rauer & Volling, 2015). Affected families deal with IPV in different ways, and most are afraid to report the situation to the authorities for various reasons. Some IPV victims fear retaliation because they lack the means to provide for their families (Rauer & Volling, 2015). The perpetrator is the household's sole provider. Latino victims endure IPV due to language barriers and fear of talking to police or other community agencies. Many police agencies in Latin American countries do not treat IPV due to cultural and religious ideas. A good example would be that men are in charge of the family, and family members obey regardless of how harsh or painful the punishment will be.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2015) defined IPV as the use of physical or sexual abuse, stalking, and psychological aggression toward an individual. Assault includes a current or former intimate partner (i.e., spouse, boyfriend/girlfriend, dating partner, or ongoing sexual partner. According to CDC (2015), the definition of an intimate partner is a person with whom one has a close personal relationship. Some characteristics are the partner's emotional connectedness, regular contact, ongoing physical contact and sexual behavior, identity as a couple, and familiarity and knowledge about each other's lives. The relationship need not involve all of those dimensions.

Some studies focused on the Latino community are geared mainly to the English-speaking population. Although the documented findings are rich in discoveries, the Spanish-speaking population lacks cultural and religious in-depth information. In this study, I addressed the literature gap by exploring IPV from a clergy/pastoral point of view. This chapter reviews Latino clergy biases to include machismo, cultural, religious, and other perceptions influencing their ability to refer church members to outside professional organizations. My goal was to demonstrate the lack of research on Latino pastoral guidance to church members searching for help outside the church setting's confines.

Literature Search Strategy

The completion of the literature review employed various search databases to produce a list of relevant literature. Databases and written resources that I used were from the past 5-years to compile an exhaustive literature review. Walden University Thoreau Library Portal was the primary resource and others such as PsycINFO, Education Resource Complete, SAGE, ProQuest. To cross-reference and for updates in current literature, I accessed Google Scholar. The keywords used for general searches were *Latino, pastoral, clergy IPV*, and other related terms. I combined keywords to narrow my searches using the Boolean operators *and*, or *not*.

I searched terms and compared them to those of other researchers for accuracy. The following review of the literature reflects the information I gathered through those searches. I found no psychological articles or religious research that directly addressed Latino pastors' lived experiences, their leadership role in the church, or the relationship

with their congregations in IPV matters. There were no studies on Latino pastoral guidance for their congregations related to IPV.

Conceptual Foundation

Understanding how different issues affect individuals is an intricate process. The IPV phenomenon subscribes to the study of various theories. The closest approach I discovered was the feminist theory. The feminist theory describes how a group of concerned women viewed social inequality for women's rights. Elizabeth Cardy and a group of females explored gender inequality. The group examined feminine roles in experiences, their interests as individuals, and other aspects of human behavior (Chodorow, 1989, 1991). In 1848, Elizabeth Cady Stanton organized a convention to address women's fundamental civil and religious rights and other social benefits (DuBois, 1987). An argument for feminist theory is that society's patriarchal organization directly connects to patriarchal-dominant culture; hence, a reflection in behaviors towards women.

Definitions of masculinity include the control of women. by withholding money and affection (Tomaszewska & Krahe, 2018). The feminist approach addressed gender inequality, and its central argument is that masculinity is the most significant factor between male-female violence and aggression. Aggression toward women is higher in men at a rate of 11.7% and victimization at 28.4% (Tomaszewska & Krahe,2018). Research in feminist theory is an ongoing endeavor to find a solution to IPV's growing issue and other social and cultural related problems associated with physical, mental, and sexual abuse.

The feminist theoretical approach could be substantially helpful in exploring the causes of sibling rivalry, which may contribute to IPV (Horsburgh & Ippolito, 2018). Consequently, studies revealed that learning occurs through interactions with family members and others. As stated by Bandura in his social learning theory, children are more likely to imitate behaviors when they identify with a person, when this person is very familiar to them and displays approval. Researchers investigated how medical personnel learned from role models in a hospital setting (Horsburgh & Ippolito, 2018). The results of this study showed adults in the survey learned from role models.

Review of the Literature

IPV is a significant public health issue (C.D.C., 2020). Statistics from the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (N.I.S.V.S.) demonstrate over 10 million men and women experience IPV from their current or former partner in the United States (C.D.C. 2020). However, the number is not divided by race or nationality. Several barriers prevent studies from identifying a precise amount of IPV victims. Fear of retaliation from perpetrators, among other obstacles, hinders a more in-depth investigation (C.D.C. 2020). I reviewed the literature demonstrating the interaction with culture, machismo, marianismo, patriarchy, and religious values. At the end of the literature review, I identified the need for further research in other areas influencing IPV from a Latino perspective. Furthermore, my study also paves the way for other scholars' new research concerning Latino pastoral behavior towards IPV.

Culture

The Latino culture's influence is essential in understanding why Latinos choose to follow cultural rules and beliefs. Latino culture is ingrained in children from when they are born (Stenis et al., 2015). Cultural knowledge is a bridge allowing practitioners to reach out to communities needing assistance with IPV issues. To provide a culturally competent practice within IPV on populations professing spiritual faith, practitioners should be cognizant of the person's culture, religion, and spirituality (Stenis et al., 2015). Thus, providing care for IPV victims and survivors should be holistic. Latino church members trust their religious leaders as part of their culture.

Understanding Latino culture leads to better understanding when assessing and treating IPV and other victims of violence. Scholars agree on the need for incorporating knowledge of the victims' cultural backgrounds when addressing IPV. Among Latino victims of IPV, unique cultural issues deserve consideration to develop a culturally competent treatment (Tomaszewska & Krahe, 2018). Wang et al. (2016) asserted that evidence-based best practices best approach a specific population's needs. - Shakya et al. (2016)) identified how gender roles the family's needs before the self-related to low rates of disclosure of IPV. Cultural norms and values may indicate disinterest in reporting and seeking treatment among Latinos. Most Latino men are under the impression that their communities accept IPV perpetration without any repercussions. Latina women that take such behavior are more likely to experience IPV victimization (Shakya et al., 2016).

In a study conducted by Fischer et al. (2016), scholars suggested using different IPV coping mechanisms to avoid abuse depending on women's cultural background.

Latinos do not report IPV because their children are present when the abuse occurs. They are afraid of having their children taken away by social agencies. Furthermore, the repercussion of reporting the abuse may produce a more severe beating by the perpetrator. An essential fact within the Latino culture was the fear of reporting because most likely, children are present when the abuse occurs; hence IPV victims may become victims of the system twice (Juby et al., 2014). I researched literature about the role of the Latino mother's protective function to see the connection between abuse during childhood and becoming a perpetrator as an adult. Unfortunately, literature on the subject was minimal (Stein et al., 2018). One of IPV symptoms is depression, and Latina mothers have a significantly high level of depression while experiencing IPV episodes (Stein, 2019). Parenting skills become a compromise concerning affection and engaging in a loving relationship with their children (Stein et al., 2018).

IPV directly affects children's psychological adjustment and may develop post-traumatic stress disorder (P.T.S.D.) and significantly impacts their behavior toward other children and adults (Rosser-Limiñana et al., 2020). Mothers struggle to provide the necessary material needs to their children while battling their own needs, such as assistance in coping and dealing with IPV. Race or nationality, poverty, lack of resources, fear of deportation, and other elements prevented Latino mothers from providing the assistance their children need to deal with IPV (Herbell et al., 2020).

Machismo

In Latin American countries, accepting and adapting to machismo is essential in maintaining the family's peace and well-being. Machismo played a significant role within

perceptions of gender roles in IPV reporting. The division of gender roles in the Latino culture consisted of machismo and marianismo (Nuñez et al., 2016). As asserted by Postmus et al. (2014), boys start training to become the man of the house from an early age. Gender roles are specific and women become dependent on men's decisions. In Latino households, men are in charge. Women grow up under the shadow of their brothers or other male figures (Postmus et al., 2014). Nuñez et al. (2016) found that the machismo construct affects emotions and physical health. Latino culture dictates mothers are the primary caregivers. Latino fathers are stereotyped as the breadwinner and mothers are primary caregivers, in charge of teaching the children to become good citizens and homemakers (Valiquette-Tessier et al., 2018).

Stephens et al., (2016) conducted a study to discover perceptions on Hispanic men's strategies to initiate sexual intercourse with women. One of the limitations they encountered was that the study targeted a specific demographic group. Although the survey revealed flaws, the conclusion with the demographic studied provided the actual trades of traditional machismo. The machismo ideology asserts that Latino men prove their masculinity through aggression and infidelity, among other negative behaviors associated with machismo (Stephens et al., 2016). By accepting machismo and patriarchy, IPV risks increments significantly. Tolerance of holding traditional values within the Latino community leaves females unprotected from IPV behaviors (Valdovinos & Mechanic, 2017).

Although the feminist movement explored equality for women, IPV affects children in that the abuse paradigm has not changed. Bandura asserted that exercising

control over the core existence and life quality is the core of humanity (Bandura, 2001). In the machismo paradigm, the father exercises total control over the mother. IPV is a multifaceted and multicausal phenomenon and impacts children witnessing such violence. In a study conducted by Kazemi et al. (2018), they reported IPV aggression is a product of observation and learning. Thus, one can assert that children witnessing IPV learn to become perpetrators by watching their fathers beat their mothers.

