

Chapter 10

Adolescent Dating Violence Among Ethnically Diverse Youth

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Every year in the United States, 10% of adolescents experience physical and sexual dating violence (Vagi, Olsen, Basile, & Vivolo-Kantor, 2015). Even more young people, roughly 3 out of 10, report having experienced psychological abuse in dating relationships in the last year (Zweig, Dank, Lachman, & Yahner, 2013). Some studies estimate that over the course of adolescence more than half of all boys and girls will have been victims of some form of dating violence (Bonomi et al., 2012). Adolescent dating violence (ADV) is also a predictor of nearly every major negative social sexual behavior, or outcome teens are at risk for, including but not limited to, drug use, risky sexual behavior, the acquisition of sexually transmitted diseases, suicide, depression and anxiety, and delinquent behavior (Ellis, Crooks, & Wolfe, 2008; Exner-Cortens, Eckenrode, & Rothman, 2013; Silverman, Raj, Mucci, & Hathaway, 2001).

These findings clearly demonstrate that dating violence is a pervasive form of abuse among adolescents, with negative implications for their social, psychological, and physical well-being. However, these numbers also disguise a more nuanced but accurate reality: that the rates and correlates of these phenomena differ based on adolescents' social identities and locations. The notion that people's subjective and statistical realities depend on their occupation of simultaneous, interlocking identities, such as gender, race, and age, is known as intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1993; McCall, 2005). Though social science has historically studied these social categories in isolation, making generalizations about individuals based on a single dimension (e.g., gender), the last few decades of research have revealed the flaws in this approach for both theory and practice.

One problematic consequence of generalizing across distinct subgroups of individuals is that existing theories and measures used to understand majority groups (e.g., white girls) are often inappropriately applied to minority groups (e.g., black girls), resulting in misleading results and conclusions (West &

Rose, 2000). Studying identities as a single analytical category (McCall, 2005) also results in nonprototypical and marginalized group members being understudied and unseen (Cole, 2009). In the event that a study sample does include minority youth, a comparative approach is often used in which the majority group is implicitly or explicitly treated as a baseline from which all others samples depart. This deficit-based approach supports negative stereotypes about minorities and contributes to self-fulfilling negative outcomes for these groups. Research that assesses and analyzes identities as separate factors (e.g., race as one factor and gender as another) is also incomplete, as occupying multiple social categories results in emergent experiences for individuals that could not have been predicted based on merely adding the main effects of individual identities (for a review, see Ferguson, 2016).

In the last two decades, differences and similarities within youth culture subgroups have been given more attention, and some of the complex socio-cultural reasons supporting within and between-group variations have begun to emerge. This chapter is dedicated to a discussion of recent literature on ADV in the United States that takes care to examine phenomena and processes unique to specific racial/ethnic groups, as well as similarities and differences in ADV prevalence and risk and protective factors based on race and ethnicity. Throughout, we consider the importance of context and culture in contributing to findings, and we draw attention to the strengths of those from marginalized populations.

Much of the current literature on ADV has used middle class, heterosexual, white adolescents as participants (Alleyne-Green, Coleman-Cowger, & Henry, 2012). This is concerning given that Hispanic Americans constitute over 17% of the total US population today and are estimated to represent 28% of all Americans by 2060 (Stepler & Brown, 2014). African Americans also currently constitute a substantial part of the current US population at about 13% (US Census Bureau, 2015). Meanwhile, the percentage of non-Hispanic white people in the United States has reached an all-time low, and by 2044 the US Census Bureau projects that less than half of the population will be white (US Census Bureau, 2015). In only a few more years, the majority of US children will be racial/ethnic minorities (US Census Bureau, 2015).

The limited research examining the relationship between race/ethnicity and ADV prevalence in the United States has typically found that African American, Native American, and Hispanic teens report higher rates of dating violence than whites (Children's Safety Network, 2012; Eaton et al., 2008; Foshee et al., 2015). Dating violence the is greatest among African American adolescents (Makin-Byrd & Bierman, 2013), who are the most likely to be involved in both physical and psychological abuse (Choi, Weston, & Temple, 2017; Debnam, Waasdorp, & Bradshaw, 2016; Haynie et al. 2013; for an exception, see Alleyne-Green, et al., 2012). The second most at-risk racial/ethnic group is Native American/Alaska Native adolescents, followed by Hispanic adolescents, white adolescents, and Asian

adolescents (Children’s Safety Network, 2012; Foshee, Ennett, Bauman, Benefield, & Suchindran, 2005; Foshee et al., 2008). This chapter therefore begins with examining the risk factors that make African American, Native American, and Hispanic adolescents more vulnerable to ADV.

ADV RISK FACTORS AMONG ADOLESCENTS OF COLOR

A great number of ADV risk factors, defined as variables that increase the likelihood of ADV occurring (Bowen & Walker, 2015), are common across racial/ethnic subgroups. For example, being male (Miller et al., 2013; for an exception, see Foshee et al., 2013), older (Black et al., 2015; Debnam et al., 2016), from a family with low educational attainment (Foshee et al. 2009; Foshee et al., 2015), using drugs and alcohol (Schnurr & Lohman, 2013; Temple, Shorey, Fite, Stuart, & Le, 2012), exhibiting delinquent behavior (East & Hokoda, 2015; Chiodo et al., 2012), approving of ADV (Temple et al., 2016), and being in a single-parent household (Foshee et al., 2009), have all been linked to greater likelihood of ADV victimization across white, African American, and Hispanic populations. However, here we focus on social and cultural risk factors that are unique in their predictive power specifically for African American, Native American, and Hispanic adolescents. In doing so, we hope to draw attention to the important ways that social and structural inequalities in the United States and youth subculture norms contribute to ADV. We also focus mainly on causal and modifiable risk factors, which are most relevant for prevention and treatment efforts.

