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**EXPLORING BATTERED MEXICAN-ORIGIN WOMEN'S HELP-SEEKING
WITHIN THEIR SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXTS**

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WITHIN THEIR SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXTS**

by

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Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Texas at Austin

August 2006

Dedication

This work is dedicated to survivors of partner abuse
and to the advocates and service providers who work with them.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to the many people who supported me emotionally, intellectually, and practically throughout the dissertation process.

I was fortunate to have a supportive, insightful, and hard-working committee who greatly contributed to this study and my writing, as well as to my enthusiasm for and belief in research. I am particularly grateful to my co-chairs, Lucia Gilbert and Michele Guzmán; their guidance, feedback, and encouragement has been invaluable. I am also indebted to Suzanne Dancer, who helped me to appreciate the richness of my data and taught me to ask and answer empirical questions.

Without the collaboration of several service providers, this study would not have been possible. I am very grateful to the staff of Safe Place, PAPA, El Buen Samaritano, Sunrise Center, F.A.C.T. Program, and Visitation House, especially: Edna Yang, Lora Llenado, Lindsay Buller, Jane Shafer, Elizabeth Sylvester, Sister Yolanda Torango, Cary Gomez, Stacy Barber, Annie Holden, Sandra Molinari, Erin Goodeson, Margaret Bassett, Jennifer Gonzalez, Sandra Elizandro, Laura Gomez, Yvette Rouen, Coni Stogner, and Diane McDaniel Rhodes, whose observation of the “direct relationship” between counting rolls of toilet paper and ending domestic violence will always inspire and humble me. I sincerely appreciate the time and confidence of the women who participated in this study. I further thank Karina and Catalina Garcia-Bravo for their assistance in back-translating measures.

I am grateful to my family for their consistent support, interest, and excitement in my life and work; I particularly thank my father, who first introduced me to Latin

America and who has taught me the gift of hearing another individual's story, and my mother, who first introduced me to Psychology and who has taught me—through words and action— to act in hopeful ways to bring about systemic change.

I thank my friends, especially the members of the Women in Psychology Club, Eva, Anna, and Katie. Thank you for the validation, the positive reframing, and the laughter.

Finally, I thank my fiancée, Andrew. Thank you for cooking me dinner, fixing my computer, listening to worries, distracting me, caring for me, and all the ways in which you go through life (including the dissertation process) alongside me.

**EXPLORING BATTERED MEXICAN-ORIGIN WOMEN'S HELP-SEEKING
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Publication No. _____

Kalina Marie Brabeck, Ph.D.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2006

Supervisors: Lucia A. Gilbert and Michele Guzmán

Women's responses to abuse reflect their particular socio-cultural contexts, available resources, and perceived options. In the present study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 75 battered women of Mexican-origin. The study aimed first, to document how these women act to survive abuse, and second, to explore whether socio-cultural variables were associated with help-seeking. Help-seeking was defined as use of formal (i.e., shelter) and informal (i.e., family) sources, as well as the personal strategies (i.e., lock one's self in a room) that women use to survive abuse. Socio-cultural variables included two cultural variables: *machismo* (belief in traditional gender roles, male dominance, and female passivity) and *familismo* (valuing family obligation, cohesion, and reciprocity), and four socio-structural variables: income, education, English proficiency, and immigrant status. Results indicated that, consistent with a survivor theory perspective, participants sought help more than once from several formal and informal help sources; some (i.e., shelter and family) were perceived as more effective than others (i.e., lawyer and partner's family). Findings further demonstrated

that participants engaged in several personal strategies to survive abuse; some (i.e., maintaining a relationship with God) were rated more effective than others (i.e., placating the batterer). Analyses showed women with higher levels of *familismo* sought informal help more frequently than those with lower levels. Results also indicated that women with only grade school education, no English language skills, and undocumented status sought formal help less frequently than women who were not constrained by these barriers. Contrary to expected results, income and *machismo* were not found to be related to formal or informal help-seeking. Participants' responses to four open-ended questions provide context to empirical findings; responses suggest why particular help sources and strategies were or were not effective and provide suggestions for improving services for this population. This study provides socio-culturally relevant information for professionals designing interventions for battered women of Mexican-origin. Findings illuminate battered Mexican-origin women's strengths, as well as barriers that impede their efforts to survive abuse. The study contributes to existing research because it focused on a specific subset of battered Latinas; gathered information on the frequency and perceived effectiveness of participants' use of a wide array of help sources and strategies; included a large sample and empirical analyses; and tested whether socio-cultural variables related to participants' help-seeking.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The present study focused on a particular group of women who had experienced abuse from a heterosexual romantic partner¹, namely, Mexican-origin battered women. The study explored first, the help sources and strategies these women employed to survive abuse, and second, whether socio-cultural factors were associated with their help-seeking behaviors. This study stemmed from an understanding of battered women as survivors, a broadened definition of “help-seeking,” and a recognition of the importance of socio-cultural context in understanding battered women’s responses to abuse.

Characteristics of Partner Abuse

Defining partner abuse. The definition of partner abuse is an issue of heated debate within the field of intimate partner abuse research; how a researcher defines abuse determines philosophical issues, such as whose experiences “count” as constituting abuse, as well as methodological issues, like who is included in the sample and to whom the results can be generalized (De Keseredy & Schwartz, 2001; Ellis, 1987). Some researchers (i.e., Fekete, 1994; Kelly, 1994) argue for a narrow definition of abuse, inclusive only of physical acts. Others (i.e., Currie, 1998; DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2001; Dobash & Dobash, 1998; Walker, 1979) believe that abuse should be defined broadly,

¹ Both men and women can be victims and perpetrators of intimate partner violence; however, women are five to eight times more likely than men to be victimized by an intimate partner, although they are less likely than men to be victims of violent crimes overall (U.S. Department of Justice, 1998). This study focused on the experiences of battered women only. When reading the term “partner abuse” in this dissertation, the reader is asked to understand “female partner abuse.”

and include psychological, verbal, and emotional forms of violence; these researchers cite evidence that indicates many women find verbal aggression and pressure to have sex just as or more threatening to their well-being than physically and/or sexually violent acts. Dutton (1994) defines partner abuse as a pattern of interactions in which one intimate partner is forced to change her/his behavior in response to the threats or actions of the other partner. In agreement with those who argue for utilizing a broad definition of abuse, in this study, partner abuse was defined as inclusive of physical, sexual, and/or psychological forms of abuse. Throughout this dissertation, “abuse” will be used synonymously with “batter.”

Physical abuse ranges from throwing things at another person, pushing, or slapping, to threatening harm with a weapon, to actually using a knife or a gun (Straus, 1973). Sexual abuse may include acts such as unwanted molestation, genital mutilation, forced sex with other persons, or rape (Walker, 1994). Psychological abuse may consist of intimidation and fear, guilt, isolation and restriction of freedom, using gender to dominate, economic deprivation, threats, stalking, minimizing and denying, use of children, humiliation, and/or embarrassment (Domestic Abuse intervention Project; Moore, 1978; Walker, 1984).

Given that this study focused on the experiences of battered women of Mexican-origin, it is important to note the various immigrant-specific tactics of maintaining power and control that are employed by abusive partners of immigrant, particularly undocumented women. Immigrant-specific forms of abuse include exploitation of immigrant status (i.e., refusing to file papers, threatening deportation or taking children);

culture (i.e., causing victim to lose face in the community, calling her racist names, accusing her of abandoning her culture); economics (i.e., forcing her to work illegally, preventing her from working); and language (i.e., preventing her from learning English, prohibiting her from talking to people who speak her language) (Orloff & Little, 1999).

Rates of partner abuse. Intimate partner abuse is a difficult phenomenon to measure, given the tendency for victims to under-report and for society to minimize the occurrence and effects of violence when it happens to a woman in her home, at the hands of her intimate partner. Still, numerous researchers (i.e., Straus, 1987; Straus, Gelles & Steinmetz, 1980; Straus & Gelles, 1990) have documented the enormity of the problem and, although they are likely underestimates, the statistics are staggering. One national incidence survey found that as many as 1.62 million women are abused by their husbands, and that 1 in 10 women report violence within their marital relationship each year (Straus & Gelles, 1990). The National Institute of Justice (2000) estimated that approximately 1.5 million women are raped and/or physically assaulted by an intimate partner each year in the United States. The U.S. Department of Justice (2000) reports that, on average, more than three U.S. women are murdered by their male partners every day.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Justice (1995), rates of intimate partner violence are statistically consistent across racial and ethnic boundaries. Still, many studies have documented the rate of intimate partner abuse specifically within the Latino² population

² Although it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to fully engage the issue, I acknowledge that there currently exists a debate between which term, Hispanic or Latino, to use when referring to persons of Latin American descent (i.e., Mexican Americans, Puerto Rican Americans, etc.) as a whole. Some (i.e., Treviño,

(Aguilar Hass, Dutton, & Orloff, 2000; Caetano, Shafer, Clark, Cunradi, & Raspberry, 2000; Kaufman Kantor, Jasinski, & Aldorando, 1994; Murdaugh, Hunt, Sowell, & Santana, 2004; Neff, Holamon, & Schluter, 1995). While some studies have found that Latino couples experience higher risks of partner abuse, researchers have generally found that racial/ethnic differences dissipate after controlling for the effects of structural variables, i.e., family income, age, and economic stressors (Kaufman Kantor et al., 1994; Neff et al., 1995; Straus & Smith, 1990). Hence partner abuse is a serious problem among all racial and ethnic groups, including Latinos.

Effects of partner abuse. The deleterious effects of intimate partner abuse go beyond physical wounds and encompass a wide range of negative psychological consequences. These include depression (Cascardi & O’Leary, 1992; Gelles & Harrop, 1989; Gleason, 1993), low self-esteem (Cascardi & O’Leary, 1992; Sackett & Saunders, 1999; Scott-Giba, Minne, & Mezney, 1995; Trimpey, M., 1989), feelings of self-blame (Cascardi & O’Leary, 1992; Clements & Sawhney, 2000), heightened stress and anxiety (Trimpey, 1989), posttraumatic symptoms and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Jones, Hughes, & Unterstaller, 2001), and increased social isolation (Pressman, 1989).

While it is beyond the scope of this proposal to fully explore, it bears noting that there are

1987) argue that researches should use the term “Hispanic” for pragmatic reasons, i.e., the standardization of scientific literature with the national statistical data systems in the US. Others (i.e., Hayes-Bautista & Chapa, 1987) argue that “Hispanic” was imposed by the federal government and that it recalls the colonization by Spain and Portugal, confounds national origin with race and culture, and ignores the indigenous and African roots of many of the people it describes. Both sides of the debate agree that when referring to a particular group, i.e., Mexican-origin, that the specific national origin of the group should be used, a practice that will be used in this dissertation. In this dissertation, when reference is made to the people of Latin American decent as a whole or to research where the sample was termed, “Hispanic”, the term “Latino/a” will be employed.

seriously harmful effects on children who witness one parent abusing one another as well; potential consequences include a propensity to demonstrate adjustment difficulties, health and behavioral problems, and disorders in cognitive and emotional development (Jaffe, Wolfe, Wilson, & Sluszczyk, 1986). Hence, intimate partner abuse is a serious medical, psychological and social problem.

Women's Efforts to Survive Abuse: Leaving and Staying Strategies

Leaving the abusive situation. Given the harmful consequences of abuse on the battered women, it is not surprising that the most common question asked regarding battered women is, "Why don't they just leave the abusive situation?" (Rhodes & McKenzie, 1998). Many researchers (see Rhodes & McKenzie, 1998 for a review) have asked that very question, albeit predominantly of non-Latina women. Some researchers (i.e., Campbell, Sullivan, & Davidson, 1995; Walker, 1979) have studied how psychological effects of abuse on women make it difficult for them to leave the abusive situation. Others (i.e., Carlson, 1977; Fugate, Landis, Riordan, Naureckas & Engel, 2005; Gayford, 1979, 1976; Gelles, 1979; Rounsaville, 1989) have studied the personal and environmental factors associated with leaving the abusive relationship.

Various researchers (i.e., Allen, Bybee & Sullivan, 2004; Bowker, 1983; Gondolf & Fisher, 1988; Strube & Barbour, 1983; Wolf et al., 2003) have focused women's usage of formal sources (i.e., shelter, lawyer, etc.) and informal sources (i.e., friends, family, etc.) to obtain help to leave the abusive situation. Research with non-Latina battered women has demonstrated that these formal and informal help-seeking strategies are

important factors in determining women's ability to leave an abusive partner (Horton & Johnson, 1993).

Staying in the abusive situation. Battered women are not only survivors when they seek help to leave an abusive situation; they also must act to survive while in the abusive relationship. With notable exceptions (i.e., Bowker, 1983; Gondolf & Fisher, 1988), typically in the literature, women are portrayed as “survivors” if they access help and leaving the relationship, and “victims” who lack agency if they do not seek help and stay in abusive situations (Mahoney, 1994). As Mahoney (1994) observes, “The popular concept that treats agency in women as synonymous with exit from a violent relationship must be challenged to make comprehensible the many ways women assert [them]selves in response to violence” (p. 73). A narrow focus on women's usage of formal services leads researchers to disregard the myriad of personal strategies, for example, hiding one's self or saving money, that women employ to protect themselves and their children in the context of abuse (Davies & Lyons, 1998; Lemper, 1996).

Survivor perspective. Gondolf and Fisher (1988) argue for characterizing battered women as survivors, rather than helpless victims, who have innate strengths and exert a diversity of coping responses. From the survivor perspective, battered women increase their help-seeking in response to the severity and nature of the threat and violence and the extent and kind of support they receive (Browne, 1988). A survivor theory allows for acknowledgement of the myriad of ways women act to survive abuse, both in effort to leave the relationship *and* to cope while still living in it. In accord with understanding battered women as active survivors, the present study defined “help-seeking” as inclusive

of women's attempts to access formal (i.e., lawyer, shelter, etc.) and informal (i.e., family members, friends, etc.) help, as well as personal strategies (i.e., placating the batterer, disguising one's self, etc.) employed to keep themselves and their children safe in the context of violence.

Ethnic differences in women's responses to abuse. While rates of partner abuse are consistent across racial/ethnic lines, there is evidence that different racial/ethnic groups of battered women respond to abuse differently. Latinas in general (Bonilla-Santiago, 1996; Gondolf, Fisher, & McFerron, 1988), and Mexican-origin women in particular (Jacques, 1981; Torres, 1991), tend to stay in abusive marriages longer, to return to the abusive marriage more frequently, and to be name fewer incidents as abusive than their non-Latina White counterparts.³ Evidence also suggests that Latinas are least likely, when compared with other racial/ethnic groups of battered women, to seek help in the form of medical (Krishnan, Hilbert, & Van Leeuwen, 2001; Rodriguez, Craig, Mooney, & Bauer, 1998; Woodward, Dwinell, & Arons, 1992), legal (Krishnan, et al., 2001; Rodriguez, et al., 1996), and/or social services (Dutton, Orloff, & Hass, 2000; Gondolf, et al., 1988; Torres, 1991). In addition, battered Latinas have been found to underutilize

³ Although the trend is changing, to date, much of the research on Latino communities, including the research on intimate partner abuse, has tended to lump the Latino population together as though it were one homogeneous entity. Distinctions among country of origin, acculturation level, and immigrant status have traditionally been disregarded. Thus, while there exists much research on "Latino" or "Hispanic" populations, there is a dearth of information that is specific to the Mexican American and Mexican immigrant community. For this reason, in building my argument, I will draw on research conducted with Latinos that did not distinguish between groups, and research with Mexican Americans that did not specify immigrant status. I acknowledge that this is a limitation of this dissertation, and that information on Latinos may not be descriptive of the Mexican-origin women in my sample. For example, research on Latinos groups that contain a majority of Puerto Ricans may not be applicable to Mexican Americans. However, until more culturally sensitive research that distinguishes between groups is amassed, this limitation can only be acknowledged, and not avoided.

informal resources (i.e., talking to a friend, asking a family member to intervene) when compared to other racial/ethnic groups of battered women (West, Kaufman Kantor, & Jasinski, 1998). To date, there is no definitive answer on why these ethnic differences have been observed.

Importance of Socio-cultural Context

Cultural, racial, and ethnic context. The present study built on the recent work of researchers and activists who recognize that intimate partner abuse and women's responses to violence exist in social and cultural contexts, and that partner abuse is not solely a mental health problem resulting from individual pathology (Bograd, 1984, 1999; Das Dasgupta, 1998; Flores-Ortiz, 1993; Kanua, 1994; Mahoney, 1994; Sharma, 2001; Thorne-Finch, 1992; Yllö & Bograd, 1988). Culture is central to how people organize their experiences, identify a problem, view violence, and seek assistance, (King, et al., 1993). Moreover, the intersections between gender and culture further influence the options people perceive, the assistance they seek, and the nature and scope of the violence they experience (Sorenson, 1996). Thus, although abusive relationships in all cultures share some similarities, taking a color-blind approach to understanding intimate partner abuse disregards the ways in which culture, race, and ethnicity shape women's experiences, interpretations, and responses to violence (O'Keefe, 1994).

Socio-structural context. On the other hand, focusing solely on culture, without regard to the socio-structural variables that affect people's lives, can lead to pathologizing non-European-American cultures and to disregarding factors that might mediate between ethnicity and violence (West, 1998). Thus, the present study is further

informed by the work of researchers (i.e., Andrade, 1982; Baca Zinn, 1979, 1994; Das Dasgupta, 1998; Mahoney, 1994) who emphasize the need to consider cultural values *in the context of structural variables* that affect people's lives. Just as the realities of Latinos are shaped by shared cultural beliefs, they are also a function of the structural arrangements in U.S. society that have excluded both Latinas and Latinos from full and equal participation in its public institutions (Baca Zinn, 1982). Battered women's experience of and responses to partner violence reflect their social conditions, resources, and available options (Dutton et al., 2000). Disregarding the socio-structural context fosters the erroneous assumption that all individuals are equally capable of creating safe lives, when in fact, a racist, classist, and increasingly anti-immigrant society limits the choices of some battered women more fully than others.

Intersections. Hence, it is in the intersections between gender, cultural, racial/ethnic, and structural variables that a richer, more relevant understanding of battered women's responses to abuse might be attained. As Bograd (1999) notes, "Intersectionalities color the meaning and nature of domestic violence, how it is experienced by self and responded to by others, how personal and social consequences are represented, *and how and whether escape and safety can be obtained*" (p. 276, italics mine). From better understanding the intersections among gender and socio-cultural factors, it is hoped that more effective interventions and policies for battered Mexican-origin women may be developed.

Introduction to Study

Purpose one. The first aim of the study was to better understand how battered Mexican-origin women respond to abuse. While prior research has provided information on which help sources battered Latinas tend to use (Dutton et al., 2000), there was a need for additional information regarding frequency and perceived effectiveness of various forms of help-seeking used by a specific subset of Latinas, i.e., those of Mexican-origin. Moreover, to this author's knowledge, studies specific to Latinas have not broadened the definition of "help-seeking" beyond accessing informal and formal services, to also encompass the personal strategies that women employ to keep themselves and their children safe in the context of abuse. Because formal services may be less accessible to battered Latinas due to financial, linguistic, legal, and cultural barriers (Bauer, Rodriguez, & Szkupinski Quiroga, 2000; Dutton et al., 2000; Sorenson, 1996), these women may be more likely to rely personal strategies to survive violence. Thus, it was deemed that including an exploration of usage of personal strategies by Mexican-origin women would make an important contribution to understanding how they respond to abuse. Collecting information on how these women *do* act to survive abuse may help to contradict the popular stereotype of these women as backward, subservient and submissively accepting of abuse (Das Dasgupta, 1998).

In order to address the first aim of this study, quantitative information was gathered to answer the following questions: First, which sources of formal and informal help do battered Mexican-origin women use? With what frequency and perceived effectiveness do they seek this help? Second, which personal strategies to survive abuse

are used by Mexican-origin battered women? With what frequency and perceived effectiveness are these personal strategies employed? This information was descriptively summarized.

Purpose two. The second major aim of this study was to understand the Mexican-origin women's help-seeking within their specific socio-cultural context. Socio-cultural factors affect how a woman experiences and responds to abuse and the options that she perceives as available (Bograd, 1999; Das Dasgupta, 1998; Mahoney, 1994). These perceptions will, in turn, help to determine the actual help she seeks (Dutton et. al, 2000).

As Orloff (1999) points out:

Culture, religion, socio-economic, and immigration status do not determine whether domestic violence will occur, but rather influence what barriers a battered [woman] must confront, what relief she will need to obtain from the legal system or other sources, what should be included in her safety plan, what threats the abuser will use against her, and what excuses the abuser will use in an attempt to justify his violence" (p. 9).

Despite the evidence that Latinas/Mexican-origin women may be less likely to seek formal and informal help, few studies have explored *why* this may be and which socio-cultural factors are associated with various forms of help-seeking women utilize. The few studies that have examined this issue, (i.e., Bauer et al., 2000; Sorenson, 1996) have included only small sample sizes and qualitative methodology and/or have not distinguished among Latino subgroups (i.e., Dutton et al., 2000).

The present study therefore sought to focus on a particular subset of the Latino community, Mexican-origin battered women, and to empirically explore which socio-cultural factors influence their help-seeking. For the purposes of this study, socio-cultural

context was defined as the presence of Mexican cultural values (i.e., ascription to traditional gender role norms (e.g., *machismo*) and importance of family (e.g., *familismo*), which will be defined and operationalized later in this dissertation) and socio-structural factors (i.e., income, education, English proficiency, and immigrant status) that have prior literature indicates may be relevant to battered Mexican-origin women's responses to abuse.

To address the second aim of this study, hypotheses were tested and research questions were explored to determine the relationships between the socio-cultural variables and formal and informal help-seeking. Specifically, this dissertation explored whether *familismo* predicts battered Mexican-origin women's informal help-seeking. Also, this study tested the hypotheses that values of *machismo* predict informal help-seeking and that *machismo*, income, educational level, English proficiency, and immigration status relate to formal help-seeking. It was expected that women who ascribed to more *machismo* values and who were socio-structurally disadvantaged—i.e., those with less income, less education, no English, and undocumented status— would report less frequent formal help-seeking.

Contributions to existing literature. This study made the following important contributions to the existing literature: First, it focused on a particular subset of battered Latinas, those of Mexican-origin. Second, this study drew on a survivor perspective to gather important information regarding the diverse forms of help-seeking employed by Mexican-origin battered women. Finally, this study used a sample big enough for

statistical analyses to empirically explore which socio-cultural factors specific to the lives of Mexican-origin women are most salient to their help-seeking behaviors.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Intimate female partner violence is a significant problem within the Latino (Caetano et al., 2000; Cunradi et al., 2002; Mattson & Rodriguez, 1999; Murdaugh et al., 2004; National Women's Law Center, 2000; Texas Council on Family Violence, 2003) and Mexican-origin communities (Aldorando, Kaufman Kantor, & Jasinski, 2002; Lown & Vega, 2001). Contrary to the theory of "learned helplessness" (Walker, 1979, 1984), from a survivor theory perspective, battered women respond to the threat and occurrence of violence by actively and continuously seeking help to protect themselves (and, if mothers, their children) in a myriad of creative ways (Browne, 1998; Gondolf & Fisher, 1988). This includes accessing formal and informal resources to leave the abusive situation as well as employing survival strategies while still living in the abusive situation (Gondolf & Fisher, 1988; Goodman, Dutton, & Weinfurt, 2003). Yet, while battered women of all cultures, races, ethnicities, and social classes act to survive abuse, help-seeking must be considered within women's particular socio-cultural contexts. Battered women's experiences of and responses to abuse reflect and are shaped by their social and cultural conditions, resources, and available options (Dutton et al., 2000). For many Latinas, issues such as language, culture, social isolation, limited information and education, low finances, unfamiliarity with US culture and legal system, and immigration

status complicate efforts to seek help and to leave abusive relationships (Orloff & Little, 1999).

Research suggests that, compared to their European-American counterparts, battered Latinas in general (Bonilla-Santiago, 1996; Dutton et al., 2000; Gondolf et al., 1988), and Mexican-origin women in particular (Jacques, 1981; Torres, 1991; West, 1998), tend to stay in abusive relationships longer, to return to the abuser more frequently, to name fewer behaviors as abusive, and to be less likely to seek help to leave the abusive relationship. However, to date there is not sufficient empirical research, concentrating on a specific subset of battered Latinas (i.e., Mexican-origin women), that explores a) how these women *do* act to survive abuse and how effective their efforts are perceived to be; and b) whether socio-cultural factors relate to help-seeking.

To address this gap in the literature, the present study worked from a survivor perspective and explored first, the diverse efforts that battered Mexican-origin employ to survive abuse and the frequency and perceived effectiveness of these strategies; and second, how socio-cultural factors relate to help-seeking. This study provides important information for those who work with Mexican-origin battered women by illuminating the diverse ways that these women survive abuse—strengths to be built upon in designing interventions—and shedding light on the socio-cultural factors that may impede help-seeking—obstacles to be addressed.

This chapter provides a framework for the present study and reviews the literature in two major areas: first, the scope of the problem and a survivor theory perspective on battered women's responses to abuse; and second, the socio-cultural factors that may

relate to Mexican-origin women's experiences of and responses to abuse. The first section discusses the prevalence of intimate partner abuse in the Latino community; a survivor theory perspective on women's efforts to survive abuse; and observed ethnic differences in battered women's perceptions, experiences, and responses to abuse. The second section presents the cultural factors (*machismo* and *familismo*) and the socio-structural factors (income, education, English proficiency, and immigrant status) that may relate to Mexican-origin women's responses to abuse.

The Scope of the Problem and Battered Women's Responses to Abuse

Prevalence

Until recently, most literature on intimate partner violence has tended not to consider cultural, racial, and ethnic differences (Sorenson, 1996; Straus, et al., 1980; Torres, 1987). However, some studies have documented the severity of partner abuse specifically within the Latino population; these studies have produced disturbing results with prevalence rates as high as 70% (Aldorando et al., 2002; Caetano et al., 2000; Cunradi, et al., 2002; Lown & Vega, 2001; Mattson & Rodriguez, 1999; Murdaugh et al., 2004; National Women's Law Center, 2000). For example, Hogeland and Rosen (1990), working for the Immigrant Women's Task Force of the Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and Services (CIRRS), found that 34% of the immigrant Latinas surveyed admitted experiencing intimate partner violence; of these women, 52% reported they were still living with the batterer. Aguilar Hass et al. (2000) found that 49.3% of the immigrant Latina women surveyed reported having experienced physical abuse, while

60% of the women reported experiencing psychological abuse in the form of dominance and isolation. Similarly, the National Women's Law Center (2000) estimated the national domestic violence prevalence rate for Latinos to be 54.9%. Murdaugh et al. (2004), surveyed 309 Latinos living in the Southeastern US, 62% of whom were born in Mexico and the majority of whom were undocumented, low-income mothers with grade school educations. These researchers found that nearly three quarters of the sample (70%) reported they had experienced an incidence of partner abuse in the previous 12 months. Hence, ample evidence indicates that partner abuse is a significant problem within the Latino community.

The Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV) (2003) provides information on the prevalence of intimate partner violence among Latinos living in Texas. In their recent study, 77% of all Latino Texans (compared to 74% of general population) reported that they, a family member, and/or a friend or coworker had experienced some form of intimate partner violence in her/his lifetime. Hence, in 2003, 5.2 million Latino Texans were personally affected by intimate partner violence. TCFV estimates that if current rates remain same, by year 2030, 12.2 million Latino Texans will be personally affected by intimate partner violence. TCFV (2003) further reported that 36% of Latino Texans acknowledged having been severely abused (i.e., experienced at least one of following: physical abuse, sexual abuse, being threatened by a partner, or having one's family threatened by a partner). Eighteen percent of women surveyed stated they had been forced by partners to have sex against their will. Thus, partner violence is a problem that affects a large number of Latinos living in Texas.

Rates of intimate partner violence are generally understood to be consistent across ethnic, racial, national origin, religious, and socio-economic lines (Hotaling & Sugarman, 1986). Yet while some studies report no ethnic/racial differences when comparing battered Latinas to battered European-American women (Torres, 1987) or battered European-American and African American women (Browne & Bassuk, 1997; Gondolf, et al., 1988; O'Keefe, 1994), other studies have found that Latino couples were at higher risk for intimate partner violence than other racial/ethnic groups (Kaufman Kantor et al., 1994; Neff et al., 1995; Straus & Smith, 1990), including abuse during the woman's pregnancy (Krishnan, Hilbert, VanLeeuwen, & Kolia, 1997). However, many researchers have found that the higher risk of wife assault among Latino families dissipates after accounting for the effects of structural variables, i.e. family income, age, and economic stressors (Kaufman Kantor et al., 1994; Neff et al., 1995; Straus & Smith, 1990). For example, results from Straus and Smith's (1990) National Family Violence Survey indicated that 1 in 4 married or cohabitating Latino couples had experienced intimate partner violence during the year of the study (1985); this rate was 54% higher than the rate for European-American couples in the sample. However, when the researchers controlled for age, income, and urbanicity, the higher probability rates for Latinos to experience intimate partner violence disappeared. These results indicate that structural inequalities between Latinos and other racial/ethnic groups—as opposed to ethnicity, race, or culture alone—account for observed differences in prevalence rates of partner abuse. That is, on average, economically disadvantaged women are more likely to be abused, and because Latinas form a larger proportion of economically disadvantaged

women than European-American women, they are more likely to be abused. Still, partner abuse is clearly a large problem within the Latino community that must be effectively addressed.

Conceptualizing Battered Women as Survivors: Defining Agency and Strategies to Survive Abuse

As previously mentioned (see Introduction chapter), given the many adverse physical and psychological effects of intimate partner abuse, a common question asked of battered women is, “Why don’t they just leave the abusive situation?” (Rhodes & McKenzie, 1998). Importantly, the preponderance of the research conducted to explore this question has not focused specifically on Latinas, much less on a particular subset of Latinas (i.e., Mexican, Puerto Rican, etc.). Yet, research conducted with non-Latina battered women provides a framework for understanding how these particular women respond to abuse.

Many researchers have focused on the individual battered woman to explain why she might have difficulty seeking help to leave her abusive situation. For example, trauma and depression resulting from the abuse affect women’s ability to think clearly (Walker, 1994). Battered women may desire to minimize the abuse and/or may fear retaliation from the abuser (Walker, 1984; 1989). An abused woman may further suffer from lower self-esteem (Sackett & Saunders, 1999), self-blame, shame, and guilt (Clements & Sawhney, 2000), all of which make it more difficult to seek help and to leave. Some argue that battered women develop perceived dependence, feelings of learned helplessness, and experience a loss of personal control (Campbell et al., 1995;

Walker, 1979). Finally, an abused woman may experience a high degree of social isolation (Pressman, 1989), which confounds depression, augments motivational and cognitive deficits, and thereby decreases the likelihood of help-seeking behaviors (Walker, 1984).