Marianismo

Marianismo has both positive and negative effects on female performance, affecting their overall well-being. Furthermore, marianismo states that Latin women are nurturing, self-sacrificing, celibate, and vehemently stronger than men (Da Silva et al., 2018). Under this construct, Latino women placed their families before themselves. This self-sacrificing behavior is an understanding of maintaining family harmony and unity, hence sacrificing self, which leads to depression and anxiety. Thus, IPV reporting is under suppression and influence Latinas IPV victims to remain in the abusive relationship (Nuñez et al., 2016).

Patriarchy

Latino families adhere to strict family customs. Patriarchy is a crucial ingredient in IPV among Latino women. Men have the right to impose their beliefs and religious values on family members. Female submission is essential to prevent violence (Ali et al., 2017). Women must submit to their husbands to the extent, but not limited to, being raped by their husbands. In a patriarchal culture, women do not exercise sexual autonomy. Within the script of marital rape, women must not report such an act because

it is just part of the culture (Valdovinos & Mechanic, 2016). Thus, marital rape is a derivative of IPV. The researchers' understanding of the Latino patriarchy's fabric is limited. The findings are scarce due to the little literature on the subject. However, one discovery well established is that patriarchy plays a vital role in keeping IPV unreported outside homes and religious institutions (Valdovinos & Mechanic, 2016)

Religious Values

Religious beliefs are essential to immigrants. One religion that sustains and bridges immigrants' faith and ethnicity is Protestantism (Berhó et al., 2017). Protestantism is rising among immigrants affirming race and their cultural values. It allows immigrants to find a valuable source of faith, but temples allow communicating in Spanish. Guatemalan communities speak both Spanish and indigenous languages, hence incorporating both traditional cultures. In Oregon, a Guatemalan Pentecostal church exemplifies how the congregation integrates their indigenous culture into their church (Berhó et al., 2017).

To better comprehend the pastor's religious mentality, one must go back to the religious movement in Azusa street. The Azusa Street great revival significantly affected the modern Pentecostal movement influencing most Pentecostal-derived denominations (Rodriguez, 2016). Religious leaders were practicing religious faith expected church members to abide by their interpretation of God's rules. Hispanic pastors hold erroneous concepts, which in turn affect their congregations. One of the requirements to become a pastor is to live a blameless and shameless life. Based on the scriptures in 1 Timothy 3:2,

"Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach."

Before the 1980s, the clergy was not aware of IPV. In the late 1980s, religious leaders became mindful of IPV occurring within their congregation and the Latino community. The alertness of was then labeled domestic violence among clergy and pastoral care providers grew around the late 1980s (Cooper-White, 2011). Because faith-based organizations do not clearly define the services they provide, scholars have little understanding of what type of IPV services clergy provide for Latino church members. The Latino culture becomes one with religion in that pastors' counseling takes precedence for the best guidance. Latinos seek assistance from Latino pastors regardless of their education level or understanding of any subject, including IPV (Davis et al., 2020).

Victim Services

Besides the emotional, health, and other IPV issues, there is a costly economic burden in treating IPV victims (Peterson et al., 2018). A cost analysis conducted in 2017 identified a taxpayer's cost of \$3.6 trillion. The total price included male and female IPV victims. Preventing IPV could lessen not only the financial value but also benefit all parties involved (Peterson et al., 2018). Immigrant women experiences added difficulties in communication due to a lack of understanding of legal rights and becoming cognizant of their new culture and social adaptation to original cultural and social composition (Stockman et al., 2015). Like a domino effect, IPV provides victims an opportunity to engage in other destructive behaviors such as substance and alcohol abuse. An interesting

finding is that religious involvement demonstrated a long-term coping and protective effect on protecting Latinas (De La Rosa et al., 2018).

Clergy Input and Participation

In this research, there was no participation from Latino IPV church member victims. However, the analysis may discover if any of the participant clergy members have been IPV victims. Male Latino pastors participated in the survey. Because IPV leaves lifetime consequences, there was a need to pursue a possible and stress-free environment to seek victims' answers. There is a lack of empirical research in Latino pastoral advising or suggesting to Latino church members seeking secular IPV assistance. An absence of analysis existed regarding the extent to which the pastor's biases, specifically how machismo affects pastoral decisions to assist IPV victims in seeking professional help outside the church. This study's purpose was two-fold; the first was to understand better Latino pastors' perceptions of assisting Latina female church members victims of IPV in need of secular referrals. The second was to examine the extent to which Latino pastors' machismo and other biases influenced IPV perceptions in counseling their congregation. Researchers have examined pastoral leadership IPV training to include long and short-term benefits (Drumm et al., 2018). Literature has not addressed Latino pastors' specific lack of IPV understanding and pastoral biases experiences and how those biases affected leadership practices among church members while serving the congregation. This study also explored the lack of literature regarding the Latino pastor's understanding of IPV and its effect on the Latino congregation.

Experiencing how Latino church leadership viewed and interpreted IPV within their group provides the rationale for performing this study.

Latino clergy is usually the primary source of support or problem-solving. Understanding their experiences and perceptions is essential to offering better assistance to their Latino parishioners. Because the Latino population presents unique characteristics, IPV can be an enormous threat to their community (Mowder et al., 2018). Furthermore, IPV possesses a harmful effect on children and other family members (Masbad, 2007). IPV victims and their families can benefit from pastoral guidance to seek professional agencies to help victims' family members.

According to Eubanks Fleming and Resick (2016), an average of 20% of women will experience episodes of intimate partner violence. Unreported IPV is a serious health concern among females (Olayide & Clisdell, 2017). Various studies provide data about IPV and services available to all ethnic groups. However, those services only assist white, middle-class women (Mowder et al., 2018). Thus, work should adapt existing facilities to serve better the Latino community incorporating cultural, moral, and spiritual language within services.

A significant benefit for the Latino clergy was obtaining concise information about their own biases and becoming better equipped to become a liaison between the church and secular agencies, paying specific attention to Latino culture, machismo, and religious values. Researchers have not examined the connection between religious beliefs and IPV (Jankowski et al., 2018). Although it is challenging to track immigrants'

religious affiliation (Calvillo & Bailey, 2015), I hoped to shed some light on the effect of pastoral guidance on IPV within Latino/Hispanic protestant congregations.

Latino females experience IPV at a rate of 1 in 6 (Chiara et al., 2014). Jankowski et al., 2018 assert submission is one reason females tolerate the abuse. Mowder et al., 2018 indicated that undocumented Latinas endure a higher IPV rate than their documented counterparts. Choi et al., 2016 discovered that faith is an integral part of Latino immigrants' cultural and religious beliefs, contributing to the lack of IPV reporting. Instead of legally documenting the abuse, victims remained silent and submitted to the violence because culture dictated that women had to submit to their husbands (Jankowski et al., 2018). Another reason for not reporting IPV to authorities is that churches are designated safe places for undocumented personnel; hence, a haven for all Latinos in general (Portillo, 2018). Perhaps pastors perceived they were protecting their church members by just providing pastoral counseling. Pastors may adhere to the attachment theory, which may be worth exploring when discussing pastors' IPV perceptions. Attachment theory is a framework explaining individuals' relationships with God (Jankowski, 2014).

Drumm et al., 2018 asserted that even non-religious individuals seek assistance in churches in times of need. Finding support within religious organizations is not a new trend. Religious leaders exercise considerable influence on their flock, and perhaps such weight precludes members from reporting IPV to outside agencies (Portillo, 2018). I attempted to obtain the pastor's understanding of IPV reality by addressing the research

topic and answering questions. Church members in need of secular referrals will benefit from pastors' awareness that secular organizations' attention is a positive step.

Behnke et al. (2012) identified that Latino clergy's understanding of IPV becomes essential in developing programs to help them engage and address IPV. Historically, Latinos in the United States are less likely to seek IPV assistance or attend violence prevention and intervention services than members of other cultures (Olayide & Clisdell, 2017). Latino males do not see IPV intervention as an equalizer between males and females and more respectful and caring as the family leader (Olayide & Clisdell 2017).

Latino clergy could benefit from becoming allies with IPV survivors. Thus, proper training and education on IPV could better assist Latino pastors in reporting outside their temples to their IPV parishioners. (Drumm et al., 2018) findings in their study of IPV training project with 104 Seventh-Day Adventist pastors demonstrated that social workers play a crucial role in training pastors to address IPV disclosures appropriately. Although Drum et al. (2018) conducted their study in a different church setting, perhaps tailoring their research to conform to Latino IPV needs could produce similar results. A healthy family adds health to the community in general.

Summary and Conclusions

The review and examination of the literature illustrated the need for pastors' IPV awareness. It was imperative to understand the role and impact religion and religious beliefs exercise on IPV based on spiritual values. Some of the articles I examined clearly defined the need for church members to seek assistance outside the church. Most pastors lack the necessary training to handle the specific needs of IPV victims. Furthermore, I

discovered that many Latino pastors in Colorado Springs do not have a degree in counseling, and very few have undergraduate degrees. I obtained this information while visiting and meeting Latino pastors in El Paso County, Colorado. By gaining a better understanding of Latino pastors' knowledge and experience with IPV, I saw an opportunity to discover clergy's understanding and approach to IPV situations. Furthermore, by making Latino pastors aware of the need for further secular counseling, IPV victims will stand a better chance for assistance within their congregations.

