

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR LATINO VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE IN HUMBOLDT COUNTY

By

Anna M. Anguiano

A Project Presented to

The Faculty of Humboldt State University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Social Work

Committee Membership

Cesar Abarca, Ph. D, Major Professor

Laura Power, MSW, Committee Member

Jean LaPietra, MSW, Community Services Officer, Committee Member

Dr. Michael Yellow Bird, Graduate Coordinator

May, 2014

## **ABSTRACT**

### **OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR LATINO VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN HUMBOLDT COUNTY**

Anna M. Anguiano

With the growing Latino population in the rural Humboldt County, there is a pressing need for more bilingual services. The purpose of my community project is to find out which service providers in Humboldt County provide bilingual services to monolingual Spanish-speaking clients, and what some of the challenges are for service providers when working with the Latino population in regard to domestic violence issues. My project consisted of distributing questionnaires to service providers to find out about which services are available in the community, the barriers faced by service providers, and what service providers feel they need so they can better meet the needs of the Latino Community. The results showed that the major barriers faced by service providers were lack of resources, language, immigration status, and cultural norms. What many of the participants believe is needed within the community is more bilingual services, relevant trainings and education, and culturally appropriate services.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to thank those who are a part of my committee; I couldn't have done it without your guidance, input, and help throughout my project. I thank you for your time and effort in helping me through this journey. I would also like to thank my loved ones, thank you for always being there for me, and supporting me through my struggles; I honestly love and appreciate you all so much. I especially want to thank my parents for giving me the opportunity to reach for the stars, and always believing in my dreams. You both always wanted more for us than you both had in Mexico. I always want to make you proud of your daughter. I would also like to thank the Social Work Department, thank you for the opportunity. I would also like to thank the social work cohort, thanks for making us (the advance standing folks) feel welcomed, you are all wonderful people, and you will all make a difference in each and every life you touch, you are all an inspiration. Gracias a todos. We did it!

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
INTRODUCTION .....	1
MATERIALS AND METHODS.....	13
RESULTS .....	16
DISCUSSION.....	23
REFERENCES .....	26

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1. Demographical agency service areas.....	16
Figure 2. Participant’s Target Population(s).....	17
Figure 3. Themes of what is needed in community.....	22

## LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A. Questionnaire.....	28
Appendix B. Consent Form.....	31
Appendix C. Email Recruitment Letter.....	33
Appendix D. Data Results.....	34

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of my community project is to find out which service providers in Humboldt County provide bilingual services to monolingual Spanish-speaking clients, and what some of the challenges are for service providers when working with the Latino population in regard to domestic violence issues. Domestic violence is underreported by many Latino women due to immigration status, fear of relation, or lack of support in the United States. The data that I have gathered about the barriers faced by Latinos dealing with domestic violence suggests there is a lack of services that should be provided to the whole community; including those who do not speak English. I have heard stories by service providers here in Humboldt County about the lack of services available to monolingual Spanish-speaking individuals. It is important to analyze the amount of bilingual services that are available to Latinos within Humboldt County, in order to start the pathway to create better services. I hope my project can be used to initiate more bilingual programs, and used for creating or sustaining programs, based upon the data collected.

In Humboldt County the second largest group is Latino; making up 10.3% of the population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). It is predicted that by the end of 2013, Latinos will be the largest ethnic group in California (State of California, Department of Finance, 2013). This influx brings the need for a heightened awareness of their cultures, languages, and traditional values. Within the United States alone, there is an estimated 1.3 million women (not just Latino women) who are victims of physical assault by an

intimate partner each year (National Coalition Against domestic Violence, 2012).

Intimate partner violence is defined as violence between former or current partners in an intimate relationship (Davidson, Grisso, Garcia-Moreno, Garcia, King, & Marchant, 2001). This estimate includes just the reported counts because domestic violence is underreported by many Latino women due to immigration status, fear of relation, or lack of support in the United States.

Among those most vulnerable are undocumented Latino women who continue to be unaware of their rights to be protected by the law. In a study of Latino women in 2000, 27% of the battered immigrant women surveyed stated their fear of being reported to immigration authorities as their primary reason for remaining in an abusive relationship (Dutton, Orloff & Aguilar Hass, 2000). Also, an inability to communicate may prevent victims from seeking legal assistance, emergency shelter, or seeking other services. These are just some of the barriers faced by many Latinos today.