Other researchers have approached the question of “staying versus leaving” by exploring the factors that are associated, not with staying, but with leaving the abusive situation. These factors include the frequency and severity of violence, whether the wife was abused as a child, and whether the children are physically abused (Carlson, 1977; Gayford, 1979; Gelles, 1979; Rounsaville, 1989). Other factors found to contribute to a woman’s decision to leave are interventions by outside family members (Rounsaville, 1989) and the resources she has—i.e., education, job skills, money, friends, and a car (Carlson, 1977; Gelles, 1976; Langley & Levy, 1977; Walker, 1979, 1984). Ultimately, however, researchers and advocates have identified several potentially influential factors associated with leaving, and no one theory or study has yet been able to include all them all (Davies & Lyon, 1998).

The emphasis that is placed, both by society and by researchers, on whether the battered woman leaves her abusive situation, however, can be problematic. Mahoney (1994) presents an important critique of the focus on the “staying versus leaving” dichotomy, arguing that it is erroneous to equate “staying” with “victimization,” and “leaving” with “agency.” She points out that a binary conceptualization of agency and victimization ignores the context of women’s lives, hides the danger women face if they decide to leave, and dismisses as illegitimate the many other ways that women assert

themselves to respond to violence: “The question, ‘why didn’t you leave?’ ... tends to hide all the things that women actually do to cope with violence and to resist the batterer’s quest for control” (Mahoney, 1994, p. 76). Thus, women who stay with their abusers may still be agentic, in the sense that they are actively responding to abuse, resisting control, and protecting themselves and their children.

In this spirit, some researchers and advocates focus, not on whether battered woman does or does not leave the abusive relationship, but instead on her continuing, active efforts to respond to her situation and to keep herself and her children safe (Browne, 1998; Dutton, 1996; Gondolf & Fisher, 1988). This viewpoint is consistent with research that has documented that, even in the face of extreme abuse, help-seeking efforts of battered women are substantial (Bowker, 1983; Pagelow, 1981; Walker, 1984). Hence, remaining in the abusive situation does not necessarily mean acceptance of violence, nor does leaving the relationship necessarily mean that the risk of violence will be reduced (Davies & Lyon, 1998; Mahoney, 1994). Rather, women may construct meaning and develop agency while they actively cope within the parameters of the abusive situation (Lempert, 1996).

While it is important to avoid dichotomizing battered women into survivors if they leave and victims if they stay, it is also critical to recognize that for many battered women, personal strategies to survive abuse may not be as effective at ending abuse as accessing outside help (Bowker, 1983). Bowker’s (1983) research indicates that, although important in short-term survival, personal strategies are less effective means of stopping violence for battered women than informal help seeking, which in turn is less effective

than accessing help from formal resources. Research indicates that support from family, friends, professionals, and the community at large is also important to the recovery and readjustment of battered women as they heal from the abuse (Astin, Lawrence, & Foy, 1993; Mitchell, & Hodson, 1983; Tan, Basta, Sullivan, & Davidson, 1995). Thus, while we recognize battered women as active survivors within the abusive situation, a community response to intimate partner abuse is essential to women's ultimate survival.

In sum, the many ways in which battered women survive abuse need to be recognized and understood. The present study agrees with the conceptualization of battered women as survivors who act on their own behalf in obvious and less recognizable ways, both to leave the abuser and to survive while in the abusive situation (Gondolf & Fisher, 1988; Goodman et al., 2003; Lempert, 1996). There is a need for research that documents the diverse survival strategies and their perceived effectiveness employed by a particular subset of battered women of Color, i.e., Mexican-origin women. This study therefore explored these women's help-seeking in three forms: formal help-seeking (i.e., consulting a lawyer, visiting a shelter, etc.), informal help-seeking (i.e., telling one's mother, asking a brother to intervene, etc.), and personal strategies to survive abuse (i.e., placating the batterer, getting the batterer counseling). These various efforts to survive abuse will be discussed next.

Formal help-seeking. Clearly, society recognizes at some level that battered women need assistance to survive their abusive relationships; this is evidenced by the existence of organizations and services that aim to help women survive abuse, i.e., police, protective orders, doctors, counselors, shelters, etc. In the present study, formal help-

seeking was defined as attempts to access the following services: medical services, legal services, domestic violence shelter, women's program, police, social worker, and counselor.

Research indicates that the majority of battered women seek formal help; Wauchope (1986), using data from the National Family Violence Re-survey (Straus & Gelles, 1986), reported that two thirds (68%) of the women in the national sample who had experienced severe violence had sought help at least once. Various studies have documented non-Latina battered women's usage of shelters (Bowker, 1983; Gondolf & Fisher, 1988), medical services (Fugate et al., 2005) social services (Bowker, 1983), police (Fugate et al., 2005; Wolf, Hobart, & Kernic, 2003), legal agents (Bowker, 1983), and therapists (Bowker, 1983; Shulman, 1979).

Accessing services appears to be an important factor in battered women's ability to leave an abusive relationship. Horton and Johnson (1993) found that 96% of the battered women who successfully and safely left their abusive situation had discussed the abuse with someone or some agency. Women who are successful in leaving an abusive relationship tend to have received external help in the form of economic resources (Pfouts, 1978; Strube & Barbour, 1983), support services (Strube & Barbour, 1984), aid filing charges (Snyder & Scheer, 1981), and help obtaining a protective order (Snyder & Scheer, 1981). Yet, some services, i.e., shelter and counselor, appear to be perceived as more helpful by battered women than others, i.e., police and emergency rooms (Bowker & Maurer, 1986; Horton & Johnson, 1993; Kurz, 1990).

Some research has documented formal help-seeking efforts of battered Latinas, including their use of medical services, shelters, police, lawyers, and counselors (Dutton et al., 2000; Murdaugh et al., 2004; West et al., 1998). West et al. (1998) used data from the National Alcohol and Family Violence Survey (1994) and found that slightly less than half of the battered Latinas surveyed (compared to two thirds of European-American women) had sought outside help.

Studies conducted with non-Latina battered women have identified some factors associated with whether women seek formal help. For example, income, transportation, and child-care are associated with accessing formal services (Gondolf & Fisher, 1988; Pagelow, 1981). Increased age and education also are associated with increased help-seeking from formal sources (Hutchison & Hirschel, 1998; Wauchope, 1988). An increase in severity of violence is further related to increased formal help-seeking (Harris & Dewdney, 1994). Women without money and those who perceive no place to go and a dearth of helpful services are less likely to seek help (Anderson, Gillig, Sitaker, McCloskey, Malloy, & Grigsby, 2002).

One study specific to Latinas found that being young and not speaking English were associated with less help-seeking (West et al., 1998). Some studies conducted with battered Latinas have asked them to endorse whether particular factors were experienced as barriers to help-seeking. Dutton et al. (2000) found that the most commonly endorsed barriers were no money and fear of losing children; Murdaugh et al. (2004) found that battered Latinas most frequently cited language issues and lack of transportation as obstacles to seeking formal help.

Informal help-seeking. Battered women may also turn to informal sources of help in their attempts to survive partner abuse (Fugate et al., 2005). In the proposed study, informal help was defined as women's talking to/requesting assistance from: immediate family member, extended family member, partner's family member, friends, co-workers, and church officials.

Fugate et al. (2005), using data from the Chicago Women's Health Risk Study, found that 71% of the battered women surveyed had talked to friends or family about the violence in their relationship. Informal sources of support, like family members, friends, and/or coworkers, can play many important roles for battered women. First, they can be supportive to the woman while she is in the relationship (Bowker, 1983). Supportive family and friends can decrease women's depression and increase their self-efficacy ability to cope with abuse (Campbell et al., 1995). Second, presence of informal supports may decrease the severity of abuse; Mitchell and Hodson (1981) found that women who received non-supportive responses from friends experienced greater levels of violence. Third, informal supports may play an important role in supporting the woman to leave (Bowker, 1983). Fourth, they may help keep a women who has left from returning to the abuser; Heggie (1985), for example, found that women were more likely to return to abusive partner when they perceived important people in their lives as supporting reconciliation. Interestingly, a high level of social support and intervention from kin or neighbors in potentially bad marital situations has been found essential in those societies with low rates of family violence (Levinson, 1988).

Some research has documented the importance of informal help sources for battered Latinas. Dutton et al. (2000) found that half of the abused Latinas interviewed had spoken to female friend about the abuse; a third spoke to their mothers; and a fifth had spoke to a sister. Dutton et al.'s (2000) study found that battered Latinas more often spoke to a female friend or relative than to a helping professional, including shelter staff and advocates. West et al. (1998) found that 35% of battered Latinas in a national probability sample sought help from a friend or relative and 16% consulted a clergy member; these percentages were larger than the percentages of women accessing any formal help source, including police and shelters. Thus, informal help appears to be a commonly accessed source of help for battered Latinas. From previous research it is unclear whether the help received was perceived as effective. It is plausible that depending on women's particular cultural norms and her community's view of intimate partner abuse, not all battered women will equally perceive the people in their lives as helpful (Das Dasgupta, 1998).

Personal strategies to survive abuse. Informal and formal help-seeking are the more visible ways that battered women actively fight on their own behalf to keep themselves (and, if mothers, their children) safe. However, in accord with understanding battered women as survivors, the present study sought to recognize the myriad of ways battered women cope and act on their own behalf in the context of the abusive situation. Based on a review of the previous literature, this study defined personal strategies to survive abuse as 16 items, ranging from placating the batterer to maintaining a relationship with God (See Appendices M and N).

Empirical (Gondolf & Fisher, 1988; Goodman et al., 2003) and qualitative (Lempert, 1996) studies conducted with non-Latinas have demonstrated how strategies to survive within the relationship can be viewed as evidence of the women's resistance and agency. Lempert (1996), for example, interviewed 32 battered women and discovered that even actions that might be viewed as submissive (i.e., placating, hiding), in fact, were conscious strategies employed by women to mitigate abuse, protect children, or otherwise ameliorate the situation.

Davies and Lyon (1998) categorize battered women's actions to survive abuse into "protection strategies," which seek to prevent and respond to violence; "staying strategies," which respond to the range of risks while a woman remains in her relationship; and "leaving strategies," which include responses to the risks a woman faces as she leaves or after she has left her relationship. Protection strategies include fleeing, self-defense, or trying to get the batterer to change, i.e., through counseling. Examples of staying strategies include placating the batterer, carefully preserving one's support system, and getting a job or joining a community group where the battered woman feels valued and gains self-confidence. Leaving strategies refer to accessing the informal and formal supports and services discussed above. Similarly, Goodman et al. (2003) built on previous research to suggest and empirically test the categories of "safety planning" (i.e., hiding car or house keys, work out escape plan), "resistance" (i.e., fighting back, leaving home), and "placating" (i.e., avoid him, try to keep things quiet for him). These researchers also acknowledge informal and formal help-seeking to be important survival efforts made by battered women.

Although they may be less effective than accessing formal or informal help to end the violence, personal strategies to survive daily abuse are important building blocks toward more effective help-seeking in the future (Bowker, 1983). Campbell Ulrich (1993) observes that, “The women who finally leave abusive situations are women who are and have been actively coping within the parameters of their particular environment. This is a strength to be recognized and fostered by clinicians” (p. 385). Hence, women’s agency within the relationship is essential to recognize by those who work with battered women.

To this author’s knowledge, no study has yet documented Mexican-origin women’s use of personal strategies to survive abuse. In fact, personal strategies may be the most viable options for these women to survive abuse because informal and formal help-seeking are complicated by socio-cultural conditions (Dutton et al., 2000). The trends researchers have observed regarding Latinas’ and Mexican-origin women’s responses to abuse will be discussed next.

Ethnic Differences in Experiences, Perceptions, and Response to Abuse.

While ethnicity does not seem to be directly related to prevalence of intimate partner violence, researchers have consistently reported ethnic differences in regards to experience of, perception of, and response to abuse. Regarding how they experience abuse, Torres (1987; 1991) interviewed 25 Mexican American women and 25 White women and found that Mexican American women reported greater unpredictability of abuse. Similar to other research (Jacques, 1981), Torres found that Mexican American women were more likely to be hit in front of their children or other family members than

the White women. Perilla, Bakerman, & Norris (1994) report that Latinas experience more conflict with their abusers over decision-making, housekeeping money, the woman's going out, and pregnancies, when compared to European-American women. Raj and Silverman (2002) suggest that immigrant women may experience specific types of abuse because of their legal status, for example, being threatened with deportation, not being allowed to learn English, or otherwise having one's ability to function as a US citizen compromised.

Research also indicates that Latinas may perceive abuse differently than European-American women, i.e., identify fewer behaviors as abusive (e.g., emotional abuse and acts such as pushing, shoving, grabbing, throwing things at a person) (Bonilla-Santiago, 1996; Jacques, 1981; Torres, 1987; 1991). The Texas Council of Family Violence's (2003) study similarly found differences in Latino Texans' perceptions of abuse, when compared with perceptions of other ethnic groups. For example, when asked what constitutes "abuse," Latinos were least likely to provide more than one definition of intimate partner violence (i.e., to include its physical, sexual, and psychological components). Also, while 72% of the Latino Texans surveyed agreed that a person can choose to stop abusing, 50% of Latinos (as compared to 25% of general population) believed that intimate partner violence is caused by circumstances beyond batterer's control. Furthermore, 61% (compared to 49% of the general population) of Latino Texans indicated that a victim who does not leave an abusive situation bears some of blame for abuse. Also, although 82% of Latino Texans said that it's never appropriate to stay in abusive situation, 46% acknowledged that leaving abusive relationship can be more

dangerous than staying. Finally, although 83% of Latino Texans agreed that a husband who abuses his wife is also more likely to abuse children, only 47% indicated a belief that intimate partner violence passes from generation to generation. The TCFV researchers concluded that these results indicate that Latino Texans hold a more limited definition of intimate partner violence and a willingness to blame victims.

Some research has shown that Latinas generally and Mexican-origin women more specifically stay married to their abusers longer than other groups of battered women. Gondolf et al. (1988) found, for example, that Latinas reported the longest duration of abuse: 32% of Latina battered women reported enduring more than 5 years of abuse, as compared with 21% of White and African American battered women. Torres (1987) found that Mexican American women were more likely to leave and return to their abusers than White women.

Research has also shown that battered Latinas, especially those who are immigrants, are unlikely to utilize formal (Bauer et al., 2000; Dutton et al., 2000; Hogeland & Rosen, 1990; Krishnan et al., 1997; West et al., 1998) and informal help (Dutton et al., 2000; West, 1998) sources in order to survive abuse. For example, Gondolf et al. (1988) found that Latinas were least likely to contact a friend, minister, or social service agency. Krishnan et al. (1997) found that significantly more White women than Latinas reported violence to law enforcement or sought medical attention for the abuse. Dutton et al. (2000) analyzed immigrant Latinas' help-seeking behaviors, and found that while they were more likely to seek informal support (i.e., speak to a female friend) than formal services, only half of the women in the sample did so. Similarly, West et al.

(1998), using a national probability sample, found that battered Latinas were less likely to seek formal and informal help than Anglo women; women of Mexican-origin were least likely to seek assistance. Hogeland and Rosen (1990), working on behalf of the Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and Services (CIRRS), surveyed 346 immigrant Latinas, half of whom were Mexican, and found that of the 34% who reported experiencing abuse, 19% said they had never spoken to *anyone* about the abuse and only 6 ($N = 80$) women indicated they had called the police. Thus, it is not surprising that of the 80 women who responded to the question, “Are you still together with the partner who abused you?” 52 women said, “yes.” The present study aimed to contribute to our understanding of how these reported ethnic differences might be related to women’s socio-cultural context.

Summary

In summary, although there is a dearth of research that focuses on the experiences of battered Latina and Mexican-origin women, some studies indicate that intimate female partner abuse is a substantial problem within the Latino and Mexican-origin communities. Moreover, Latinas and Mexican-origin women appear to experience, perceive, and respond to abuse in different ways than European-American women, i.e., they may be name fewer behaviors as abusive, stay in abusive marriages longer, be more likely to return after leaving, and be less likely to seek formal or informal assistance.

While some studies have documented the ways in which battered Latinas *do* act to survive abuse, no study focused on a particular subset of this population and quantitatively documented the frequency and perceived effectiveness of formal and

informal help-seeking, as well as personal strategies to survive abuse. The current study aimed to address this gap.

Moreover, studies have not sufficiently accounted for *why* these ethnic differences in responses to abuse might exist. As Das Dasgupta (1998) notes, “Needless to say, the individual abuser and the victim do not operate in a vacuum; rather, they are nested within the supportive circles of social institutions and culture” (p. 211). Indeed, although partner abuse affects persons from all backgrounds, some battered women face even greater obstacles in their efforts to escape violent relationships due to particular social, structural, and cultural factors (Orloff & Little, 1999). The proposed study will address these questions by exploring the socio-cultural factors associated with seeking help; these socio-cultural factors will be discussed next.

Socio-cultural Factors Associated with Battered Mexican-origin Women’s Help-seeking

The following section will review socio-cultural factors that may be related to Mexican-origin women’s experiences of and responses to abuse. The factors that will be discussed are two cultural values: *machismo* and *familismo*, and four socio-structural factors: income, education, English proficiency, and immigrant status.

Cultural Factors Associated with Mexican-origin Women’s Responses to Abuse

Values of machismo and gender role norms. According to theory and research, culturally influenced gender roles, scripts, and values may significantly impact abused Latinas’ (Bauer et al., 2000; Flores-Ortiz, 1994; Kanuha, 1994; King et. al, 1993; Martinez-Garcia, 1988; Perilla, 1999; Vera, 2002; Zambrano, 1985) and Mexican

American women's (Avecedo, 2000; Morash, Bui, & Santiago, 2000; Sorenson, 1996; Torres, 1991) responses to abuse. Certain Latino cultural characteristics are thought to create a climate that facilitates and maintains female intimate partner abuse among Latino couples. These characteristics include aspects of *machismo* that reinforce patriarchal relationships; prescriptions of *marianismo* and women's suffering; rigid sex role differentiation; and women's obligations to defer to the needs of others, especially the family (Bernal & Alvarez, 1983; Flores-Ortíz, 1993). Traditional gender roles can serve as justification for abuse, and can also increase the women's vulnerability by keeping women isolated, subservient, and self-sacrificing (Raj & Silverman, 2002).

Gender roles in the Latino culture tend to be more traditional and strictly prescribed and to dictate that males are superior and females be passive, compliant, and responsive to others' needs (Ginorio & Reno, 1986). Most empirical evidence suggests that Latinos are less egalitarian in their gender role attitudes than European-Americans (Harris & Firestone, 1998, Strong, McQuillen, & Hughey, 1994; Wilkie, 1994). Traditionally, male and females are socialized differently as children, and boys are given more resources, freedom, and priority than girls (Triandis, 1983). Such socialization encourages male aggression and female passivity (Flores-Ortiz, 1993).

In many Latino families, girls are taught to be obedient and to put the needs of their family and community above their own (Raj & Silverman, 2002). Moreover, Latina girls are taught from an early age that marriage is of utmost importance and is essential to identity (Perilla, 1999). Within the traditional Mexican family, the father is the main provider, protector, and authority figure, while the mother is in charge of caring for the

children, supporting her husband under all circumstances, and keeping the family together (Lichter & Landale, 1995; Lijtamer, 1998; Perilla, 1999; Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002). The result of such familial expectations for women and work prescriptions for men can lead to economic control for men and reduced options for women (Raj & Silverman, 2002).

Because they reinforce a hierarchical, male-dominated family structure, cultural values of *machismo* and *marianismo* may serve to legitimize abuse and encourage women to stay in abusive situations. In its negative sense, *machismo* has been described as an exaltation of male physical superiority and force and a legitimization of unjust power relations between the genders (Lugo, 1985). *Machismo* demands that a man be aggressive to show he is strong, masculine, and physically powerful, as well as hypersexual and aggressive toward women (Ingoldsby, 1995; Martinez-Garcia, 1987; Roschelle, 1999). The *machista* man gains respect through being powerful over others, particularly over his family (Raj & Silverman, 2002).⁴ However, more recently Latino researchers have disputed this negative characterization of *machismo* (Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002). These researchers suggest that *machismo* has positive traits as well, for example, a man's responsibility to provide for and protect his family, loyalty toward

⁴ Note that several criticisms have also been made of *machismo* and *marianismo* as strictly Latino cultural values (Baca Zinn, 1979; Casas, Wagenheim, Banchemo, & Mendoza-Romero, 1994). Also, some caution that we must understand these phenomena within the socio-structural context rather than purely as cultural values. For example, it has been suggested that *machista* behavior is a way for men to make up for the powerlessness they experience outside of the home by proving it inside of the home (Mirande & Enriquez, 1979). Similarly, Latinas' subordination should be understood in the context of their racial, ethnic, and immigrant, in addition to gender subordinate status in U.S. society (Finkler, 1997; Melville, 1980). Kanua (1994) reminds us that Latinas' self-sacrifice is relegitimized by societal attributions of women of color as resilient in the face of all odds, caregivers, and matriarchs who minimize their own needs and prioritize the needs of others.

family, strength, and dignity (Morales, 1996).⁵ However, it is the aspects of *machismo* that are restrictive toward women and reinforcing of male dominance and traditional gender roles that are thought to be related to occurrence of abuse and women's responses.

Marianismo is the female correlate to the male script of *machismo*. *Marianismo* dictates that women should be self-sacrificing, self-abnegating, deferent to others' needs, passive, and sexually pure (Gil & Vasquez, 1996; Lopez-Baez, 1999; McLoyd, Cauce, Takeuchi, & Wilson, 2000). *Marianismo* stems from the myth of Malinche, which teaches that women are untrustworthy (especially with sex), capable of betraying men if not closely guarded, and open to sexual exploitation. *Marianismo* also derives from the idealization of the Virgin Mary, who is pure and self-sacrificing. A *marianista* woman is subservient and adheres to her traditional female gender roles. There exist, then, contradictory images of women: she is both subordinate and sexually pure, and she is sexually dangerous and potentially powerful, and therefore in need of being controlled.

Marianismo is described as the culturally legitimized ideology of women's suffering:

Among the characteristics of this ideal are semi-divinity, moral superiority, and spiritual strength. The spiritual strengths engenders abnegation, that is an infinite capacity for humility and sacrifice. No self-denial is too great for the Latin American woman, no limit can be divined to her vast store of patience with the men of her world. (Stevens, 1973, pp. 94-95).

⁵ While *machismo* embodies some positive characteristics, in this dissertation, only the aspects of *machismo* thought to be related to abuse (i.e., restrictive women and reinforcing of traditional gender roles) were studied.

This expectation of self-sacrifice carries with it strict behavioral prescriptions for Latina women. Gil & Vasquez (1996) delineate the following mandates of *marianismo* that dictate how the ideal Latina should behave:

Do not forget a woman's place; do not forsake tradition; do not be single, self-supporting, or independent-minded; do not put your own needs first; do not wish for more in life than being a housewife; do not forget that sex is for making babies—not for pleasure; do not be unhappy with your man or criticize him for infidelity, gambling, verbal and physical abuse, alcohol or drug abuse; do not ask for help; do not discuss personal problems outside the home; do not change those things which make you unhappy that you can realistically change (Gil & Vasquez, 1996, p.8).

Research has established the relationship of male dominance to family violence (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Straus, 1973), and provided evidence that men who hold more traditional sex role attitudes or patriarchal beliefs are more likely to endorse the use of physical abuse in marital relationships (Finn, 1986; Koval, Ponzetti, & Cate, 1982). Hence, theoretically, the more stereotyped prevalence of male dominance among Latino couples should lead to higher levels of intimate partner violence among Latinos and increased female tolerance of abuse (Carroll, 1980). Moreover, in the context of such cultural expectations of women's self-sacrifice and subservience, it can be argued that a Latina would be more likely to accept submission to her husband's authority, and therefore more likely to stay with an abusive partner.

Indeed, some researchers suggest that the childhood socialization of Latinas, the message that marriage is of utmost importance and is essential to identity, and the expectation that women should be submissive, may all increase the frequency and severity of intimate partner violence among Latino couples and augment women's

tolerance of abuse (Perilla, 1999). Champion (1996) found that the abused Mexican American women in her sample were more traditional regarding gender role expectations than non-abused women. She postulated that such traditionalism might lead to situations in which abused women were more likely to stay in the marriage longer because of previous acceptance of the dominant male role, coupled with fears concerning their ability to obtain employment and care for children without the man. Similarly, Vera (2002) found that less traditional gender role attitudes were related to women's decreased likelihood to leave abusive relationship. Perilla et al. (1994) found that mutuality between partners, as opposed to dominance/subservience, acted as a buffer against abuse among Latino couples.

The sexual double standard inherent in *machismo*, wherein men's sexual aggressiveness is encouraged and women are expected to be sexually pure, may further perpetuate situations of partner abuse (Raj & Silverman, 2002). In Sorenson's (1996) focus groups consisting of abused Mexican American women, for example, the women spoke often about their culture's emphasis on the sexual prowess of men and the simultaneous emphasis on women's virginity; this double standard reinforced male privilege and female subordination and resulted in episodes of and tolerance of abuse. Also, because of *machismo*, male sexual jealousy may be viewed as a legitimate reason to abuse one's wife (Morash et al., 2000; Perilla, 1999).

In addition, Latinas may have learned through witnessing domestic abuse as a child that it is part of a woman's role to be submissive and to "take" abuse; women may understand from experience that there are no consequences for the man who beats his

wife (Perilla, 1999). Caetano et al. (2000) found that Latinas reporting childhood experiences with violence were twice as likely to report any type of interpersonal violence than those who did not report a history. Thus, women who, based on what they learned as a child through their mothers' modeling, associate tolerance of abuse with a wife's duty to abnegate her own needs for others, might themselves be more tolerant of abuse.

Despite the argument that a culture of *machismo* should result in more intimate partner violence and the existing evidence that supports this theory, other empirical research has failed to support the assumption that rigid gender role expectations lead to more abuse. For example, Perilla et al. (1994) found the degree to which Latinas subscribed to the traditional female role to be unrelated to abuse levels. This finding may relate to evidence that suggests that rigid gender role differentiation and unequal power distribution between men and women is more of an ideal than a reality for most Latino couples, one that changes in the U.S. as women gain more opportunities for education and employment (Baca Zinn, 1980; Blee & Tickamyer, 1995; Cromwell & Cromwell, 1978; Hawkes & Taylor, 1975; Kane, 1992; Rogler & Santana Cooney, 1984). It is also important to note that the acculturation process affects attitudes toward gender roles, such that more acculturated individuals appear to have more liberal attitudes toward gender roles and engage in less gendered behavior (Kranau, Green, & Valencia-Weber, 1982; Taylor, Tucker, & Mitchell-Kernan, 1999). Also, some point out that the Latina mother generally has considerable power within the domestic sphere, where she is the principle

figure in charge of daily home-related decisions and child-rearing (Abalos, 1986), and she is respected and revered in her role (Mirandé & Enríquez, 1979).

Still, it has been argued that even when Mexican American women have control over daily decisions, the façade of *machismo* and the man's authority remains (Coltrane & Valdez, 1997). For example, a few studies indicate that even when Latinos and Latinas engage in nontraditional roles, they continue to hold values of *machismo* and to believe that the man should be the primary breadwinner and the woman should be the central parental figure (Davis and Chavez, 1985; Deutsch & Saxon, 1998). Thus, although changes take place with acculturation, such as wives working and couples having a more egalitarian stance, there may remain a marked difference between ascribed gender roles, which may serve to facilitate occurrence and maintenance of abuse (Perilla, 1999).

In sum, traditional gender roles, norms of *machismo* and *marianismo*, expectations of women's suffering, and the power imbalances between men and women may all function to facilitate abuse for Latinas. While research has examined the relationship between values of *machismo* and occurrence of abuse or likelihood of leaving an abusive relationship, studies have generally not examined the relationship between these attitudes and women's help-seeking. One study, drawing on national incidence survey data, found that while Latinas were more likely than European-American women to characterize their relationships as male dominated, male dominance was not related to help-seeking among abused Latinas. Other qualitative studies (Avecedo, 2000; Sorenson, 1996) have found that values of *machismo* do deter help-seeking. Moreover, based on the finding that Latinas who remain abusive relationships

have more traditional gender role norms (Vera, 2002), and the demonstrated relationship between leaving an abusive relationship and having sought help (Horton & Johnson, 1993), it is plausible to assume that more ascribing to greater levels of *machismo* would be associated with less frequent help-seeking. Further research is required to examine whether this theory holds up empirically.

Women's identity as mother. One particular gender role, women's identity as mother, appears to be especially important to abused Latinas' responses to abuse and their willingness to seek help (Avecedo, 2000; Bauer, et al., 2000; Dutton et al., 2000; Finkler, 1997; Gondolf et al. 1988; National Latino Alliance for the Elimination of Domestic Violence, 2003; Orloff & Little, 1999; Sorenson, 1996; Torres, 1987). Some women may be motivated to stay with an abuser by fear of losing their children, concern about ability to provide for their children should they leave the abuser, or desire that their children have a father (Orloff & Little, 1999). On the other hand, qualitative research indicates that women may be motivated to leave an abusive relationship because they want to protect the children, be good examples, improve children's futures, and disrupt the familial cycle of violence (Avecedo, 2000).

Within the Latino family generally and the Mexican-origin family specifically, males and females tend to have specific roles and expectations. Traditionally, the father is the head of the family; he is the sole provider, protector, and authority figure and has the most decision-making power (Perilla, 1999). The mother is the moderator and interceder, the heart of the family who is respected by her children. The mother is the principle figure in the home, in charge of providing resources and services and of child-rearing and

ensuring the well-being of others (Abalos, 1986). The Latina mother should be warm, nurturing, and attuned to the needs of others. At the same time she defers to the needs of others, however, the mother is respected and revered by her children (Mirandé & Enríquez, 1979).

The identity as wife and mother is central to the way in which many Mexican-origin women organize their experiences and derive their sense of identity (Perilla, 1999). Many Mexican-origin women are expected to be wives and mothers first and foremost (Melville, 1980), and childbearing is a primary source of social identity (Velez, 1980). The Latina's self-esteem and self-concept are a function of her ability to fulfill specific cultural mandates revolving around her role as mother, i.e. remembering her place as a woman, being responsible for passing on cultural traditions, putting others' needs above her own, supporting her husband under all circumstances, and keeping her family together (Perilla, 1999). Empirical research indicates that being in a disrupted marital status, and therefore unable to fulfill the role as mother and wife, is strongly linked to depression among Mexican Americans (Vega, Kolody, & Valle, 1986; Vega, Warheit, & Meinhardt, 1984).