Risk Factors Specific to African American Adolescents

Of the three racial/ethnic minority youth groups we review in this chapter, African American adolescents have received the most research attention, perhaps because they are typically the most at-risk group for ADV. As such, it is fairly well established that the consumption of African American–targeted media, exposure to community violence, and informal or alternative forms of help-seeking are ADV risk factors especially relevant to African American youth.

African American–Targeted Media

The high rate of media consumption among African American adolescents has led researchers to examine its influence in a number of health outcome domains, including ADV. Consider the fact that the average television viewing hours for African American youth are significantly higher than for their white peers (ChildTrends, 2014). In 10th grade, black youth are almost three times more likely to watch 4 or more hours of television per weekday (45%) than whites (14%), and almost twice more likely to watch 4 or more hours per weekday than Hispanics (29%) (ChildTrends, 2014). Research has shown that television, particularly entertainment programming, is the most

important source of information and socialization for African American adolescents (Bickham et al., 2003; Stephens, Phillips, & Few, 2009). African American adolescents even outpace other racial and ethnic groups in social media usage; a nationally representative survey found that 34% of African American adolescents reported going online “almost constantly” as compared to 32% of Hispanic and 19% of white adolescents (Lenhart, 2015).

Many scholars also argue that African American adolescents consume popular media for information about relationships (Bryant, 2008; Stephens, 2012; Stephens & Phillips, 2003; Stephens et al., 2009). Unfortunately, mainstream media consistently frames heterosexual intimate relationships using racialized, stereotypical frameworks (Andsager & Roe, 2003; Stephens, 2012). Culturally targeted forms of media, such as Hip Hop medias, have also been accused of reinforcing messages that rely on stereotypical gender and racial frameworks, including black women’s hypersexuality, black male promiscuity, and male–female antagonism (Ross & Coleman, 2011; Stephens, 2012; Stephens & Few, 2007a). The power of Hip Hop media on African American adolescents’ sexual health and decision-making has been studied by researchers examining HIV/STI (Wingood et al., 2003), substance use (e.g., Mulder et al., 2010), and beliefs about beauty and self-presentation (Stephens & Few, 2007b; Stokes, 2007).

Taken together, media presents adolescents with a portrait of intimacy as a game that relies upon false self-presentations, while reinforcing the idea that African American male–female relationships center on sexual interactions (Muñoz-Laboy, Weinstein, & Parker, 2007; Stephens, 2012; Stephens et al., 2009). Bryant (2008), for example, found that the more time spent watching Hip Hop music videos and accompanying lyrics, the more African American teens were likely to perceive that African American males and females are enemies in relationships (Bryant, 2008). This conflictual framework is problematic as it reinforces the belief that it is acceptable to utilize violence when addressing violations in intimate relationship norms. As evidence of this, Stephens and Few (2007b) found that both Black adolescent males and females felt women who enacted highly sexualized scripts from Hip Hop culture were to blame if they were the victims of sexual violence.

Community Violence Exposure

Some research points to African Americans’ sociohistorical experiences with physical and psychological violence as a risk factor for ADV. Centuries of racial discrimination and abuse have resulted in African Americans, as a whole, having worse socioeconomic and health trajectories than whites in the United States (Henry & Zeytinoglu, 2012). These accumulated disadvantages over time have positioned large segments of the African American community into low-resource neighborhoods that engender high rates of

community violence. Research suggests that this societal violence that can eventually manifest in relationship violence through a “trickledown” process (Henry & Zeytinoglu, 2012).

As predicted, experiences with community violence are an important predictor of African American ADV victimization and perpetration (e.g., Black et al., 2015; Horowitz, McKay, & Marshall, 2005). In their study examining community violence exposure and sexual behaviors, Voisin Hotton, and Neilands (2014) found aggression was the key factor linking exposure to community violence with sexual debut and sexual risk behaviors for both boys and girls (Voisin et al., 2014). This community-level violence can contribute to the perception that situational violence against women and girls is acceptable. For example, Hernandez, Weinstein, and Munoz-Laboy (2011) found that aggression on the dance floor, such as grabbing or pushing a girl, was seen as commonplace and appropriate among urban, African American adolescents. This was especially true in cases where the male perceived the girls’ response to him as disrespectful (e.g., publicly challenging her male partner or refusing to acquiesce to his demands; Hernandez et al. 2011).

Community-level violence can also contribute to violence occurring with families. Reports of personal exposure to violence in familial contexts are higher in urban, black adolescents than among their white counterparts (Alleyne-Green et al., 2012), and such violence exposure has consistently been found to increase adolescents’ likelihood to perpetrate or experience violence in their dating relationships (Walsh, Senn, & Carey, 2012). One reason for this is that violence between neighbors, extended family members, parents, and other community members is adopted by adolescents through social learning and modeling (Landor et al., 2017). Although witnessing violence in one’s family may be at first highly distressing, it can become normalized over time and can shape personal perceptions of acceptable relationship behavior (e.g., Buzawa & Buzawa, 2013; Hernandez et al., 2011). In fact, African American adolescent girls exposed to violence between their parents are more likely to remain in or move into a violent relationship compared to those who have not been exposed (Alleyne-Green et al., 2012).