I saw a need for further studies concerning IPV and Latino pastoral perceptions in the articles reviewed. The gap I discovered is the Latino clergy's lack of knowledge of referring IPV victims to secular agencies. There was a need for Latino pastors to understand how to become familiar with IPV symptoms and signs. Second, clergy needs to understand IPV victims' experiences within the scope of their limitations as pastors. After conducting an exhausting literature search, I could not find any recent literature on Latino clergy and IPV. The opportunity to research the subject was open to examining the relationship between machismo, familismo, religion, and IPV.

Chapter 3 addressed the research methods of the proposed study. An examination of the research methodology and design was part of this chapter. Also, I explained data collection and analysis along with participant tools. I employed ethnology as the methodology of this qualitative study to assess the participants' thoughts and feelings. I explored Latino pastors, and Latino priests' lived experiences counseling church members on IPV. Also, I wanted to understand their perception in encouraging church members to reach out to secular professional organizations. By examining and analyzing responses

from Latino pastors and priests, I intended to determine what barriers or biases existed to understand better why IPV victims were not benefiting from sources other than church-only counseling. Ravitch & Carl (2016) suggested that the goal is to discover the best outcome for the study.

Chapter 3

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the current conditions and challenges that Latino pastors were experiencing in providing their congregation members who were IPV victims with other professional venues outside the church. I explored the Latino pastors' lived experiences or perceptions and how those experiences precluded them in referring IPV church members to outside resources. I employed analysis approach to address the research question What are Latino pastors' perceptions about referring church members victims of IPV to secular organizations? By using this methodology, I hoped to identify biases, misinformation, and barriers to help the researcher obtain adequate information to design, measure, and validate the premise (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

Data Analysis

I linked the logical and natural flow from the problem statement, purpose, and research question with its components in a clearly defined outline (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Per protocol and assisting with definitions, themes, etc., I manipulated data collection without any external software to produce a graphical display of computer code software to obtain themes, trends, and patterns (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I did not use NVivo 8 because data analysis was minimal, and saturation occurred within the 10 participants. I manipulated the data manually, using a participant demographic matrix, a data analysis memo, a theme matrix, and recorded face-to-face interviews.

Protection of Participants' Rights

My main concern was the protection of participants' rights. I ensured to reduce physical or psychological harm to the volunteer sample population. At the beginning of the interviews, I explained the study goal to the participants, the study's purpose, and all its components. All participants recorded their consent to participate in the study in a recording device. I secured verbal statements for the confidentiality of any recoverable data and coding. All participants' identifiable information was omitted, during, and after for anonymity as ascertained by Anderson et al., 2016.

I employed qualitative traditions of inquiry used within the study. The goal to conduct a complex and intensive analysis of individual Latino pastors who provide Christian counseling on IPV to their church members became a reality. Participants consisted of active Latino clergy personnel with direct involvement in counseling their church members on IPV issues. I explore reasons for the lack of referral outside the church. I compile a comprehensive data collection method through face-to-face interviews to choose themes, similarities, and shared experiences. To protect the discussions' integrity, I recorded and transcribed all answers word per word. Participants recorded a confidentiality agreement. A clear explanation of the entire process occurred before the start of the interviews. Therefore, I obtained formal consent from all study participants before the meetings started and after describing the interview process, interview intent, data integrity, and discussion.

Data Collection Procedures

This research study was conducted in Colorado Springs, Colorado, specifically in El Paso County, by face-to-face interviews from a selected population of eight volunteer Latino pastors and two Latino catholic priests. After conducting face-to-face meetings, the collection of data analysis began. The data were deductive as prescribed by Ravitch & Carl, 2016. The approach was a qualitative case study using a natural setting to obtain data through interviews and observations as ascertained by Ravitch & Carl, 2016.

Data collection procedures started with a sample population of Latino clergy who served as a pastor or priest who served the Latino community within the past 5-years. Participants included ten volunteer pastors and priests to collect data in presenting a suitable representation of the clergy population. All volunteer samples recorded a voluntary desire-to participate in the study in a recording device. I allowed sufficient time for questions related to the research or other matters concerning the investigation. Furthermore, samples received assurance that their names or any identifiable data would not appear in any area of the findings.

Trustworthiness

As ascertained by Martinez-Ballesté et al., 2018 trustworthiness has its basis on the credibility established by Latino pastors and priests associated and working with the Latino community. Other organizations with similar mission statements validated Transferability. Conducting an audit trail proved conformability. The trust between participants and me was mutual. That trust produced details of the data analysis and a clear understanding of all parties' decisions. The research was dependable through

consistent results that will enable other scholars to replicate the same or similar effects.

(Martínez-Ballesté et al., 2018).

Research Design Derived Logically from the Problem Statement

Qualitative Research Method

Ethnology

I reviewed five approaches to determine the best fit for this research problem, purpose, and question. Ethnology's first approach differentiates how culture works to understand the issues or problems within a sample population; hence, this research explored one or more cases within a context. Researchers who have identified their case-specific boundaries and can analyze other issues in-depth can also benefit from this type of research. One of the challenges with ethnology lies in determining an equitable example for study (Chih-Pei & Yan-Yi, 2017).

Narrative

The second approach is A narrative research study consisting of a written account of sampling stories or their recollection of lived experiences during structured interviews. This type of approach research provides a collection of experiences in chronological order. The researcher must collect comprehensive data and clearly understand when reading the lived experiences of the sampling population. Chih-Pei & Yan-Yi, 2017 asserted that the historical study is a fantastic way to understand sampling lived experiences. I wanted a more significant sampling group to use this research, but recruitment was difficult.

Phenomenology

Another research method I examined was phenomenology, which is very similar to historical research, according to Chih-Pei & Yan-Yi, 2017. A difference between the two is that phenomenology captures notable developments of samples within a specific population. However, understanding the phenomenon or events from a more excellent philosophical analysis can be challenging, as asserted by Chih-Pei & Yan-Yi, 2017. The definition of previous learning is knowing something before life experience. The opposite, *posteriori*, means afterlife experiences. Padilla-Diaz, 2015, p.2384 stated, "All qualitative research has a phenomenological aspect to it, but the phenomenological approach cannot be applied to all qualitative researchers." I found that Padilla-Diaz's assertion applied to my research. Although my research has a phenomenological aspect, this type of research has no application to mine.

Grounded Theory

Del Pino et al., 2017 ascertains that the grounded theory works better when no argument or the researcher departs from a new analytical process explanation. One of the challenges of the grounded theory is setting aside any preconceived notions of any approach. The most important thing to remember about grounded theory is that research using this method collects qualitative data systematically. I could not use this theory because my study did not systematically take place. Furthermore, my research had a small number of participants yielding limited data.

Ethnography

Ethnography research has similarities with grounded theory in that ethnography collects a substantial amount of data from samples sharing the same or similar experiences or events. The difference is that the sharing of those experiences could occur at different locations. The definition of ethnography includes a scientific-methodical explanation of a group of people and cultures (Hammersley, 2017). A challenge with this type of research is understanding cultural anthropology and subsystems and cultures. Another definition states ethnography as an interactive process involving recurring societal variables and how those variables relate to one another (Hammersley, 2017).

I used a qualitative case study approach to address an existing gap between the clergy's IPV counseling effectiveness, excluding external secular professional counseling. Under the lens of the critical phenomenon, I explored the feminist theoretical approach to determine how rivalry among family members affects IPV perception among the clergy. I conducted. The case study approach enables the researcher to conduct interviews in person while controlling the sample population with accurate information and ensuring adequate and legal responses obtained from samples (Fusch et al., 2018). Case studies are pragmatic, and a flexible research tool in which validity and purposefulness are not confusing, and the platform has a clear definition (Fusch et al., 2018). Any case study's goal is to advance theory by filling an existing gap or validating a current approach (Fusch et al., 2018).

I explored the above suitable research approaches. The ethnology approach seems the best fit since it determines a particular culture's attempt to understand problems or

issues while sampling a portion of a population. Ravitch & Carl, 2016 ascertained that case studies included examining the case in-depth while underlining key issues, focusing on the analysis. Other parts of case studies identify 2-5 problems while trying to find potential solutions or changes. When conducting a case study, the goal is to select the best solution to the problem the researcher may encounter (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). A challenge the researcher may meet is discovering and identifying a valid case to conduct the study. Some researchers find that ethnology provides specific boundaries for a suitable topic for analysis using the stated paradigm. After carefully reviewing the options, I chose the-ethnology approach, purpose, and question for this research problem. Chih-Pei & Yan-Yi, 2017 determined that ethnology merges situations or problems by exploring one or more cases within a context.

Choosing ethnology allowed me to understand the link between Latino pastors' knowledge of IPV and cultural and religious biases. I explored reasons precluding the clergy from referring their church members from obtaining secular assistance. I analyzed the data obtained from those interviews and determined any gaps. Subsequently, I wrote recommendations for further research, if necessary, to improve the Latino pastors' knowledge in setting aside any biases to allow their congregations to seek secular assistance with IPV-related issues.

The qualitative approach, along with ethnology methodology, supported the theoretical framework of this study. By analyzing transcripts from interviews compiled with observations, I discovered themes and other relevant information. Those themes

helped me better understand the Latino clergy's need to understand IPV and the benefits of interacting with secular institutions willing to help their congregations.