Several studies have concluded that for Latinas, concern for and desire to protect their children contributes to their decision to stay in an abusive marriage (Bauer, et al., 2000; Dutton et al., 2000; Finkler, 1997; Gondolf et al. 1988; National Latino Alliance for the Elimination of Domestic Violence, 2003; Sorenson, 1996; Torres, 1987). For example, belief that the welfare of the children depends upon keeping the family together may make women more willing to endure abuse (Bauer, et al., 2000). In Dutton et al.'s

(2000) study, fear of losing their children was cited by 48.2% of the participants as a major obstacle in seeking help to escape the violence in their relationship. Gondolf et al. (1988) reported that the Latinas in their sample appeared to be bound by the norm of “loyal motherhood” (p. 48), as reflected in their tendency to marry earlier, to have larger families, and to stay in marriages for longer periods of time. Based on her research with Mexican women living in Mexico, Finkler (1997) noted that while self-sacrificing may sustain and empower Mexican women, it does so “even in the face of physical abuse by their husband. A woman will remain with the man, will suffer, because of the often heard refrain ‘my children need a father’” (Finkler, 1997, p. 1152.) The National Latino Alliance for the Elimination of Domestic Violence (2003) similarly reported that battered Latinas are reluctant to separate their children from their father. Avecedo (2000) found that fears of losing their children to the state or to the batterer, and/or fears of what might happen to their children should they leave the abusive relationship were central to battered Mexican immigrant women’s decisions to refrain from help-seeking and stay with abusive partners.

Moreover, abuse may affect women’s perceptions of their ability to provide for their children (Orloff & Little, 1999). Champion (1996) found that abused Mexican American women perceived themselves as being significantly less competent than non-abused women in, among other things, ability to obtain a job and to take care of children and family. Thus, abused Mexican immigrant women may be trapped in a cycle wherein they perceive themselves as less competent nurturers and providers as a result of being

abused, and based on these negative-self-perceptions of their capability to provide for their children, may be more likely to stay with abusive partners.

However, researchers have also found that gender role expectations regarding motherhood and concerns for one's children may similarly act as a reason to leave the abusive marriage. Avecedo's (2000) qualitative study found cultural factors to be more influential on Mexican-origin women's help-seeking than structural factors, and concluded that the primary factor determining whether or not women sought help was concern for their children. Sorenson's (1996) qualitative data similarly reveal that concerns for the welfare of the children was the primary motivator in the decisions of abused Mexican American in her sample to leave the abusive marriage. Likewise, Torres (1987) found that family was cited as the most important factor in Mexican American women's decisions to leave (as well as to stay in) an abusive marriage. Forty percent of Mexican American women, compared with 20 percent of White women, said that they left the marriage because of their children. Thus, it appears that concern for children and ability to fulfill one's role as mother is central to Mexican immigrant mothers' decisions to leave or to stay in an abusive marriage.

Familismo. While it is important to bear in mind the diversity that exists among Mexican-origin families (Andrade, 1982; Cromwell & Cromwell, 1978; Grebler Moore, & Guzman, 1970; Murillo, 1976; Zapata & Jaramillo, 1981), some generalizations may be made in regards to the importance of families in the lives of Mexican-origin individuals (Santiago-Rivera, Arredondo, & Gallardo-Cooper, 2002). Although the following information is not descriptive of *every* Latino or Mexican-origin family, it is

likely to be more descriptive of Latino or Mexican families than other racial/ethnic families.

*Familismo*⁶ has been described as a core Mexican cultural value (Keefe, Padilla, & Carlos, 1978) and is reported to be an emotional support system for individual family members (Grebler et al., 1970). Research indicates that Latinos tend to have strong identification and attachment with their families (both nuclear and extended) and that there exist strong feelings of reciprocity, loyalty, and solidarity among members of the same family (Triandis, Marín, Betancourt, Lisansky, & Chang, 1982; Westberg, 1989). *Familismo* includes placing the family ahead of individual interest and development, living near extended family, and being responsible and obligated to the family (Falicov, 1998; Ingoldsby, 1995). Interdependence of family members provides great economic and social support (Mirandé, 1977). Empirical studies have shown that Mexican American psychological wellbeing is related to family involvement (Raymond & Rhoads, 1980) and that Mexican Americans generally derive significant emotional gratification from the family (Sotomayor, 1972; Temple Trujillo, 1974). The tendency to rely on kin

⁶ Note that increasingly, researchers and scholars have argued that cultural interpretations of Latino gender roles within families and Latino family life may obscure the role of socio-structural factors, race, and gender, as shapers of family life (Baca Zinn, 1999; Baca Zinn & Eitzen, 1996; Dill, Baca Zinn, & Patton, 1993). For example, this characteristic orientation toward a close-knit kinship pattern among Mexican American families may be less of an inherited cultural value, and instead represent an adaptation to conditions of exclusion, socioeconomic marginality, and hostility in the larger U.S. society (Griffith & Villaviencio, 1985). Extended kinship networks may operate as mechanisms of social exchange and support among Mexican Americans, particularly for women, who gain access, through such networks to resources that are not available elsewhere, i.e. child care, housing, and employment opportunities (Baca Zinn, 1982). Thus, reliance on family for support may be a coping strategy for Latino individuals who are marginalized by U.S. society and is best understood in view of the structural conditions with which Latino families cope, rather than in only terms of cultural values (Harris & Firestone, 1998).

for emotional support may negatively impact formal help-seeking behavior (Keefe et al., 1978).

Some researchers (i.e. Edgerton and Karno, 1971; Garza & Gallegos, 1985; Grebler et al., 1970) hypothesize that the primacy of the family decreases as families acculturate, urbanize, and migrate. In contrast, other authors (i.e. Griffith & Villaviencio, 1985) hypothesize that the extended family system becomes larger and better integrated from first generation immigrants because the number of family members increases. Researchers have generally found that while some aspects of *familismo* may change with the process of acculturation, attitudes toward the family and the internal structure of the family generally do not differ throughout generations (Repack, 1997; Ruschenberg & Buriel, 1989; Sabogal et al., 1987). Thus, despite the process of acculturation, *familismo* appears to be an important value in the Latino and Mexican-origin communities.

On the one hand, *familismo*'s emphasis on family members' responsibility to each other may prompt family members to intervene in an abusive situation, thereby helping battered women to seek help and to leave the abusive relationship. Indeed, studies have shown the presence of extended kin is associated with decreased risks of wife assault (Finkler, 1997; Firestone, Lambert, & Vega, 1999; Straus, et al., 1980; Yllö & Straus, 1990). In many Latino families, multiple generations live together under one roof; whereas in a nuclear family, the married pair is left to their own devices to settle disputes, the presence of senior members of the household may both mitigate the threat of abuse and provide people to intervene to help the battered woman if abuse occurs (Finkler, 1997; Sorenson, 1996). Sisters-in-law, in particular, may establish friendships that

cushion the effects of dissention between mates (Finkler, 1997). Studies have also shown that the *lack* of social support of the extended family, which frequently occurs for immigrant women following their migration, augments battered women's feelings of social isolation, increases their perceived dependence on the abusive marriage, decreases their sense of efficacy to seek help, and lowers their perceived options (Bauer, et al., 2000).

However, while the attachment to and support from the family may provide protection against abuse, it may also present barriers to leaving an abusive relationship (Bauer, et al., 2000; Dutton et al., 2000). Being too independent, expressing dissatisfaction within the marriage or family, and discussing problems outside the home all might cast a negative light on the family and therefore be discouraged (Perilla, 1999). The stigmatization of divorce, the expectations that problems are to be kept within the family, and the burden of preserving family dignity, may all impede women from seeking help⁷ (Das Dasgupta, 1998; Raj & Silverman, 2002; Zambrano, 1985). Women may feel disloyal if they attempt to leave an abusive marriage, especially if they believe that their tolerance of abuse leads to family unity (Flores-Ortiz, 1992; National Latino Alliance for the Elimination of Domestic Violence, 2003). Battered women's reluctance to escape the violence in her relationship may further be augmented by the family and community that surrounds women, who may encourage tolerance of abuse for the sake of family solidarity and/or fail to intervene (Raj & Silverman, 2002). TCFV (2003) reported that

⁷ Religion, in particular Catholicism, and its teachings that women should obey their husbands, can further contribute to women's sense that a good wife/mother suffers for the sake of her family solidarity (Perilla, 1999; Sorenson, 1996).

40% (2 in 5) of Latino Texans who reported that they or family member experienced intimate partner abuse took no action to intervene.

Qualitative research has supported the notion that strong values of *familismo* present barriers to seeking help to leave the abusive situation (Avecedo, 2000; Sorenson, 1996). Avecedo (2000) reports that nearly half of the battered Mexican immigrant women in the sample believed that intimate partner violence is a private matter to be dealt with between spouses/partners. Sorenson (1996) notes that for the Mexican American women in her sample, desire to keep the family together was the most commonly cited reason for staying in an abusive marriage. *Familismo*, and its mandates of individual devotion to the family's unity, was a central theme in the Mexican immigrant women's discussion in the Bauer et al. (2000) study; participants tended to perceive outside intervention as threatening to family solidarity and sanctity. In these focus groups, the Mexican immigrant women generally felt that maintaining the family took precedence over personal problems. They described the sacredness of the marital bonds and the self-sacrificing nature of marriage, as well as of feelings of love and loyalty toward their husbands that led them to stay with abusive partners. In Dutton et al's (2000) empirical study with battered immigrant Latinas, 18.3% of the total sample and 48.2% of the women still living with their abusers cited desire to keep their family together as a major obstacle to seeking help and attempting to leave the abusive relationship. Batterers may misuse these cultural values of loyalty and vulnerability of the

family to control their wives in the sanctioned primacy and privacy of the family system (Anzaldua, 1990).⁸

In sum, *familismo*, an important value for many Mexican-origin women, may influence how they make sense of their situations and respond to abuse. For some women, the presence of extended kin who feel obligated and responsible toward other family members may provide an important source of informal help and support, and these family members may also intervene to assist the women in accessing formal sources of support. However, for other women, the expectations of individual sacrifice for the sake of the family may lead them to stay with abusive partners and to be reluctant to tell seek help from anyone outside of her relationship.

Summary. In conclusion, it appears that values of mothering, nurturing, deferring to and fulfilling the needs of others, and maintaining family cohesiveness are central to Mexican American women's sense of identity. It further appears that these values may impact abused Latinas' decision to stay with or to leave abusive partners. There is a need for research that empirically investigates how these variables relate to help-seeking among a specific subset of battered Latinas. The proposed study therefore gathered quantitative information regarding how ascription to *machismo* and *familismo* related to

⁸ In addition, abused women of color also have to contend with feelings of disloyalty to their racial/ethnic/cultural community as a whole should they seek outside help (Flores-Ortíz, 1993). Many battered women don't want to call attention to themselves and their families, and by extension their racial/ethnic community, for fear of further stigmatization or unfair stereotyping of people of color as violent (Kanua, 1994). They may fear criticism of their culture or country of origin as "backward" or as accepting of violence (Raj & Silverman, 2002). These concerns for community may further serve to deter battered Mexican-origin women from seeking help to end or escape abuse.

the frequency with which battered Mexican-origin women seek help to end, escape, or avoid the violence in their relationship.

Cultural values and norms are not the only factors that may influence Mexican-origin women's help-seeking and responses to abuse. Socio-structural factors are also important to consider when understanding why some women, and not others, seek certain types of help. Socio-structural factors associated with women's help-seeking will be presented next.

Socio-structural Factors Associated with Mexican-origin Women's Responses to Abuse

Studies have shown that various socio-structural factors may be obstacles that impede battered Latinas from seeking social service (Gondolf, et al., 1988), medical (Krishnan, et al., 2001; Rodriguez et al., 1998), and/or legal help (Krishnan, et al., 2001; Rodriguez, et al., 1996). Battered Latinas' perceptions of their options and their subsequent ability to escape abuse may be affected by socio-economic disadvantage, language issues, discrimination, and immigrant status (Dutton et al., 2000). This study explored how income, education, English proficiency, and immigrant status were associated with Mexican-origin women's efforts to seek formal help.

Income. Latino couples in the US are known to be younger, to have less education, and to be more likely to live below the poverty line than European-Americans (U.S. Bureau of Census, 2000). When compared with other ethnic groups, Latinas in research samples of battered women tend to differ on socio-economic variables, i.e., they tend to be most economically disadvantaged, have the lowest employment status, and

experience more external constraints to leaving (Frisbie, 1986; Gondolf et al., 1988; Jacques, 1981; West et al., 1998).

The link between poverty and physical violence has been established by many studies (Curtis, 1975; Loftin & Hill, 1974; National Institute of Justice, 2004). Studies indicate that the majority of women who are homeless and/or receive public assistance are currently or were formerly abused by their partners or spouses (Raphael & Tolman, 1997). In many studies, racial/ethnic differences in rates of abuse cease to exist when age, social class, and husband's employment status are taken into account (O'Keefe, 1994; Straus, et al., 1980). Thus, because they are more likely to be economically disadvantaged, Latinas may be more vulnerable to being in abusive situations (Straus, 1987).

Some studies indicate that financial stressors increase the likelihood of abuse specifically among Latino couples (Kaufman Kantor, et al., 1994; Perilla et al., 1994). Straus (1987) found that Latino men with lower income have the highest rate of wife assault; while fifteen percent of the employed Latino men carried out an act of minor violence, that rate doubled to 1 out of 3 for unemployed men.

Not only does the stress of economic marginality and lack of resources augment the potential for abuse to occur, but battered women may also be more willing to endure in an abusive situation and less likely to seek help due to her (and possibly her children's) financial dependency on her husband. Studies of non-Latina battered women have shown that economic dependency plays a role in keeping women in abusive marriages (Kalmuss & Straus, 1982). Lack of income also may increase women's feelings of helplessness and

apprehension about the future if they do ultimately leave (Pagelow, 1981; Walker, 1979). Also, women with fewer personal resources may have fewer opportunities to engage in occupational and social roles outside the family, which decreases their chances for establishing a social network, obtaining information, and bolstering self-worth (Mitchell & Hodson, 1981). Qualitative studies have demonstrated that, feeling (for good reason) economically unable to sustain themselves and their children if they leaves the abusive husband, economically marginalized Latinas might stay with an abusive partner, for lack of a better alternative (Avecedo, 2000; Morash et al., 2000).

Quantitative studies specific to Latinas indicate that lack of money is a commonly cited obstacle to accessing services. The National Latino Alliance for the Elimination of Domestic Violence (2003) reported that lack of transportation and concerns about housing were frequently cited as barriers to help-seeking by battered Latinas. The effect of limited economic options on help-seeking and leaving may be especially profound for immigrant Latinas, who often lack childcare, transportation, and language capabilities, and who either can't obtain work authorization papers, or work low paying jobs without job security or benefits (Orloff & Dave, 1997; Orloff & Little, 1999). For example, 21% of immigrant Latinas in Hogeland and Rosen's (1990) study said that services were too expensive. Dutton et al. (2000) reported that 26% of battered immigrant Latinas said that "no money" was a barrier to seeking help; among the women who were still in the abusive relationship, 67% reported that lack of financial resources impeded them from seeking help to leave the relationship.

Also, immigrant women have a harder time accessing economic resources through public programs because of overlapping laws regarding intersection of public benefits and immigration (Goldfarb, 1999). A survey conducted by Equal Rights Advocates (Becerra, 1999) on immigrant women and welfare found that among the women who had been recipients of AFDC/CalWorks, 71.4% of Mexican women reported having experienced intimate partner violence, and one half of these women said that they or their children “often” or “sometimes” didn’t have enough to eat. Also, the Mexican women were twice as likely as European-American women to share house with unrelated adult.

Such difficulty in obtaining the basic necessities may affect where intimate partner violence falls in women’s list of priorities, i.e. it may not be considered the most pressing problem in the midst of feeding concerns about one’s self and one’s children. Thus, for Latinas and especially for immigrant Latinas, a dearth of economic resources may be a serious impediment to seeking formal help to leave their abusive situations for various reasons: they may not be able to survive economically independent from the relationship; they may not be able to afford the transportation or child care necessary to access services; or basic issues of survival take precedence over addressing the violence in their relationship.

Education. Battered Latinas tend to be disadvantaged by limited education (West et al., 1998). The National Latino Alliance for the Elimination of Domestic Violence (2003) found that 39% of the agencies they surveyed reported that their clients had either primary or middle school education, but not beyond. In Hogeland and Rosen’s (1990)

study, which focused exclusively on immigrant Latinas, only 9% of the women had graduated from high school.

With some disagreement in the literature (Rollins & Oheneba-Sakyi, 1990), generally higher education has been demonstrated to be associated with less incidences of intimate female partner abuse (Downs, Miller, & Panek, 1993; Hotelling & Sugarman, 1986). Increased education has also been shown to be associated with increased help-seeking among non-Latina battered women (Hutchison & Hirschel, 1998; Wauchope, 1988). It is likely that education is most relevant to occurrence of abuse as it relates to the likelihood of finding employment in a stable and well-paying job (Jasinski & Williams, 1998). For example, Straus (1987) found that there was a higher incidence of violence in families of blue-collar versus white-collar jobs. Lack of education, then, may both increase incidence of abuse and may also result in economic dependence and difficulty providing for self and children independent from an abusive marriage.

Limited education and illiteracy, in addition to factors such as language barriers and isolation, may limit battered Latinas' access to information about rights and services (Bauer et al., 2000; Gondolf et al., 1984; Krishnan et al., 1997; Murdaugh et al., 2004; National Latino Alliance for the Elimination of Domestic Violence, 2003). For example, Dutton et al. (2000) found that 23.3% of the Latina immigrant women they interviewed cited not knowing about services as the biggest barrier to seeking help to end or escape the violence in their relationship. In Hogeland and Rosen's (1990) study, 38% of the immigrant Latinas surveyed reported that they did not know services existed. In Texas, only 63% of the Latinas interviewed were aware that a national toll-free intimate partner

violence hotline exists, although 73% said they'd be very likely to call if they were experiencing intimate partner violence (Texas Council on Family Violence, 2003). Thus, women with little education and limited information may be less able to seek help than women with more education.

English proficiency. Not speaking English may pose a particular obstacle to monolingual Spanish-speaking battered women's help-seeking. Language issues were perceived as barriers to help-seeking by 23.4% of immigrant Latinas in Dutton et al.'s (2000) study, and 31% of the immigrant Latinas in Hogeland and Rosen's (1990) study. Language was the number one barrier identified by battered Latinas in Murdaugh et al.'s (2004) study. Similarly, West et al. (1998) found that battered women who speak more English have greater access to formal help sources.

Lack of bilingual staff and services is a serious impediment to women's efforts to obtain formal services. For instance, if the police respond to a domestic violence call, but do not speak Spanish, they may not make the report or may issue a report based on faulty information due to miscommunication, particularly if the batterer (but not the victim) speaks English (Orloff & Little, 1999). The National Alliance for the Elimination of Intimate Partner Violence (2003) surveyed 92 intimate partner violence agencies and found that, although about 50% of the agencies reported that none of their clients could read or write English, 25% of the agencies had no bilingual/bicultural staff, and over half (57.1%) had 2 or less staff members who spoke Spanish. Language issues may also affect communication between the service provider and the client, dissuading some battered Latinas from seeking help (Avecedo, 2000; Bauer, et al., 2000; Dutton et al., 2000;

Hogeland, C. & Rosen, K., 1990; National Latino Alliance for the Elimination of Domestic Violence, 2003; Orloff & Little, 1999; Sorenson, 1996). As mentioned, language issues further affect awareness of existing rights and services (Orloff & Little, 1999). Thus monolingual Spanish-speaking battered women may be at a disadvantage in regards to seeking help.

Immigration status. Fear of deportation—for self, children, family members, and even the batterer—is a strong deterrent for undocumented Latina and Mexican-origin women to report abuse or to seek help (Avecedo, 2000; Bauer et al., 2000; Dutton et al., 2000; Hogeland & Rosen, 1990; National Latino Alliance for the Elimination of Domestic Violence, 2003; Orloff & Little, 1999; Sorenson, 1996). Studies conducted by Dutton et al. (2000), Hogeland and Rosen (1990), and Murdaugh et al. (2004) indicate that immigrant Latinas endorsed that fear of deportation was a significant obstacle to seeking help to leave their abusive situation.

Women whose legal status is dependent on their husbands are especially vulnerable to being trapped in abusive situations. Although the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) allows for these women to petition for citizenship based on the history of abuse, many immigrant women are unaware of or unwilling to file these papers. Instead, they are dependent on their husbands to file for Legal Permanent Residence on their behalf, and few battering husbands will do so (Raj & Silverman, 2002). Other facets of immigration laws function to keep women from seeking help to leave their abusive relationship. For example, if their Legal Permanent Resident status is based on a work Visa, they must maintain sponsored employment to remain in country—this is hard when

batterers disrupt and threaten women's jobs (Sorenson, 1996). In another example, under the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act 1996, all non-citizen immigrants, including Legal Permanent Residents, can be deported for variety of crimes, including misdemeanors—a batterer who successfully involves his partner in criminal activity can use this to threaten the woman with deportation. Finally, the Marriage Fraud Act (1986), originally designed to discourage “sham” marriages, has had the unintended consequence of trapping women in abusive, though “legitimate,” marriages. This act placed a two-year waiting period for an immigrant to receive a legal permanent residency through marriage to a US citizen, after which the couple must submit bank account information, property, and other records demonstrating joint partnership, as well as affidavits from people who know them to be married. If the U.S.-citizen husband refuses to assist wife in the petition process, she has little recourse and must defer to his wishes for fear of jeopardizing her immigration status.

In addition to fears about their own legal status, many immigrant women may worry that if they report any problems within the home, the entire family will be deported (Raj & Silverman, 2002; Sorenson, 1996). Given the importance of family cohesiveness within the Latino culture, this threat may lead a woman to go to great ends to protect her family—including tolerating abuse. Battered immigrant women may further be concerned about the batterer's deportation to his country of origin, particularly if they are refugee women (Orloff & Little, 1999; Raj & Silverman, 2002).

Summary. In sum, various socio-structural factors specific to the situation of Mexican-origin battered women may relate to how they respond to abuse. According to

Counts, Brown, and Campbell (1992), one of the preconditions for battering to occur and to be endured is a lack of sanctuary for battered women. For battered Mexican-origin women, who perceive their options for assistance to be limited— due to factors such as economic and educational disadvantage, lack of awareness of rights, limited English proficiency, discrimination from providers, and fear of deportation—the barriers to seeking help to leave their abusive situation may seem insurmountable. Thus, staying in the abusive situation may seem the only viable alternative for themselves and their children. However, staying in the abusive situation does not necessarily mean these women are complacent or accepting of abuse. From a survivor's perspective, these women who stay and do not seek help are finding other ways to survive within the abusive situation. The present study sought to both understand how socio-structural factors are associated with help-seeking, and also to explore the obvious and less apparent ways battered Mexican-origin women act to survive abuse.

Purposes of the Present Study

The purpose of this study was to explore help-seeking responses to abuse utilized by battered women of Mexican-origin, with consideration given to their socio-cultural context. In contrast to prior research that has tended to be qualitative, use small sample sizes, and not distinguish between ethnic groups of Latinos, the present study focused specifically on women of Mexican-origin and provided quantitative information on help-seeking and socio-cultural factors. Also, as opposed to previous studies that have not explored the various ways Mexican-origin women act to keep themselves safe while in

the context of the relationship, this study used a broadened definition of help-seeking that included the various strategies women use to survive intimate partner abuse, including those employed while in the abusive situation.

Specifically, this study aimed first to provide information on the ways in which Mexican-origin battered women act to escape, end, or avoid abuse. Information was collected on the frequency of women's formal and informal help-seeking, and on how effective women perceive these sources of help to be at keeping them safe from abuse. Information was also gathered regarding the specific places where women sought formal help (i.e., lawyer, shelter, etc.) and informal help (i.e., clergy, immediate family, etc.) and how helpful these particular sources were deemed to be by the participants. Further information was gathered regarding the various personal strategies that women employ to survive abuse while in the context of the abusive situation, and women were asked to report how effective they perceived these personal strategies to be at keeping them safe.

Secondly, this study gathered information regarding participants' specific cultural context, i.e., their ascription to the cultural values of *machismo* and *familismo*, and information regarding their particular socio-structural context, i.e., their monthly income, education level, English proficiency, and immigration status. This study sought to understand how these socio-cultural values were associated with formal and informal help-seeking.

This study yields important information regarding battered Mexican-origin women's help-seeking within their socio-cultural contexts. It is hoped that this study's findings will contradict the popular stereotype of women of Mexican immigrant women

as backward or submissively accepting of violence. It is further hoped that results will be useful for professionals who design interventions that aim to build on women's strengths and to eradicate the barriers they encounter.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology used in the present study. It begins with a description of the data collection sites, procedures, sample, and instruments, and concludes with a summary of hypotheses and research questions.

Data Collection Sites

In order to include a sample of Mexican American and Mexican immigrant women utilizing a range of help-seeking behaviors, participants were recruited from six agencies: Safe Place, Austin, TX; Sunrise Center, Austin, TX; El Buen Samaritano, Austin, TX; Political Asylum Project of Austin (PAPA), Austin, TX; San Antonio Police Department Victims' Services, San Antonio, TX; and Visitation House, San Antonio, TX. In addition, in an attempt to include participants who had never accessed any form of formal help, participants recruited from the above agencies were asked to refer any battered Mexican-origin women in the community who might have been willing to participate in the study.

Austin Sites

Safe Place. Safe Place provides a range of services to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Services include temporary housing, basic necessities, counseling, advocacy, and connections to additional resources for battered women and their children. In addition to posting fliers to recruit participants, staff were explained the

purposes of the study and criteria for participation. Staff members then connected the principle investigator with potential participants.

Sunrise Center. Sunrise Center (currently no longer in operation) provides counseling, psychological assessment, and social services to immigrants and refugees. The clinical director of Sunrise Center was explained the purpose of and criteria for participation in the study and referred potential participants to the principle investigator.

El Buen Samaritano. El Buen Samaritano provides a range of services to the Latino population in Austin; services include English and GED classes, medical and social services, aid organizing *promotora* (local advocates) groups, and basic needs (i.e., clothing, food) assistance. In addition to posting fliers in the clinic to advertise the study, clinic and social services staff members were explained the purpose of and criteria for participation in the study. These staff members aided in recruitment of participants for this study.

PAPA. Political Asylum Project of Austin (PAPA) is a legal agency that provides low-cost and pro-bono services to immigrant and refugees. In addition to posting fliers to advertise the study, participants were identified with the help of staff in PAPA's Program Representing Immigrant Survivors of Abuse (PRISA).

San Antonio Sites

Police Department. The San Antonio Police Department's branch of Victim Services includes a Family Assistance Crisis Team (F.A.C.T.), which trains community volunteers to respond to the needs of victims of family violence and their families. The

director of F.A.C.T. was explained the purpose of and criteria for participation in the study and she connected the principle investigator to potential participants.

Visitation House. Visitation House provides transitional housing to poor women and helps them, among other things, to gain an education, heal from trauma, and find permanent housing. In addition to poverty, many of the residents of Visitation House have also experienced or currently experience abuse in their intimate partner relationships. The director was informed of the purpose of and criteria for participation in the study, and she referred potential participants to the principle investigator.

Procedures

Prior to commencing research, contact people at each data collection site wrote formal letters indicating their support for and permission to conduct the study at their agency. Permission to conduct the proposed study was also granted from The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board (IRB). The ethical standards of the American Psychology Association and The University of Texas' "Policies and Procedures Governing Research with Human Subjects" were followed to ensure the ethical treatment of all participants. To guarantee that participants' identities remained completely anonymous, The University of Texas at Austin IRB granted permission to give participants a cover letter explaining to them the purpose of the study and their rights, but did not require their signatures.

The principle investigator, who is bilingual and has clinical experience with the population of interest, personally completed all data collection. Once participants were

identified and agreed to participate in the study, they were asked to schedule a meeting with the principle investigator. The majority of surveys (94%) were administered orally and administration time ranged from 25 minutes to 1.5 hours. Most interviews were conducted at the agency from which participants were recruited; a small number of women elected to be interviewed in their home.

All participants received a cover letter, available in English or Spanish, explaining the purpose of the study (See Appendices A and B). They were also provided with appropriate local referral numbers for domestic violence hotlines and counseling services, in the case that participation in the study caused psychological distress. Participants were assured that their responses would be kept strictly confidential, and were reminded that participation in the study was voluntary. A copy of the cover letter was given to the participants for their records. Again, participants were not asked to sign anything, in order to make certain their identities were kept anonymous.

Participants were then asked to respond to a series of questions. They were given the following instructions: “Please respond to/fill out the following surveys. Know that your responses are strictly confidential. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. I am simply interested in how you view things.” Interviews were conducted in English or Spanish, depending on participants’ language preference. The principle investigator was present to answer any questions or concerns the women might have regarding completion of the study. Furthermore, the principle investigator, who is currently being trained in Counseling Psychology and has worked as a counselor-in-training at Safe Place Family Shelter, Sunrise Center, and Capital Area Mental Health

Center with battered women in English and Spanish, was present to respond to any negative feelings and reactions that arose from the interview/survey, and to make appropriate referrals.

Each participant received a demographics page. Participants were further given a measure of gender role attitudes (Cuéllar, Arnold, & González, 1995) and a measure of *familismo* (Buriel & Rivera, 1980). They were also asked, via a semi-structured interview, to provide information regarding their help-seeking from both formal and informal sources, as well as the personal strategies that they used to survive abuse on a daily basis. Participants rated how often they sought different types of help and how effective they found each of these sources of help to be in terms of helping them to survive abuse. Finally, participants were asked four open-ended questions regarding concerns they had about seeking outside help, barriers to help-seeking they perceived, their most successful strategy used to survive abuse, and ideas they have for how we might improve services for abused Mexican-origin women. Participants' answers to these questions were used to clarify responses to the quantitative data and were not subject to any formal analysis. Participants were given \$10.00 for participation in this study.

Participants

Criteria for participation in this study included: a) age 18 years or older; b) Mexican ethnicity (i.e., born in Mexico or born outside of Mexico but with Mexican ancestors); and c) past or present involvement in a heterosexual intimate partner relationship that included/includes some form of physical, psychological, and/or sexual

abuse. All participants who agreed to participate completed the interview; there was no attrition.

Seventy-five female, Mexican-origin participants who reported experiencing psychological, physical, and/or sexual abuse from a heterosexual intimate partner were recruited from the six sites participating in this study. (See Tables 1 and 2 for a summary of demographic and relationship data.) Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 67 ($M = 32.23$ years, $SD = 8.17$). Sixty-eight percent of the participants were born in Mexico while 32% were born in the US. Approximately 63% of participants were undocumented immigrants and 37% were legal US citizens. Participants' length of stay in the US ranged from 1 to 55 years ($M = 15.19$ years, $SD = 12.76$).

