Economics and Intimate Partner Violence: Reducing Risk Through Economic Solvency

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Poverty is a consistent risk factor for IPV.

The cycle of poverty and violence makes it difficult for many women to escape.

But what is the state at which a woman is no longer at risk for IPV based on her poverty status?

Creating a Model of Economic Solvency

- Definition of Economic Solvency

“a long-term state that occurs when there is societal structure that supports gender equity and external resources are available and can be used by a woman who has necessary human capital, sustainable employment and independence.”

(Gilroy, Symes, & McFarlane, 2014)
Theoretical Model of Economic Solvency

- Within the framework of the social ecological model
- Four factors: human capital, social capital, sustainable employment, independence
Creating a Model of Economic Solvency

- Human Capital - a person’s acquired knowledge, skills, and attitudes
- Social Capital - the ability to access and use a network of individuals for a person’s own welfare
- Sustainable Employment - a paid position that provides sufficient income and benefits to provide for the woman and her family’s needs over time
- Independence - the means to earn sufficient income to meet family financial needs as well as decision-making power about finances

Quantitative Validation of the Model

Population
- 280 women who were part of the Mother Child Study
  - Mean age 30.7 years
  - Education: 32.9% less than high school, 19.3% high school grad, 42.1% some college, 5.7% college graduate
  - Race/ethnicity: 25.2% black, 57.5% Hispanic, 10.8% white, 6.5% other
  - All women had reported intimate partner violence and had at least one child between 18 months and 16 years at the beginning of the study
  - Women were recruited while either seeking safe shelter or a protection order
Quantitative Validation of the Model

Instruments

- Education
- Personal Progress Scale
- Social Problem-Solving Inventory
- General Self-Efficacy

- Social Support

- Employment over time
- Full-time employment
- Health insurance from job

- Economic Hardship
- Poverty ratio
Quantitative Validation of the Model

- **Confirmatory Factor Analysis**
  - Examination of the full measurement model yielded adequate fit with the obtained data, $\chi^2(258) = 386.39$; $adj. \chi^2 = 1.50$; RMSEA = .049; NNFI = .928; CFI = .938; SRMR = .080
  - Composite reliabilities were adequate for all constructs, ranging from .628 to .760
  - Individual indicators were significant ($\alpha<.05$) except for marginality and the presence of overtime or a second job
Qualitative Validation of the Model

Population

- 21 women residing in a battered women’s shelter
  - Mean age 39
  - Education: 9.5% less than high school, 23.8% high school, 47.6% some college, 19.1% bachelor’s degree or higher
  - Race/ethnicity: 47.6% black, 19% white, 23.8% Hispanic, 9.6% biracial
  - 61.9% had at least one child living with her at least 50% of the time
  - All women reported intimate partner violence
Qualitative Validation of the Model

- Emerging concepts
  - Employment
  - Independence
  - Human Capital
  - Assets
  - Social Capital
  - Opportunities and Threats
Qualitative Validation of the Model

- Concepts applied to the Model
  - Original four factors retained
  - A fifth factor added: assets
  - Acknowledgment of opportunities and threats added to the social ecological model
Implications

- Findings support multi-factoral interventions to address poverty-based risk for IPV
- The theoretical model gives us a template to think about measuring economic solvency in women who have experienced IPV