Role of the Researcher

My role in this research was to become a human instrument for objectively collecting data and outside opinions, concerns, lived experiences, and other information from the sample's perspective. I received the data for further analysis and to come up with themes and recommendations. The sample population received news about my educational background. I explained the reasons for collecting data for the study. One of the meeting's main objectives was to ensure all participants engaged in the study out of their free will. I recorded the participants' consent in a recording instrument before the beginning of interviews and any written papers about the discussions. I journaled the participant's reactions, insights, reflections, and other interview-related information shared during the sessions. When conducting face-to-face meetings, I asked used probing questions while applying critical listening paying attention to details such as body language.

Acting as a human instrument, I collected the data provided by samples. During the last 10-years, Latino pastors and priests served the Latino population as the sample population. The criteria consisted of 8 Latino pastors and 2 Latino priests who willingly accepted participating in this study. I assumed various roles, such as the author, interviewer, observer, coder, themes, and identified patterns. I intended to establish rapport with participants by helping them feel comfortable relating their lived experiences as Latino clergy-counselors of Latino IPV church members.

Personal or Professional Relationship

My primary role in this study was to participate and observe the experiences of those Latino pastors and priests acting as counselors of their congregations' IPV members. I intended to join as the collection instrument and not establish a personal relationship with the sample population. None of the participants were current or intimate acquaintances of mine. There was no conflict of interest or personal relationships with the sample population. The researcher did not attend any of the sample population's churches (2019).

Researcher Bias

I used a journal to mitigate any biases or misconceptions I might have as the researcher in charge of this study. Journaling helped me express any reactions or feelings I experienced during my interaction with participants in this study (Rios, 2019). The completion of selecting the sample population was random and without unknown samples' coercion to prevent potential researcher bias. Sutton and Zubin (2015) stated that researchers are conducting their study to hear the sample's voice; hence, the researcher should put themselves in the sample's shoes. As Sutton & Zubin, 2015 wrote: "Qualitative research can help researchers access the thoughts and feelings of research participants, which can enable the development of an understanding of the meaning that people ascribe to their experiences. Therefore, I did not change any answers samples to avoid any researcher's bias. All recorded interviews provided insights from the participants' perspectives. Taking notes preserved the authenticity of the participant's responses.

In conducting this study, the goal was not to allow any personal feelings, biases, or anything else to interfere with participants' voices, opinions, and beliefs during and after the interviews. I practiced diligence by being objective throughout the study. I approached this endeavor without biases, assumptions, or other barriers that may spoil or damage the survey. Journaling helped remember and provide data to tie to discovery or themes throughout the interview process. Journaling is an excellent tool to maintain the researcher's honesty and trustworthiness (Creswell, 2013)

Methodology

Participation Selection

The population chosen for this study were Latino pastors and priests 45 years or older who have counseled Latino parishioners on IPV issues. None of the participants had a license as counselors in the health profession. A person is considered an adult at the age of 18 in the United States; hence, participants gave informed consent. Most of the pastors and priests participating in the study were bilingual; thus, I translated the recorded interviews for only a few participants with IRB authorization. Interviews were conducted at a central location to provide security, comfort, relaxing atmosphere to prevent any data corruption or leakage.

Sampling and Recruiting

The selection of all candidates was random; representatives participated of their own free will without any cohesion. The sample population consisted of Latino clergy who served as a pastor or priests serving the Latino community within the past 5-years. The composition of participants was (8) Latino Christian pastors and (2) priests to collect

data. The sample group was a suitable representation of the clergy population. All volunteer samples signed a consent form and received a detailed explanation of the study. The researcher allowed time for questions related to the research.

Samples received reassurance that their names or any other identifiable data appeared in any area of the findings. The saturation rate's definition is when a researcher obtains sufficient data during the study's collection phase, and the need for further data collection is no longer necessary. Researchers achieve data saturation when collecting new data that does not provide new information in previous literature (Saunders et al., 2017). This study performed a saturation rate because very few studies are available, and no recent data has appeared concerning IPV and Latino clergy. Furthermore, most participants had similar answers to several of the questions posed.

The research about the relationship between Latino pastors and advising their church members to seek professional secular assistance was minimum. Creswell (2013) stated that three to ten participants would suffice for a remarkable study of IPV and clergy.

Recruiting was achieved by asking pastors in person, by telephone, and by messages asking their willingness to participate in the study. All samples asked what the purpose of the study was and how they could collaborate with the experiences as clergy. I provided a brief introduction of the survey explaining the goal, how the interviews would occur, and privacy handling. My telephone and email address were available for further questions regarding the process or any concerns. All samples agreed to participate voluntarily. Furthermore, flyers were emailed to dozens of potential participants to Latino

Christian and Latino Catholic churches to ensure enough participation. The leaflet contained my information and a brief introduction to the study (See Appendix A).

Criteria for Participation

All 10 participants had to be at least 45 years of age or older. Furthermore, participants had to be Latino/Hispanic pastors and priests who had the opportunity to deal with IPV within their church members within the last five years. Trying to recruit Latino pastors to participate in this study was highly challenging. Latinos, in general, follow strict cultural and religious rules, hence the difficulty to convince the small sample to participate. One of the requirements was that participants have been counseling church members who have experienced IPV. Participants had to disclose their lived experiences willingly when acting as counselors with IPV church members. Lastly, participants were required to share their understanding of IPV within the Latino/Hispanic culture and religious beliefs.

Informed Consent

Before any engagement in the study, I explained the recorded informed consent to all participants. Participants had ample time to review the consent form and to ask questions before registering their verbal consent. The goal was to ensure samples understood their responsibility as well as my responsibility during the study. Consent forms did not have participants' signatures. I obtained recorded participants' permission before starting the interview. The goal was to create an atmosphere of privacy and a secure environment. I ensured samples understood the seriousness of the research and the confidentiality involved. I alerted participants of their right to withdraw at any time while

the investigation occurred if they felt uncomfortable or did not want to disclose information required to complete the study. Furthermore, I let participants know that withdrawal from the process had no consequences for them. The informed consent warned participants of any potential harm that could occur while reliving their experiences.

Samples received a profound explanation of what confidentiality entailed for this research. Also, participants received information concerning the data they provided and how it would be further analyzed to discover themes and other relevant data. It was necessary to explain and discuss confidentiality and respond to all questions posed by participants regarding consent to build trust with participants (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I informed participants that I would substitute their real names with pseudonyms to help protect their anonymity when producing results from the study's data. The clergy was labeled P1 through P10. The researcher discussed any potential risks with participants by providing an introduction. Examples of a potential risk would be retelling and reliving their experiences with their church members or perhaps themselves. Another potential risk was that by retelling or reliving the IPV experience, the participant was potentially harming themselves psychologically, indirectly, or directly. By providing straightforward guidelines and clarifications regarding informed consent forms, I allowed participants to withdraw before or during the study.

I emailed a copy of the informed consent for participants' records. Furthermore, I recorded verbal consent in a recorder before starting the interview. The recorded cassettes are in a safe inside my home office. I explained to participants that I have sole custody

and password of the safe. I will keep all data collected from participants for five years as required by Walden University. Furthermore, I provided all participants with a list of local mental health and trained professionals dealing with IPV issues.

Instrumentation

Error reduction must be one of the main goals in conducting a qualitative study. The researcher ensured to follow a method that other scholars can trace. Collecting and interpreting data was crucial in emerging themes; hence, the analysis was consistent with the researcher's data collection (Laumann, 2018). Data collected was sufficient given the small pool of participants. The researcher collected data through face-to-face interviews, observations, analyzing documents, and interviewing samples in generating data. To accomplish the required tasks in conducting the survey, I used the Interview Guide Questionnaire created by me (Appendix B) in May 2021. The IRB approved the questionnaire. I developed the questionnaire for this study, and it was the first time this questionnaire was used on a survey.

Additionally, I created a semi structured interview schedule log before the participation of participants (Appendix C). Finally, I drafted an observations sheet with very few notes for documentation purposes since interviews quickly went on. The latter had entries of nonverbal and other apparent behaviors while conducting the interviews. I kept a Data Collection Log to track my progress. No historical or legal documents served as a source of data.

Interviews

The interviews for this study were face-to-face with Latino clergy who provided guidance or counseling to IPV members of their church. These interviews took place at a secure location that provided privacy and allowed for mutual confidentiality. All conversations were recorded with each participant's permission, as stated in the informed consent form. Also, I had no helper in obtaining information. All interviews were recorded in a recording device for data integrity. When posing questions to participants, the researcher must remember that such items align with the research question (Castillo-Montoya, 2016).

After each interview, I transcribed the audio recording immediately and utmost care for accuracy and avoided mistakes (Assarroudi et al., 2018). I did not use real names during and after the recording to protect the sample's anonymity. "A researcher's interview protocol is an instrument of inquiry asking questions for specific information related to the aims of a study (Patton, 2015). Following interview protocol was an integral instrument for facilitating a conversation with participants (lived or perceived experiences and ideas about the subject) and protecting the participants' data. I asked questions following the Interview Guide (Appendix B). The inquiry provided general background information on the participant, such as their name, age, and the extent of their involvement in counseling church members on IPV-related issues. Interviews began with an open-ended question; towards the end of the meetings, I asked closed-ended questions to better understand participants' stories and accuracy. For further clarification on participants' answers, I asked probing questions when necessary, gathering as much

description as possible for explanation and meaning. Each interview lasted and approximately 45 and 60 minutes in total. The chosen location provided little distraction for participants. The questions posed were relevant and appropriate for my study.