Fifty-four percent of the participants were not working outside of the home during the last 6 months of their most recent abusive relationship and these participants reported they received no independent income. Participants who worked during this period earned an average of \$335.36 per month ($SD = \498.94). Participants averaged 9.43 years of formal school ($SD = 4.15$). The majority of participants (61%) spoke little or no English. Approximately half (49%) of participants reported that they witnessed and/or experienced emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse in their family of origin.

Participants' relationships with their most recent abusive partners ranged from 2 months to 20 years in duration ($M = 6.13$ years, $SD = 4.49$). (See Table 2.) Most participants (96%) were not living with their abusive partners at the time of participation in this study. Length of time away from abusive partners averaged 3 months ($SD = 1.26$ years). When asked about marital status, the majority of participants (45%) indicated they

were “separated” from their abusive partners. Twenty-five percent reported being “single”; 18% said they were “married”⁹; 11% were “divorced”; and 1% was “widowed.” Ninety-six percent of the participants were mothers, reporting between 1 and 5 children currently living with them ($M = 2.16$ children, $SD = 1.34$).

⁹ This term was preferred by 11% of the sample, although many of women who said they were married also indicated they were not currently living with their spouse

Table 1.
Demographic Information on 75 Battered Mexican-origin Women Participating in Study

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Age | Range: 18 to 67 years Median: 32.0 $M = 32.33, SD = 8.17$ |
| Data collection site | 80% Safe Place 5% Political Asylum Project of Austin (PAPA) 5% El Buen Samaritano 4% Visitation House 4% San Antonio Police Department 2% Sunrise Center |
| Birth country | 68% Mexico 32% US |
| Years in the US | Range: 1 to 55 years Median: 10.0 $M = 15.19, SD = 12.76$ |
| Employed outside home | 55% No 45% Yes |
| Monthly income | Range: \$0 to \$1,800 Median = \$0.00 $M = \$335.36, SD = \498.94 |
| Years attended school | Range: 1 to 20 years Median: 9.0 $M = 9.43, SD = 4.15$ |
| English ability | 39% Fluent 36% Some 25% None |
| Immigrant status | 63% Undocumented 37% Documented |
| Religion | 68% Catholic 27% Protestant 7% Other |
| Family of origin abuse | 49% Yes 51% No |

Table 2.
Characteristics of Participants' Most Recent Abusive Relationships

| | |
|--|--|
| Marital Status | 45% Separated 25% Single 18% Married 11% Divorced 1% Widowed |
| Years in relationship | Range: 0.17 to 20 years Median = 5.0 $M = 6.13, SD = 4.49$ |
| Currently living with partner | 96% No 4% Yes |
| Years apart from partner | Range: 0 to 6 years Median = 0.25 $M = 0.87, SD = 1.26$ |
| Number of children living with participant | Range: 0 to 5 children Median = 2.0 $M = 2.16, SD = 1.34$ |

Notes. Participants had to answer, “yes” to the question, “Have you ever experienced any form of emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse from an intimate partner?” to be included in study. Participants were instructed to think about their most recent abusive relationship while responding to questions.

Measures

A summary of all measures used in this study appears in Tables 3 and 4. In addition to a demographics questionnaire, participants' cultural values (i.e., *machismo* and *familismo*) were assessed by the *Machismo* subscale of the Multiphasic Assessment of Cultural Constructs—Short Form (MACC—SF) (Cuéllar et al., 1995) and the Brief Familism Scale (Buriel & Rivera, 1980).

In responding to questions regarding help-seeking and personal strategies, participants were instructed to think about the last 6 months of their most recent abusive relationship. Overall informal and formal help-seeking (i.e., usage of *any* source of help *at least once*) were measured by “yes/no” questions regarding *whether* they employed

these forms of help, and a series of one-item scales that assessed *how often* and *how effectively* participants employed these types of help.

Experiences with *specific* sources of formal (i.e., lawyer, shelter, etc.) and *specific* informal (i.e., friends, family members, etc.) help were assessed by a series of “yes/no” questions regarding *whether* they used these specific help sources (at least once), and a series of one-item scales assessing *how often* and *how effectively* participants used these specific types of help.

Participants also responded to items assessing *whether, how often, and how effectively* they employed personal strategies to survive abuse (i.e., placating the batterer, walking away from a threatening situation). All measures were pilot tested on a small number of women at Safe Place Family Shelter and appropriate changes were made to the measures prior to commencement of the study.

Table 3.
Summary of Instruments Used in Analyses

| Instrument | Number of Items | Response Format | Possible Range of Scores | Present Study Reliability |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>Machismo</i> Subscale of MACC-SF | 17 | True/False | 0-17 | 0.84 |
| Brief Familism Scale | 5 | Likert (1-4) | 4-20 ^a | 0.89 |
| Frequency of Formal Help-Seeking | 1 | Likert (1-5) | 1-5 ^b | n/a |
| Usage of Specific Sources of Formal Help | 7 | Yes/No | 0-1 | n/a |
| Frequency of Informal Help-Seeking | 1 | Likert (1-5) | 1-5 ^b | n/a |

a. Scale ranged from 1 (strong disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). b. Scale ranged from 1 (never, 0 times) to 5 (very often, 6+ times).

Table 4.
Summary of Survey Questions Providing Descriptive Information Only

| Instrument | Number of Questions | Response Format |
|--|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Frequency of Help-Seeking from Specific Formal Sources | 7 | Likert (1-5) ^a |
| Effectiveness of Help-Seeking from Specific Formal Sources | 7 | Likert (1-5) ^b |
| Effectiveness of Overall Formal Help-Seeking | 1 | Likert (1-5) ^b |
| Frequency of Help-Seeking from Specific Informal Sources | 6 | Likert (1-5) ^a |
| Effectiveness of Help-Seeking from Specific Informal Sources | 1 | Likert (1-5) ^b |
| Effectiveness of Overall Informal Help-Seeking | 6 | Likert (1-5) ^b |
| Frequency of Personal Strategies to Survive Abuse | 16 | Likert (1-5) ^a |
| Effectiveness of Personal Strategies to Survive Abuse | 16 | Likert (1-5) ^b |

a. Responses ranged from 1 (never, 0 times) to 5 (very often, 6 + times). b. Responses ranged from 1 (not at all helpful) to 5 (extremely helpful).

Demographic Information. (See Appendices C and D.) Participants were asked to provide demographic information, including age, country of origin, duration of residence in the United States, religion, number of children, number of children residing with them, marital status. They were also asked to provide information regarding the socio-structural variables of interest in this study: English proficiency, years of formal schooling, employment and monthly income (independent from a partner's income), and immigrant status. They were asked to self-identify as a battered woman by answering "yes" to the question, "Have you ever experienced any form of emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse from an intimate partner?" Participants were instructed to consider their most recent relationship in which some form of abuse occurred and to report how long they were in the abusive relationship, whether they currently lived with the man who abused

them, and if not, how long they had been apart from him. Finally, participants were asked whether they witnessed or experienced any form of abuse (either from parent to parent, or parent to child) in their family of origin,

Multiphasic Assessment of Cultural Constructs—Short Form (MACC—SF) (Cuéllar et al., 1995). (See Appendices E and F.) The cultural variable, *machismo*, was measured by the *Machismo* subscale of the MACC-SF. The MACC-SF was developed to measure five theoretical cultural constructs (*machismo*, folk illness beliefs, *familismo*, fatalism, and *personalismo*) based primarily on cultural beliefs, ideas, and attitudes in Mexican Americans. While *machismo* has, as previous discussed (see Review of the Literature), some positive aspects (Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002), this scale reflects those aspects of *machismo* that are related to partner abuse, i.e., aspects that restrict women, enforce male dominance, and reinforce traditional gender role norms. The present study employed the entire subscale, which consists of 17 items; examples include, “Boys should not be allowed to play with dolls and other girls’ toys,” and, “A wife should never contradict her husband in public.” Respondents indicate whether they believe the statements to be true or false, and scores can range from 0 to 17. Higher scores indicate more traditional gender role beliefs.

Cuéllar et al. (1995) report that a factor analysis using the varimax rotation yielded four factors with an eigenvalue greater than 1.0: male superiority, male gender role, female gender role, and male strength. Participants were 379 university students, 43% male and 48% female. Eighty-nine percent of participants were of Mexican-origin individuals who varied across five generational levels.

In their sample of 379 persons, (mean age = 25 years, 89% Mexican-origin, 43% male, 48% female), Cuéllar et al. (1995) reported some evidence for the scale's construct validity by correlating scores on the *Machismo* subscale with scores on a measure of acculturation. The two scales were negatively correlated ($r = -0.24, p < 0.001$); that is, higher scores on the acculturation measure, reflecting greater acculturation, were associated with lower scores on the *Machismo* subscale, which reflects less traditional gender role attitudes.

Cuéllar et al. (1995) reports good reliability for the *Machismo* subscale of the MACC—SF, with Cronbach's alpha calculated at 0.78. Reliabilities were obtained for the English and Spanish versions, and the reported reliability was an average of the two. Ferrari (2002) utilized the measure with college students ($N = 150$, mean age = 33 years, 33% Latino, 50% female, 50% male) and reported Chronbach's alpha to be 0.84 for the *Machismo* subscale. The *Machismo* subscale of the MACC-SF yielded an internal consistency of 0.84 in the present study.

Both English and Spanish versions of the *Machismo* subscale of the MACC-SF were used in the present study. The MACC-SF was translated by the author into Spanish through a combination of two methodologies: an Expert Panel (two Mexicans, one Colombian, and two Mexican American bilingual individuals) and the Back Translation methodology. Discrepancies between the two English versions of the scale (before and after being back translated) were worked out by the panel through consensus opinion.

Brief Familism Scale (Buriel & Rivera, 1980). (See Appendices G and H.) The Brief Familism Scale was used to measure participants' attitudes toward and attachment

to their families. The scale consists of four items, including, “Relatives are more important than friends” and, “You should think of what is good for your family more than you think of what is good for yourself.” Responses are made on a 4-point continuum, with “1” corresponding to strongly disagree, and “4” corresponding to strongly agree. Buriel and Rivera (1980) report internal consistency estimates based on Cronbach’s alpha were 0.82 for the Mexican American participants (N=80, mean age 16.5 years, 48% female, 51% male).

Because the Brief Familism Scale is so short, the present study followed the practice of previous researchers (i.e., Ferrari, 2002) and added one item with the highest item-total correlation coefficients with its total scale score from the *Familismo* subscale of the MACC-SF (Cúellar et al., 1995) (“No matter what the cost, dealing with my relatives’ problems comes first”). Using this method, Ferrari found a reliability of 0.76 (N=150, mean age = 33 years, 33% Latino, 50% female, 50% male). Thus, in the present study, scores could range from 4-20, with higher scores indicating higher levels of *familismo*. In the current study, the scale yielded an internal consistency of 0.89.

Because no Spanish language version was available, The Brief Familism scale was translated by the principle investigator, and then back-translated by a Mexican-origin Spanish speaker until an accurate translation was arrived at.

Measure of Formal and Informal Help-Seeking Behaviors.

A review of the literature revealed few instruments developed to measure battered women’s formal and informal help-seeking. Moreover, psychometric properties of these instruments indicated inadequate internal consistency (i.e. the Effectiveness of Obtaining

Resources (EOR) (Sullivan, Tan, Basta, Rumpitz, & Davidson, 1992) $\alpha = 0.62$, Types and Perceived Effectiveness of Coping Strategies (Yoshihama, 2000) $\alpha = 0.58$). Due to this dearth of adequate instruments, measures of battered women's help-seeking were developed for this research. The measures were adapted from materials used in previous studies (Dutton et al., 2000; Hogeland & Rosen, 1990; Hutchinson, 1999; McFarlane, Soeken, & Wiist, 2000; Yoshihama, 2002) and the primary investigator's clinical experience with battered Mexican-origin women. Participants were given the following instructions before completing the measure: "I am interested in the various ways that you sought help to avoid, end, or escape the abuse in your relationship. Again, there are no right or wrong answers. I am only interested in your experiences. For the following questions, please think about the *last six months* of your *most recent relationship* in which there was some form of emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse." The survey was translated into Spanish by the principle investigator and back-translated by a Mexican-origin Spanish speaker until accurate translation was arrived at.

Formal Help-Seeking. (See Appendices I and J.) To assess overall formal help-seeking (i.e., usage of any service at least once), participants were asked to consider the last six months of their most recent abusive relationship and to respond to the following question: "In the *last six months of this relationship*, did you ever seek help from an agency or service (i.e., medical services, lawyer, counselor, shelter, social worker, the police, or woman's program) to survive the abuse in your relationship?" Participants were instructed to answer "yes" or "no." Participants were then administered a series of one-item scales using a 5-point Likert response format. The one-item scales asked

participants to rate two variables: how often they sought help, and how helpful they perceived the help that they received to be. The following question format was used:

In the last six months of this relationship, did you ever seek help from an agency or service (i.e., medical services, lawyer, counselor, shelter, social worker, the police, a women's program) to survive the abuse in your relationship?

(please circle one.) **YES** **NO**

A. Overall, how often did you seek this type of outside help to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

B. Overall, how helpful were these services in aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one).

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

As can be seen, higher scores reflect more frequent usage of formal help and greater perceived helpfulness of help obtained. The information gathered from the one-item scale assessing frequency was used in this study's analyses. The remaining information was used descriptively.

Participants were next asked to respond to similar questions regarding their usage and perceptions of the *specific* formal services. These services included: medical services, lawyer, shelter, women's program, police, social worker, and counselor. An example of this type of question is:

Please indicate whether you sought help from the following services or talked to the following people in the last six months of your relationship. If you answer, “YES,” please go on to answer the following two questions.

Medical assistance from a clinic, emergency room, doctor, or nurse

(please circle one) **YES NO**

a. If you answered “YES,” how often did you seek help here? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

b. Overall, how helpful were these services in aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one).

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

Again, higher numbers reflect more frequent usage of services and greater perceived helpfulness of help obtained. There were a total of seven three-part questions regarding specific formal services. The “yes/no” responses were used in the study’s analyses. The remaining information was used descriptively.

Informal Help-Seeking. (See Appendices K and L.) To measure participants’ overall informal help-seeking (i.e., usage of any informal source at least once), they were asked, “In the last *six months of your relationship*, did you ever talk about the abuse with anyone (i.e., immediate family, friends, extended family, partner’s family, co-workers, religious official)?” Participants were instructed to answer “yes” or “no.” Similar to the measure of formal help-seeking, participants were then asked to respond to a series of one-item scales using a 5-point Likert scale format that assessed two variables: frequency of informal help-seeking and perceived helpfulness of help obtained. An example item is:

In the last six months of your relationship, did you ever talk about the abuse with anyone (i.e., immediate family, extended family, your partner's family, co-workers, friends, religious officials)?

(please circle one) **YES** **NO**

A. Overall, how often did you talk with these people about the abuse? (please circle one.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

B. Overall, how helpful was talking with these people in aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

Higher numbers reflect more frequent usage of informal help and greater perceived effectiveness of help obtained. The information gathered by the one-item scale assessing frequency was used in this study's analyses. The remaining information was used descriptively.

Participants were next asked to respond to similar questions regarding their help-seeking from and perceptions of the following people: immediate family, extended family, partner's family, friends, religious officials, and co-workers. Similar to the questions regarding formal help-seeking, women were asked to indicate, on a 5-point Likert scale, how often they sought help from each of these people and how helpful the help was that they received. For example:

Please indicate whether you sought help from the following services or talked to the following people in the last six months of your relationship. If you answer, “YES,” please go on to answer the following two questions.

Your immediate family members (mother, brother, sister, father)
(please circle one) **YES NO**

a. If you answered “YES,” how often did you seek help here? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

b. If you answered “YES,” how helpful was the help you received at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

Again, higher scores reflect more frequent help-seeking from these people and greater perceived helpfulness of help obtained. There were a total of six three-part questions regarding informal help sources. The information gathered by these questions was used descriptively.

Personal Strategies to Survive Abuse (See Appendices M and N.) A review of the literature again revealed a dearth of psychometrically sound and comprehensive instruments to measure battered women’s personal strategies to survive abuse. To assess participants’ usage of personal strategies to survive abuse, 16 items were developed based on previous research (Bowker’s, 1983; Davies and Lyons, 1998), the investigator’s practice experience with battered Mexican-origin women, and interviews conducted by the principle investigator with service providers who work with the population of interest. An example of an item is “Walking away from a threatening situation.” This measure was also translated into Spanish by the investigator and back-translated by a Spanish speaking person of Mexican-origin until an accurate translation was arrived at.

Participants were asked to respond to various personal strategies to survive abuse, i.e., “Do whatever you could to calm him down,” and “Attempt to get the batterer help.” They were asked a) whether they engaged in the behaviors, b) the frequency with which they engaged in these behaviors, and c) how helpful they perceived these behaviors to be in surviving the abuse. Responses were made on a 5-point Likert scale. For example:

Please indicate whether you engaged in or currently engage in any of the following behaviors in the last six months of your relationship. If you answer “YES,” please go on to answer the next two questions.

Walk away from threatening situation (*please circle one*) **YES** **NO**

a. If you answered “YES,” how often did you do this? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

b. If you answered “YES,” how helpful was this strategy at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

Higher scores correspond to more frequent usage of the behavior and more perceived helpfulness of the strategy. There were a total of 16 four-part items. The information gathered was used to describe the strategies used by women in the sample, and was not used in any analyses.

Open-ended questions. (See Appendices O and P.) Participants were asked four open-ended questions regarding the concerns they had about seeking outside help, the barriers to help-seeking they perceived, the strategies that proved most successful in terms of surviving the abuse, and suggestions they have for how we can improve services

for battered women of Mexican-origin. These open-ended questions were integrated into the discussion section of this dissertation, in order to add texture and insight to the quantitative results and highlight additional issues not explored empirically.

Hypotheses and Research Questions

The first major purpose of this study was to gather information regarding frequency and perceived effectiveness of the formal and informal help-seeking behaviors of Mexican-origin battered women as well as the personal strategies that they employ to survive abuse. Descriptive information was collected to address this purpose but no analyses were conducted. The second major purpose was to explore how socio-cultural variables were associated with battered Mexican-origin women' help-seeking. What follows is a summary of hypotheses and research questions that address the second purpose of this study.

Hypotheses

Ideology of machismo. Research suggests that values of *machismo* and culturally influenced traditional gender roles may contribute to occurrence of abuse among Latino couples and women's decisions to stay in or to leave an abusive relationship (Avecedo, 2000; Bauer et al., 2000; Morash et al., 2000; Sorenson, 1996; Torres, 1991; Vera, 2002). Therefore, it is hypothesized that women who report more endorsement of *machismo* will be less likely to seek both formal and formal help.

Hypothesis 1: *Machismo* scores will be associated with battered Mexican-origin women's informal help-seeking, such that women with higher *machismo* scores will seek informal help less frequently than women with more liberal attitudes.

Hypothesis 2: *Machismo* will be associated with battered Mexican-origin women's formal help-seeking, such that women with higher *machismo* scores will seek formal help less frequently than women with more liberal attitudes.

Income. Evidence indicates that income is an obstacle to help-seeking for non-Latina battered women (Anderson et al., 2002). Similarly, research indicates that limited financial resources are perceived as barriers to help-seeking by battered Latinas (Avecedo, 2000; Dutton et al., 2000; Hogeland & Rosen, 1990; Morash et al., 2000; Orloff & Dave, 1997). Therefore, it is expected that women earning less monthly income will report using less formal help.

Hypothesis 3: Income will be associated with battered Mexican-origin women's help-seeking, such that women who earn less income will report less frequent formal help-seeking.

Education. Lack of education may limit a battered woman's options for seeking formal help both because without education she has little chance of obtaining a well-paying and stable job (Jasinski & Williams, 1998) and because, if illiterate, information about rights and available help is inaccessible (Murdaugh, et al., 2004; National Latino Alliance for the Elimination of Domestic Violence, 2003). Less education has been associated with less formal help-seeking among a national incidence (Wauchope, 1988) and a predominantly African American sample of battered women (Hutchison &

Hirschel, 1998). Therefore, it is expected that women who have less education will report seeking less formal help.

Hypothesis 4: Educational level will be associated with battered Mexican-origin women's formal help-seeking, such that women with less education will seek formal help less frequently than women with more education.

English Proficiency. Research suggests that lack of English proficiency may affect battered women's awareness of services as well as their communication with service providers; this may dissuade some battered Latinas from seeking formal help (Avecedo, 2000; Bauer, et al., 2000; Dutton et al., 2000; Gondolf et al., 1988; Hogeland, & Rosen, 1990; Krishnan et al., 1997; Murdaugh et al., 2004; National Latino Alliance for the Elimination of Domestic Violence, 2003; Sorenson, 1996; Torres, 1987). Therefore, it is expected that women reporting no English proficiency will report less usage of formal services than women who report speaking some English.

Hypothesis 5: English proficiency will be associated with battered Mexican-origin women's formal help-seeking, such that women who speak less English will report seeking formal help less frequently than women who speak more English.

Immigrant Status. Evidence suggests that fear of deportation is a strong deterrent for undocumented Latina and Mexican-origin women to report abuse or to seek formal help (Avecedo, 2000; Bauer et al., 2000; Dutton et al., 2000; Hogeland & Rosen, 1990; National Latino Alliance for the Elimination of Domestic Violence, 2003; Orloff & Little, 1999; Sorenson, 1996; Torres, 1987). Therefore, it is expected that women who are

undocumented will report less frequent formal help-seeking than women who are legally documented.

Hypothesis 6: Immigrant status will be associated with battered Mexican-origin women's formal help-seeking, such that undocumented women will seek formal help less frequently than documented U.S. citizens.

Research Questions

Familismo. Some research (i.e. Finkler, 1997; Sorenson, 1996) suggests that the value placed on family reciprocity and responsibility in Mexican culture, i.e., *familismo*, may help to ensure a battered woman's safety because of increased familial intervention and support. However, other research, (i.e., Bauer, et al., 2000; Dutton et al., 2000; Torres, 1998) suggests that the stigmatization of divorce, the expectations that problems are to be kept within the family, and the burden of preserving family dignity, may all impede women from seeking help from the people they know. Because the research is conflicting, no hypothesis regarding *familismo* was made.

Research Question 1: How does *familismo* relate to the frequency of battered Mexican-origin women's informal help-seeking?

Usage of Specific Types of Help. Prior research has not examined the relationships between socio-structural variables and usage of specific types of help, i.e., police, shelter, lawyer, etc. Therefore, this study explored the following research questions to determine these relationships:

Research Question 2: How does educational level relate to usage of specific sources of formal help (i.e., medical services, lawyer, shelter, etc.)?

Research Question 3: How does level of English proficiency relate to usage of specific sources of formal help (i.e., medical services, lawyer, shelter, etc.)?

Research Question 4: How does immigrant status relate to usage of specific sources of formal help (i.e., medical services, lawyer, shelter, etc.)?

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of this study. It begins with a review of the study's two main purposes, followed by a presentation of the results for each main purpose.

First, this study aimed to explore the frequency and perceived effectiveness of help-seeking behaviors employed by battered women of Mexican-origin. Three types of help-seeking behaviors were investigated: usage of formal services (i.e., medical assistance, lawyer, shelter, police, women's program, social worker, and counselor); usage of informal sources (i.e., immediate family, extended family, partner's family, friend, co-worker, and religious official); and personal strategies employed to survive abuse (i.e., disguising one's self, maintaining a relationship with God, etc.). Second, the study investigated the extent to which the types of help-seeking used were associated with the socio-cultural context of battered women of Mexican-origin. Socio-cultural context was defined as cultural values (i.e., *machismo* and *familismo*) and socio-structural variables (i.e., income, educational level, English proficiency, and immigrant status).

Purpose One: Frequency and Perceived Effectiveness of Help-seeking Behaviors Employed by Battered Women of Mexican-origin

This section presents descriptive information regarding the help-seeking behaviors used by the women in this sample. First, a summary of the types, frequencies,

and perceived effectiveness of participants' formal help-seeking is presented. This is followed by a review of the types, frequencies, and perceived effectiveness of participants' informal help-seeking. Finally, types, frequencies, and perceived effectiveness of the personal strategies to survive abuse used by the women in this sample are summarized.

Usage of Formal Services

Consistent with previous research (i.e., Bowker, 1983; Gondolf & Fisher, 1988), the battered women in this study reported accessing a number of services and agencies. Eighty percent ($N = 60$) of participants accessed formal sources of help, on average, 3-4 times during the last 6 months of their most recent abusive relationship. (See Table 5.) Participants rated these services, on average, to be “moderately” to “very” helpful ($M = 3.73$, $SD = 1.58$).¹⁰ Domestic violence shelters and the police were accessed, on average 2-3 times, by the greatest number of the participants (64% and 48% respectively). (See Table 6.) In line with previous research (Bowker & Maurer, 1986; Horton & Johnson, 1993; Kurz, 1990), domestic violence shelters received a higher rating of perceived effectiveness than the police. About a quarter of the sample sought help from a counselor and counselors received, on average, a “moderately” to “very” helpful rating. Medical services were accessed, on average, 2-3 times by a small percentage of women (20%); those who used these services, however, rated these services to be “very” helpful. Twenty

¹⁰ On the five-point Likert scale assessing perceived helpfulness of formal help, a rating of 1 conceptually corresponds to “not at all helpful”; 2 corresponds to “somewhat helpful,” 3 corresponds to “moderately helpful,” 4 corresponds to “very” helpful,” and 5 corresponds to “extremely helpful.” See Table 6 for means and standard deviations of perceived helpfulness of specific sources of formal help.

percent of participants consulted a lawyer, but perceived this service to be only “somewhat” to “moderately” helpful. Social workers and women’s programs were used by the fewest number of participants (16% and 8% respectively); those who used these services, however, tended to access them with greater regularity (on average, 3-4 times) and reported social workers and women’s programs to be “moderately” to “very” helpful.

Table 5.

Number of Formal Help Sources Used by Participants (N = 60 participants using at least one formal help source)

| Number of Formal Help Sources Used by Participant | N (%) Participants |
|---|--------------------|
| 1 | 14 (23%) |
| 2 | 22 (37%) |
| 3 | 11 (18%) |
| 4 | 5 (8%) |
| 5 | 6 (10%) |
| 6 | 2 (3%) |

Note. 20% (N = 15) of participants reported that they never sought help from a formal agency or service.

Table 6.

Usage and Perceived Helpfulness of Formal Help Sources Used by Mexican-origin Women who Experienced Abuse from a Heterosexual Partner

| Source of Help | Participants Never Using Service | | Participants Using Service at Least Once | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--|-----|--|-----|--------------------|-----------|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| | <i>N</i> | % | <i>N</i> | % | Usage Frequency | | Perceived Helpfulness ^a | |
| | | | | | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
| Domestic violence shelter | 27 | 36% | 48 | 64% | 2.08 | 0.35 | 4.44 | 1.13 |
| Police | 39 | 52% | 36 | 48% | 2.44 | 0.81 | 3.22 | 1.64 |
| Counselor | 54 | 72% | 21 | 28% | 3.57 | 1.43 | 3.90 | 1.30 |
| Medical assistance | 60 | 80% | 15 | 20% | 2.53 | 1.13 | 4.00 | 1.30 |
| Lawyer | 60 | 80% | 15 | 20% | 2.45 | 1.06 | 2.87 | 1.85 |
| Social worker | 63 | 84% | 12 | 16% | 3.08 | 1.31 | 3.33 | 1.37 |
| Women's program | 69 | 92% | 6 | 8% | 3.83 | 1.17 | 3.17 | 1.83 |

a. Scale ranged from 1 (not helpful) to 5 (extremely helpful). On the five-point Likert scale assessing perceived helpfulness of formal help, a rating of 1 conceptually corresponds to “not at all helpful”; 2 corresponds to “somewhat helpful,” 3 corresponds to “moderately helpful,” 4 corresponds to “very” helpful,” and 5 corresponds to “extremely helpful.”

Usage of Informal Sources of Help

Consistent with previous research (Dutton et al., 2000), a slightly larger percentage (83%, $N = 63$) of participants in this study reported accessing informal sources of help, compared to formal sources. (See Table 7.) Those who accessed informal sources tended to do so with greater frequency than those who accessed formal sources (on average, 4-5 times). In accord with previous research (Bowker, 1983), participants who sought informal help perceived these sources to be “moderately” to “very” helpful ($M = 3.57$, $SD = 1.32$)¹¹. Participants were most likely to talk to immediate family and

¹¹ On the five-point Likert scale assessing perceived helpfulness of informal help, a rating of 1 conceptually corresponds to “not at all helpful”; 2 corresponds to “somewhat helpful,” 3 corresponds to

friends (55% and 53% respectively); these participants did so, on average, 4-5 times and perceived these people to be “moderately” to “very” helpful. (See Table 8.) While 31% of participants talked to their partners’ families, the women who did so found these people to be only “somewhat” helpful. Fewer participants (19%) contacted extended family, likely because many of the immigrants in the sample did not have extended family members living in close proximity. Those who did consult extended family members found them to be “moderately” to “very” helpful. Religious officials were sought out by a small number of participants (16%); the women in this sample experienced them, on average, to be “moderately” helpful. While the smallest number of participants sought help from co-workers (15%), these participants perceived co-workers to be “very” helpful. The small number of women seeking help from co-workers likely reflects the characteristics of the sample, i.e., over half the participants did not work.

Table 7.
Number of Informal Help Sources Used by Participants (N = 62 participants using at least one informal help source)

| Number of Informal Help Sources Used by Participant | N (%) Participants |
|---|--------------------|
| 1 | 14 (23%) |
| 2 | 26 (42%) |
| 3 | 14 (23%) |
| 4 | 7 (11%) |
| 5 | 1 (2%) |

Note. 17% (N = 13) of participants reported that they never sought help from an informal source.

“moderately helpful,” 4 corresponds to “very” helpful,” and 5 corresponds to “extremely helpful.” See Table 8 for means and standard deviations of perceived helpfulness of specific sources informal help.

Table 8.