Informal or Alternative Help-Seeking

Although much of the effort to curb ADV has focused on school-based programming, it is important to note that studies suggest African American youth may prefer and utilize other social networks to address this concern (Elias-Lambert, Black, & Chigbu, 2014). For example, Black and Weisz (2003) found African American middle-school girls were more likely to seek help for intimate relationship questions more often from their friends, mothers, and grandmothers than boys. Stephens and Eaton (2016) similarly found that close siblings and close friends were the sources they were most

likely to trust and view as credible when discussing dating violence. Unfortunately, few programs addressing ADV integrate familial members into their efforts. This oversight is concerning given research that has shown African American parents' current approaches to addressing dating violence in adolescence may help with prevention but ironically decrease an adolescents' willingness to report its occurrences.

Studies have noted that African American parents' primary motivation for addressing sexual molestation, assault, or dating violence, particularly with daughters, is the desire to protect them from experiencing victimization. The content of African American parent–daughter discussions about intimate relationship conflicts or violations often focuses on self-respect and self-esteem as key influences on adolescents' ability to make good decisions in dating relationships (Akers, Yonas, Burke, & Chang, 2011; O'Sullivan, Meyer-Bahlburg, & Watkins, 2001; Stephens & Eaton, 2016). These communications primarily focus on daughters' responsibility in the relationship and what she should expect from her partner. While this approach ensures that daughters have the tools for prevention, it does not address how to deal with violations within the relationship.

Risk Factors Specific to Native American Adolescents

Research on adult populations shows that Native American/Alaska Native/Native Pacific Islander, and other indigenous peoples of the United States (from here forward referred to using the broad term “Native American”) experience high rates of physical, psychological, and sexual violence, often ranking as the highest or second highest at-risk racial/ethnic group in the United States (Breiding et al., 2014; Black et al., 2011; Sapra, Jubinski, Tanaka, & Gershon, 2014). For example, Native American women are 1.7 times more likely to be the victims of physical violence than whites, twice as likely to be the victims of rape, and nearly three times as likely to be killed by an intimate partner (Breiding et al., 2014; Oetzel & Duran, 2004; Karch, Logan, McDaniel, Parks, & Patel, 2012). Native American adolescents are also more likely to be involved in intimate partner violence than their counterparts (e.g., Choi-Misailidis, Hishinuma, Nishimura, & Chesney-Lind, 2008), with studies suggesting that Native American adolescents are the first or second most at-risk racial/ethnic group for ADV in the United States (Children's Safety Network, 2012; Earnest & Brady, 2016; Pavkov, Travis, Fox, King, & Cross, 2010). Despite this, there is scarce research on the correlates and outcomes of ADV in this population (Smokowski, David-Ferdon, & Stroupe, 2009). Some of the possible risk factors for ADV specifically among Native Americans include the adoption of postcolonial gender roles, physical and psychological segregation, and experiences of prejudice and discrimination, all of which are bound and informed by historical trauma.

Historical Trauma

Perhaps the most foundational risk factor for ADV among Native Americans, which links and sustains an aggregation of health, economic, and social disparities, is historical trauma in the context of ongoing neocolonization (Burnette, 2015; Denham, 2008; Duran & Duran, 1995; Whitbeck, Sittner Hartshorn, & Walls, 2014). The extended and cumulative intergenerational harms caused by the intersecting oppressions of colonialism, sexism, and racism have wounded traditional native cultures in irrevocable ways, including wholesale losses of land, language, art, and life, and are also evident in individual experiences of unresolved emotional trauma (Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 1998; Burnette, 2015; Mohatt, Thompson, Thai, & Kraemer Tebes, 2014). The specter of historical trauma is at the bedrock of every potential ADV risk factor for Native American adolescents. While the historical trauma running through these risk factors is not itself modifiable, it may be treatable and some of its manifestations can be directly addressed.

Postcolonial Gender Roles

Some have hypothesized that historical trauma changed gender roles and relations in some Native American cultures (Duran, Duran, Brave Heart, & Yellow Horse-Davis, 1998). Whereas many indigenous cultures were once matrilineal or female-centered, with violence against women being extremely rare (Matamonasa-Bennett, 2015), colonial contact may have created a more antagonistic form of relations between Native men and women (Weaver, 2009), reproducing the domination and hostility enacted by Europeans on Native peoples. Research on non-Native young adults has already linked adversarial gender roles to intimate partner violence and coercion (e.g., Eaton & Matamala, 2014), and future work should investigate if these reconfigured gender roles might contribute to the augmented levels of ADV among Native adolescents. Consistent with the presence of adversarial gender role norms, research on 550 indigenous adolescents in the United States and Canada found that most dating violence reported by adolescents was mutual violence, with boys attacking girls and girls attacking boys (Hautala, Sittner Hartshorn, Armenta, & Whitbeck, 2017).