Data Analysis

An essential step in data analysis is a systematic search for meaning (Assarroudi et al., 2018). The process of data analysis requires immersing in the data to find specific themes and other significant findings (Assarroudi et al., 2018). I read and examined the written data multiple times to identify emerging themes. I compared relationships and other clustering themes. Listening to interview recordings several times helped me understand at a deeper level samples answers to questions and different lived experiences they expressed during the interviews. I attempted to capture body language expressions, comments about the conversation, and other significant words articulated by the participants on my notes to understand participants' narratives better. Furthermore, I asked for clarification on clerical terms that may not be clear to outsiders of the religious profession. I also asked for clarification on specific responses that I could not understand.

Each interview followed the same procedure, and a comparison of themes between samples provided insight for data analysis. After carefully analyzing the data and grouping the findings into items according to their similarities, I separated the information to come up with themes (Pietkiewicz, 2016). I did not have any subthemes. I ensured that I reached saturation during the data analysis process when participants repeated almost the same experiences. The participant pool was too small. Participants had the opportunity to review all emerging themes for accuracy. I provided a 45-minute

session to discuss what I captured from their individuals and group interviews.

Trustworthiness and credibility from participants are essential in conducting qualitative interviews (Creswell, 2013). I am maintaining participants' recorded responses and the verbatim transcription of such discussions. I refrained from asking leading questions nor sought to solicit desired responses. I engaged in a clear and detailed explanation of the study and clarified any questions regarding any parts of the process to gain participants' trust.

Ethical Considerations

After researching scholarly information, it was my responsibility to anticipate and act upon any ethical issues. My first and foremost task was to protect all participants in this study. I followed instructions and adhered to all requirements and ethical guidelines by Walden University Institutional Review Board (I.R.B.) and the American Psychological Association (A.P.A., 2019) Specialty Guidelines for Forensic Psychology.

Treatment of Participants

Before embarking on the research, I obtained approval from Walden University's I.R.B. Participants received protection from any perception of biases, coercion, intimidation, or any other attempts to force participants to participate in the study. None of the participants was someone I supervised or had authority over. During the debriefing, participants received a list of secular agencies that provide mental health assistance for their use or pass to their church members experiencing IPV issues (Appendix D). Participants were mindful of the fact that they could stop the interview at any time. Samples received information about their rights to discontinue participating in

the study if they desired, and they should not fear any retaliation for choosing so. If any participants decided to stop their participation in the study, I had three alternate participants standing by to fill in the necessary gap.

Treatment of Data

Face-to-face semi structured interviews took place in person. The use of a recording device recorded the conversations for transcription. Participants were not identified by their real names but by pseudo names to protect their identity and anonymity. All written data and any other documents I accessed during the interview process are safe at my house. After five years, I will destroy all written and recorded materials, following I.R.B. and other Walden University's directives and guidelines.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate what perceptions, experiences, and biases precluded Latino pastors and priests in referring IPV victims to secular organizations. The current study addressed potential barriers preventing those referrals. I sought to investigate each clergy member's actual lived experience as they attempted to answer questions related to those experiences. By understanding any perceived or actual experiences through the Latino clergy's eyes, I engaged in a lively session of questions and answers about such incidents in a face-to-face individual interview format. My motivation to understand my research was the scarcity of studies on the subject. No other reviews exist in this particular gap that I discovered while researching literature. I desired to gain in-depth information to understand how further studies would propel interest in solving the mix's outside agencies.

I used a qualitative phenomenological approach to address the research question of Latino pastors' and priests' perceptions of referring female church member victims of IPV to secular organizations. I developed a series of questions for one-on-one interviews, allowing each clergy to provide information about their biases, culture, and other issues that prevent the connection between church and secular organizations.

In Chapter 4, I detail collecting the data, setting, and demographics of samples. Furthermore, I discuss the methodology used to analyze the data obtained and themes after carefully reviewing the data. My study is not a pilot study. No organizational or

personal conditions influenced participation in this study or any other outside influence due to personnel cuts or traumas.

This research may benefit Latino IPV victims within local Latino congregations in obtaining support for clergy to reach out outside the clergy's realm. Furthermore, findings obtained from the investigation may provide other scholars with an opportunity for further studies. Such studies may generate more leads to assist IPV victims in reaching out to Latino churches' confines and the clergy in finding ways to connect with secular organizations.

Setting

A qualitative phenomenological case study helped me in setting the atmosphere for the task. I used a qualitative approach utilizing a phenomenological case study to address the research questions. The research question was: Latino pastors' perceptions of referring church members victims of IPV to secular organizations. Recruitment took place via emails, telephone calls, and Facebook. I explained the purpose of the study to all participants.

Demographics

The participant pool consisted of 10 clergy members located in El Paso County, Colorado. Samples were males 45 to 60-years of age. The participants consisted of eight Latino Christian pastors married with children and two single Catholic priests. Furthermore, participants stated they have been in ministry for 5-years or longer. All 10 participants expressed a desire to support the study and asked to see the final report, which seems an incentive for all clergy. The lack of identifiable demographics prevented

anyone from identifying the participants in my study. I safeguarded all participants' information. Table I1 below provides information about the age, total years in ministry, and level of education.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

| Category | P1 | P2 | P3 | P4 | P5 | P6 | P7 | P8 | P9 | P10 |
|-------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| Age | 57 | 72 | 45 | 50 | 91 | 60 | 47 | 56 | 80 | 49 |
| Total years in Ministry | 7 | 25 | 7 | 10 | 37 | 20 | 10 | 18 | 20 | 15 |
| Level of education | HS | BS | MS | HS | HS | E | HS | E | E | HS |

Legend: E=Elementary S=Secondary HS=High School BS=Bachelors M=Masters

Participant Recruitment

I started participant recruitment was once I obtained IRB approval through Walden University. After IRB approval, I reached out to potential recruits using Facebook, phone calls, and emails. Participants asked questions about the purpose of the study and how the data provided would be kept safely. They agreed to participate after the researcher explained the research purpose and assured them of the data's disposition and safeguard. I explained to the pool of participants the need to record the one-on-one interactions for accuracy purposes.

I informed participants about the recorded information they provided and its disposition. I told them the recorded data obtained from the interviews would be kept safe at my house. I also informed participants that Walden University required I keep all collected data for 5-years after. After 5-years, I would destroy the data obtained from the participants. Pastors and priests agreed to meet in my home office or their office to

conduct the interviews. I explained the need for a secure place to conduct the interviews because of the confidentiality required. Although I reached out to over 30 pastors, only 10 committed to participate

Participants consisting of 10 voluntary pastors answered all questions geared toward the demographics and qualifying criteria. All participants had to meet specific criteria. The participants needed to be over 40 and less than 60-years of age and Latinos. Another requirement was they had provided counseling to IPV victims among their congregations. All participants met recruitment criteria.

Data Collection

Ten clergy members participated in this study. Once the participants declared their interest in volunteering in the study, I told them that the consent to participate in the survey would be verbal and recorded in a recording device-before starting with the interviews. I sent a consent form to potential participants via email to read and see if they agreed to participate. The discussions took place in person in an office with each participant. After reading the consent form and the invitation flyer, I started scheduling pastors and priests to meet at their convenience per their specified date and preferred time. All interview questions were identical for each participant. The time frame for each interview was an hour and a half. However, participants were informed about their ability to control the length of time the interviews lasted. Participants had the choice to answer questions however they felt most appropriately addressed the question. As a result, discussions ran between 45 to 60 minutes.

I recorded the individual interviews with the participant's consent. I listened to the recorded interviews several times to become familiar with the responses. I transcribed the answers for data analysis and subsequent participant review. All recorded audio was stored in a locked safe in my office in which I was the only one who held the key. The recordings of the transcripts were then sent to the participants to review for accuracy. If the participants had any additional information to add or correct a statement, they could add and update the information provided. After sending each transcription, all participants agreed with the accuracy of the transcriptions. Data analysis took place after I read the transcripts and reviewed them several times.

Data Analysis

The reports for analysis came from interviews with semi structured questions. The discussions were semi structured questions that allowed for the participant to elaborate. There were three categories of interview questions in which the participant could complete all three at the same time if desired. All participants elected to complete the questions during the one-on-one interviews. The interviews consisted of 17 interview questions and were categorized by a) age, length in ministry, and education level, b) information about IPV, and c) additional information and follow-up. I asked the same questions to each participant. I framed the questions in a format that facilitated analysis for themes derived from each participant's shared experience.