Usage and Perceived Helpfulness of Sources of Informal Help Used by Mexican-origin Women who Experienced Abuse from a Heterosexual Partner

| Source of Help | Participants Never Using Source | | Participants Using Source at Least Once | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|-----|---|-----|--------------------|-----------|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| | <i>N</i> | % | <i>N</i> | % | Usage Frequency | | Perceived Helpfulness ^a | |
| | | | | | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
| Immediate family | 34 | 45% | 41 | 55% | 3.98 | 1.29 | 3.49 | 1.45 |
| Friends | 35 | 47% | 40 | 53% | 4.48 | 1.06 | 3.95 | 1.30 |
| Partner's family | 52 | 69% | 23 | 31% | 3.26 | 1.32 | 2.22 | 1.31 |
| Extended family | 61 | 81% | 14 | 19% | 3.79 | 1.31 | 3.43 | 1.34 |
| Religions official | 63 | 84% | 12 | 16% | 3.08 | 1.31 | 3.42 | 1.51 |
| Co-workers | 64 | 85% | 11 | 15% | 3.45 | 1.51 | 4.00 | 1.34 |

a. Scale ranged from 1 (not helpful) to 5 (extremely helpful.) On the five-point Likert scale assessing perceived helpfulness of formal help, a rating of 1 conceptually corresponds to "not at all helpful"; 2 corresponds to "somewhat helpful," 3 corresponds to "moderately helpful," 4 corresponds to "very" helpful," and 5 corresponds to "extremely helpful."

Usage of Personal Strategies to Survive Abuse

Participants reportedly engaged in a number of strategies to survive abuse during the last 6 months of their most recent abusive relationship, for example disguising themselves (33%) or teaching their children to call the police (33%). (See Table 9.) The majority of participants reported that, 4-5 times on average, they attempted to do whatever the abuser asked to calm him down (88%), walk away from threatening situations (81%), and talk the abuser out of being abusive (81%). However, on average, these participants reported these strategies to be "not at all" to "somewhat" helpful¹². The

¹² On the five-point Likert scale assessing perceived helpfulness personal strategies, a rating of 1 conceptually corresponds to "not at all helpful"; 2 corresponds to "somewhat helpful," 3 corresponds to "moderately helpful," 4 corresponds to "very" helpful," and 5 corresponds to "extremely helpful." See Table 9 for means and standard deviations of perceived helpfulness of personal strategies.

61% of participants who tried to fight back and 51% who locked themselves in a room generally perceived these strategies to also be “not at all” to “somewhat” helpful. The strategy perceived as least helpful by the 67% of participants who employed it was encouraging counseling for the abuser. These findings are in line with Bowker’s (1983) research, which suggests that personal strategies, while representing important steps in battered women’s eventual empowerment and survival, are experienced as less effective than accessing informal and formal sources of help. Some personal strategies, however, were reported to be very helpful for women: The 71% of participants who maintain a relationship with God, 63% who moved to an undisclosed location; 51% who maintained relationships with supportive people, 32% who secretly saved money, and 31% who talked to other abused women to gain support perceived these strategies to be “very” helpful.

Table 9.

Usage and Perceived Helpfulness of Personal Strategies to Survive Abuse Used by Mexican-origin Women who Experienced Abuse from a Heterosexual Partner

| Personal Strategy | Participants Never Using Service | | Participants Using Service at Least Once | | | | | |
|---|--|-----|--|-----|--------------------|-----------|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| | <i>N</i> | % | <i>N</i> | % | Usage Frequency | | Perceived Helpfulness ^a | |
| | | | | | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
| Do whatever he asks to calm him down | 9 | 12% | 66 | 88% | 4.47 | 1.01 | 2.22 | 1.36 |
| Walk away from threatening situation | 14 | 19% | 61 | 81% | 4.18 | 1.14 | 1.98 | 1.28 |
| Talk him out of abuse | 14 | 19% | 61 | 81% | 4.46 | 1.03 | 1.88 | 1.18 |
| Maintain relationship with God | 22 | 29% | 53 | 71% | 4.55 | 0.87 | 4.31 | 1.16 |
| Protect body while being abused | 24 | 32% | 51 | 68% | 4.04 | 1.18 | 2.38 | 1.41 |
| Encourage counseling for him | 25 | 33% | 50 | 67% | 3.48 | 1.37 | 1.35 | 0.89 |
| Move to undisclosed location | 28 | 37% | 47 | 63% | 2.49 | 1.06 | 4.25 | 1.38 |
| Fight back | 29 | 39% | 46 | 61% | 3.67 | 1.33 | 1.82 | 1.27 |
| Maintain relationships with supportive people | 37 | 49% | 38 | 51% | 4.55 | 0.89 | 4.08 | 1.21 |
| Lock self in a room | 37 | 49% | 38 | 51% | 3.47 | 1.18 | 1.83 | 1.15 |
| Not involve others to protect them | 44 | 59% | 31 | 41% | 4.65 | 0.95 | 3.73 | 1.48 |
| Disguise self | 50 | 67% | 25 | 33% | 3.12 | 1.27 | 2.21 | 1.47 |
| Teach children to call police | 50 | 67% | 25 | 33% | 2.68 | 1.03 | 2.52 | 1.45 |
| Secretly save money | 51 | 68% | 24 | 32% | 3.63 | 1.21 | 3.91 | 1.50 |
| Talk to abused women for support | 52 | 69% | 23 | 31% | 3.96 | 1.29 | 3.91 | 1.34 |
| Join a group where one feels valued | 67 | 89% | 8 | 11% | 3.88 | 1.25 | 3.50 | 1.60 |

a. Scale ranged from 1 (not helpful) to 5 (extremely helpful.) On the five-point Likert scale assessing perceived helpfulness of formal help, a rating of 1 conceptually corresponds to “not at all helpful”; 2 corresponds to “somewhat helpful,” 3 corresponds to “moderately helpful,” 4 corresponds to “very” helpful,” and 5 corresponds to “extremely helpful.”

Summary of Results Addressing Purpose One

In summary, during the last 6 months of their most recent abusive relationship, 80% of participants reported formal help-seeking, an average of 3-4 times. On average, these participants found formal services to be “moderately” to “very” helpful. Domestic violence shelters were accessed by the greatest number of participants and deemed by these participants to be most helpful. Eighty-three percent of participants reported using informal sources of help, on average 4-5 times during the last 6 months of their most recent abusive relationship. Those seeking aid from informal sources found this help to be “moderately” to “very” helpful. While immediate family was a source of help for the greatest number of participants, those participants seeking aid from co-workers found these people to be most helpful. Finally, participants reported engaging in a number of personal strategies to survive abuse; placating the batterer was a strategy used by the greatest number of participants, but maintaining a relationship with God was deemed the most helpful strategy by those who employed it.

Purpose 2: Relationships between Help-seeking Behaviors Employed by Battered

Women of Mexican-origin and Socio-structural and Cultural Variables

Simple linear regression was used to test whether battered Mexican-origin women’s cultural values—i.e., *machismo* and *familismo*—predict their informal help-seeking and to assess whether their *machismo* predicts formal help-seeking. It was hypothesized that *machismo* would predict formal and informal help-seeking; no

hypothesis was formulated regarding *familismo*. Separate linear regressions were used in place of an overall multiple regression because intercorrelations among the predictor variables were small; hence, results from the multiple regression did not offer additional information nor did they differ from results of a series of separate simple regressions. Moreover, this study focused on the influences of single predictors on the dependent variable, as opposed to a combination of multiple predictors' influence on the dependent variable. Finally, because only three simple regressions were run, risk of inflating Type I error was not considered a reason to use multiple regression.

This study further used planned comparisons (*t*-tests) to test the hypotheses that battered Mexican-origin women's income, educational level, English proficiency, and immigrant status influence their formal help-seeking. Finally, chi-square analyses were used to examine whether educational level, English proficiency, and immigrant status are related to use of specific sources of help (i.e., lawyer, counselor, shelter, etc.) All analyses are based on the scores of 75 participants; there were no missing data. Table 10 presents a summary of the various analyses performed.

Table 10.

Summary of Predictor Variables, Criterion Variables, and Analyses Conducted (N = 75)

| Predictors | Formal help-seeking | Informal help-seeking | Analysis |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>Familismo</i> (Research Question) | | X | Regression |
| <i>Machismo</i> (Hypothesis) | X | X | Regression |
| Income (Hypothesis) | X | | One-tailed <i>t</i> -test |
| Education ^a (Hypothesis) | X | | One-tailed <i>t</i> -test |
| English proficiency ^a (Hypothesis) | X | | One-tailed <i>t</i> -test |
| Immigrant status ^a (Hypothesis) | X | | One-tailed <i>t</i> -test |

a. In addition to the *t*-test, chi square analyses were used to test the relationships between this variable and specific sources of formal help (i.e., medical assistance, lawyer, shelter, police, women's program, social worker, and counselor).

What follows is a summary of first, the results for the two cultural variables explored (*machismo* and *familismo*) and second, the results for the four socio-structural variables examined (income, education, English proficiency, and immigrant status).

Cultural Variables: Machismo and Familismo as Predictors of Help-seeking

Machismo and informal help-seeking. To test the hypothesis that *machismo* predicts battered Mexican-origin women's informal help-seeking, a simple linear regression was conducted. Results are summarized in Table 11.

Table 11.

Simple Linear Regression Source Table for Hypothesis One: Predicting Frequency of Scores Informal Help-Seeking from Machismo Scores

| | <i>SS</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>MS</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>p value</i> |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| <i>Machismo</i> | 1.49 | 1 | 1.49 | 0.51 | 0.48 |
| Error | 212.99 | 73 | 2.92 | | |
| Total | 214.48 | 74 | | | |

* adjusted $R^2 < 0.01$

No relationship was found between *machismo* and informal help-seeking, $F(1, 73) = 0.51, p = 0.48$, adjusted $R^2 < 0.01$. The prediction equation was as follows: $y' = -0.045x + 4.79$ (where y' = predicted informal help-seeking score and x = observed *machismo* score). The correlation between *machismo* scores and informal help-seeking was very low, $r_{xy} = -0.08, p = 0.48$. (where x = observed gender role norm score and y = observed informal help-seeking score). Hence, the present data do not indicate that gender roles influence the frequency of Mexican-origin battered women's informal help-seeking.

Machismo and formal help-seeking. To test the hypothesis that *machismo* scores predict battered Mexican-origin women's formal help-seeking (i.e., seeking help from any formal source), a simple linear regression was conducted. Results are summarized in Table 12.

Table 12.
Simple Linear Regression Source Table for Hypothesis Two: Predicting Frequency of Scores Formal Help-Seeking from Machismo Scores

| | <i>SS</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>MS</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>p value</i> |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| <i>Machismo</i> | 2.26 | 1 | 2.26 | 1.36 | 0.29 |
| Error | 145.42 | 73 | 1.99 | | |
| Total | 147.68 | 74 | | | |

* adjusted $R^2 = 0.002$

No relationship was found between *machismo* and formal help-seeking, $F(1, 73) = 1.36, p = 0.29$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.002$. The prediction equation was: $y' = 0.06x + 1.10$ (where y' =

predicted formal help-seeking score and x = observed gender role norm score). The correlation between the variables was very low, $r_{xy} = 0.12$, $p = 0.29$ (where x = observed gender role norm score and y = observed formal help-seeking score). Thus, based on the present data, battered Mexican-origin women's *machismo* is not predictive of the frequency with which they seek formal help.

Familismo and informal help-seeking. To determine whether *familismo* predicts battered Mexican-origin women's informal help-seeking (i.e., usage of any informal source of help), a simple linear regression was conducted. Results are summarized in Table 13.

Table 13.
Simple Linear Regression Predicting Frequency of Informal Help-Seeking from Familismo Scores

| | <i>SS</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>MS</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>p value</i> |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| <i>Familismo</i> | 19.06 | 1 | 19.01 | 7.12 | 0.01 |
| Error | 195.43 | 73 | 2.68 | | |
| Total | 214.49 | 74 | | | |

* adjusted $R^2 = 0.08$

The regression revealed that *familismo* does predict informal help-seeking, $F(1, 73) = 7.12$, $p = 0.01$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.08$. The prediction equation is as follows: $y' = 0.14x + 1.28$ (where y' = predicted informal help-seeking score and x = observed *familismo* score). *Familismo* explains approximately 8% of the variance in informal help-seeking. According to Cohen's (1988) standards, this is a medium effect size. The two variables

are correlated, $r_{xy} = 0.30$, $p = 0.01$ (where x = observed *familismo* score and y = observed informal help-seeking score). Thus, it appears that the amount to which Mexican-origin battered women ascribe to the cultural variable *familismo* predicts the frequency with which they seek help from informal sources.

Socio-structural Variables: Income, Educational Level, English Proficiency, and Immigrant Status as Predictors of Formal Help-seeking

Income and formal help-seeking. To test the hypothesis that participants with no income differ from participants with some income with respect to formal help-seeking, a t-test was conducted. Participants were categorized into two groups (no income and some income) because approximately half of the sample (52%) reported earning no income independent of their abusive spouse and because there was little variability in participants' income (range: \$0.00 to \$1800; $M = 33.36$, $SD = \$498.94$, median = \$0.00). Descriptive statistics for the two levels of income (no income and some income) are summarized in Table 14.

Table 14.
Descriptive Statistics for Frequency of Formal Help-Seeking by Income

| | Income Group | |
|-----------|--------------|------|
| | None | Some |
| <i>M</i> | 2.69 | 2.83 |
| <i>SD</i> | 1.47 | 1.36 |
| <i>N</i> | 39 | 36 |

The data satisfied the assumption of homogeneity of variance (HOV) (Levene's test showed $F(1, 73) = 0.72, p = 0.40$). Results are summarized in Table 15.

Table 15.

Source Table for Hypothesis Three: Comparison that Examine the Influence of Income on Formal Help-Seeking

| Comparison | Student's t-test | Adjusted R^2 |
|---------------------------|--|----------------|
| No income vs. some income | $t(73) = -0.43, p = 0.34, 1\text{-tailed}$ | 0.01 |

These analyses indicate that women with no income do not differ from women some income with respect to formal help-seeking, $t(73) = -0.43, p = 0.34, 1\text{-tailed}$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.01$. Thus, the hypothesis that Mexican-origin battered women with no income differ in formal help-seeking from women with some income is not supported by present data.

Educational level and formal help-seeking. To test the hypothesis that level of education (grade school, high school, post high school) influences formal help-seeking, three planned comparisons were analyzed. Comparison 1 examined whether participants with a grade school education differ from participants who completed high school with respect to formal help-seeking. Comparison 2 tested whether participants who completed grade school differ from those who completed some post-high school education with respect to formal help-seeking. Finally, Comparison 3 assessed whether participants who completed a high school education differed from those with post-high school education with respect to formal help-seeking. Descriptive statistics for the three categories of educational level are summarized in Table 16.

Table 16.

Descriptive Statistics for Frequency of Formal Help-Seeking by Educational Level

| | Level of Education | | |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------|------------------|
| | Grade School | High School | Post-High School |
| <i>M</i> | 1.91 | 3.25 | 2.88 |
| <i>SD</i> | 1.04 | 1.27 | 1.67 |
| <i>N</i> | 23 | 36 | 16 |

The data did not satisfy the assumption of homogeneity of variance (HOV) (Levene's test showed $F(2, 72) = 5.73, p < 0.01$). Student's *t*-test is affected by unequal variances when sample sizes are not equal, as is the case with educational level. Therefore, comparisons were analyzed using Welch's *t'*-test. Results are summarized in Table 17.

Table 17.

Source Table for Hypothesis Four: Comparisons that Examine the Influence of Level of Education on Formal Help-Seeking

| Comparison | Welch's <i>t'</i> -test | 95% Confidence Interval for Mean Difference | Adjusted R^2 |
|------------------------------|--|---|----------------|
| Grade school vs. high school | $t'(53.47) = -4.42, p < 0.01$, 1-tailed | -0.73 to -1.95 | 0.226 |
| Grade school vs. post-high | $t'(23.04) = -2.06, p = 0.03$, 1-tailed | -0.001 to -1.94 | 0.095 |
| High school vs. post-high | $t'(23.05) = 0.79, p = 0.22$, 1-tailed | | 0.005 |

First, these analyses indicate that battered Mexican-origin women with a grade school education seek formal help less frequently than those with a high school education, $t'(53.47) = -4.42, p < 0.01$, 1-tailed adjusted $R^2 = 0.226$. According to Cohen's (1988) standards, this is a large effect size. Most likely (95% CI), grade school participants'

scores on formal help-seeking are lower than high school participants' scores by 0.73 to 1.95 points. Second, results indicate that women with a grade school education also seek formal help less frequently than women with post-high school education, $t'(23.04) = -2.06$, $p = 0.03$, 1-tailed, adjusted $R^2 = 0.095$. Again using Cohen's (1988) standards, this is a medium effect size. Most likely (95% CI), grade school participants' scores on formal help-seeking are lower than post high-school participants' scores by 0.001 to 1.94 points. Third, these analyses indicate that women with a high school education do not differ from women with post-high school education with respect to formal help-seeking, $t'(23.05) = 0.79$, $p = 0.22$, 1-tailed, adjusted $R^2 = 0.005$.

Formal help-seeking is a global score that reflects participants' usage of seven distinct sources of formal help (i.e., medical assistance, lawyer, shelter, police, women's program, social worker, and counselor). To better understand how level of education influences use of these *particular* sources of formal help, the relationship between level of education and usage of each specific source of formal help was examined. In light of the non-significant t' -test for the contrast of women with high school education versus women with post-high school education, these two educational categories were collapsed, and a series of 2x2 tables (level of education by use of specific source of formal help-seeking) were examined. Results of chi-squared tests are shown in Table 18.

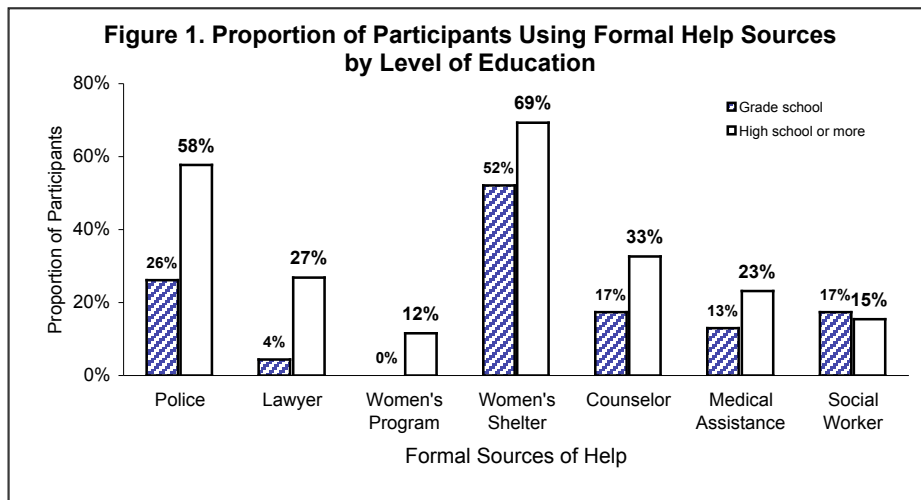
Table 18.

Chi Square Statistics for Research Question Two: How Does Educational Level Relate to Usage of Specific Sources of Formal Help?

| Specific Sources of Help | χ^2 | p value | Adjusted R^2 ^a |
|--------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| Police | 6.38 | 0.01 | 0.073 |
| Lawyer | 5.01 | 0.02 | 0.055 |
| Women's program | 2.89 | 0.09 | 0.026 |
| Shelter | 2.01 | 0.16 | 0.014 |
| Counselor | 1.85 | 0.17 | 0.012 |
| Medical assistance | 1.00 | 0.32 | <0.001 |
| Social worker | 0.05 | 0.83 | <0.001 |

a. Hays (1994) shows that for a contingency table with two rows or two columns, the effect size estimate R^2 is related to χ^2 thus $R^2 = \chi^2 / N$.

These analyses indicate that participants with a grade school education differed from participants with more education with respect to only two sources of formal help. One was police, $\chi^2 (1, N=75) = 6.38, p = 0.01$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.073$. Using Cohen's (1988) standards, this is a medium effect size. While approximately 26% of women with a grade school education contacted the police, 58% of women with more education used the police (See Figure 1). The second source of formal help was lawyers, $\chi^2 (1, N=75) = 5.08, p = 0.02$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.055$. According to Cohen's (1988) standards, this effect size is small, but it is just shy of reaching the cutoff point for medium effect sizes (0.0588). While approximately 4% of women with a grade school education used a lawyer, about 30% of women with more education used a lawyer. Educational level was not related to use any of other specific source of formal help.



English Proficiency and formal help-seeking. To test the hypothesis that level of English proficiency (“none,” “some,” and “fluent”) influences formal help-seeking, three planned comparisons were analyzed. Comparison 1 examined whether participants who speak no English differ from participants who speak some English with respect to formal help-seeking. Comparison 2 assessed whether participants who speak no English differ from those who speak fluent English with respect to formal help-seeking. Finally, Comparison 3 tested whether participants who speak some English differ from participants who speak fluent English with respect to formal help-seeking. Descriptive statistics for the three categories of English proficiency are summarized in Table 19.

Table 19.

Descriptive Statistics for Frequency of Formal Help-Seeking by English Proficiency Level

| | Level of English Proficiency | | |
|-----------|------------------------------|------|--------|
| | None | Some | Fluent |
| <i>M</i> | 2.11 | 2.81 | 3.14 |
| <i>SD</i> | 0.88 | 1.55 | 1.46 |
| <i>N</i> | 19 | 27 | 29 |

The data did not satisfy the assumption of homogeneity of variance (HOV) (Levene's showed $F(2, 72) = 5.73, p = 0.01$), the effect of which again was exacerbated by the unequal sample sizes in English proficiency level groups. Hence, comparisons were analyzed with Welch's t' -test. Results are summarized in Table 20.

Table 20.

Source Table for Hypothesis Five: Comparisons that Examine the Influence of Level of English Proficiency on Formal Help-Seeking

| Comparison | Welch's t' -test | 95% Confidence Interval for Mean Difference | Adjusted R^2 |
|---------------------------------|--|---|----------------|
| No English vs. some English | $t'(42.42) = -1.94, p = 0.03, 1\text{-tailed}$ | -0.001 to -1.43 | 0.046 |
| No English vs. fluent English | $t'(45.77) = -3.05, p < 0.01, 1\text{tailed}$ | -0.35 to -1.71 | 0.123 |
| Some English vs. fluent English | $t'(53.07) = -0.82, p = 0.21, 1\text{-tailed}$ | | 0.006 |

First, these analyses indicate that battered Mexican-origin women who speak no English seek formal help less frequently than those who speak some English, $t'(42.42) = -1.94, p = 0.03, 1\text{-tailed}$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.046$. According to Cohen's (1988) standards, this effect

size is small. Most likely (95% CI), participants who speak no English will score lower on formal help-seeking by 0.001 to 1.43 points. Second, results indicate that women who speak no English seek formal help less frequently than those who speak fluent English $t'(45,77) = -3.05, p < 0.01$, 1 tailed, adjusted $R^2 = 0.0123$. This is again a small effect size (Cohen, 1988). Most likely (95% CI), scores on formal help-seeking of participants who speak no English will be lower than those of participants who speak fluent English by 0.35 to 1.71 points. Third, results indicate that women who speak some English do not differ from those who speak fluent English with respect to formal help-seeking, $t'(53.07) = -0.82, p = 0.21$, 1-tailed, adjusted $R^2 < 0.001$.

As mentioned, formal-help seeking scores are overall scores that reflect participants' use of seven distinct sources of formal help. To understand how level of English proficiency influences use of these particular sources of help, the relationships between level of English proficiency and use of each source of formal help were examined. In light of the non-significant t' -test for the contrast of women speaking some English versus those speaking fluent English, these two categories were collapsed, and a series of 2x2 tables (level of English proficiency by use of specific source of formal help) were examined. Results of chi square tests are shown in Table 21.

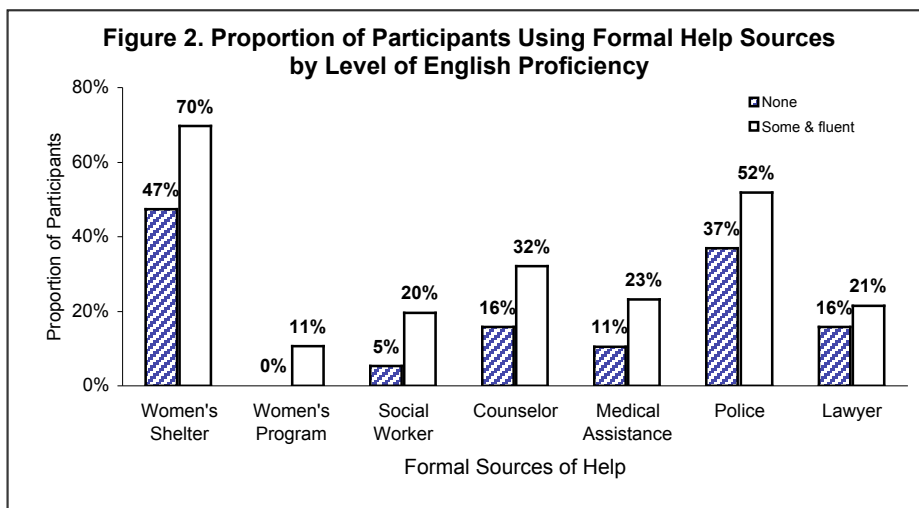
Table 21.

Chi Square Statistics for Research Question Three: How Does Level of English proficiency Relate to Usage of Specific Sources of Formal Help?

| Specific Sources of Help | χ^2 | p value | Adjusted R^2 |
|--------------------------|----------|-----------|----------------|
| Shelter | 3.16 | 0.08 | 0.029 |
| Women's program | 2.21 | 0.14 | 0.017 |
| Social worker | 2.18 | 0.14 | 0.017 |
| Counselor | 1.88 | 0.17 | 0.012 |
| Medical assistance | 1.43 | 0.23 | 0.006 |
| Police | 1.27 | 0.26 | 0.004 |
| Lawyer | 0.28 | 0.56 | <0.001 |

a. Hays (1994) shows that for a contingency table with two rows or two columns, the effect size estimate R^2 is related to χ^2 thus $R^2 = \chi^2 / N$.

No relationships were found between levels of English proficiency and usage of specific sources of formal help. (See Figure 2.) However, although no relationships were found to be statistically significant, women with no English consistently used sources of formal help less than women who spoke some or fluent English.



Immigrant Status and formal help-seeking. To test the hypothesis that documented participants differ from undocumented immigrants with respect to formal help-seeking, a t-test was conducted. Descriptive statistics for the two levels of immigrant status (documented and undocumented) are summarized in Table 22.

Table 22.
Descriptive Statistics for Frequency of Formal Help-Seeking by Immigrant Status

| | Immigrant Status | |
|-----------|------------------|------------|
| | Undocumented | Documented |
| <i>M</i> | 2.51 | 3.18 |
| <i>SD</i> | 1.38 | 1.39 |
| <i>N</i> | 47 | 28 |

The data satisfied the assumption of homogeneity of variance (HOV) (Levene's test showed $F(1, 73) = 0.001, p = .92$). Results are summarized in Table 23.

Table 23.
Source Table for Hypothesis Six: Comparisons that Examine the Influence of Immigrant Status on Formal Help-Seeking

| Comparison | Student's t-test | 95% Confidence Interval for Mean Difference | Adjusted R^2 |
|--------------------------------|--|--|----------------|
| Documented vs. undocumented | $t(73) = -2.03, p = 0.02, 1\text{-tailed}$ | -0.01 to -1.33 | 0.040 |

These analyses indicate that undocumented battered Mexican immigrant women seek formal help less frequently than documented women, $t(73) = -2.03, p = 0.02, 1\text{-tailed}$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.040$. This effect size is small (Cohen, 1988). Undocumented women's

scores on formal help-seeking will most likely (95% CI) be lower than documented women's scores by 0.01 to 1.33 points.

To better understand how immigrant status influences use of the seven specific sources of formal help that comprise the overall formal help-seeking score, the relationships between immigrant status and use of each source of formal help were examined. A series of 2x2 tables (immigrant status by use of a specific source of formal help) was examined. Results of chi-squared tests are shown in Table 24.

Table 24.

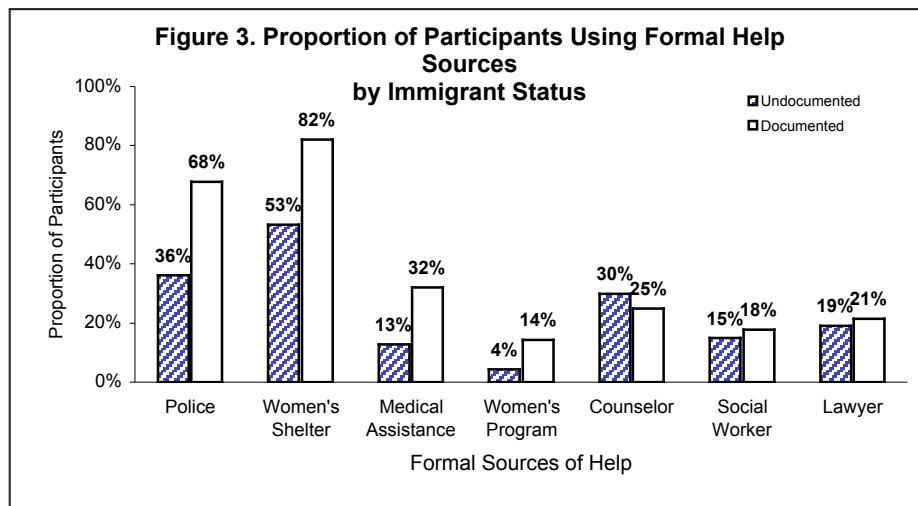
Chi Square Statistics for Research Question Four: How Does Immigrant Status Relate to Usage of Specific Sources of Formal Help

| Specific Sources of Help | χ^2 | <i>p</i> value | Adjusted R^2 |
|--------------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|
| Police | 7.01 | 0.01 | 0.082 |
| Shelter | 6.38 | 0.01 | 0.073 |
| Medical assistance | 4.12 | 0.04 | 0.043 |
| Women's program | 2.40 | 0.12 | 0.019 |
| Counselor | 0.20 | 0.66 | <0.001 |
| Social worker | 0.12 | 0.74 | <0.001 |
| Lawyer | 0.06 | 0.81 | <0.001 |

a. Hays (1994) shows that for a contingency table with two rows or two columns, the effect size estimate R^2 is related to χ^2 thus $R^2 = \chi^2 / N$.

Undocumented women differed from documented women with respect to three sources of help. The first was police $\chi^2 (1, N=75) = 7.06, p = 0.01$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.082$. This effect size, according to Cohen's (1988) standards, is medium. Approximately 36% of undocumented women accessed police as a formal source of help, whereas about 68% of

documented women utilized police services. (See Figure 3.) The second was usage of a domestic violence shelter $\chi^2(1, N=75) = 6.38, p = 0.01$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.073$. Again, this is a medium effect size (Cohen, 1988). Fifty-three percent of undocumented women used a shelter, compared to 82% of legal citizens. Finally, the third specific source of help found to be related to immigrant status was medical assistance, $\chi^2(1, N=75) = 4.12, p = 0.04$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.043$. This effect size is small (Cohen, 1988). Approximately 13% of undocumented women reported using medical services, whereas about 32% of documented women accessed medical assistance.