Segregation

Another consequence of colonization and historical trauma is the physical and psychological marginalization of Native peoples. Many Native American communities are in rural locations with limited resources. Being both economically and culturally isolated (Irwin, 2011; Sandefur, 1989), these communities often lack adequate victim or legal services, sufficient law enforcement resources and rights, and screening and treatment for intimate partner violence in health care settings (Oetzel & Duran, 2004), potentially

increasing the risk for ADV. For example, only in the last few years did the Violence Against Women Act enable participating tribes to prosecute non-Native perpetrators of dating and domestic violence (United States, 2013). Although Native American reservations are purposefully and steadfastly self-governing, this sovereignty came in exchange for minimal economic support from the federal government, making long-term self-sufficiency difficult to achieve (Gerdes, Napoli, Pattea, & Segal, 1998). In order to substantially reduce violence in Native American communities and reservations, however, it is imperative to increase these communities economic and social opportunities, and access to health care (Yuan, Belcourt-Dittloff, Schultz, Packard, & Duran, 2015). Indeed, a study with a tribally owned women's health clinic found that low socioeconomic status (SES) was positively associated with past-year IPV even after adjusting for age, relationship status, and household size among Native American women (Malcoe, Duran, & Montgomery, 2004), though SES has not always predicted IPV rates among indigenous peoples (Valdez-Santiago, Híjar, Martínez, Burgos, & de la Luz, 2013).

Prejudice and Discrimination

Native Americans who live in more culturally heterogeneous areas, such as urban centers, are subject to multiple forms of personal and institutional discrimination, and at an even greater rate than many other racial and ethnic minority groups. For example, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development found that more than one in four Native American renters have faced housing discrimination (Fluharty, 2003). Moreover, while Native Americans make up only about 1% of the total US population, they comprised 3.3% of all racially motivated hate crimes in the United States as of 2012 (US Department of Justice, 2012). Similar to other minority groups in the United States, being the target of prejudice and discrimination increases Native Americans' odds of ADV involvement. Research by Hautala and colleagues (2017) found that Native American adolescents who subjectively experienced high levels of personal discrimination, such as being threatened or demeaned for their cultural heritage, were more likely to report having been involved in mutual dating violence or to have been victims of ADV.

Risk Factors Specific to Hispanic Adolescents

Culturally specific gender roles and acculturation into US mainstream culture are two of the risk factors for ADV that apply specifically to Hispanic adolescents.

Hispanic Gender Roles

Cross-culturally, ADV has been associated with the acceptance of traditional gender stereotypes. Research asserts, however, that Latino/a's understanding

of norms about gender roles, egalitarianism, and intimate relationships may differ from other ethnic groups (Ulloa, Jaycox, Marshall, & Collins, 2004). For example, research on Hispanic culture and violence suggest that some aspects of Hispanic culture are associated with more acceptance or prevalence of violence (Sanderson, Coker, Roberts, Tortolero, & Reininger, 2004). To explain these cultural disparities in attitudes toward violence, researchers often point to *marianismo* and *machismo* beliefs, which are definitional to Latino/a gender roles.

According to *marianismo* beliefs, women are expected to embody passivity, submissiveness, humility, asexuality, and self-sacrifice for the family (Castillo, Lopez-Arenas, & Saldivar, 2010). Grounded in the context of Catholicism's Virgin Mary, *marianismo* behaviors encourage women to reflect this iconic figures representation of moral integrity, spiritual strength, and the ability to endure suffering, particularly when inflicted by men (Comas-Díaz, 1995). Within relationships, women are expected to defer to men and depend on them for all physical and psychological needs, including sexual and relationship needs. Among adolescent Latinas, these attitudes directly shape their willingness to challenge male partners when they disagree with them or want to make alternative choices, placing them in a vulnerable position for ADV victimization (Villegas et al., 2013).

The complementary framework for Latino men's expressions of masculinity is "*machismo*." Characterized by physical prowess, aggression, toughness, being in charge, and risk-taking, *machismo* beliefs give primacy to men's dominance, superiority, and strength in relationships (Marrs Fuchsel, Murphy, & Dufresne, 2012; Sobralske, 2006a, 2006b). The influence of *machismo* beliefs on ADV beliefs can be particularly powerful. Such beliefs can lead to the expectation that Latinos will "prove" their masculinity through being able to control one's girlfriend or wife through force or fear (Galanti, 2003; Kyriakakis, Dawson, & Edmond, 2012; Sobralske, 2006b). Furthermore, through the use of traditional theoretical paradigms and approaches that fail to capture within-group differences or integrate culturally relevant findings, researchers have reinforced the belief that Latino/a cultural groups embrace these values and allow men to behave in aggressive ways toward their female partners (Cole, 2009; Marrs Fuchsel et al., 2012; Smokowski, Rose, & Bacallao, 2010; Ulloa et al. 2004).

However, it is important that researchers consider the role of other key individual difference and identify factors when examining the influence of gender roles on ADV outcomes, including education, acculturation, and language. Framing adolescent Latino/a's outcomes solely using a culturally specific gender lens does not accurately capture the true influence of gender beliefs on sexual health outcomes broadly (Eaton & Rose, 2012; Stephens, Eaton, & Boyd, 2017) and ADV specifically (Haglund, Belknap, & Garcia, 2012; Stephens & Eaton, 2014). Haglund and colleagues' (2012) research with Mexican American young women, for example, found that participants

opposed the stereotype that in Mexican culture men dominate and women do “as they are told.” These women provided familial examples to contradict the stereotypes and describing a desire for egalitarian gender roles in their relationships. Similarly, [Stephens and Eaton \(2014\)](#) found that college Latino’s machismo beliefs were not salient in their reflections upon dating coercion. They further asserted that, in their view, machismo was indistinguishable from westernized hypermasculinity frameworks ([Stephens & Eaton, 2014](#)).