Since the sample size for this study was small, the data analysis process was not as challenging as I expected. Most participants answered questions in a similar manner, which surprised me. To ascertain themes from the interviews, I became very familiar

with the interview questions and the participant's answers. I prescribed Creswell, 2013 advised identifying the need to read over discussions to become familiar with the answers repeatedly. By doing so, I began to see themes emerging from those answers. I highlighted keywords and phrases that pertained to the participant's direct experience with IPV. After highlighting keywords and phrases, I reviewed the transcripts to formulate a clustering system of the shared information among the participants. The commonality in responses paved the way to a common theme among participants. Two themes emerged from those interviews (see Table 2)

Table 2

Themes and Supporting Codes

| Themes (T) | Supporting codes |
|---|--|
| T1: Traumatic experiences and effect in clergy's life | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the experience made me a better person • I understand parishioners in an abuse situation better • faith in God allows me to forgive and help others • I treat all females to include the ones in my household, with love • witnessing beatings to family members prevent me from repeating the cycle because I believe in God and His love |
| T2: Cultural and religious influences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • viewed father abusing mother as something normal • living under machismo as part of the culture • spousal abuse is taboo • fighting with spouse after alcohol consumption • violence in the home was a daily occurrence as part of the Latino culture |

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Credibility

Bengtsson, 2016 asserted that veracity translates into the research credibility and integrity when reflecting the findings reported in a qualitative study. I verified the

research through a series of steps. Korstjens & Moser, 2018 suggested that the researcher focuses on eight validation strategies to verify or validate the findings. I used the strategy and included prolonged engagement, triangulation, peer-review, debriefing, clarifying researcher bias, member checking, and descriptions. Furthermore, and to obtain a deeper understanding, I set aside any personal preferences. I analyzed the data with the intent to capture the true lived or perceived experiences of the participants. After using the series of steps, I could see why those verification methods translated into trustworthiness as they applied to my study. To meet a credible outcome, I recruited a participant pool of 10 participants to complete theme saturation. I used member checking to verify data collection and findings. It was essential to establish credibility, as Zogaj et al., 2020 stated. Participants examined a copy of their transcripts, interpretations, and conclusions to verify if they were accurate and credible. Participants were allowed to notify me of any incorrect information. I informed participants about their ability to add any information they felt was pertinent to their experience with the IPV or any other information they left out and wanted to include.

Dependability

The integrity of participants' responses was the key to ensuring the study was easy to replicate if another interviewer asked the same questions as the participants. The answers collected from participants provided themes derived from the questions. Themes emerged using a detailed description of the answers provided by the participants as posited by Bengtsson, 2016. By doing so, other researchers could quickly identify the themes and trends in the participants' answers. Furthermore, reading the transcripts from

participants several times and significant coding statements also provided dependability. Last, I cross-validated participants' responses for accuracy within the transcription.

Transferability

External validity or transferability can make the findings general outside the research setting (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). I used detailed and rich descriptions in this study, thus allowing scholars to identify the themes quickly. The reader then can relate to the experience of the clergy with IPV victims. In performing this study, I intentionally attempted to identify the unique themes within this phenomenon and not generalize the findings as stated by Bengtsson, 2016. I considered the experience of the Latino clergy as they understood their perceived role in assisting victims of IPV. Readers will be able to identify the themes and understand them through the written experiences of the Latino clergy.

Confirmability

To achieve confirmability or objectivity, I ensured the study results came directly from the responses obtained from participants. I addressed confirmability by asking the same questions to all the participants reviewing their reactions to the individual transcriptions. I completed the survey without any personal biases involved. Several times I read the participants' responses. That process helped me understand data content provided by participants as prescribed by Zogaj et al., 2020.

Results

The structured interviews provided the participants with insight into how they perceived female counseling victims of IPV within the religious context. This action

provided an excellent venue for me to expand on their views about referring those IPV victims to outside agencies. The first three questions addressed their age, length in ministry, and education level. The rest of the questions addressed their approach to IPV victims within the religious and cultural context. The answers to most questions were very similar; hence only two topics emerged.

Themes emerged from the participants' lived experiences within the family dynamics. Experiences included physical and mental abuse such as punching, hitting against objects, cursing, sending their spouses to the hospital because of the beatings. The control exercised included withholding affection, money, and other resources and not leaving the house without the perpetrator's permission. Furthermore, victims, including their children, were under the control of the perpetrator.

Participants' ages ranged from 45 and 60, and all were Latino clergymen. The ministry's length was between 5 to 30-years. Participants' education varied from first grade through master's degree. The survey consisted of 17 questions. I noticed that the more education, the more information they had about outside resources. Common responses among participants were physical and psychological abuse perpetrated on the women in their congregations. Two themes emerged from the study, which may clarify the importance of contacting outside resources. Those two themes were: Traumatic Experiences and Effect in Clergy's life and Cultural and Religious Influences.

Identified Theme 1: Traumatic Experiences and Effect in Clergy's life

On the topic of traumatic experiences in their own lives, "P1 stated:

My mother had met a male, and this person got up from his chair at the table, threatening my mother. My brother was 17, and I was 15. We were not little boys, and we stood next to him. I have taught my sons that women are fragile vessels and have to be respected and protected. That is what we believe."

"P2 said,

I saw lots of abuse with my mother from my father's part. But thank God I did not follow the pattern. I have asked God to help me, and my wife is my witness that I have never put the finger on her to hurt her."

"P3 had a similar experience and said,

Back when I was growing up, people would never talk about domestic violence. So, it's like a stain on my mind. It disturbs me still today. In my case, it was positive because it opened a sensitive area for me to work with other people."

"P4 said,

So, it had to do with drinking. My dad was an alcoholic, an active alcoholic for many years. And the dynamic between an alcoholic and their spouse just had all kinds of physical and mental abuse going on. For years, at one level or another, sometimes it would be very intense. I indeed found my peace, consolation, my hope, my strength in God and the Church. I learn mercy and compassion, goodness and to be a good listener."

"P5 said,

I watched fights in my house. Something that ugly affects you deeply as a child and growing up too. I always thought about it. It was constantly in my mind. With the experience, what God has taught me, with my knowledge of the Word of God, and with the studies I completed, I can communicate better and counsel someone in that situation."

"P6 said,

Well, I did not hear anything regarding this type of issue during my childhood. Perhaps it happened because this is something that has been happening forever. But that type of situation was not present within my family. I cannot tolerate abuse from anybody. Not from men to women or vice versa, children, elderly, or anybody else."

"P7 said,

We had a neighbor that was very rough with his wife and his kids. And when I was growing up, I would hear them often crying. I did not ever want to listen to another person cry like that or be subject to something of such magnitude. And as a minister, it made me more conscious of some of the things people went through."

"P8 said,

I lived in that situation with my father's aggression toward my mother. He was very violent, and he beat her up in front of me several times. I became a Christian before my wife converted too. From there on, I started to see things from a

different perspective, and I tried to respect my wife as the Bible says for us to treat our wives as fragile vessels."

"P9 said, My father was an aggressive man, violent because he drank too much. I said: I am not going to be like my father. But thanks God, my father at one point stopped drinking, and things changed. He was a different man. And that type of violence and aggression ended in my family. My father's actions did not affect me. Those actions did not affect me at all to become an aggressive person, violent with my wife."

"P10 said,

I saw a man beating a woman on the street. I was around 17 years old. I thought that the couple needed orientation. So, then what the Bible teaches us is to seek peace. I believe there should be an equilibrium point, the key to the existence of harmony inside homes."

Identified Theme 2: Cultural and Religious Influences

On the topic of cultural and religious influences in their own lives, "P1 said: My father left my mother when I was four months old. Secondly, the paternal figure was my grandfather. My grandfather was not a violent person, and he loved my grandmother with all his heart. Therefore, we did not have that type of situation. Within the family, I did not know anyone, cousins, uncles, or anybody else to have that degree of violence."

"P2 said,

Yes. I saw some of those cases. Because of lack of knowledge or ignorance, sometimes one judges and say: "she deserves that."

"P3 said,

But it was hum; in those times, it was like a taboo. So, someone would never talk about it."

"P4 said,

I indeed found my peace, consolation, my hope, my strength in God and the Church."

"P5 said,

When God comes into our lives, God makes changes, and we think differently."

"P6 said,

IPV was a private and confidential issue kept inside the house, not spoken publicly. It was taboo. Maybe we did not know as we do now. Machismo was part of the culture. Perhaps that type of abuse was not viewed as violence or maltreatment. Maybe it was part of the culture. As years have gone by, and men and women started educating themselves, now we are aware of the situation. It is no longer taboo. Then laws have been enacted against domestic violence."

"P8 said,

Before becoming a Christian, I thought about having a non-violent home and treating my wife right. I felt like that because of the experience with my father's abuse toward my mother. But there was a brief period before I became a Christian

that I was a jealous person. I became violent then. I did not hit my wife, but I offended her with words, and I mistreated her."

"P10 said,

I saw a man beating a woman on the street. A person tried to help the female, but she asked the person not to interfere. Sometimes women do not want to say anything fearing financial security. Women won't say anything in fear of losing income from their spouses."

Each participant expressed the need to understand better the laws about IPV and how they can further assist those victims. Although all clergy spoke of the need for outside agencies' intervention, most participants emphasized the need for God and religion to help find a solution for IPV. Another typical response was an interest in learning more about bringing IPV training from outside resources to understand better how to approach the issue. As for the perceived need to contact clergy as the primary solution to the victim's IPV problems, most clergies agreed it is cultural. Participants stated Latinos trust their religious leaders because of their reputation and their connection with God. Latinos are inclined to seek help within the religious context because they become close to the religious leaders and develop a trustworthy relationship. IPV victims feel safe when they finally decide to reach out to their religious leaders when seeking help.