Summary of Results Addressing Purpose Two

To summarize, two cultural and four socio-structural variables were analyzed to determine their relationships to Mexican-origin women's help-seeking. (See Table 24 for a summary of results.) Regarding the cultural variables analyzed, it was found that *familismo* influences informal help-seeking, such that women with greater levels of

familismo engage in more frequent informal help-seeking. However, the hypotheses that *machismo* would influence informal and formal help-seeking were not supported.

Regarding the four socio-structural variables examined, support was found for the hypotheses that educational level, English proficiency, and immigrant status influence battered Mexican-origin women's help-seeking. Women who have only a grade school education, speak no English, and are undocumented engage in less frequent formal help-seeking than women who have high school (or beyond) education, speak some (or fluent) English, and are documented. It was also found that educational level relates to two specific sources of formal help: lawyers and police, while immigrant status relates to three specific sources of formal help: police, shelter, and medical assistance. However, the hypothesis that income is associated with battered Mexican-origin women's formal help-seeking was not supported.

Table 25.
Summary of Hypotheses, Research Questions, Analyses, and Results

| Hypothesis/Research Question | Analysis Conducted | Received Support |
|--|---|--|
| Hypothesis 1: <i>Machismo</i> scores predict informal help-seeking. | Regression | No |
| Hypothesis 2: <i>Machismo</i> scores predict formal help-seeking | Regression | No |
| Hypothesis 3: Income predicts formal help-seeking | one-tailed <i>t</i> -test | No |
| Hypothesis 4: Education influences formal help-seeking | Planned comparison: one-tailed <i>t</i> '-test | Yes |
| Hypothesis 5: English proficiency influences formal help-seeking | Planned comparison: one-tailed <i>t</i> '-test | Yes |
| Hypothesis 6: Immigration status influences formal help-seeking | one-tailed <i>t</i> -test | Yes |
| Research question 1: Does <i>familismo</i> predict informal help-seeking? | Regression | Yes |
| Research question 2: Which specific sources of formal help are related to educational level? | Chi squares | Police, lawyer |
| Research question 3: Which specific sources of formal help are related to English proficiency? | Chi squares | None |
| Research question 4: Which specific sources of formal help are related to immigrant status? | Chi squares | Police, shelter, medical assistance |

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

This chapter provides a discussion of the study's key findings and their implications for assisting this population of women. Also considered are the study's limitations and directions for future research in this area. Participants' responses to the four open-ended questions included in the study are integrated into the discussion of the study's results to provide insight into quantitative findings. Participants were asked open-ended questions regarding concerns they had about seeking outside help, barriers to help-seeking they perceived, their most successful strategies used to survive abuse, and ideas for how we might improve services for abused Mexican-origin women.

Overview of Study's Purpose and Main Findings

*“One can become desperate in this process...
But we all have the capacity to empower ourselves” (ID75).*

Intimate partner violence is a serious problem in the general US population (National Institute of Justice, 2000) as well as in the Latino (Caetano et al., 2000; Cunradi et al., 2002; Mattson & Rodriguez, 1999; Texas Council on Family Violence, 2003) and Mexican-origin communities (Aldorando et al. 2002; Lown & Vega, 2001; Murdaugh et al., 2004). From a survivor theory perspective (Browne, 1998; Gondolf & Fisher, 1988), battered women respond to violence by continuously acting to survive abuse in a myriad of ways— from calling the police, to asking a family member to intervene, to maintaining a relationship with God. Yet despite similar rates of domestic violence across racial,

ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic lines (Hotaling & Sugarman, 1986), women's experiences of and responses to abuse reflect their particular socio-cultural context, available resources, and perceived options (Dutton et al., 2000).

While prior research has documented the non-Latina battered women's patterns of help-seeking (Allen et al., 2004) and the barriers these women encounter (Fugate et al., 2005), there is a need for research that examines these issues specifically for battered Latinas. While previous research has explored which help sources battered Latinas tend to use (Dutton et al., 2000), this research has not documented the frequency and perceived effectiveness with which these women seek help from various sources, nor has it expanded the definition of help-seeking to include use of personal strategies (i.e., placating the battered) to survive abuse. In addition, while studies have found that battered Latinas are less likely to seek help than battered European American women (West et al., 1998), few studies have considered the particular cultural values and/or socio-structural variables related to whether and how these women seek help. The studies that have examined this issue (i.e., Bauer et al., 2000; Sorenson, 1996) have relied on small sample sizes (i.e., $N < 50$) and collected open-ended, descriptive information, and/or have not distinguished among Latino subgroups (i.e., Dutton et al., 2000). Hence, there was a need for a larger sample, empirical study focusing on a particular subgroup of battered Latinas to comprehensively explore these women's help-seeking behaviors and strategies to survive abuse, and the relationships between these behaviors and the socio-cultural variables salient in their lives.

The present study therefore focused on a particular subset of the Latino community, Mexican-origin battered women who sought help at a community agency, to better understand these women's strategies to survive abuse and the barriers to help-seeking they perceive and encounter. The study had two main purposes. First, it aimed to gather information on the frequency and perceived effectiveness of battered Mexican-origin women's use of formal (i.e., medical services, police, etc.) and informal (i.e., friends, immediate family, etc.) help sources, and their use of personal strategies (i.e., placating the batterer, locking one's self in a room, etc.) to survive abuse. The second main purpose of this study was to explore whether certain socio-cultural variables are associated with formal and informal help-seeking. Socio-cultural variables were defined as cultural values (*machismo* and *familismo*) and socio-structural variables (income, educational level, English proficiency, and immigrant status).

Seventy-five female, Mexican-origin participants who reported experiencing psychological, physical, and/or sexual abuse from a heterosexual intimate partner were recruited from the six sites participating in this study. The majority (68%) of participants were born in Mexico and were undocumented immigrants (63%). Slightly over half the sample was unemployed and reported earning no independent income. Participants averaged a ninth grade education and most (61%) spoke little or no English. The vast majority of participants (96%) had left their abusive partners; average length of time away from the abuser was three months. Nearly all participants (96%) were mothers with children currently living with them.

Regarding the study's first main purpose, results revealed that the majority of participants sought help from formal sources and on average perceived this help to be effective; a slightly greater percentage sought help from informal sources and those who did so rated this help also to be effective, albeit slightly less so than formal services. Results also indicated that the women in this sample engaged in a number of personal strategies to survive abuse; while some of these strategies (i.e., moving to an undisclosed location, maintaining a relationship with God) were perceived as very helpful in surviving abuse, others (i.e., placating the batterer, encouraging counseling for the batterer) were judged to be generally unhelpful.

Regarding the study's second main purpose, statistical analyses indicated that the cultural variable, *familismo*, predicts battered Mexican-origin women's informal help-seeking, such that women who report greater levels of *familismo* seek help from the people they know with greater frequency than with women with lower levels of *familismo*. Results further revealed that three socio-structural variables—educational level, English proficiency, and immigrant status—were associated with the frequency of battered Mexican-origin women's formal help-seeking. Women who had only a grade school education, spoke no English, and were undocumented sought formal help less frequently than women who were not constrained by these variables. Contrary to expected results, *machismo* and income were not found to be associated with help-seeking.

Frequency and Perceived Effectiveness of Help-seeking Behaviors Employed by Battered Women of Mexican-origin

Formal Help-seeking

“I pressed charges and that was freeing. I didn’t want him to do this to any other women... I said, this stops right here” (ID68).

The majority of participants (80%) reported they had accessed at least one source of formal help in the last 6 months of their most recent abusive relationship. Given that participants were recruited from agencies, this finding is not surprising; what is notable is that 77% of the sample reported accessing more than one formal help source. Indeed, the women who accessed formal services did so, on average, 3-4 times during the last 6 months of their most recent abusive relationship. This finding contradicts the popular stereotype of “backward, submissive” battered Latinas and immigrant women (Das Dagupta, 1998). Services were perceived by participants to be “moderately” to “very” helpful in surviving abuse. While previous research *not* specific to Mexican-origin women has found accessing formal services to be an important factor in battered women’s ability to leave an abusive situation (Horton and Johnson, 1993), this study’s findings indicate that these services are important *specifically* for Mexican-origin women as well.

The formal service accessed by the largest percentage of participants (64%) was the domestic violence shelter. While this finding may have been associated with the study’s recruitment procedures, many participants had used shelters in the past; participants reported using shelters 2-3 times during the last 6 months of their most recent

abusive relationship. Participants who used shelters rated them to be “very” helpful and many described shelters as places where they finally felt safe: “The shelter is very helpful because I can sleep at night finally, and my son can sleep at night” (ID3). Moreover, consistent with previous research conducted with the non-Latina battered women (Davis & Srinivasan, 1995), a few of the Mexican-origin participants in this study described shelters as places where participants could be connected to other agencies, i.e., housing, childcare, and legal services.

While women found domestic violence shelters to be very helpful in general, responses to open-ended question regarding how we might improve services included specific suggestions for shelters. Many women proposed that shelters stop giving exit dates or at least afford clients longer stays. Most also recommended that shelters take women in, regardless of whether they show bruises or marks of physical abuse. A few participants further suggested that shelters have more flexible rules and require fewer chores. A few women advocated the need for greater confidentiality, privacy, and space in shelters. One woman suggested that if a shelter cannot take in a woman, staff should arrange alternative temporary shelter, i.e., a hotel. Additionally, a few participants recommended that shelters make efforts to hire and train compassionate and proactive staff who are trained to reach out to clients. Finally, a few women espoused the need for more shelters. In the absence of shelters, two women suggested there should be more hotlines.

After shelters, police were used by the second greatest percentage of participants (48%), on average, 2-3 times. Police were rated to be “moderately” to “very” helpful by

those who accessed them. Responding to open-ended questions, many women described how the police intervened, arrested the batterer, afforded temporary safety, and provided them with information about other services, i.e., domestic violence shelters. Moreover, calling the police was experienced as empowering for a few women.

Participants' responses to the open-ended questions conveyed some negative perceptions of and experiences with the police; these participants offered recommendations for law enforcers. Suggestions for police included offering women information, i.e., regarding shelters, providing safe and anonymous places for women to go, and arresting the abuser and not the victim. Several women also recommended that abusers be given more serious punishments to deter them from re-offending:

The Police Department has to get more involved in apprehending abusers. Instead of misdemeanors, the 'perps' need to get one month of jail. Compared to the damage a woman goes through, they [abusers] get nothing! We need to change the laws. Violence should be punished, not slapped with a misdemeanor (ID34).

Many participants further suggested that protective orders need to be more strictly enforced and that repeat offenders should be appropriately sentenced. One participant, commenting on the way she perceived the current systemic response to domestic violence to be geared toward the woman, remarked, "Target him, not me... Change him" (ID51).

Counselors were accessed by 28% of the participants on average 4-5 times and were rated to be "moderately" to "very" helpful by those participants. One participant described how severe depression, resulting from her partner's abuse, left her hopeless, underweight, and unable to perform daily tasks, such as cleaning her home and attending

to personal hygiene; with the help of a counselor, she again found the motivation, hope, and stamina to engage in life (ID75).

Yet, responding to open-ended questions, various participants voiced the need for increased counseling opportunities. They asked for individual counseling to decrease fear and isolation and increase self-esteem and sense of self-worth. A few participants also asked for parenting help, particularly regarding how to explain domestic violence to their children. One participant requested marriage counseling; the need for group counseling was voiced by many participants. One woman suggested that support groups should exist specifically for persons of the same nationality or race (ID4). Many participants further requested that counseling be offered at no cost.

Equal proportions of participants (20%) reported using legal and medical services. Medical services were used on average 2-3 times and were generally found to be “very” helpful by those who accessed them, although a few women responding to open-ended questions complained about medical professionals’ insensitivity to domestic violence: “When I went to the doctor’s office, they saw my bruises and no one asked me what had happened. They turned their backs” (ID12). Legal services, which were used 2-3 times by participants who sought legal help, received the lowest rating of helpfulness. Many women described frustration with the legal system, particularly regarding their efforts to obtain protective orders. Participants were least likely to seek help from social workers (16%) and women’s programs (8%), although those who did found these services to be “moderately” to “very” helpful.

In summary, previous research has documented non-Latina battered women's formal help-seeking (Allen et al., 2004) as well as their usage of specific help sources such as shelters (Goodman et al., 2003), police (Wolf et al., 2003), counselors (Horton & Johnson, 1993), and medical services (Kurz, 1990). While these findings have suggested that some services (i.e., shelters) are more helpful for these women than others (i.e., police) (Horton & Johnson, 1993; Kurz, 1990), research has generally pointed to the importance of formal help-seeking in helping women to survive abuse (Horton & Johnson, 1993). Previous research has also documented the usage of formal help sources by battered immigrant Latinas (Dutton et al., 2000); however, this research did not distinguish among subgroups and did not provide information on frequency of usage or perceived effectiveness of help sources. The present study adds to previous research by providing detailed quantitative information on the formal help-seeking a specific subset of battered Latinas, those of Mexican-origin. Results indicate that, similar to non-Latina battered women, Mexican-origin women tend to use an array of formal help sources, especially shelters and police. On average, women seek formal help more than once and perceive these services, particularly shelters, as effective in helping them to survive abuse.

Informal Help-seeking

“My dad is the same as my husband; he drinks and abuses my mother. He says, ‘He [abuser] pays your bills, you should be grateful.’ And my mom says, ‘Think of your children.’ In my family, you keep secrets within the family. My dad was the only person I thought ever cared about me, and he told my husband to hit me if I ever tried to leave” (ID 56).

A similar percentage (83%) of participants reported accessing informal sources of help as those accessing formal sources (80%). Those who used informal sources sought this type of help, on average, 4-5 times during the last 6 months of their most recent abusive relationship. These participants perceived informal sources to be “moderately” to “very” helpful. Hence, informal help sources were important factors in these Mexican-origin women’s efforts to survive abuse and women actively sought their help.

The largest percentage of participants (55%) who sought informal help reported seeking help from immediate family; these participants sought help from family members on average 4-5 times during the last 6 months and deemed this help to be “moderately” to “very” helpful.” Responding to open-ended questions, many women described steadfast family members who helped them hide, offered support, intervened, and encouraged them to seek help and to leave the abuser. Several women, however, described barriers that made it difficult to seek help from family members. These included desire to protect the family, abuse being normalized within their family of origin, and cultural values, i.e., the mandates that secrets stay within the family and/or that a good woman suffers: “My family wasn’t going to help me; they told me that a woman must tolerate and take everything her husband does” (ID52). Despite these barriers, family members were frequently sources of effective help for participants.

Friends were sources of help for the next largest percentage of participants (53%). Friends were sought out 4-5 times on average and were deemed “moderately” to “very” helpful by participants seeking their help. Participants responding to open-ended questions recalled friends who listened, put them up in hotels, offered food, bought their

children gifts, and refused to let them return to their abusers. Yet, while the majority of participants found friends to be helpful, issues of blaming the victim, turning backs, isolation, and shame interfered with many women's ability to seek help from friends.

Thirty-one percent of participants sought help from the abuser's family (3-4 times), but deemed this help to generally be only "somewhat" helpful. Several participants described abusers' family members as threatening (particularly with taking women's children), controlling, and generally unresponsive. For immigrant women who did not have their own family members nearby, partners' families may have been the sole avenues for familial help-seeking; however, few of these experiences were experienced as helpful.

Only 19% of participants sought help from extended family members (4-5 times); this help was deemed by these participants to be "moderately" to "very" helpful. The fact that so few participants sought help from extended family members likely reflects the fact that so many participants in this study were immigrants, whose extended families continue to reside in Mexico. In their responses to open-ended questions, many immigrant women indicated they would have sought help from extended family had that been a possibility: "I wanted to turn to my family, but they were all in Mexico" (ID18).

Religious officials were sought out by 16% of participants (3-4 times). Participants deemed religious officials to be "moderately" to "very" helpful. This finding contradicts research conducted with non-Latina battered women (Horton & Johnson, 1993) and may reflect the importance of Catholicism and religion in the Mexican culture

(Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002).¹³ Many participants described their priests or pastors as extremely helpful in listening, counseling, and connecting them to other services. At least one participant, however, had a different experience with her religious leader: “I went to my priest, and he told me I had to take it all, stay with him [abuser] because that’s what a wife does... He said I was just looking for problems” (ID24).

Participants were least likely to seek help from co-workers (15%), but those who did so reported the help they received to be “very” helpful. This small percentage again likely reflects the composition of this sample, i.e., over half the participants did not work and those who did were likely to be employed in solitary jobs, such as cleaning houses and babysitting.

In summary, previous research has documented the importance of informal support in helping non-Latina battered women survive abuse (Goodman et al., 2003; Nurius, Furrey, & Berliner, 1992). From previous research, we know that battered women seek help from people such as family members (Van Hook, 2000), friends (Rose & Campbell, 2000), and clergy (Bowker & Maurer, 1986). We also have evidence that some informal help sources (i.e., friends) are more effective than others (i.e., clergy) (Horton & Johnson, 1993). What was unclear was whether these patterns pertain to battered Mexican-origin women as well. While empirical research has documented the fact that battered immigrant Latinas seek informal help with greater frequency than formal help (Dutton et al. 2000), again, no distinction was made among subgroups and no information was provided on frequency of usage and perceived effectiveness of informal

¹³ Religious breakdown among participants in the current study was: 68% Catholic, 27% Protestant, 7% Other.

sources. This study adds to the current research by providing detailed, empirical data on informal help-seeking behaviors and perceptions employed by a specific subset of battered Latinas. The current research indicates that, in addition to seeking formal help, battered Mexican-origin women seek help from people they know, particularly from family members and friends. These women find this help, particularly from family and co-workers, to be quite effective in surviving abuse. While patterns of informal help-seeking reported in studies conducted with non-Latinas are largely evident with this particular sample, some differences are apparent. For example, unlike results of studies conducted with non-Latina samples, clergy are perceived as effective by Mexican-origin women, perhaps because of the importance of Catholic faith for this population. In addition, the likelihood that immigrant women's extended family members reside in Mexico may contribute to less frequent help-seeking from this particular informal source.

Personal Strategies to Survive Abuse

"I didn't realize how out of the ordinary all these things I was doing were... hiding, disguising myself, pretending all the time... for me it was normal. I didn't realize what a bad situation I was in" (ID73).

This study found that the Mexican-origin women in this study engaged in a number of personal strategies to survive abuse. While some strategies were deemed very helpful, others were decidedly ineffective. Participants rated whether, how frequently, and how effectively they used these strategies. In addition, they responded to an open-ended question regarding their most successful strategies employed to survive abuse.

Strategies reported in the current study can be grouped into five categories that partially coincide with previous researchers' findings (Davies & Lyons, 1998; Dutton,

1992): avoiding strategies, defensive strategies, spiritual/psychological strategies, social/familial strategies, and escaping strategies.¹⁴ While previous researchers' similar groupings of personal strategies guided the design of the questionnaire items to which participants responded, these five categories also emerged from participants' responses to open-ended questions. Open-ended question responses indicate that while avoiding and defensive strategies provided a means of surviving while living with the abuser, spiritual/psychological strategies and social/familial strategies appear to have served as both coping mechanisms while in the relationship and also as assets in leaving the abuser. Escaping strategies seem to have been employed in an effort to leave the abusive relationship.

Avoiding strategies. Avoiding strategies included endorsement of the following questionnaire items: placating the batterer, walking away from threatening situations, trying to talk the abuser down, and encouraging counseling for the batterer. Responses to open-ended questions indicate that these strategies provided a temporary means of coping with and attempting to mitigate the occurrence of abuse.

The greatest percentage of participants (88%) reported that they tried to placate the batterer, i.e., do whatever he asks to calm him down. Responses to open-ended questions indicate that, in line with qualitative research that has documented usage of personal strategies by non-Latinas (Lempert, 1996), placating the batterer and acting passively were active choices participants made to survive abusive situations. Most women described consciously cooking, cleaning, having sex, keeping children quiet,

¹⁴ These are possible groupings of the strategies, but they were not formally analyzed as subscales.

changing appointments, attending constantly to the batterer's needs and mood, and generally acting submissively to avoid their abusers' criticism and rage. However, consistent with previous research conducted with battered African American women (Goodman et al., 2003), this strategy was described as only "somewhat" helpful. While for some women, this strategy proved temporarily effective in staying safe, placating the batterer was deemed generally ineffective in mitigating violence. For most women, no matter what they did, they could not appease the batterer: "I tried to do whatever he [abuser] wanted to calm him down, but whatever I did, I was still messing up... I didn't do it quick enough, or right, or I'm just plain stupid..." (ID3). Obeying, placating, and calming the batterer also had consequences for some women's self esteem: "I tried to obey him, even though nothing I did was good. I had to be like a dog... that's the saddest part of all" (ID24). Moreover, a few women described how this strategy kept alive the hope that, if they just could be quiet/compliant/attractive/plain/etc. enough, he would change:

I would let him have his way... try to do whatever he wanted so he wouldn't get madder. This kept my hope alive, though; it was like a trap. I thought I could make him happy... that I could change and then he would. But that wasn't going to happen (ID30).

Thus, the strategy of placating the abuser, while temporarily ensuring some women's safety and eventually enabling them to leave, ran the risk of taking a toll on their sense of self-worth and contributing to keeping them in abusive situations, by keeping the hope alive that change was possible.

Eighty percent of participants reported they tried to walk away from threatening situations, but found this strategy to be generally “not at all” to “somewhat” helpful. Most participants suggested that walking away generally served to further enrage the abuser; he was angrier when they returned. Eighty percent of the sample also reported that they tried talking the abuser down; again, this was deemed “not at all” to “somewhat” helpful. Most participants described the futility of trying to rationally talk to an irrational person, particularly when he was intoxicated. Sixty-seven percent of participants said they encouraged counseling for the abuser, but found this to be the least effective of all strategies to survive abuse since, from the abuser’s perspective, “I was the ‘crazy’ one who needed counseling—of course it wasn’t him!” (ID24).

Defensive strategies. Participants reported engaging in defensive strategies. These included affirmative responses to the questionnaire items such as: protecting their bodies (68%), which was “somewhat” to “moderately” helpful; physically fighting back (61%), which was “not at all” to “somewhat” helpful; locking one’s self in a room (51%), which was “not at all” to “somewhat” effective; and teaching children to call police (33%) which was “somewhat” to “moderately” helpful. Responses to open-ended questions indicated that these defensive strategies provided a means of temporarily (if not always effectively) protecting one’s self in a dangerous context. For example, locking one’s self in a room afforded temporary safety, although it was generally deemed ineffective: “I tried to lock the door but he’d just unscrew the bolts and open the door” (ID26). To protect their bodies, one woman recalled cutting off her hair (so it could no longer be pulled); many described covering their faces and cradling their pregnant stomachs.

Fighting back, for many women, had the unfortunate consequences of further angering the abuser and resulting in the women's arrest. Thus, fighting back, although in self-defense, proved to be physically and sometimes legally dangerous for many women.

Spiritual/psychological strategies. Participants reported engaging in spiritual/psychological strategies to survive abuse by endorsing the following questionnaire items: joining a group and maintaining a relationship with God. Responses to open-ended questions suggested that while these strategies were means of coping within the relationship, some of these strategies also helped motivate women to eventually leave the abusive situation. Eleven percent of participants found it helpful to join a group wherein they felt valued; this was "moderately" to "very" helpful." Seventy-one percent of participants reported that maintaining a relationship with God was an important factor in surviving abuse; consistent with previous research conducted with non-Latinas (Dunbar & Jeannechild, 1996) this was rated as "very" to "extremely" helpful. Responses to open-ended questions revealed that faith helped most women to maintain positive attitudes, the hope that a better life awaited them, and the strength to persevere. Moreover, for a few women, faith afforded the confidence that they could leave the abuser and be taken care of by a greater power: "I thought to myself, the Virgin had no spouse and she was able to raise her child; she will give me strength to go on" (ID44). Thus, faith served as both a temporary coping mechanism and, for some, as an aid to leaving.

In addition to the questionnaire items, participants' responses to open-ended questions included additional emotional/supportive strategies. Many participants

described the power of positive thinking, i.e., staying optimistic, focusing on good times, forgiving, concentrating on a better tomorrow, and using humor to cope. A few women also described denial and avoidance to cope and get through the day.

Social/familial strategies. In line with research that points to the importance of social support in African American battered women's survival (Rose & Campbell, 2000), the Mexican-origin women in this study reported engaging in a number of social/familial strategies to survive abuse. These included the affirmative responses to following questionnaire items: maintaining relationships with supportive people (51%), not involving family members in order to protect them (41%), and speaking with other battered women for support and advice (31%). Responses to open-ended questions indicated that keeping alive social and familial ties appeared to both sustain many women while they were with the abuser and also provide the needed motivation and support for a few women to leave the abuser: "My mom was the one who gave me the strength to leave" (ID3).

In addition to these questionnaire items, responses to open-ended questions indicated that particular family members—children—were central factors in participants' survival of and departure from abusive situations. For a few women, the children's presence provided women protection: "I would stay next to my kids so he wouldn't hit me. I felt safer near my kids because he wouldn't come at me if I was near them" (ID4). Focusing on, fighting for, and aiming to be good examples for their children inspired most women to persevere through difficult situations. Trying to remain optimistic for children helped women to resist depression and anger and enabled many women to

maintain hope for a better life, if not for themselves, for their children. Indeed, children were the impetus for many women to eventually leave their abusers, sometimes because mothers didn't want their children to witness the violence or to view their mothers as defeated; other times because the children had become targets of violence. These responses support previous qualitative research conducted with a smaller sample of Mexican-origin battered women (Avecedo, 2000).

Escaping strategies. Women reported engaging in a number of escaping strategies; the endorsed questionnaire items such as: moving to an undisclosed location (63%), disguising themselves (33%), and saving personal money (32%). Moving to an undisclosed location was generally experienced as a “very” to “extremely” effective strategy. Using a disguise was “somewhat” helpful, whereas saving money was perceived to be “very” helpful. Responses to open-ended questions indicated that these strategies were aimed at leaving the abusive situation. For example, saving one's own money provided financial independence for a few women and their children and means to escape. However, most women were not able to save their own money because of the abuser's economic control and/or their economic marginalization. Also, lack of financial resources, as well as fear of being followed, prohibited many women from moving to an undisclosed location.

Summary. To this author's knowledge, previous research has not empirically documented Mexican-origin women's usage of personal strategies to survive abuse. This study addressed this gap in the literature. Previous research has documented the ways in which non-Latina battered women respond to violence in a range of ways and, in contrast

to the theory of learned helplessness (Walker, 1984), increase their strategies to survive abuse in the face of growing frequency and threat of violence (Gondolf & Fisher, 1988; Goodman et al., 2003). Research with non-Latinas further indicates that personal strategies to survive abuse, while representing important steps in battered women's eventual empowerment and survival (Campbell Ulrich, 1993), are experienced as less effective in terms of surviving abuse than accessing informal and formal sources of help (Bowker, 1983). However, as noted, this study represents a first attempt to focus specifically on battered women of Mexican descent to understand their usage of personal strategies to survive abuse. Findings support the survivor theory perspective (Gondolf & Fisher, 1988) for battered Mexican-origin women as well as previous findings for non-Latina battered women (Bowker, 1983) that many personal strategies are experienced as unhelpful in surviving abuse.

Summary of Participants Help-seeking and Strategies to Survive Abuse

In summary, this study addressed the need for detailed, empirical information on the attempts to survive abuse employed by a large sample of battered Mexican-origin women and the perceived effectiveness of these efforts. Findings support the survivor theory perspective (Gondolf & Fisher, 1988) by providing evidence that these women are both seeking help from various sources to leave abusive situations and actively coping within the parameters of their abusive context in order to survive on a daily basis. Findings also indicate that while formal and informal help sources are important assets to women's survival of abuse, personal strategies vary in their perceived effectiveness;

some strategies, such as maintaining faith and saving money, are very helpful whereas others, like placating the batterer and encouraging counseling for him, are less effective.

Relationships between Help-seeking Behaviors Employed by Battered Women of Mexican-origin and Cultural and Socio-structural Variables

The second main purpose of the study was to explore how cultural values (i.e., *machismo* and *familismo*) and socio-structural variables (i.e., income, education, English proficiency, and immigrant status) are associated with the help-seeking of battered women of Mexican-origin. Unlike previous research, this study included a large sample (N = 75) suitable for statistical analyses and concentrated on a specific subset of the Latino population, i.e., women of Mexican-origin. Responses to open-ended questions present participants' suggestions for building on cultural strengths and overcoming the socio-structural barriers to help-seeking that this population faces.

Relationships between Cultural Values and Help-Seeking.

"In the Bible, it says that men should be the head of the family... Other people looked for what I'd done wrong. For many women, the culture says that the husband commands and we must obey. We have to endure everything that comes. 'My daughter,' they said, 'You must take it.' (ID75)

The present study explored whether Mexican-origin women's cultural values, defined as *machismo* and *familismo*, are associated with help-seeking. It was found that *familismo*, but not *machismo*, relates to informal help-seeking.

Ideology of Machismo. The expectation that *machismo* predict help-seeking was not supported by the regression analyses performed on participants' responses. This

finding is not consistent with previous qualitative research (Avecedo, 2000; Morash et al., 2000; Sorenson, 1996), and may reflect the lack of variability in responses on the measure used. That is, the vast majority of participants had left their abusive partners and sought help at least once; these women likely held more liberal attitudes toward gender roles than women who had not left the abusive partner (Vera, 2002). The resulting low variability in responses on the measure of *machismo* resulted in low power and little probability of detecting effects (see “Limitations” section below). Indeed, responses to open-ended questions seemed to indicate that values of *machismo* do influence many participants’ help-seeking behaviors: “Some families have stricter customs and don’t believe women should be educated or be treated as equals. That makes it more difficult for them to leave” (ID32). Discussing barriers to help-seeking, many women described believing the ideology of *machismo*, i.e., that their husbands were the “heads” of the house (Roschelle, 1999), and following the prescriptions of *marianismo*, i.e., that a “good” woman suffers for the sake of the family (Gil & Vasquez, 1996): “I believed what people told me, that a woman must bear everything” (ID52). Most women generally described these mandates of men’s dominance and women’s self-sacrifice as coming from their families and culture.