Recognizing this similarity, researchers have called for greater exploration of the definition and relevance of machismo and marianismo, given that it is often difficult to determine the ways in which they replicate and differ from traditional gender role beliefs in American society ([Sobralake, 2006a, 2006b](#); [Stephens & Eaton; 2014](#); [Stephens et al., 2017](#)). Consider the fact that studies drawn from white samples have consistently uncovered gender beliefs that assert it is acceptable for a man to control and dominate a woman in an intimate relationship, yet a comparable racial/ethnic lens is not used to explain this outcome. As such, future efforts to examine ADV in Hispanic populations must include a critique of westernized hypermasculinity and hyperfemininity frameworks, paying particular attention to the ways they can be differentiated from machismo and marianismo beliefs.

Acculturation

Research on Hispanic adolescents’ behavioral outcomes has commonly explored the role of acculturation. Defined as the adaptation or preservation of particular cultural norms and practices after an immigration experience ([Schwartz et al., 2013](#)), the acculturation process for Hispanic adolescents involves the simultaneous processes of adapting to the “American” culture while retaining values and beliefs from their familial nations and cultures of origin. Adolescents’ ability to do this successfully has been tied to various individual and external factors such as an individual’s and Hispanic subgroup’s characteristics and history, the geographic area where the individuals live, the demographics of that community, and political support ([Lara, Gamboa, Kahramanian, Morales, & Bautista, 2005](#)).

Hispanic adolescents’ experiences with acculturation are multidimensional and unique across subgroups’ experiences with ADV ([Schwartz et al., 2013](#)). Research examining the links between ADV and acculturation across various Hispanic communities has noted that acculturation can serve as risk factor, buffer, or both. Some research has found that Hispanic adolescents who have higher levels of acculturation into American systems are at a greater risk for ADV victimization (e.g., [González-Guarda, McCabe, Florom-Smith, Cianelli, & Peragallo, 2011](#)). Other studies have noted that moderate levels of acculturation serve as a protective factor against ADV

(Smokowski et al., 2009). These discrepancies may be partly due to the variability in measures used to assess acculturation (e.g., years in the United States, language spoken, media source consumption), limiting researchers' ability to accurately capture the true influence of this phenomenon.

These findings must be further read with caution, as acculturation is often measured in narrow or incomplete ways. For example, in the studies noted above, the research does not take into account the extent to which Hispanic teens have acculturated to the American culture and simultaneously maintained attachment to their culture of origin. As a result, we cannot definitively know if acculturation to the American culture is a risk factor, or the maintenance of Hispanic culture is a protective factor, or both. In fact, it may be that the loss of close connections with the familial unit through the rejection of traditional Hispanic culture is the real factor influencing teens risk for ADV victimization or perpetration, rather than the fact they are becoming more "American" (González-Guarda et al., 2011).

ADV studies exploring the role of acculturation often do not address other factors that could be contributing to stress in participants' lives, such as their relationship-coping abilities before the acculturation process began. Furthermore, the reasons why an adolescent Hispanic is acculturating to American culture (e.g., forced migration, refugee), their immigration status (e.g., legal verse illegal), and their receiving context must be considered. For example, Cuban adolescents have an easier time acculturating because they are welcomed in Florida, compared to Mexican American adolescents entering via California where there has been greater resistance to their culture (Forster, Grigsby, Soto, Schwartz, & Unger, 2015; Schwartz et al., 2014). This difference may point to the need for researchers to tease out the role of acculturative stress when exploring acculturation's role in ADV victimization and perpetration.

ADV PROTECTIVE FACTORS AMONG ADOLESCENTS OF COLOR

Although protective factors for ADV are not as well established as risk factors (Vagi et al., 2015), research has uncovered several ADV protective factors that apply across multiple racial/ethnic groups. For example, having prosocial beliefs was associated with reduced involvement in dating violence among white and black adolescents in three North Carolina counties (Foshee et al., 2015). Very often, however, the effect of a particular protective factor on ADV involvement differs by adolescent race and ethnicity (East & Hokoda, 2015). In the following section, we describe protective factors that are particularly relevant and impactful for African American, Native American, and Hispanic youth, respectively.

Protective Factors Among African American Adolescents

Parental communications and the expectation of self-sufficiency and self-respect for women and girls are among the factors that may serve to protect African American adolescents from ADV.

Parental Communications

The degree to which parents observe and track their children's behaviors, attitudes, and life choices has been shown to buffer African American adolescents from engaging in risk-taking (e.g., Murray et al., 2014). African American parental socialization patterns also are essential for the transmission of sexual values, attitudes, and knowledge (Fasula & Miller, 2006). However, it is important to consider the role of gender in these discussions, because black adolescent males are more likely than their female counterparts to report that they discussed sexual topics with their mothers and fathers (Kapungu et al., 2010; Sneed, Somoza, Jones, & Alfaro, 2013).

There are also gender differences in the ways in which parental communications influence ADV discussions. When examining the empirical research on sexual communication patterns, maternal indirect (e.g., modeling behaviors) and direct (e.g., mother–daughter discussions) messages directly affect African American adolescents' decision-making around sexual risk (Usher-Seriki, Bynum, & Callands, 2008). Overall, African American adolescents report having more frequent talks and greater comfort in talking about sex with their mother compared to their father (Sneed et al., 2013). Supportive and positive direct maternal communication regarding sexuality have been found to be a positive influence for adolescents, particularly those who are sexually active (Fasula & Miller, 2006; Usher-Seriki et al., 2008). However, while these studies find that mother–daughter communication about sex-related topics predicts adolescent sexual behavior, few have explored the degree to which discussions about ADV directly influence victimization or perpetration (Murray et al., 2014; O'Sullivan et al., 2001; Sneed et al., 2013; Usher-Seriki et al., 2008). African American mothers are often hesitant to have these discussions with daughters because they believe their daughters are not involved in dating relationships or do not perceive that they are at risk during this stage of the life span (Usher-Seriki et al., 2008).

