The Relationship between Marginalization and Mental Health Symptoms in Abused Women: 5th year data in a 7-year Study

Sigma Theta Tau International's 28th International Nursing Research Congress
Dublin, Ireland
July 27-31, 2017

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Research Team for Study:
Outcome effectiveness of shelters and civil protection orders in helping abused women and children transition to safety: Evidence for Practice & Policy

Bold = team members on this presentation

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Funding Source: Houston Endowment
Overview

• Background/Significance
• Purpose
• Methods
• Results
• Discussion and Conclusions
• Implications for Practice
Background & Significance

• Globally intimate partner violence (IPV) affects 1 in 3 women. WHO, 2013

• Marginality brings about social isolation which has negative consequences for mental health
  Koci, 2012; Symes, McFarlane, Nava, Gilroy, Maddoux, 2013.
Background & Significance

• Anxiety, depression and PTSD are adverse mental health symptoms that increase the risk for suicide.

• In a Swedish national cohort study (2001-2008) mental health disorders were strong risk factors for suicide with depression the strongest risk factor (greater than 15-fold risk among women).

  Crump, Sundquist, Sundquist, & Winkleby, 2014.
Among the largest single cause of disability worldwide, particularly for women.

50% higher for females than males.

WHO: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/14367SDG3format-rev_MD_OD.pdf
The World Health Organization’s Sustainable Development Goal 3

By 2030:

• To ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

• To reduce premature mortality from suicide.
Purpose

• To examine the link between marginalization and mental health symptoms among women with known histories of intimate partner violence.
Methods

**Design:** 5 year data of a 7-year prospective study to examine the clinical outcomes of women seeking support through either a safe shelter or the DA’s office for the first time following a violent relationship (n=279). Interviewed q 4 months for 5 years.

**Instruments:** Koci Marginality Index (KMI), Brief Symptom Inventory, & a PTSD screening measure.
Methods

Participants: 279 abused women, 93% retention at yr 5, median age: 30 y/o, range 18-52 y/o
79% Hispanic, 37% immigrant status.

Data analysis: Multiple linear regressions conducted to predict mental health outcomes (depression, somatization, anxiety, PTSD) from current levels of marginalization, controlling for entry levels of marginalization.
Results

In this sample of abused women:

• Marginalization significantly associated with higher levels of Global Distress, Depression, Anxiety, Somatization, & PTSD symptoms.

• Results consistently demonstrated that higher levels of marginalization were associated with higher levels of mental health symptoms.
## Results

Summary of Regression Analyses Predicting Mental Health Symptoms from Marginalization

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<tr>
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<th>beta*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global Distress</td>
<td>.319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>.349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>.294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somatization</td>
<td>.197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttraumatic Stress Symptoms</td>
<td>.366</td>
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Note. * Standardized beta when controlling for baseline marginalization
Discussion/Conclusions

• Findings revealed a positive relationship between marginality and adverse mental health outcomes.

• The more marginalized woman suffers more deeply with mental health symptoms of depression, anxiety, somatization, and PTSD symptoms.

  – Findings concur with previous research (Koci, 2004) that marginality of women contributes to social isolation and deterioration of mental health.
Discussion/Conclusions

• The World Health Organization’s Sustainable Development Goal 3 is to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages and to reduce premature mortality from suicide.

• Understanding marginality and its impact on mental health may aid in reducing mortality from suicide.
Implications for Practice

• Serves as an alert to healthcare providers to the possibility of long-term abuse-related sequelae in their practice.

• Contributes to the knowledge of marginality as a social determinant of health.
Implications for Practice

• Policymakers need to be cognizant of the role of marginality in females and its potential adverse impact on their mental health.

• Understanding the impact of marginality may aid in development of healthcare agendas at all levels of government.
Acknowledgements

The Dedication, Assistance and Support of:

• Administrators and staff of **5 shelters (USA)**
• Chief and staff of **Harris County District Attorney’s Office**, Family Criminal Law Division.
• **300 women** who take emotional and physical risks to record their survival journey, pain and recovery and their children who journey with them.
Website for resources

Websites with information re: IPV

National Resource Center on Domestic Violence http://www.nrcdv.org/

World Health Organization Violence Against Women
http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs239/en/
Thank You for your kind attention!

Questions?