A few participants offered suggestions regarding the reexamination of traditional gender roles so that the familial cycle of violence might be interrupted. Specifically, they suggested that the “good woman suffers” *marianista* image, and “head of the house” *machismo* ideology should be challenged:

Women have learned how to suffer; their mothers suffered, their ancestors suffered, and so they have learned to suffer also. This needs to stop. And we need to educate mothers how to raise men who don't expect to be "the head" [of the family] and are not abusive. We need to teach parents how to be parents, to stop emotional and physical abuse. We need to break the cycle of violence in the family (ID64).

Despite these personal accounts offered in response to open-ended questions, however, the current empirical data do not indicate that values of *machismo* are associated with battered Mexican-origin women's help-seeking.

Familismo. A regression analysis performed on participants' responses indicated that battered Mexican-origin women with higher levels of *familismo* sought informal help with greater frequency than women with lower levels of *familismo*. The effect size of the finding, an indication of practical significance, was medium. Thus, results of this study indicate that *familismo*, and its sense of belonging, responsibility, obligation, and proximity to family (Falicov, 1998), is meaningfully associated with greater frequency of informal help-seeking for battered Mexican-origin women.

The finding that *familismo* is associated with greater informal help-seeking among battered Mexican-origin women sheds new light on previous researchers' conflicting findings about the relationship between this cultural value and help-seeking. Prior qualitative research (Bauer et al., 2000; Sorenson, 1996) indicates that *familismo* may, on the one hand, encourage family members to intervene in an abusive relationship, provide support and options for the victim, and decrease the victim's sense of isolation. On the other hand, other research (Avecedo, 2000; Dutton et al., 2000; National Latino Alliance for the Elimination of Domestic Violence, 2003) and theory (i.e., Perilla, 1999; Raj &

Silverman, 2002) suggests that the stigmas associated with being too independent, expressing dissatisfaction within the marriage or family, discussing problems outside the home, or seeking divorce, might deter abused Latinas from seeking help from the people they know. This study differed from previous studies in that it included a large sample of specifically Mexican-origin women, versus Latinas in general, and conducted statistical analyses to determine whether a relationship between *familismo* and help-seeking exists. This study's finding that *familismo* predicts informal help-seeking not only helps to clarify previous research but also yields results generalizable to the population represented by this sample.

In accord with this study's empirical finding regarding *familismo*, a few participants linked interrupting the trans-generational cycle of violence to the strengthening of families:

We need something that integrates the family... programs for the family that teach us about relationships. The biggest problem in this country [US] is that there is no united family. We need help in breaking the cycle of family violence... We need education about human and family values (ID23)

This suggestion that partner abuse may be mitigated through strengthening family solidarity coincides with the finding that *familismo* is a cultural strength that positively relates to informal help-seeking and may be built upon in designing interventions for this population.

Relationships between Socio-structural Values and Help-Seeking: Income, Education, English Proficiency, and Immigrant Status

"I had no work. I didn't speak English, didn't have Social Security. I was illegal... I didn't want to end up a single woman unable to support her child" (ID22).

The present study hypothesized that certain socio-structural variables—defined as income, educational level, English proficiency, and immigrant status—would be associated with battered Mexican-origin women’s formal help-seeking. Support was found for hypotheses regarding the associations of educational level, English proficiency, and immigrant status with formal help-seeking. Income, however, was not found to be related to help-seeking.

Income. A *t*-test analysis comparing women with no income to women with some income yielded no support for the hypothesized association between income and formal help-seeking. The finding that income is not associated with help-seeking was surprising given that it contradicts previous studies in which battered Latinas have endorsed that lack of income was a barrier to help-seeking (Dutton et al., 2000; Hogeland & Rosen, 1990; Murdaugh et al., 2004). Again, this finding must be considered in light of the sample’s characteristics: over 50% of women reported no independent income, which resulted in low probability of detecting effects (see “Limitations” section below).

Not surprisingly, given the little to no income reported by participants, a number of women responding to open-ended questions voiced economic concerns, including the batterer’s economic control, housing worries, inability to support children, and transportation. Many women with little or no income also feared they would be charged fees by sources of formal help. Financial resources especially seemed to be obstacles to help-seeking for immigrant women who, because they lacked legal papers, could not receive Social Security, welfare, or work papers.

When asked about ideas they have for how we might improve services for abused Mexican-origin women, most participants asked for help regarding various aspects of their financial situation; for many, economic independence was the key to bolstering self-esteem and leaving their abuser:

Talking to others about how I feel helps—but I'd feel better if I knew I had a house for my kids and a job to support them, so I don't have to go back to him and rely on him to provide for me and my kids... That's what would help my self-esteem (ID14)

Women specifically asked for job training, low-income housing, assistance paying bills, and help procuring transportation. Immigrant women asked for help finding work without their legal papers. Women also suggested that more services should be offered free of charge. Despite these responses, however, quantitative findings do not indicate any relationship between battered Mexican-origin women's income and their formal help-seeking.

Education. The results of the planned comparisons made on participants' educational level provided support for the hypothesis that education is associated with formal help-seeking: battered Mexican-origin women with a grade school education sought formal help less frequently than women with a high school education. The effect size for the relationship between education and help-seeking was large, in fact the largest effect size of all variables examined. Thus, educational level is very meaningful, in a practical sense, to understanding battered Mexican-origin women's help-seeking. The analyses indicated that that it makes no additional difference with regards to formal help-seeking whether or not women had education beyond high school. Simply having a high

school education made a considerable difference in women's help-seeking, regardless of whether they were educated beyond that level. This may be the case because high school educated women have better job prospects (and therefore greater ability to support themselves and children), are literate (and thus able to read pamphlets that educate them about rights and services available), and have a higher level of self-efficacy. While previous research conducted with non-Latina battered women has found education to be the best predictor of help-seeking (Hutchinson & Hirschel, 1998), the findings in this study indicate that education plays a similarly important role for battered women of Mexican-origin.

Level of education is related to usage of two specific sources of formal help: Women with grade school educations were less likely to seek help from the police than women with high school (or beyond) educations. Similarly, grade school educated women were less likely to seek help from lawyers. Effect sizes for both relationships were medium; again this indicates that in addition to being statistically significant, the relationships between education and usage of police and lawyers are practically meaningful.

These findings regarding education were supported by responses to open-ended questions; having education was discussed as an asset and lack of education was described as a deterrent to help-seeking. Women with more education appeared to feel more confident, have greater access to information (perhaps because of literacy), and have better financial prospects. Education appeared to particularly make a difference in regards to access to information for many women: "It all comes down to how much

information you have. It also has to do with your level of education. I've studied more than other women, and that's why I've been able to get more help" (ID32).

When asked for recommendations for improving services for battered women of Mexican-origin, many women in this study espoused the need for increased education in general studies (i.e., earning high school diploma or GED), and specific areas, i.e., English proficiency, domestic violence, and legal rights. These suggestions are in line with the findings in this study (i.e., that not having education, not speaking English, and being undocumented are associated with less frequent help-seeking). Most women also made numerous suggestions regarding how to educate women through better publicizing information about domestic violence, women's and immigrant rights, and help available. Participants suggested publicizing information in Planned Parenthood clinics, newspapers, billboards, welfare offices, grocery stores, clinics, schools, junk mail, Spanish language TV, and radio. One woman suggested teachers send home information on domestic violence and available help with the children; she reasoned that since only mothers read the papers their children bring home from school, women would be able to obtain information without the abusers' knowledge. A few participants also suggested disguising advertisements for help sources, i.e., placing phonebook shelter ads in random sections, so it would not be apparent to the abuser what type of information a woman might be seeking. Two women suggested compiling a Spanish/English directory, specifically for Latinas, that contained all relevant agencies' contact information, i.e., employment, medical, social services, childcare, carpools and transportation, shelters, etc.

English Proficiency. Results of the planned comparisons yielded support for the hypothesized association between English proficiency and help-seeking. Although the effect size was smaller, indicating English proficiency is not as important as education in understanding help-seeking, it was found that women who no English sought formal help less frequently than women who speak some English. However, it made no additional difference with regards to formal help-seeking whether women spoke fluent English; simply speaking *some* English appeared to be enough to engage in more frequent formal help-seeking. The trend in the data showed that women speaking some English consistently sought more help from each specific formal source (i.e., lawyer, shelter, etc.) than monolingual Spanish speakers. However, according to chi square analyses, no relationships between English proficiency and specific sources of help were statistically significant.

Participants' responses to open-ended questions provided a contextual understanding of this important finding regarding the relationship between English proficiency and help-seeking. Many monolingual Spanish-speaking women described their fears that agencies would lack Spanish speakers and therefore lies would be told about them, services would be refused, people would discriminate against them, or well-meaning service providers would simply misunderstand them. Many women in this study also described how English-speaking husbands used their linguistic advantage to isolate and dis-empower the women.

In response to open-ended questions inquiring about their suggestions for improving services, many participants asked for increased bilingual staff members,

particularly police officers, to help monolingual Spanish-speaking battered women. One participant suggested the police have an emergency line specifically for Spanish speakers (ID39). Many participants also asked that they not be discriminated against for not speaking English. Most Spanish speaking participants recommended that information about domestic violence, women's and immigrant rights, and available help be publicized in Spanish.

Immigrant Status. The hypothesis that immigrant status would be related to formal help-seeking was supported; undocumented women sought formal help less frequently than documented women. The effect size for this analysis was smaller than effect sizes for education and English proficiency, indicating that immigration status is practically less important in understanding battered Mexican-origin women's help-seeking, but carries some weight.

Use of three formal help sources—police, domestic violence shelter, and medical assistance—was specifically related to legal status. Medium effect sizes were found for the relationships between immigrant status and usage of police and of domestic violence shelters. This reflects the practical meaningfulness of these relationships and the critical importance of making these services more accessible to undocumented immigrants. The effect size for the relationship between usage of medical services and immigrant status was smaller, and thus practically less important.

Responses to open-ended questions highlight the many ways in which legal status serves as a barrier to battered Mexican-origin women's help-seeking. Most undocumented women described fearing rejection based on legal status and/or

deportation: “I was undocumented. I thought they would deport me. I thought I couldn’t issue any report, or talk with police” (ID50). Many women described how their abusers took advantage of their illegal status by feeding them misinformation about their rights and issuing threats that they, their children, or their family members would be deported if they sought help. Not having papers also limited many women’s options, i.e., regarding transportation (no driver’s license), housing, and work, decreasing the chances that they would be able to support themselves and their children independent of the abuser.

In response to the open-ended question regarding how to improve services, several participants recommended ways to improve domestic violence services specifically for undocumented battered women. For example, many participants asked for more services that do not ask about legal status and do not treat clients differentially based legal status:

There should be no differences between people who have papers and those who don’t. I should get the same amount of support, even though I don’t have my papers... there should still be interest in helping me. When someone wants help, that person should receive it (ID66).

Many participants also asked for help arranging their legal papers, pointing out that being documented would expand their options, i.e., they could obtain driver’s licenses and work papers.

Implications for Professionals and Advocates Working with Battered Mexican-origin Women

“We need community involvement—neighbors, the neighborhood association, even the mayor! We need more community action and assistance for families to end domestic violence and help women and children” (ID12).

This study provides important information for advocates, counselors, and other professionals who design and implement interventions and treatment for battered Mexican-origin women. This study’s implications for those who work with this population are discussed below.

Conceptualizing Battered Mexican-origin Women as Survivors

The first aim of this study was to document the frequency and perceived effectiveness of battered Mexican-origin women’s formal and informal help-seeking and their usage of personal strategies to survive abuse. This study addressed the need to gather empirical, detailed information on battered Mexican-origin women’s help-seeking and personal strategies to survive abuse. The finding that the majority of women sought help from a variety of sources and also engaged in a myriad of personal strategies to survive abuse on a daily basis is important information for those working with battered Mexican-origin women. This finding contradicts stereotypes of these women as submissive, passive victims, and presents them as active, determined survivors who defy numerous and formidable obstacles and act to protect themselves and their children. While many of the personal strategies to survive abuse were not perceived as effective in terms of ending or escaping violence, actions like placating the batterer or avoiding a

threatening situation were important coping mechanisms and helped keep many women safe and alive to seek more effective help from informal and formal sources in the future. Moreover, these strategies were active choices as opposed to passive acquiescence; practitioners working with battered women should recognize women's continuing agency and active participation in ensuring their own survival. Actively coping within the parameters of their particular context sets the stage for future help-seeking and thus is an important strength that may be built upon (Campbell Ulrich, 1993).

Understanding Help-Seeking within Women's Particular Socio-Cultural Context

The second aim of this study was to explore battered Mexican-origin women's help-seeking within their socio-cultural contexts and to add to previous research by providing empirical, generalizable results. Specifically, six socio-cultural variables were explored in relation to the frequency of these women's help-seeking. The study's results reveal that Mexican-origin women face an array of obstacles, specific to their particular socio-cultural contexts, that create barriers to help-seeking. However, results of the study also indicate that there are cultural strengths specific to Mexican culture that may be built upon in efforts to help battered Mexican-origin women. It is essential for professionals working with this population to take this context into consideration and intervene, provide services, plan treatment, and suggest options accordingly.

Familismo as cultural strength. The finding that *familismo* was positively associated with women's informal help-seeking in a practically meaningful way indicates that this value is a strength in the Mexican culture that can be built upon by those working with battered Mexican-origin women. For women who identify with this self-in-

belonging orientation, family and community members may be effectively involved in treatment and may provide support, options, and resources. If the woman does not have family living nearby, reaching out to friends, religious officials, or co-workers may be particularly necessary. Such involvement may necessitate family and community psycho-education regarding domestic violence and the inter-generational transmission of violence. The women in this study proposed programming geared toward strengthening family values and cohesiveness to combat the familial cycle of violence. Indeed, educating communities about partner abuse and the difficulties inherent in leaving an abusive relationship may be an important preventive measure.

Need for education. In light of the finding that increased education was the variable explored in this study that was most meaningfully associated with battered Mexican-origin women's formal help-seeking, particularly from lawyers and police, it follows that increased efforts should be made to educate women at least to a high school level. Alternatives for affordable daycare, transportation, and housing must be available to enable women to complete high school or GED educations. Increased availability of affordable night classes at convenient locations, in predominantly Mexican neighborhoods, i.e., at children's schools, churches, etc., should be provided. Increased publicity of educational opportunities, particularly in culturally or geographically isolated communities, is necessary. Moreover, women need an educational curriculum that values and reflects their culture. Those working with battered Mexican-origin women—i.e., police, shelter staff, medical professionals, counselors, welfare workers, etc.—should emphasize the need for education and provide suggestions for how to obtain education.

Counselors in particular may act as advocates for their clients in connecting them to relevant educational resources.

The need for more available and accessible information to educate women, particularly those who are culturally and linguistically isolated, about domestic violence, sources of help, and women's rights was particularly salient in participants' responses to open-ended questions. The women in this study provided innovative examples of how outreach efforts might achieve such publicity, i.e., providing information in grocery stores and other places women frequent; schools might send information home with children, and a compendium might be compiled specifically for Latinas that includes all resources abuse survivors would potentially need—from bus schedules, to childcare, to shelters. As the women in this study point out and the findings of this study indicate, this information needs to be published in English and Spanish. Following the culturally attuned *promotora* (i.e., grassroots community organizer) role, battered women who have sought help and left the abusive relationship may be recruited to disseminate information in the community.

Need for English proficiency. The relationship between English proficiency and battered Mexican-origin women's help-seeking is also highlighted in this study; speaking some (but not necessarily fluent) English enhanced the likelihood that these women sought outside help. Thus, there is a need for increased efforts to provide basic English classes for these women. Again, availability of these classes should be highly publicized and the classes should be held in accessible locations in predominantly Mexican communities (i.e., children's schools and churches) that are less likely to arouse the

batterer's suspicions. In addition, agencies, particularly police forces, need to hire more bilingual staff and/or provide Spanish language training for staff.

Need for aid specific to undocumented women. In this study, immigrant status was found to be associated with Mexican-origin women's help-seeking, especially from police, shelters, and medical services, such that undocumented women seek help less frequently than documented women. In light of this finding, it is recommended that information about immigrant rights be publicized and communicated by service providers, so that women will understand that sites such as police, emergency rooms, and shelters cannot and will not ask about legal status. Such information would lessen abusers' power and control and expand women's information and options. In addition, increased availability of free or low cost legal aid to file legal papers is needed, particularly for women who were abused by US citizens and therefore eligible for residency under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

Potential need to reconsider gender roles and machismo. Responses to open-ended questions, but not response patterns on the *machismo* scale used in this study, indicated that aspects of *machismo* that reinforce patriarchal relationships are deterrents to seeking help for battered women. If this is the case, it may be helpful to engage in dialogues about men's and women's roles, family organization, and gender expectations to re-examine these ideas and their possible relationships to abuse and help-seeking. A group format, preferably led by a woman of Mexican-origin, and consisting of Mexican-origin women and men who believe in gender equity and respect would be an effective means of engaging in such a dialogue. Such a dialogue is in line with the suggestions of

Flores-Ortíz (1993), who proposes that healing should occur within Mexican culture and that together, women and men may come to examine patriarchy, the internalized cultural ideology of the suffering women, and unfair child rearing practices that favor males. The goal of this dialogue is not to blame nor reject culture, but rather to understand the patterns of abuse, develop a sense of entitlement, and attain power, thereby redefining culture. Of course, these implications should be considered with caution, given that the hypothesis regarding *machismo*'s relationship to help-seeking was not supported.

Need for financial assistance. With regard to income, aid with finding low-income housing, transportation, and employment is needed for economically disadvantaged women. Also, services should be provided free of cost for women who cannot afford them. Counselors and others working with battered Mexican-origin women may act as advocates, for example by educating them about public transportation or connecting them to job training, low income housing, and free services. Again, it is acknowledged that the hypothesis regarding income's relationship to income was not supported, making these implications tentative.

Limitations of the Current Study

A number of limitations must be considered when interpreting the current findings. The most important limitation to this study was its use of a sample comprised of women recruited mainly via local services and agencies. The vast majority of women had already sought help at least once and left their abusive partner (although there is no way to determine whether they returned post-study participation). Hence, these findings

cannot be generalized to women from the broader community who have never left their abusers, never sought help, and perhaps had not even yet named their situations as abusive.

In addition, because the majority of participants in the current study had already left their abusers one or more times and many had sought help at least once, it is likely that participants had developed more liberal attitudes toward gender roles than women who had not sought help and who had remained with abusive partners (Vera, 2002). The resulting restricted range of scores on the *machismo* scale may reflect these changed attitudes. The restricted range of scores curtailed possible correlations with the measures of help-seeking. Had the women been interviewed prior to leaving their abusers and before seeking help, they may have varied more in their responses on the *Machismo* scale and analyses may have provided support for the hypothesized relationship with help-seeking. Future research is needed to examine this issue further.

Regarding income, because so many participants were immigrants who reported they did not work, over half the sample reported an income of \$0. The decision was therefore made to categorize participants into two groups: those with no income and those with some income. This decision resulted in a loss of information, which negatively affected statistical power and chances of finding differences. Thus, the lack of support for hypotheses regarding income may reflect the characteristics of this particular sample and not the potential relationship between these variables and help-seeking that may exist in the larger population.

A further limitation was the inability to follow up with the women in this study. Because participants represented an extremely vulnerable group, particularly because many were living in secrecy due to abuse and/or legal status, it was not possible to gather information necessary to follow up. Thus, it was impossible to know whether women who had left the abuser later returned, and what factors related to this decision and to future help-seeking.

Another limitation to this study was the dependence on self-report measures in the context used for data collection. The women in this study, particularly the undocumented immigrants, represented a vulnerable population; this may have swayed them to respond in socially desirable ways. Moreover, because many women were interviewed at agencies from which they had sought help, it's plausible they felt pressured to highlight the benefits and assets of the agencies, and downplay the limitations.

The principal investigator, who conducted all interviews, was a White, native English-speaking US citizen. Although a Spanish-speaker, the various positions of power (i.e., education, socioeconomic status, legal status, ethnicity, language) that the investigator occupied vis-à-vis the participants likely influenced the process of conducting this research, and in turn, the results obtained.

A further limitation to the present study was the unavailability of previously used, psychometrically sound, empirically validated measures of help-seeking and personal strategies to survive abuse. This limited this study's potential to conduct some statistical analyses; only descriptive information could be provided.

Directions for Future Research

Future research should attempt to replicate this study with a more diverse population that is more representative of the broader community of battered Mexican-origin women. Ideally, a small group of participants would be engaged as co-investigators, invited to suggest additions or amendments to the questions/instruments, and trained in the interview protocol. As “insiders” within the community, these co-investigators would likely both have access to a wider group of participants and also obtain better information (because ethnic, linguistic, and other differences would be mitigated).

If researchers can obtain a representative sample of Mexican-origin women, ranging from those who are still with their abuser to those who have successfully left, they might investigate socio-cultural factors in relation to staying/leaving. Researchers might ask more deliberately, which factors distinguish Mexican-origin women who leave the abusive partner versus those who stay? Researchers might conduct longitudinal research to investigate help-seeking and socio-cultural factors’ relationships to Mexican-origin women’s likelihood of leaving and returning to an abuser.

It would be important to also focus on different subgroups of battered Latinas, i.e., Puerto Ricans, to understand help-seeking and survival strategies within these women’s particular socio-cultural contexts. Researchers should work to develop measures specifically for battered women of Mexican-origin, particularly to assess personal strategies to survive abuse. Since the proposal of this dissertation, a measure has been published that is designed to assess battered women’s usage of formal and informal

help sources and personal strategies to survive abuse (Goodman et al., 2003). Although the measure was normed on a predominantly African American population, it may be a useful tool in future empirical investigations of help-seeking and survival strategies among Mexican-origin and Latina populations of battered women as well.

Future research should further explore the relationship between education and help-seeking. From the present findings, it is not entirely clear why increased education enhances the frequency of help-seeking; education may enhance self-esteem and thus increase agency, afford new perspective on one's situation, increase financial resources, or facilitate access to information. Future researchers may clarify these questions.

Finally, research should continue to investigate the intersection between partner abuse and immigrant status using both empirical and qualitative methodologies.

Conclusion

This study of 75 battered Mexican-origin women shows these women to be active survivors of abuse, despite the socio-structural variables that serve as obstacles to their abilities to seek help to protect themselves and their children. As a humane society, we must look for ways to provide the socio-structural resources that this study highlighted as important in lowering the barriers that keep these women trapped in abusive relationships. The women in this study provide suggestions for services they need, including increased opportunities for education, learning English, understanding immigrant rights, re-examining gender ideology, and enhancing family cohesiveness. Professionals and the broader community should help these survivors by directing

women toward services that already exist and by creating new accessible, effective, programs and services that consider and address the socio-cultural particular contexts of battered women of Mexican descent.

Appendices

Appendix A

Informed Consent to Participate in Research

The University of Texas at Austin

You are being asked to participate in a research study. This form provides you with information about the study. The Principal Investigator (the person in charge of this research) or his/her representative will also describe this study to you and answer all of your questions. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything you don't understand before deciding whether or not to take part. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Title of Research Study:

Principal Investigator(s) (include faculty sponsor), UT affiliation, and Telephone Number(s):

Kalina Brabeck, Graduate Student
(512)-471-4409

Faculty Affiliates:

Lucia Gilbert, Ph.D., Professor and Vice-Provost
(512)-232-3310
Michele Guzman, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
(512)-471-4409

Funding source:

N/A

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this study is to explore help-seeking responses to intimate partner abuse utilized by Mexican-origin battered women, with special attention paid to their sociocultural context. Approximately 100 women of Mexican-origin who have experienced any form of psychological, physical, and/or sexual abuse in their

heterosexual intimate partner relationships will be recruited to participate in the proposed study.

Specifically, the proposed study aims first to provide information on the ways in which Mexican-origin battered women act to escape, end, or avoid abuse. Information will be collected on the frequency of women's formal and informal help-seeking, and on how effective women perceive these sources of help to be at keeping them safe from abuse. Information will also be gathered regarding the specific places where women sought formal help (i.e. lawyer, shelter, etc.) and informal help (i.e. clergy, immediate family, etc.) and how helpful these particular sources were deemed to be by the participants. Also, information will be gathered regarding the various personal strategies that women employ to survive abuse while in the context of the abusive situation, and women will be asked to report how effective they perceived these personal strategies to be in keeping them safe. Secondly, the proposed study will amass information regarding participants' specific cultural context, i.e., their ascription to the cultural values of traditional gender role norms and *familismo*, and information regarding their particular sociostructural context, i.e., their monthly income, education level, English proficiency, and immigration status. This study will seek to understand how these sociocultural values are associated with formal and informal help-seeking. Finally, this study will gather information on women's perceptions of significant barriers to seeking help.

What will be done if you take part in this research study?

If you decide to take part in this research, you will be asked to schedule a 1-hour meeting with the principle investigator. During your meeting, you will be asked to respond to a series of surveys regarding your attitudes toward men's and women's roles, your attitudes toward family, and the different strategies you have used to seek help and survive the violence in your relationship. You will also be asked to provide information regarding your income, education, immigration status, and English proficiency.

What are the possible discomforts and risks?

If you decide to participate in this study, you may experience some emotional distress. You will be asked questions regarding your response to the violence in your relationship, and this may cause you to feel upset, anxious, and/or depressed. Should you experience any discomfort as a result of participating in this survey, please call the following resources:

Safe Place (Austin, Texas):

512-267-SAFE

Battered Women's Shelter of Bexar County (San Antonio, Texas):

24-hour crisis line: 210-930-8810; Counseling Center: 210-930-3669

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE

If you wish to discuss the information above or any other risks you may experience, you may ask questions now or call the Principal Investigator listed on the front page of this form.

What are the possible benefits to you or to others?

It is possible that if you participate in this study, as you record your various efforts to seek help and survive abuse, you will be able to recognize your own strength. Also, by participating in this study, you will be a part of increasing our knowledge and understanding of the experiences and responses of battered women of Mexican-origin.

If you choose to take part in this study, will it cost you anything?

It will not cost you anything to participate in this study.

Will you receive compensation for your participation in this study?

You will receive \$10.00 as compensation for participation in this study.

What if you are injured because of the study?

There is no risk of injury if you participate in this study.

If you do not want to take part in this study, what other options are available to you?

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You are free to refuse to be in the study, and your refusal will not influence current or future relationships with The University of Texas at Austin, nor any other agency, such as Safe Place, Visitation House, the San Antonio Police Department, or the Battered Women's Shelter of Bexar County.

How can you withdraw from this research study and who should I call if I have questions?

If you wish to stop your participation in this research study for any reason, you should contact: Kalina Brabeck at (512) 471-4409. You are free to withdraw your consent and stop participation in this research study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits for which you may be entitled. Throughout the study, the researchers will notify you of new information that may become available and that might affect your decision to remain in the study.

In addition, if you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact Clarke A. Burnham, Ph.D., Chair, The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, 512/232-4383.

How will your privacy and the confidentiality of your research records be protected?

Authorized persons from The University of Texas at Austin and the Institutional Review Board have the legal right to review your research records and will protect the confidentiality of those records to the extent permitted by law. If the research project is sponsored then the sponsor also have the legal right to review your research records. Otherwise, your research records will not be released without your consent unless required by law or a court order.

If the results of this research are published or presented at scientific meetings, your identity will not be disclosed.

Will the researchers benefit from your participation in this study?

The researchers will not benefit from your participation in this study, apart from possibly presenting the results at a professional conference.

Appendix B

Consentimiento Informado en una Investigación

La Universidad de Texas, Austin

Le pedimos participar en una investigación. Este formulario le provee la información tocante a la investigación. La investigadora principal (la que está encargada de esta investigación) también le describirá esta investigación y puede contestar las preguntas que tenga. Por favor, lea la información abajo y haga preguntas sobre todo lo que no entienda bien, antes de decidir participar en esta investigación. Su participación es totalmente voluntaria y puede negar participar sin castigo o pérdida de beneficios, que aparte de esto, merece.

Título de la Investigación: Explorando las Maneras de Buscar Ayuda de las Mujeres Golpeadas de Origen Mexicano entre sus Contextos Socioculturales

Investigadora Principal:

Kalina Brabeck (Estudiante Graduada)

(512)-471-4409

Consejeras de la Facultad de UT:

Lucia Gilbert, Ph.D., Profesora y Vice-Preboste

(512)-232-3310

Michele Guzman, Ph.D., Profesora Auxiliar

(512)-471-4409

Fuentes del Apoyo Económico:

No hay.

¿Qué es el propósito de esta investigación?

El propósito de esta investigación es explorar las respuestas a la violencia doméstica utilizadas por mujeres golpeadas de origen mexicano, con atención prestada a sus contextos socioculturales. Aproximadamente 100 mujeres que han sufrido alguna forma del abuso psicológico, físico, y/o sexual en sus relaciones románticas heterosexuales participarán en esta investigación.

¿Qué ocurrirá si Usted participa en esta investigación?

Si decide participar en esta investigación, pediremos que fije un tiempo para reunirse con la investigadora principal. Durante esta reunión, pediré que responda a una serie de encuestas tocante a sus actitudes hacia los papeles de los hombres y las mujeres, sus actitudes hacia la familia, y las estrategias que ha empleado para buscar ayuda y sobrevivir la violencia en su relación. También, pediré que me dé información respecto a su ingreso, educación, estado enmigrante, y habilidad de hablar inglés.

¿Cuáles serán las posibles molestias y los riesgos?

Si decide participar en esta investigación, es posible que experimente un poco de dolor emocional. Tendrá que contestar a preguntas respecto a la violencia en su relación, y tal vez eso le haga sentirse mala, ansiosa, y/o deprimida. Si experimenta alguna forma de malestar a consecuencia de participar en esta investigación, por favor llame los siguientes números:

Safe Place (Austin, Texas):

512-267-SAFE

Battered Women's Shelter of Bexar County (San Antonio, Texas):

24-hour crisis line: 210-930-8810; Counseling Center: 210-930-3669

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE

¿Cuáles serán los posibles beneficios a Usted a otras personas?

Si participa en esta investigación, es posible que, mientras que recuerda todos sus esfuerzos en buscar ayuda y sobrevivir el abuso, pueda ser capaz de reconocer su propio esfuerzo. También, por medio de participar en esta investigación, será una parte del proceso de aumentar nuestro conocimiento y comprensión sobre las experiencias y las respuestas de las mujeres golpeadas de origen mexicano.

¿Si decide participar en esta investigación, le costará algo?

No, la participación no le costará nada.

¿Recibirá alguna compensación por su participación?

Sí, recibirá \$10.00 si participa en esta investigación.

¿Qué sucederá si está herida por participar en esta investigación?

No hay riesgo de lastimarse por participar en esta investigación.

Si no quiere participar en esta investigación, ¿qué son las otras opciones disponibles para Usted?

La participación en esta investigación es completamente voluntaria. Usted está libre de negarse a participar, y su negación no influirá su relación actualmente ni en el futuro con la Universidad de Texas en Austin, ni su relación con otra agencia.