When questioned about considering outside resources, the majority of participants responded positively. The clergy stated they wanted literature in Spanish and interpreters when meeting with outside agencies. They replied that outside help would benefit their

congregations and had no issues referring their Latino members to outside agencies. Furthermore, clergy wanted information regarding outside agencies to pass to their communities. Most participants stated they report IPV victims to law enforcement agencies and encourage victims to seek help outside the church.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative ethnographic study is twofold: first, to explore the lived experiences and perceptions of Latino pastors' understanding of IPV and how it affects their church members. Second, this study investigated avenues to successfully facilitate better communication between Latino pastors in guiding church members victims of IPV to reach out to secular organizations. Ten male clergies participated in sharing this common phenomenon. The research question and 17 interview questions provided guidelines for participants to express their lived or perceived experiences. Those experiences elicited answers for analysis, assisting the researcher in understanding the dynamics of the phenomenon in question. Data obtained was analyzed by the researcher. The two themes that emerged were present in a narrative visual, written form reflecting participants' responses.

Participants' demographics were the same; all participants were Latino males. I gained insight from a male perspective by reading their marginalized experiences. I noticed their experiences were similar and that the majority of participants had witnessed IPV firsthand through their mothers or other close female relatives. Their responses supported the findings from the two identified themes. Replies shared commonality: all participants agreed to refer their church members with IPV issues to outside

organizations. Participants that witnessed IPV while growing up related the coping and resiliency strategies when they matured and became confident in their abilities, as posited by Ramezani et al., 2017. Furthermore, they expressed their desire to work alongside secular agencies to support their female church members who are IPV victims.

Participants became comfortable talking to the researcher because I could relate to their candid responses as a Latino researcher. Participants did not open up at first, but they felt comfortable respecting educated Latino females as the interview progressed. All participants asked the researcher if, in the future, the researcher could assist with a connection with secular IPV organizations. As a Latina, I was grateful for the support provided by the clergy in obtaining such rich information. That information may assist this researcher, or other scholars build on that trust to further understand this phenomenon. Chapter 5 presents the introduction and interpretation of the findings, study limitations, recommendations, and chapter summary.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Recommendations, and Conclusions

Introduction

This study's importance was identifying self-reported behaviors and experiences precluding Latino pastors from asking their church members victims of IPV to report the issue outside the church. My goal to conduct this study was to ~~This study aimed to~~ equip Latino pastors with a better understanding of IPV's impact on families. Latino pastors may provide better guidance to seek secular help by understanding IPV victim needs. I conducted a structured interview with questions designed to understand Latino pastors' perceptions of referring church members victims of IPV to secular organizations. The lack of research specifically on Latino clergy's knowledge in referring church members to an outside organization led to the need for this study. I used a phenomenological analysis using historical oppression as the theoretical framework to understand clergy lived or perceived experiences. This approach was the most appropriate design for this study. A significant number of participants in the survey related their lived experience with IPV with the women in their families. They witnessed the abuse while growing up. While conducting the interviews, most participants said they understood they learned to cope with the abuse they witnessed while growing up. As they grew older, they became resilient and learned to minimize or tolerate IPV.

The study also revealed an understanding of how those experiences became a stumbling block for clergy's objectivity when referring females in their congregations' victims of IPV. The research question for the study was: Latino pastors' perceptions of referring church members victims of IPV to secular organizations. To answer the

research question, I gathered 10 participants from different religious groups who provided pastoral counseling to female victims of IPV in their congregations.

Furthermore, I purposely selected and interviewed an all-male Latino group of pastors counseling women for at least 5-years. I wanted to understand if machismo, religion, and biases precluded them from referring those IPV victims to secular agencies. The participants recorded their consent for the interviews, and I assured them of the data confidentiality.

Interpretation of the Findings

After an exhaustive literature review, I focused on the gap in studies regarding Latino clergy and their IPV perceptions. I discussed the two themes that emerged after reviewing and examining the individual interview results. Those results provided information for Theme 1 and Theme 2. I discussed in previous chapters the lack of scholarly peer-reviewed literature concerning pastoral guidance to church members to seek outside assistance. I used the theory of historical oppression as postulated by Wands & Mirzoev, 2021 as a lens to view this investigation. The historical oppression theory helped me understand clergy's hesitance in referring their church members to secular agencies.

As mentioned in the previous chapters, clergy members' lived perceptions about IPV came from experiences growing up in a Latino household. The last chapters demonstrated cultural and religious influences dictate imitation of behaviors by parents as propounded by Horsburgh & Ippolito, 2018. Most pastors experienced IPV from the father to the mother, hence learning to consider that behavior normal. The difference

most clergy members articulated was that religion helped them understand it was not acceptable behavior. Furthermore, participants were willing to explore the possibility of meeting with outside organizations to serve their congregations better.

The literature review demonstrated a lack of studies explicitly addressing how Latino clergy addressed IPV victims and church members referred to outside agencies. I discovered studies on IPV in general but no specific studies addressing Latino clergy and outside organizations' involvement. My study aimed to discover minorities studies on IPV, specifically within the Latino religious community. The escalating nature of IPV violence within El Paso County prompted me to conduct such a study. The lack of studies about IPV and outside referrals is a severe problem within El Paso County. All participants agreed IPV victims are a severe problem and need more outside agencies to help. I identified the language barrier as a communication problem, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic posited by Williams et al., 2021. The participants expressed a desire to meet outside agencies and understand their role in helping IPV victims through Spanish interpreters.

My expectation in conducting this qualitative research is to fill the gap in the literature regarding the lived experiences of Latino church victims of IPV and referrals to outside IPV organizations. In the following sections, I discuss another one of my goals: that the results of this study bring more awareness to other scholars in conducting a more in-depth analysis within the Latino clergy and IPV referrals to outside agencies. The positive social change would significantly impact the IPV victims in El Paso County and other communities.

Bernardi and Steyn (2021) asserted a holistic approach in a religious-based program reduced anxiety and depression, among other symptoms, in IPV victims. I suggest future studies explore the benefits of Latino clergy working together with secular agencies to benefit IPV victims. Furthermore, I would encourage pastors to pursue further education on IPV to better understand and address IPV victims' needs within their congregations. Educating clergy about the intricacies of IPV may curtail the increasing number of deaths resulting from IPV. My recommendation in this research is to create education possibilities for Latino clergy to make a positive social change in decreasing IPV victimization.

Theme 1: Traumatic experiences and effect in clergy's life

All participants related their lived or perceived experiences while growing up and how religion played an essential role in coping with IPV. While they could not understand IPV, their faith helped them survive the memories. Clergy expressed a change in how they viewed IPV within their Latino congregations through pastoral counseling and religious beliefs. Participants recognized that although they believed God could solve IPV, they welcomed outside resources. However, clergy would like to better understand outside agencies' intervention. All participants wanted to help their Latino congregations receive information and interact with secular organizations via Spanish interpreters.

One of the participants mentioned their father left their mother when they were very young, and his mother did remarry, resulting in not experiencing IPV in their household. However, he witnessed IPV victimization among other women in the family and neighbors. Some clergy were growing up in the Latino community but did not know

hitting women was not ok. Some participants' lived experiences helped them become better husbands and fathers. They felt those experiences also helped them understand the women of their congregations better. One of the participants stated he only witnessed one incident of IPV with his mother but that he and his brother put a halt to the situation by defending their mother. All the participants told me IPV is something they are learning about as they provide pastoral counseling to congregations victims of IPV. Nevertheless, they welcome the training or other means of better understanding IPV to serve the congregations' IPV needs. None of the participants knew if they were financial or training resources for IPV victims, hence their desire to connect with outside help.

All participants stated religion was vital in maintaining a positive outlook in helping the female victims of IPV within their congregations. Religion was the key to their desire to conduct pastoral counseling to members suffering victimization via IPV. Clergy believed prayer and counseling help alleviate the pain caused by IPV. None of the participants denied a desire to connect with outside resources. One of the participants articulated the pain of witnessing physical and mental abuse for years and how that experience helped him get closer to God. He stated he is in a position to know he can provide compassion by providing ministerial comfort.

Theme 2: Cultural and Religious influences

All participants told me that religion significantly impacted (Morello, 2019) when dealing with IPV. Cultural influences such as machismo created a hostile atmosphere in the lives of all participants while growing up. Although machismo is encouraged in the Latino household (Wands & Mirzoev, 2021), participants of the study stated they learned

to respect females because of their experience while growing up. One participant told me he taught his sons to be good men and husbands by following his example. One participant said he hurt his wife at the beginning of the marriage because of the machismo he learned at home. However, he went to counseling, and after that, he learned to treat her with respect. He also taught his son to respect all women. This participant encourages male congregation members to treat the women in their family and respectfully.

Latino culture exercised an essential role in participants' understanding of their lived or perceived experiences with IPV. Although most participants expressed witnessing beatings to their mothers, they decided they would not follow the same pattern when they became husbands themselves. The majority of participants stated they have learned to listen to the stories of abuse-related by their female church members and wanted to know how outside agencies handle the perpetrators. Women have talked to their clergy about their role as submissive partners (Choi et al., 2016). Participants acknowledge their desire to learn more to see if they can connect with outside resources to assist IPV victims within their congregations. Therefore, all the participant clergy would like to understand how to blend Latino culture without justifying certain behaviors related to machismo and female submissiveness.