Fathers' influence on ADV also differs according to gender. Studies have noted that African American fathers endeavor to indirectly communicate relationship role expectations through the modeling of ideal male partner behavior for sons and daughters, rather than through direct conversations (Akers et al., 2011; Cooper, 2009). Furthermore, the relationship African American fathers have with their teens has differing impacts on ADV outcomes. For example, Alleyne-Green and colleagues (2015) found that black adolescent boys were less likely to engage in ADV perpetration when they perceived their relationship with their father as close. However, the same did

not hold true for girls. The content and frequency of both father and mothers' discussions about ADV must continue to be explored in future research as they serve as key influences in adolescents' outcomes.

Self-sufficiency and Self-respect for Women and Girls

African American girls are taught to take responsibility to protect themselves both physically and psychologically; this is particularly true within urban areas where exposure to community violence increases their risk for victimization and perpetration (Kennedy, 2008). For example, African American parents often initiate discussions about sexual health issues with daughters because they feel motivated to prevent sexual molestation, assault, or dating violence victimization (Akers et al., 2011; Kennedy, 2008). This motivation is reflected in the content and focus of parent–daughter intimate relationship discussions, where self-respect and self-esteem have been identified as key topics parents believe will shape their child to make good decisions (Akers et al., 2011; O'Sullivan et al., 2001; Stephens & Eaton, 2016).

The actual decisions and behaviors of African American youth often reflect norms for self-respect and self-protection that are passed down by parents. For example, one study of African American middle-school students found that 84% of youth took action in response to the use of controlling behaviors in their dating relationships (Elias-Lambert et al., 2014), such as fighting back or breaking up with the offending dating partner. Despite portrayals of black women as promiscuous in Hip Hop media, black girls expressed a strong commitment to holding true to their own personal values and choices around sex and relationships, in keeping with broader beliefs about self-reliance and sexual autonomy (French, 2013). However, believing that one is largely in control of and responsible for all sexual interactions is a double-edged sword, as it may lead to victim blaming and the assumption of personal responsibility for abuse one endures (French, 2013).

Protective Factors Among Native American Adolescents

As with data on ADV risk factors, empirical data on factors that protect Native American adolescents from dating violence are scarce (Yuan et al., 2015). It is clear, however, that some indigenous regions, tribes, and nations in the United States have higher risks for severe intimate partner violence than others (Scott & Langhorne, 2012), such that cross-tribal investigations of ADV protective factors could be fruitful. Some comparative research has already been performed using heterogeneous samples of indigenous people, and one potential protective factor identified in this work was strong cultural ties.

Strong Cultural Ties

It is important to consider the ways in which within-group cultural affiliations shape experiences with IPV. Unfortunately, research typically treats

Native American adolescent populations as homogeneous or interchangeable. This is problematic as cultural differences within and across Native American populations, such as language or dialect, regional location, and social status within these contexts, can inform adolescents' cultural identifications and, in turn, experiences with IPV (Fluharty, 2003; Malcoe et al. 2004; Oetzel & Duran, 2004; Weaver, 2009). For example, research in eight indigenous regions of Mexico found that one characteristic distinguishing more at-risk communities from less at-risk communities was whether indigenous people were a minority or majority in that area. Areas where 40% or more of the population spoke an indigenous language (an "indigenous municipality") experienced lower rates of IPV than areas where less than 40% of the population speaks an indigenous language (a municipality with an "indigenous presence"). The authors of this work suggested that strong cultural ties and the preservation of cultural traditions may therefore protect native communities from IPV and related forms of violence (Valdez-Santiago et al., 2013). Ethnographic, theoretical, and intervention work with Native American women has also suggested that having a strong ethnic identity and engaging in traditional health and spiritual practices can protect against ADV and mitigate the negative effects of IPV (Burnette & Hefflinger, 2017; Denham, 2008; Varcoe et al., 2017; Walters & Simoni, 2002). However, other work has associated high levels of tribal identity among Native American women with an increased risk of rape (Yuan, Koss, Polacca, & Golman, 2006). The unique ways in which marginalization experiences shape cultural ties and, in turn, experiences with violence must be teased out in future research.

Protective Factors Among Hispanic Adolescents

A strong tie to one's culture of origin is also a factor protecting Hispanic adolescents from ADV, as well as healthy communication among Hispanic adolescents and their caregivers.

Strong Cultural Ties

Similar to research with Native American adolescents and adults, research has shown that Hispanic teens who have a strong identification with their culture of origin (i.e., high levels of ethnic pride) are less at risk for ADV (Sanderson et al., 2004). Although there is only one study supporting the protective relationship between ethnic pride and ADV, this link has been noted with other risk intentions among Hispanic adolescents (Guilamo-Ramos, 2009), such as cigarette smoking and alcohol use. Ethnic pride among Hispanic adolescents may have a protective effect on risk behaviors through self-esteem (Guilamo-Ramos, 2009). Higher levels of self-esteem among Hispanics adolescents are related to other protective factors such as

close family relationships with lower levels of conflict (Smokowski et al. 2010). Increases in ethnic/cultural pride and the benefits it can generate can also be achieved alongside increased acculturation (Enriquez, Kelly, Cheng, Hunter, & Mendez, 2012). In pilot testing of an in-school interpersonal violence prevention intervention targeting Hispanic teens, “Familias En Nuestra Escuela,” researchers found that participants increased in their ethnic pride, decreased in their incidence of dating violence, and increased in their acculturation from pre- to postintervention (Enriquez et al., 2012).