¿Cómo puede retirarse de esta investigación, y con quién debe hablar si tiene preguntas?

Si quiere dejar de participar en esta investigación por cualquiera razón, debe llamar a Kalina Brabeck: (512) 471-4409. Usted está libre de retirar su consentimiento y dejar de participar en esta investigación en cualquier tiempo que quiera, sin castigo o pérdida de beneficios que aparte de eso merece. Durante la investigación, la investigadora principal le notificará de la cualquiera información nueva que pueda afectar su decisión de seguir participando en la investigación.

También, si tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos como un participante en esta investigación, por favor, llame a: Clarke A. Burnham, Ph.D., Chair, La Universidad de Texas, Austin Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, 512/232-4383.

¿Cómo van a mantener la privacidad y confidencia de sus documentos?

Personas autorizadas de la Universidad de Texas, Austin y la Institutional Review Board tienen el derecho de repasar sus documentos y protegerán la confidencia de estos documentos hasta el punto permitido por la ley. Si la investigación tiene apoyo económico, entonces los patrozinadores también tienen el derecho legal de repasar sus documentos. Fuera de eso, sus documentos no serán liberados sin su consentimiento, a menos que sean requeridos por la ley o la corte.

Si los resultados de esta investigación están publicados o presentados en una reunión científica, su identidad no será descubierta.

¿Recibirán los investigadores algún beneficio por su participación en esta investigación?

Los investigadores no recibirán ningún beneficio por su participación en esta investigación, aparte de la posibilidad de presentar los resultados en una conferencia profesional.

Appendix C

1. What is your age? _____
2. What is your country of origin? _____
3. Where were you born? _____
4. How many years have you been in the United States? _____
5. How many children do you have? _____
6. Of those children, how many are currently living with you? _____
7. What is your current marital status? *(please select one)*
☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Separated ☐ Divorced ☐ Living together
☐ Widowed
8. Have you ever experienced any form of emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse from an intimate partner? *(please circle one)* **YES NO**
9. Please think about your most recent relationship in which some form of emotional, physical, or sexual abuse occurred. How long have you been/were you in a relationship with this partner? _____
10. Are you currently living with this partner? *(please circle one)* **YES NO**
11. If you answered “NO” to #10, how long have you been apart from this partner? _____
12. Which of the following sentences best describes your ability to speak English? *(please select one)*
☐ I speak no English.
☐ I speak some English.
☐ I speak English fluently.
13. How many years have you attended formal school? _____
14. Do you work outside the house? *(please circle one)* **YES NO**
15. On average, how much do you make each month (independent from what your partner might earn)? \$ _____
16. If you are an immigrant, what is your immigration status? *(please circle one)*
☐ undocumented ☐ currently filing for documentation ☐ documented
17. My religion is: *(please select one)*
☐ Buddhist ☐ Hindu ☐ Muslim ☐ Protestant ☐ Catholic
☐ Other (please specify: _____)
18. Did you ever witness or experience any form of abuse (from one parent to another parent or from a parent toward a child) in the family you grew up in? *(please circle one)*
YES NO

Appendix D

1. ¿Cuántos años tiene? _____
2. ¿Cuál es su país de origen? _____
3. ¿Dónde nació? _____
4. ¿Hace cuánto tiempo que está en los Estados Unidos? _____
5. ¿Cuántos hijos tiene? _____
6. ¿De estos hijos, cuántos viven con Usted actualmente? _____
7. ¿Cuál es su estado marital? (*por favor, seleccione una.*)
☐ Soltera ☐ Casada ☐ Separada ☐ Divorciada ☐ Co-viviendo
☐ Viuda
8. ¿Ha Usted sufrido alguna forma de abuso emocional, físico, y/o sexual de una pareja íntima? (*por favor, seleccione una.*) **SI** **NO**
9. Por favor, piense en su relación más reciente en cual ocurrió alguna forma de abuso emocional, físico, y/o sexual. ¿Cuántos años lleva con esta pareja? _____
10. Actualmente, vive Usted con esta pareja? _____
11. Si contestó “NO” al número 10, ¿hace cuánto tiempo que se separó de él? _____
12. De las siguientes frases, ¿cuál mejor describe su habilidad de hablar inglés? (Por favor, seleccione sólo una.)
☐ No hablo nada de inglés.
☐ Hablo un poco de inglés.
☐ Hablo inglés con facilidad.
13. ¿Cuántos años lleva de escuela formal? _____
14. ¿Trabaja Usted afuera de la casa? (*por favor, seleccione una.*) **SI** **NO**
15. Por término medio, ¿cuánto dinero gana Usted por mes (independiente de lo que gane su pareja)? \$ _____
16. Si Usted es inmigrante, ¿cuál es su estado migrante? (*Por favor, seleccione una.*)
☐ Sin documentación ☐ Actualmente estoy en el proceso de registrar mis documentos
☐ Documentada
17. Mi religión es (por favor, seleccione una):
☐ Católica ☐ Protestante ☐ Budista ☐ Hindu ☐ Moslem ☐ Otro (*por favor, indique*) _____
18. ¿Dió Ud. testigo de alguna forma de abuso (desde un padre hacia otro padre, o desde un padre hacia un hijo) en la familia en que creció? (*por favor, seleccione una.*) **SI**
NO

Appendix E

Please indicate whether you believe the following statements to be “True” or “False.” Please circle “T” if you believe the statement is true, and “F” if you believe the statement is false. Again, there are no right or wrong answers. We are only interested in your opinion.

1. A man should not marry a woman who is taller than he is. **T F**
2. It is the mother’s special responsibility to provide her children with proper religious training. **T F**
3. Boys should not be allowed to play with dolls, and other girls’ toys. **T F**
4. Parents should maintain stricter control over their daughters than their sons. **T F**
5. There are some jobs that women simply should not have. **T F**
6. It is more important for a woman to learn how to take care of the house and the family than it is for her to get a college education. **T F**
7. A wife should never contradict her husband in public. **T F**
8. Men are more intelligent than women. **T F**
9. No matter what people say, women really like dominant men. **T F**
10. Some equality in marriage is a good thing, but for the most part the father ought to have the main say so in the family. **T F**
11. For the most part, it is better to be a man than a woman. **T F**
12. Most women have little respect for weak men. **T F**
13. I would be more comfortable with a male boss than with a female boss. **T F**
14. It is important for a man to be strong. **T F**
15. Girls should not be allowed to play with boys’ toys such as soldiers and footballs. **T F**
16. Wives should respect the man’s position as head of the household. **T F**
17. The father always knows what is best for the family. **T F**

Appendix F

Para las siguientes frases, por favor indique si Usted cree que la frase es verdadera o falsa. Por favor, seleccione "V" si cree que la frase es verdadera, y "F" si cree que la frase es falsa.

1. Los hombres no deben casarse con mujeres que sean más altas que ellos. **V F**
2. La educación religiosa de los niños es la responsabilidad de la madre. **V F**
3. A los niños no se les debe dejar que juegen con muñecas u otros juguetes de niñas. **V F**
4. Los padres de familia deben ser más estrictos con sus hijas que con sus hijos.
V F
5. Hay algunos trabajos en los que las mujeres no deben meterse. **V F**
6. Es más important para la mujer aprender a cuidar de casa y su familia, que tener una educación de universidad. **V F**
7. Una mujer nunca debe contradecir a su esposo en público. **V F**
8. Los hombre son más inteligentes que las mujeres. **V F**
9. No importa lo que la gente diga, las mujeres prefieren a los hombres que las controlen. **V F**
10. Cierta igualdad dentro del matrimonio es buena, pero por lo general el padre es el que debe tener la última palabra en cuanto a las cosas de la familia. **V F**
11. Por lo general, es mejor ser hombre que mujer. **V F**
12. La mayoría de las mujeres no respetan a los hombres débiles. **V F**
13. Yo me sentiré más a gusto si, en el trabajo, mi jefe fuera un hombre y no una mujer. **V F**
14. Es importante para un hombre ser fuerte. **V F**
15. A las niñas no se les debe permitir jugar con juguetes de niños tales como soldaditos o pelotas de fútbol. **V F**
16. Las mujeres deben respetar la posición de sus maridos como jefes del hogar.
V F
17. El padre siempre sabe que es lo mejor para la familia. **V F**

Appendix G

Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being “strongly disagree,” and 5 being “strongly agree. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. I am simply interested in your opinions and how you view things.

| | 1 strongly disagree | 2 somewhat disagree | 3 somewhat agree | 4 strongly agree |
|--|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Relatives are more important than friends. | | | | |
| 2. Grandparents, parents, and grandchildren should all live within close visiting distance of one another. | | | | |
| 3. You should think of what is good for your family more than you think of what is good for yourself personally. | | | | |
| 4. The word “family” includes parents, children, grandparents, grandchildren, cousins, nieces, nephews, aunts, and uncles. | | | | |
| 5. No matter what the cost, dealing with my relatives’ problems comes first. | | | | |
| | 1 strongly disagree | 2 somewhat disagree | 3 somewhat agree | 4 strongly agree |

Appendix H

Por favor, indique cuánto Usted está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con las frases siguientes en una escala de 1-4. “1” significa “totalmente en desacuerdo” y “4” significa “totalmente de acuerdo.” No hay respuestas correctas ni malas; sólo nos interesan sus opiniones.

| | 1 Totalmente en desacuerdo | 2 Más o menos en desacuerdo | 3 Más o menos de acuerdo | 4 Totalmente de acuerdo |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| 1. Los parientes son más importantes que los amigos. | | | | |
| 2. Los abuelos, los padres, y los nietos deben vivir muy cerca de los otros familiares, para que puedan visitarles mucho. | | | | |
| 3. Se debe pensar en lo que sea bueno para la familia, más que lo que sea bueno para si misma. | | | | |
| 4. La palabra “familia” incluye los padres, los niños, los abuelos, los nietos, los primos, los tíos, y los sobrinos. | | | | |
| 5. No importa lo que cueste, enfrentarme a los problemas de mis parientes es primero. | | | | |
| | 1 Totalmente en desacuerdo | 2 Más o menos en desacuerdo | 3 Más o menos de acuerdo | 4 Totalmente de acuerdo |

Appendix I

I am interested in the various ways that you sought help to avoid, end, or escape the abuse in your relationship. Again, there are no right or wrong answers. I am only interested in your experiences.

For the following questions, please think about your most recent relationship in which there was some form of emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse.

1. In the last six months of this relationship, did you ever seek help from an agency or service (i.e., from a doctor, lawyer, counselor, shelter, social worker the police, a women's center, priest, pastor, etc.) to survive the abuse in your relationship? *(please circle one.)* **YES** **NO**

1A. Overall, how often did you seek this type of outside help to survive the abuse in your relationship? *(please circle one.)*

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

1B. Overall, how helpful were these services in aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? *(please circle one.)*

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

I am interested in the specific places where you sought help and people with whom you have talked to survive the abuse in your relationship. Again, please answer the following questions according to your most recent relationship in which some form of emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse occurred

Please indicate whether you sought help from the following services or talked to the following people in the last six months of your relationship. If you answer, "YES," please go on to answer the following two questions.

A. Medical assistance from a clinic, emergency room, doctor, or nurse *(please circle one)* **YES** **NO**

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

b. If you answered "YES," how helpful was the help you received at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? *(please circle one)*

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

B. Lawyer (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered "YES," how often did you seek help here? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

b. If you answered "YES," how helpful was the help you received at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

C. Women's shelter (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered "YES," how often did you seek help here? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

b. If you answered "YES," how helpful was the help you received at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

D. Another women's program (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered "YES," how often did you seek help here? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

b. If you answered "YES," how helpful was the help you received at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

E. Police (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered "YES," how often did you seek help here? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

b. If you answered "YES," how helpful was the help you received at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

F. Social worker (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered "YES," how often did you seek help here? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

b. If you answered "YES," how helpful was the help you received at aiding you to survive the abuse your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

G. Counselor (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered "YES," how often did you seek help here? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

b. If you answered "YES," how helpful was the help you received at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

Appendix J

Me interesan las maneras distintas en que Usted ha buscado ayuda para terminar, escapar, o evitar el abuso en su relación. Otra vez, no hay respuestas correctas, ni respuestas malas. Sólo me interesan sus experiencias.

Para las siguientes preguntas, por favor piense en su relación más reciente en cual ocurrió alguna forma de abuso emocional, físico, y/o sexual.

1. ¿En los 6 últimos meses de su relación, ha Usted buscado ayuda de una agencia o servicio (por ejemplo, servicios médicos, un abogado, un consejero, un refugio, la policía, un centro para mujeres, un sacerdote, etc.) para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (por favor, seleccione una.) **SI** **NO**

1A. En total, ¿con qué frecuencia buscaba este tipo de ayuda para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

1B. En total, ¿eran estos servicios útiles en ayudarlo sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| Un útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

Me interesan los lugares específicos donde buscaba ayuda y las personas específicas con quienes hablaba para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación. Otra vez, por favor, conteste las siguientes preguntas según su relación más reciente en cual ocurrió alguna forma de abuso emocional, físico, y/o sexual.

Por favor, indique si Usted buscaba ayuda de los siguientes servicios o hablaba con las siguientes personas en los 6 últimos meses de su relación. Si contesta “SI,” por favor, conteste las siguientes preguntas.

A. Asistencia médica de una clínica, sala de emergencia, doctor, o enfermera (Por favor, seleccione una.)

SI **NO**

a. Si constestó “SI,” ¿con qué frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿eran estos servicios útiles en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|--------------------|----------|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

B. Abogado (Por favor, seleccione una.) SI NO

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿eran estos servicios útiles en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|--------------------|----------|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

C. Refugio para mujeres (Por favor, seleccione una.) SI NO

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿eran estos servicios útiles en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

D. Otro programa para mujeres (Por favor, seleccione una.) SI NO

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿eran estos servicios útiles en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|--------------------|----------|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

E. La policía (*Por favor, seleccione una.*) **SI** **NO**

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿eran estos servicios útiles en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

F. Trabajador Social (*Por favor, seleccione una.*) **SI** **NO**

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿eran estos servicios útiles en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

G. Consejero (*Por favor, seleccione una.*) **SI** **NO**

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿eran estos servicios útiles en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

Appendix K

1. In the last six months of your relationship, did you ever talk about the abuse with anyone (i.e., your family, your partner's family, co-workers, friends, etc.)? *(please circle one)* **YES** **NO**

2A. Overall, how often did you talk with these people about the abuse? *(please circle one.)*

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

2B. Overall, how helpful was talking with these people in aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? *(please circle one.)*

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

I am interested in the specific places where you sought help and people with whom you have talked to survive the abuse in your relationship. Again, please answer the following questions according to your most recent relationship in which some form of emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse occurred

Please indicate whether you sought help from the following services or talked to the following people in the last six months of your relationship. If you answer, "YES," please go on to answer the following two questions.

A. Your immediate family members (mother, brother, sister, father) *(please circle one)* **YES** **NO**

a. If you answered "YES," how often did you seek help here? *(please circle one)*

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

b. If you answered "YES," how helpful was the help you received at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? *(please circle one)*

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

B. Extended family members (aunt, uncle, cousin, grandparent) *(please circle one)* **YES** **NO**

a. If you answered "YES," how often did you seek help here? *(please circle one)*

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

b. If you answered “YES,” how helpful was the help you received at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

C. Your partner’s family members (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered “YES,” how often did you seek help here? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

b. If you answered “YES,” how helpful was the help you received at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

D. Friends (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered “YES,” how often did you seek help here? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

b. If you answered “YES,” how helpful was the help you received at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

E. Co-workers (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered “YES,” how often did you seek help here? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

b. If you answered “YES,” how helpful was the help you received at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

F. Priest, pastor, minister, rabbi, etc. (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered “YES,” how often did you seek help from this person? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

b. If you answered "YES," how helpful was the help you received at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

G. Other (please indicate) _____ (please circle one) YES
NO

a. If you answered "YES," how often did you seek help here? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

b. If you answered "YES," how helpful was the help you received at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

Appendix L

1. ¿ En los 6 últimos meses de su relación ha Usted hablado sus conocidos (por ejemplo, su familia, la familia de su pareja, sus compañeros del trabajo, sus amigos) para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? *(por favor, seleccione una.)*

SI NO

1A. En total, ¿con qué frecuencia buscaba este tipo de ayuda para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? *(por favor, seleccione una.)*

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

1B. En total, ¿eran estas personas útiles en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? *(por favor, seleccione una.)*

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

Me interesan los lugares específicos donde buscaba ayuda y las personas específicas con quienes hablaba para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación. Otra vez, por favor, conteste las siguientes preguntas según su relación más reciente en cual ocurrió alguna forma de abuso emocional, físico, y/o sexual.

Por favor, indique si Usted buscaba ayuda de los siguientes servicios o hablaba con las siguientes personas en los 6 últimos meses de su relación. Si contesta “SI,” por favor, conteste las siguientes preguntas.

A. Sus familiares: madre, hermanos, padre *(Por favor, seleccione una.)* SI
NO

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿eran estos servicios útiles en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

B. Sus parientes: tíos, primos, abuelos, etc. (Por favor, seleccione una.) **SI**

NO

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿eran estos servicios útiles en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

C. Los familiares de su pareja (Por favor, seleccione una.) **SI** **NO**

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿eran estos servicios útiles en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

D. Amigos (Por favor, seleccione una.) **SI** **NO**

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿eran estos servicios útiles en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

E. Compañeros de trabajo (Por favor, seleccione una.) SI NO

a. Si contestó "SI," ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

b. Si contestó "SI," ¿eran estos servicios útiles en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

F. Sacerdote, pastor, rabí, etc. (Por favor, seleccione una.) SI NO

a. Si contestó "SI," ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

b. Si contestó "SI," ¿eran estos servicios útiles en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

G. Otro (por favor, explique.) _____ (Por favor, seleccione una.)

SI NO

a. Si contestó "SI," ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

b. Si contestó "SI," ¿eran estos servicios útiles en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

Appendix M

I am interested in the many ways you have survived the abuse in your relationship. Again, please answer the following questions according to your most recent relationship in which some form of emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse occurred.

Please indicate whether you engaged in or currently engage in any of the following behaviors in the last six months of your relationship. If you answer “YES,” please go on to answer the next three questions.

1. Walk away from threatening situation (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered “YES,” to what extent did you use this behavior as a strategy to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all | To a small extent | Moderately | To good extent | To a great extent |

b. If you answered “YES,” how often did you do this? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

c. If you answered “YES,” how helpful was this strategy at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

2. Lock yourself in a room so that your partner couldn't get to you (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered “YES,” to what extent did you use this behavior as a strategy to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all | To a small extent | Moderately | To good extent | To a great extent |

b. If you answered “YES,” how often did you do this? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

c. If you answered “YES,” how helpful was this strategy at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

3. Hide/disguise yourself (please circle one)

YES NO

a. If you answered "YES," to what extent did you use this behavior as a strategy to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all | To a small extent | Moderately | To good extent | To a great extent |

b. If you answered "YES," how often did you do this? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

c. If you answered "YES," how helpful was this strategy at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

4. Moved to a place your partner didn't know about (please circle one) YES

NO

a. If you answered "YES," to what extent did you use this behavior as a strategy to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all | To a small extent | Moderately | To good extent | To a great extent |

b. If you answered "YES," how often did you do this? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

c. If you answered "YES," how helpful was this strategy at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

5. Do whatever your partner asks, talk to him to calm him down (please circle one)

YES NO

a. If you answered "YES," to what extent did you use this behavior as a strategy to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all | To a small extent | Moderately | To good extent | To a great extent |

b. If you answered "YES," how often did you do this? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

c. If you answered “YES,” how helpful was this strategy at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

6. Protect your body when being abused (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered “YES,” to what extent did you use this as a strategy to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

a. If you answered “YES,” to what extent did you use this behavior as a strategy to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all | To a small extent | Moderately | To good extent | To a great extent |

b. If you answered “YES,” how often did you do this? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

c. If you answered “YES,” how helpful was this strategy at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

7. Taught your children to call the police, or to leave and seek help (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered “YES,” to what extent did you use this behavior as a strategy to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all | To a small extent | Moderately | To good extent | To a great extent |

b. If you answered “YES,” how often did you do this? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

c. If you answered “YES,” how helpful was this strategy at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

8. Talk your partner out of abuse (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered "YES," to what extent did you use this behavior as a strategy to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all | To a small extent | Moderately | To good extent | To a great extent |

b. If you answered "YES," how often did you do this? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

c. If you answered "YES," how helpful was this strategy at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

9. Talked to your partner about getting help, i.e. counseling (please circle one)

YES NO

a. If you answered "YES," to what extent did you use this behavior as a strategy to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all | To a small extent | Moderately | To good extent | To a great extent |

b. If you answered "YES," how often did you do this? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

c. If you answered "YES," how helpful was this strategy at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

10. Get a job or joining a community or religious group where you feel valued, gain self-confidence, and/or get support (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered "YES," to what extent did you use this behavior as a strategy to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all | To a small extent | Moderately | To good extent | To a great extent |

b. If you answered "YES," how often did you do this? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

c. If you answered “YES,” how helpful was this strategy at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

11. Become very involved with religion to get strength and courage to go on (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered “YES,” to what extent did you use this behavior as a strategy to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all | To a small extent | Moderately | To good extent | To a great extent |

b. If you answered “YES,” how often did you do this? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

c. If you answered “YES,” how helpful was this strategy at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

12. Carefully maintain your relationships with people who support you (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered “YES,” to what extent did you use this behavior as a strategy to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all | To a small extent | Moderately | To good extent | To a great extent |

b. If you answered “YES,” how often did you do this? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

c. If you answered “YES,” how helpful was this strategy at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

13. Not involve your family or friends if your partner might hurt them (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered "YES," to what extent did you use this behavior as a strategy to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all | To a small extent | Moderately | To good extent | To a great extent |

b. If you answered "YES," how often did you do this? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

c. If you answered "YES," how helpful was this strategy at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

14. Find a way to save money that is your own and about which your partner is unaware (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered "YES," to what extent did you use this behavior as a strategy to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all | To a small extent | Moderately | To good extent | To a great extent |

b. If you answered "YES," how often did you do this? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

c. If you answered "YES," how helpful was this strategy at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

15. Fight back (please circle one) YES NO

a. If you answered "YES," to what extent did you use this behavior as a strategy to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all | To a small extent | Moderately | To good extent | To a great extent |

b. If you answered "YES," how often did you do this? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

c. If you answered "YES," how helpful was this strategy at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

16. Talk with other women to gain support and advice (please circle one)

YES NO

a. If you answered "YES," to what extent did you use this behavior as a strategy to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all | To a small extent | Moderately | To good extent | To a great extent |

b. If you answered "YES," how often did you do this? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never (0 times) | Once in awhile (1-2 times) | Sometimes (3-4 times) | Fairly Often (5-6 times) | Very Often (over 6 times) |

c. If you answered "YES," how helpful was this strategy at aiding you to survive the abuse in your relationship? (please circle one)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not at all helpful | A little helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |

Appendix N

Por favor, indique si Ud. hacía o hace algunas de las siguientes conductas en los 6 últimos meses de su relación. Si contesta "SI," por favor conteste las siguientes tres preguntas. Otra vez, por favor, conteste las siguientes preguntas según su relación más reciente en cual ocurrió alguna forma de abuso emocional, físico, y/o sexual.

1. Irse de una situación amenazadora (Por favor, seleccione una.) SI NO

a. Si contestó "SI," ¿hasta qué punto usaba este comportamiento como una estrategia para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------------|----------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| De ningún modo | Un Poco | Moderatamente | En grado sumo | En toda su extensión |

b. Si contestó "SI," ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

c. Si contestó "SI," ¿era esta estrategia útil en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

2. Cerrarse a sí misma en un cuarto para que él no pudiera entrar (Por favor, seleccione una.)

SI NO

a. Si contestó "SI," ¿hasta qué punto usaba este comportamiento como una estrategia para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------------|----------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| De ningún modo | Un Poco | Moderatamente | En grado sumo | En toda su extensión |

b. Si contestó "SI," ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

c. Si contestó “SI,” ¿era esta estrategia útil en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|--------------------|----------|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

3. Ocultarse a si misma (Por favor, seleccione una.) **SI** **NO**

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿hasta qué punto usaba este comportamiento como una estrategia para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------------|----------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| De ningún modo | Un Poco | Moderatamente | En grado sumo | En toda su extensión |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

c. Si contestó “SI,” ¿era esta estrategia útil en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|--------------------|----------|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

4. Mudarse a un lugar que él no conocía (Por favor, seleccione una.) **SI** **NO**

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿hasta qué punto usaba este comportamiento como una estrategia para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------------|----------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| De ningún modo | Un Poco | Moderatamente | En grado sumo | En toda su extensión |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

c. Si contestó “SI,” ¿era esta estrategia útil en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|--------------------|----------|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

5. Hacer cualquier cosa que su pareja le pedía, hablar con él para que calmara. (Por favor, seleccione una.)

SI NO

a. Si contestó "SI," ¿hasta qué punto usaba este comportamiento como una estrategia para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------------|----------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| De ningún modo | Un Poco | Moderatamente | En grado sumo | En toda su extensión |

b. Si contestó "SI," ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

c. Si contestó "SI," ¿era esta estrategia útil en ayudarlo sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

6. Proteger al cuerpo cuando él le abusaba (Por favor seleccione una.) SI NO

a. Si contestó "SI," ¿hasta qué punto usaba este comportamiento como una estrategia para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------------|----------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| De ningún modo | Un Poco | Moderatamente | En grado sumo | En toda su extensión |

b. Si contestó "SI," ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

c. Si contestó "SI," ¿era esta estrategia útil en ayudarlo sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

7. Enseñarles a sus hijos como llamar a la policía, o salir para buscar ayuda (Por favor, seleccione una.)

SI NO

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿hasta qué punto usaba este comportamiento como una estrategia para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------------|----------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| De ningún modo | Un Poco | Moderatamente | En grado sumo | En toda su extensión |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

c. Si contestó “SI,” ¿era esta estrategia útil en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

8. Hablar con su pareja para disuadirle de abusarle (Por favor, seleccione una.) SI NO

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿hasta qué punto usaba este comportamiento como una estrategia para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------------|----------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| De ningún modo | Un Poco | Moderatamente | En grado sumo | En toda su extensión |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

c. Si contestó “SI,” ¿era esta estrategia útil en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

9. Hablar con su pareja sobre buscar ayuda, por ejemplo, la consejería. (Por favor, seleccione una.)

SI NO

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿hasta qué punto usaba este comportamiento como una estrategia para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------------|----------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| De ningún modo | Un Poco | Moderatamente | En grado sumo | En toda su extensión |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

c. Si contestó “SI,” ¿era esta estrategia útil en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

10. Conseguir un trabajo o asociarse con un group comunitario o religioso donde se siente valorada, aumenta su auto-confidencia, y/o recibe el apoyo (Por favor, seleccione una.) SI NO

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿hasta qué punto usaba este comportamiento como una estrategia para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------------|----------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| De ningún modo | Un Poco | Moderatamente | En grado sumo | En toda su extensión |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

c. Si contestó “SI,” ¿era esta estrategia útil en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

11. Envolverse en la religión para encontrar la fuerza y el ánimo para seguir para adelante (Por favor, seleccione una.) SI NO

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿hasta qué punto usaba este comportamiento como una estrategia para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------------|----------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| De ningún modo | Un Poco | Moderatamente | En grado sumo | En toda su extensión |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

c. Si contestó “SI,” ¿era esta estrategia útil en ayudarlo sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

12. Con cuidado, mantener las relaciones con las personas que le ayudan. (Por favor, seleccione una.) SI NO

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿hasta qué punto usaba este comportamiento como una estrategia para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------------|----------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| De ningún modo | Un Poco | Moderatamente | En grado sumo | En toda su extensión |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

c. Si contestó “SI,” ¿era esta estrategia útil en ayudarlo sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

13. No envolver a sus familiares o amigos si existía la posibilidad que su pareja les pudiera hacer daño. (Por favor, seleccione una.) SI NO

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿hasta qué punto usaba este comportamiento como una estrategia para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------------|----------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| De ningún modo | Un Poco | Moderatamente | En grado sumo | En toda su extensión |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

c. Si contestó “SI,” ¿era esta estrategia útil en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

14. Hallar una manera de ahorrar su propio dinero, sin que su pareja lo supiera (Por favor, seleccione una.)

SI NO

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿hasta qué punto usaba este comportamiento como una estrategia para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------------|----------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| De ningún modo | Un Poco | Moderatamente | En grado sumo | En toda su extensión |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

c. Si contestó “SI,” ¿era esta estrategia útil en ayudarle sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

15. Defenderse luchando contra él. (Por favor, seleccione una.) SI NO

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿hasta qué punto usaba este comportamiento como una estrategia para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------------|----------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| De ningún modo | Un Poco | Moderatamente | En grado sumo | En toda su extensión |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

c. Si contestó “SI,” ¿era esta estrategia útil en ayudarlo sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |
| | | útil | | útil |

16. Hablar con otras mujeres para recibir su apoyo y sus consejos. (Por favor, seleccione una.) **SI** **NO**

a. Si contestó “SI,” ¿hasta qué punto usaba este comportamiento como una estrategia para poder sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------------|----------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| De ningún modo | Un Poco | Moderadamente | En grado sumo | En toda su extensión |

b. Si contestó “SI,” ¿con que frecuencia buscaba ayuda aquí? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Nunca (0 veces) | Una que otra vez (1-2 veces) | A veces (3-4 veces) | A menudo (5-6 veces) | Muy frecuentemente (más de 6 veces) |

c. Si contestó “SI,” ¿era esta estrategia útil en ayudarlo sobrevivir el abuso en su relación? (Por favor, seleccione una.)

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No útil | Un poco útil | Moderadamente útil | Muy útil | Extremadamente útil |

Appendix O

Please describe, in your own words, any concerns you might have had about seeking help to end, escape, or avoid the violence in your relationship.

What, in your experience, was the biggest barrier to seeking help to end, escape, or avoid the violence in your relationship?

What was the most successful strategy you employed to end, escape, avoid, or survive the violence in your relationship?

In your opinion, how could services for battered women be more helpful?

Appendix P

Por favor, describa, en sus propias palabras, algunas preocupaciones que tenía en cuanto a buscar ayuda para poder terminar, escapar, o evitar el abuso en su relación.

En su experiencia, ¿cuál fue la barrera más grande que le hacía difícil buscar ayuda para poder terminar, escapar, o evitar el abuso en su relación?

¿Cuál fue la mejor estrategia que usaba Ud. para poder terminar, escapar, o evitar el abuso en su relación?

¿En su opinión, cómo podemos mejorar los servicios para mujeres golpeadas?

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