All participants acknowledged that Latino culture influences IPV victimization within the Latino community. The participants stated that need for cultural definitions and awareness to instruct parents in teaching their sons to respect all women regardless of their country of origin. Clergy felt the continuous increase in IPV within their

community merits further studies to intervene IPV victim's needs better. They do not have a consistent long-term plan or the necessary resources to help Latino female victims of IPV within their congregations. Some participants did not graduate from high school or earn a degree due to a lack of financial support.

Furthermore, Latinos come from low-income families in Latin America, where salaries are meager. Providing and paying for children's education is challenging because of the lack of resources. In most Latin American countries, parents pay for everything starting at the elementary school level, hence why some clergy have very little education. Participants with a low level of education expressed they are not required to obtain a higher education to become part of the clergy. Some differed by stating the more secular education and the better equipped they were to serve their congregations. As displayed in Table 1, please see the education achieved by participants.

Implications

Ten Latino male pastors participated in this qualitative, phenomenological study. The questions I asked were relevant to IPV issues and served to gain insight into their subjective experiences related to the research question. Key questions that guided the study were:

1. Do you believe God can solve IPV issues without outside intervention?
2. If you counsel your female church members, do you refer them to secular agencies as needed?

3. Did you witness any IPV acts on any of your female relatives or neighbors while growing up? If so, please describe the incident in your own words and how it impacted your life.
4. If you witnessed IPV within your family members or neighbors, how do you feel today about the situation in the past? How has it affected your ability to treat other females in your family and your congregation?
5. Do you believe cultural values and religious beliefs play a role in your church members wanting you to counsel them on IPV?

This conceptual lens for this study was the theory of historical oppression asserted by Wands & Mirzoev, 2021. The findings in this study demonstrated that cultural and religious influences drive Latino female victims to Latino male clergy because they perceive they can trust them with their IPV issues. Furthermore, the Latino culture still requires women to submit to men. Participants admitted to providing pastoral counseling only and reporting IPV victimization to law enforcement. I did not collect enough information given the lack of specific studies on this subject and the small number of participants.

I believe I just made a dent in a huge need that can produce a social change for Latino female victims of IPV seeking assistance from their clergy. However, further data would provide a more straightforward bridge to facilitate clergy's interaction with secular agencies with Spanish-speaking interpreters. I see the need for Spanish interpreters if the church is willing to understand secular agencies' intervention with female Latino congregations. Participants of this study expressed their desire to know how to approach

secular agencies. However, they wanted to have all written information from those agencies in Spanish.

Victims could experience less distress if their religious leaders explain how secular agencies can help them in Spanish. Clergy could assist those IPV victims by assuring them secular agencies can help them with their IPV issues as experts in the matter. The more pastors understand outside agencies' processes, the smoother the transition from pastoral counseling to IPV the process can be. In doing so, both parties (clergy and secular counselors) can work together to benefit IPV victims. The researcher suggests incorporating interpreters to facilitate communication between the two organizations in Spanish.

Recommendations

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to examine the biases or any other issue precluding Latino pastors from referring female members of their congregations in seeking secular assistance with their IPV issues. To my surprise, all clergy agreed that although religion, trust in the church, and culture play a significant role within the Latino community, seeking secular assistance is acceptable. As previously stated, the number of participants was minimal to apply the finding of this study on a large scale. A significant discovery in this study is that clergy admitted to cultural biases and mentioned machismo to control Latino female victims of IPV. Although participants did not know each other, the responses were very similar, which indicated that culture influenced their responses.

Future research should compare male and other diverse Latino groups' victims of IPV living with a partner to investigate the differences within the Latino culture. Furthermore, a quantitative analysis could address the number of other genders seeking assistance from the clergy. I received the same responses for most of the questions, hence expanding the study to more participants.

Limitations of the Study

I encountered limitations in this qualitative study. The participant pool consisted of 10 participants, limiting the data. Although the participant pool was small, I met theme saturation. Future research may consider using a larger participant pool if possible in a quantitative study. Because of the sensitivity of the subject, not too many clergy members wanted to participate. Therefore, I suggest future research on this subject extend the recruitment area to several states to achieve a more significant number of participants. Perhaps the data provided from the participants was subjective. The participants may have provided false reporting of their experiences because of the length of time since the incidents occurred or just because they had suppressed the painful memories. Some participants could not articulate the memories because it may have been something they were trying to erase from their minds. In addition, the pool of participants was too small to apply this study objectively.

Another limitation to the study was that interviews were in English. However, I conducted some of the discussions in Spanish because some participants felt comfortable responding in their native language. I translated the recording interviews into English and gave those participants the initial interview responses in English and Spanish to review.

The university IRB permitted me to translate those interviews. I am an official interpreter and translator with the local law enforcement agencies. Interviewing in Spanish and translating it into English was time-consuming, adding extra work for me.

Conclusion

The primary purpose of my phenomenological qualitative study was for me to understand the lived or perceived experiences precluding Latino clergy in referring Latino female members of their congregations to secular agencies. During this research process, it was apparent that the church is willing to meet with secular agencies to understand better how they handle IPV victims. The participants were eager to tell their stories and were candid about understanding IPV better by training from outside resources in Spanish. There is a need for more research on Latino clergy and their involvement with other diversity groups. Quantitative studies would enhance and expand the market to better impact all victims of IPV

The participants in this study related lived experiences of IPV while growing up and how they longed to assist members better victims of IPV working with outside agencies. They described their experiences and expressed the desire to help others because they understood the seriousness of the phenomenon. Furthermore, the participants expressed their concern about the recent murder-suicides episodes and the epidemic proportions of IPV victims in El Paso County, Colorado, and other nation-states. The participating clergy sees the need to learn more about discovering a solution for the IPV situation. Participants also discussed the need for more robust laws for perpetrators of IPV. IPV affected the lives of the participants of this study. The clergy

would like to see a better outcome for victims of IPV. Their desire to know better about outside agencies is encouraging in that more studies may open doors for bridging that need.

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Appendix A: Flyer for Recruitment

A new study seeks Latino pastors to participate in interviews

There is a new study that could help Latino pastors connect with the community to better understand the dynamics of intimate partner violence (IPV) (Domestic Violence) between religious institutions and outside organizations. For this study, you are invited to describe your role in supporting IPV women without sharing any names.

This Individual interview is part of the doctoral study for Esther Rios, a Ph.D. student at Walden University.

About the study:

- 1 hour of a one-on-one interview
- To protect your privacy, no names or any identifying demographics will be collected

Volunteers must meet these requirements:

- 45 through 60 years old
- Have been a pastor for 5-years or more
- Have counseled or is counseling members about IPV

Appendix B: Questionnaire

1. Are you over 45 years of age? ___Yes ___No
 2. Length in Ministry _____years
 3. What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed: ___a) Less than High school ___b) High school diploma or equivalent ___c) Bachelor___
d) Master_____ e) Doctorate (e.g., PhD, EdD) f) Other (please specify)

 4. Are you familiar with the meaning of intimate partner violence (IPV) (new name for domestic violence (DV))? __yes ___no ___I am not sure ___need clarification
 5. What is your opinion about pastors counseling female IPV victims?

 6. Do you believe God can solve IPV issues without any outside intervention? yes___ no___ Why or Why not: ___

 7. Do you provide pastoral counseling to members of your congregation with IPV issues? yes_____ no_____ why or why not? _____

 8. If you counsel your female church members, do you refer them to secular agencies as needed? yes___ no___ Why or Why not

 9. If those female members of your congregation return to let you know that the counseling is not working for them, what is the next step you take to help them. (Example: provide more counseling, etc.)

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10. Did you witness any IPV acts on any of your female relatives or neighbors while growing up? If so, please describe the incident in your own words and how it impacted your life.

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11. If you were part or witness IPV within your family members or neighbors, how feel today about the situation in the past and how it affected your ability to treat other females in your family and in your congregation?

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12. Do you believe that the experience in #10 above help you counsel female victims of IPV because you perceive it helps because you understand what they are going through? __yes __no. If you answer yes or no, explain:

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13. The Bible states that women are to submit to their husbands. Based on that verse, do you believe that women are to stay with their husbands even if they are experiencing IPV? If yes or no, please explain:

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14. Why do you believe pastors should counsel their female members on IPV issues?

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15. Do you believe cultural values and religious beliefs play a role in your church members wanting you to counsel them on IPV? yes___ no__ Please tell me why or why not:

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16. What do you believe is the best way to help a female victim of IPV in your congregation?

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17. Would you like to add any relevant information about your perception on IPV that I have not asked you?_____
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Appendix C: Face-to-Face Interview Log

| Name | Interview Date | Interview Time | Interview Location | |
|-------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|--|
| (P1) | 5/15/2021 | 3:00 p.m. | Office | |
| (P2) | 6/07/2021 | 1:00 p.m. | Office | |
| (P3) | 5/14/2021 | 10:00 a.m. | Office | |
| (P4) | 5/11/2021 | 9:00 a.m. | Office | |
| (P5) | 6/18/2020 | 11:00 a.m. | Office | |
| (P6) | 6/28/2021 | 7:00 p.m. | Office | |
| (P7) | 6/28/2021 | 5:00 p.m. | Office | |
| (P8) | 7/19/2021 | 7:00 p.m. | Office | |
| (P9) | 7/22/2021 | 7:00 p.m. | Office | |
| (P10) | 7/25/2021 | 5:00 p.m. | Office | |
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