Personal endorsement of traditional cultural values and norms and cultural values can also protect Hispanic adolescents from ADV. Heritage language use, another indicator of strong cultural ties, has also been negatively related to ADV among Hispanic populations. Spanish language use at home protects against physical relationship violence in urban Latinas, regardless of nativity in the United States (DuPont-Reyes, Fry, Rickert, & Davidson, 2015), possibly through high levels of family closeness and support. Furthermore, the study by Cuevas, Bell, and Sabina (2014) found that women’s Latino cultural orientation, as measured by the Brief Acculturation Rating Scale of Mexican Americans-II (ARSMA-II) using items like “I enjoy speaking Spanish” and “My friends, while growing up, were of Mexican origin,” were related to an increased likelihood of seeking help to address IPV victimization.

Parental Communications

The traditional Hispanic value of familism may support parental influence on adolescents’ beliefs about appropriate dating behaviors, intimacy, and interpersonal interactions that serve to benefit all members of the familial unit (Oramas, Stephens, & Whiddon, 2015). As a framework that centers and validates family and community, familism includes a sense of loyalty and reciprocity with one’s immediate and extended family (Howard, Beck, Hallmark-Kerr, & Shattuck, 2005). Studies examining the influence of family of origin on aggression outcomes have primarily noted that it is through social learning within families that aggressive behavior must be learned, triggered, and reinforced in order for it to be attained and maintained (Snetten & Van Puymbroeck, 2008).

In addition to the modeling of behaviors and direct communications, parenting styles have also been found to provide positive outcomes for Hispanic girls and boys in terms of ADV. Specifically, monitoring, communication, and personal interactions can buffer Hispanic adolescents from both ADV victimization and perpetration. For example, mothers’ early strictness, monitoring, and conservative sexual attitudes predicted a lower likelihood of sexual and dating violence victimization among Latina/o adolescents (East & Hokoda, 2015). Furthermore, these maternal behaviors served as significant buffers given external risks for victimization. Similarly, Hispanic

adolescents' perceptions of their communication openness with parents have been found to be an important protective factor against physical and sexual dating violence. Higher levels of mother and father communication are associated with less physical violence victimization among adolescent males and females, and with less sexual violence victimization among females (Sabina, Cuevas, & Lannen, 2014).

CULTURALLY RELEVANT PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

When seeking to address ADV among teens, researchers, clinicians, and educators must acknowledge the role of ethnic and racial identity. Race and ethnicity have an impact on not only behavioral outcomes but also acceptance and adherence to interventions or research they are expected to participate in (Enriquez et al., 2012; Horowitz et al., 2005; Muir, Schwartz, & Szapocznik, 2004). When researchers or clinicians exhibit inadequate levels of cultural competence and respect, less effective services and data collection will result.

The first step is to move from deficit-based approaches that interpret behaviors as nonnormative and/or dysfunctional when they do not reflect those exhibited by middle class, white populations. Rather, those interested in addressing ADV among racial/ethnic minority populations must recognize that behaviors or coping mechanisms that do not reflect dominant culture patterns may be appropriate to or adaptive in certain contexts. For example, among inner-city Hispanic and African American high-school girls, physical dating violence perpetration was more prevalent among African Americans, whereas psychological dating violence victimization was more prevalent among Hispanics (Peskin et al., 2014). This finding points to the need for research that accurately identifies the meanings and values individuals and their communities give to ADV perpetration or victimization.

Furthermore, there is a need to integrate the use of assessments that accurately capture the influence of culture and how cultural communities and identities can be helpful. This strategy should include collecting information about individuals' national origin, birthplace, immigration experience, length of time in the country, language preference, and the meaning of being a member of a racial/ethnic minority group. The research by Cuevas, Sabina, and Bell (2014) reinforces the importance of culture when they noted that ADV among Hispanic adolescents was associated with factors such as peer or sibling victimization, age, and gender indirectly tied to their ethnic identification.

Relatedly, those working with these populations must educate themselves about both the broader cultural terms and norms and specific subgroup experiences of the target population. A first step toward this is to become familiar with and gain the ability to critically examine media content applicable to the target population. Those media genres primarily consumed by

racial/ethnic minority adolescents can be extremely useful for providing insights into the beliefs, language, and meanings adolescents associate with ADV (Adams-Bass, Stevenson, & Kotzin, 2014; Stephens & Eaton, 2016). Research has shown that urban African American adolescent girls often used terminologies about dating violence that differ from terms found in traditional measures (Stephens & Eaton, 2016). Furthermore, the content of Hip Hop media sources has been found to more accurately reflect their language, beliefs, and understandings of ADV than mainstream media sources and adults in their lives (Stephens & Eaton, 2016). Thus, those developing interventions can use media tools to begin conversations about ADV and other sensitive topics, to identify key values and expectations across diverse populations.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Qualitative Research

In their study examining the use of qualitative methods with black women, Few, Stephens, & Rouse-Arnett (2003) noted that quantitative research—although quite useful in providing reliable information on broad relationships—can miss the subtle details about the lived experiences of unique populations such as African American adolescents. The use of quantitative measures and inferential statistical may not provide a culturally specific picture of what is occurring in this population. Because this population differs from other racial/ethnic groups in their identities, experiences within mainstream cultures, and ADV outcomes, researchers should obtain a deep understanding of their unique experiences across contexts before developing and testing quantitative models. This deeper understanding requires identifying and describing the subjective perceptions and experiences of adolescent African American's ADV beliefs and behaviors (Few et al., 2003). Furthermore, such information must be dynamically sized and applied (Sue, 1998), integrating an understanding of the diverse within-group differences shaping this populations' experiences, such as location (e.g., rural verse urban), SES, and familial nation of origin (e.g., African American, African, Caribbean). For example, youth living in low-income inner-city areas may be at higher risk for ADV victimization and related stressors, with African American adolescents being disproportionately represented in these contexts (Foshee et al. 2008; Spriggs, Halpern, Herring, & Schoenbach, 2009).

Qualitative approaches provide the best opportunity to provide a detailed understanding of problematic dating situations for adolescents within and across specific socio-ecological contexts. Unfortunately, few qualitative studies have explored the contextual and situational dynamics that place African American youth at risk for emotional distress and conflicts in dating experiences (e.g., Stephens & Eaton, 2016; Sullivan, Erwin, Helms, Masho, &

Farrell, 2010). This situation is particularly problematic given that qualitative approaches would be ideal for comprehensively exploring this sensitive topic. Through in-depth interviews, for example, researchers can gather data on adolescent African Americans' personal experiences, perceptions, and personal narratives about ADV, including which social networks are most important, familial/kinship experiences with violence, and their perceptions of options for avoiding perpetration or victimization. By centering adolescents' subjective experiences, researchers will arrive at increased understandings of culturally relevant points for intervention and change. Furthermore, through qualitative approaches, participants become active agents in the research process through the sharing and analyzing of meanings, social rules, values, and motives that govern ADV within their specific context (Few et al., 2003; Karnieli-Miller, Strier, & Pessach, 2009).

The Use of Culturally Congruent Terms and Measures

Research using qualitative methods can contribute to the development of culturally appropriate quantitative measures. Currently, most psychological scales are developed and validated using samples of convenience, often undergraduate students (e.g., Teten et al., 2009; Worthington & Whittaker, 2006). Nonetheless, these scales are being widely used to assess the dating violence attitudes and experiences of racial/ethnic minority adults and adolescents (e.g., Alleyne-Green, et al., 2012; Lormand et al., 2013; Rothman et al., 2011). This generalized use of measures is concerning because African American and Hispanic adolescents assign qualitatively unique meanings to ADV that may result in inaccurate conclusions and practices (e.g., Akers, et al., 2011; Gillum, 2009; Nicolaidis et al., 2010; Stephens & Eaton, 2016; Sullivan et al., 2010).

Miller (2008) found that African American girls viewed certain styles of heterosexual intimate conversation as simply a form of "running game"; current measures of ADV would have assessed these styles as verbal aggression. Similarly, behaviors that ADV measures typically define as physical aggression were found to be interpreted by both male and female African American adolescents as "just playing" (Love & Richards, 2013) or harmless (Stephens & Eaton, 2016) in some qualitative studies. Thus, it is important that researchers consider that patterns of associations among items or constructs in existing scales might differ as they reflect attributes shared among this population but not among the samples used to develop measures (DeVellis, 2016). In addition, observed mean differences between racial/ethnic minority and white adolescents on measures developed using a white sample could indicate real differences in the endorsement of ADV, or they could be the result of different factor structures across groups that masquerade as mean differences. Indeed, some work has also suggested that reports of violence in Native American communities may be overestimated due to

cultural misunderstandings between Native American interviewees and non-Native interviewers (Yuan, Koss, Polacca, & Goldman, 2006).

Furthermore, interventions designed for one group but implemented with another may have effects that run counter to the intended goals (Szapocznik, Prado, Burlew, Williams, & Santisteban, 2007). For example, Muir and colleagues (2004) describe an adaptation of a Hispanic-focused substance abuse prevention program for use with African Americans. Families who were engaged and retained in the intervention evidenced worse family functioning, and more adolescent problems, compared to families in the control condition. Thus, it is essential to adopt an emic (insider) perspective on ADV among African American adolescents. By creating measures that better capture the cultural orientations and beliefs of racial/ethnic minority adolescents, researchers will open the door to even more successful interventions focused on changing ADV attitudes and behaviors in these population.

Intersectional and Within-Group Research

A final recommendation for work on racial/ethnic minority ADV is to continue to pursue intersectional approaches and investigations of within-group differences. Examining how race/ethnicity, sexuality, social class, ability, and other social identities intersect to produce unique risk and protective risk factors for that population, and how they moderate the effect of existing risk and protective factors, will enable researchers and clinicians to better model and serve these populations. For example, there is tremendous cultural and geographic diversity among Native American communities (Sapra et al., 2014). With more than 567 federally recognized American Indian tribes and Alaska Natives in the United States (Bureau of Indian Affairs, 2017), future work should be careful to not generalize results from one sample of Native American peoples to others. However, rather than looking purposefully at within-group differences, much of the current literature on adolescent ADV examines the effect of a single identity or characteristic (e.g., ability) on ADV outcomes, while merely controlling for the effects of other identities or characteristics (e.g., race) (e.g., Mitra, Mouradian, & McKenna, 2013). Naturally, this kind of work means recruiting and running larger samples with increasingly rare participants, which presents practical challenges. We therefore recommend greater federal and local funding and support to make this critically important intersectional work possible in our increasingly complex and global society.

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