As a service provider in Humboldt County, I have seen these barriers deter people from seeking services. Language barriers have been prevalent in the agencies I have worked with. Humboldt County lacks Spanish bilingual services when working with victims of domestic violence. I asked service providers in Humboldt County to participate in this study to get a better understanding of what happens when monolingual Spanish-speaking victims come into their agency for support and services. With the growing population of Latinos in Humboldt County, services have not been adapting to this growth. There is an awareness of the need for access to other language services, and

a need for culturally competent services within the county. My project seeks to understand which human services are available to Latino victims of domestic violence.

Without these language services in the county there is an increasing likelihood for victims of domestic violence to go back home to their perpetrators. Addressing these barriers faced by Latinos, can give the community an understanding of what this population faces when they seek services from community agencies. Proper access to these services this can greatly impact a survivor's life, and can increase their knowledge and education about the resources available in the community.

Definition: The term Latino is used in this project to refer to individuals born in or with ancestry from Mexico, Central America, and Spanish-speaking countries in the Caribbean, and South America.

#### Research Questions

Within Humboldt County there is a need to understand how service providers are accommodating clients that come in who do not speak English, especially with the growing Latino community. The research questions that guided my community project were:

Are the needs of Latino domestic violence victims being met?

Are there barriers such as language or culture in these services?

What kinds of services are offered in Humboldt County that are bilingual?

What is being done when someone who is monolingual in Spanish tries to access services?

There are multiple questions being asked in my project, but they are all interconnected with the underlying theme of understanding what services are available to the monolingual Spanish-speaking community.

### Research Approach

My community project focused on a qualitative questionnaire, which asked service providers in Humboldt County (that claim to offer services to victims and/or perpetrators, of domestic violence), and their experiences working with the Latino population. The service providers ranged from domestic violence services, family resource centers, crisis centers, counselors, batter's intervention programs, and prevention classes. Specifically, I asked 30 (with an optimal goal of 15) service providers from different agencies in Humboldt County, to voluntarily participate and get an understanding of what happens when monolingual Spanish-speaking victims come into their agency for support, and services, and what the protocols of the agency are.

### Anticipated Outcomes

The aim for creating the questionnaire was to find out how many agencies and programs in Humboldt County that currently offer bilingual services to the Latino community, and get a general understanding of what percentage of the population are not getting access to those needed services. Also, finding out what are the barriers that the

service providers identify when working with the population. The anticipated outcomes for this project are to document the need for more Spanish bilingual services within Humboldt County and enhance agencies within the county to have better language access. I went in hoping to understand what service providers believe is needed to better serve this population, and changes that need to be done within the community. Overall the questionnaire responses might help open up conversations about the gaps of services provided by agencies and programs to the Latino community.

#### Research Assumptions

My assumption was that most services out in the county were not bilingual. There is also an assumption that victims of domestic violence have tried to get help from these services, but were unable to because of language and culture barriers. I also wanted to know if any of the agencies have attempted to better serve the population, and how they did so. The data that was collected will provide the community members and service providers within Humboldt County to take initiative about the need for bilingual services, and training around working with the Latino community, and how to provide better services.

#### Relevance to Social Work and Significance

The National Violence Against Women Survey (NVAWS), which based on a random sample of households in United States, reports a lifetime prevalence rate of exposure to intimate partner violence among Latinos of 23.4% (Tjaden & Thoennes,

2000). Battered Latino women return to their abusers more often than non-Latino White women (Torres, 1991) and often prefer to stay with their abuser (Dutton, Orloff, & Hass, 2000). The common barriers faced by Latinos during these times of crisis are language, cultural beliefs, and lack of knowledge about their rights. This shows the significance and need for more bilingual services within the community because everyone should have access to services, especially the growing Latino population in Humboldt County. I hope this opens up the horizon for a better understanding of how much of a need it is to have better access to language within these agencies and programs.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Understanding the knowledge and research that has been established around Latino domestic violence survivors and their experiences seeking services is an essential part of my community project. The literature that I compiled has raised interesting questions about the lack of research done addressing the differences between Latino and non-Latino victims. The purpose of my literature review is to provide a general overview of what information is currently available on this issue of Latinos and domestic violence. While researching the literature, similar themes within the articles came up including barriers, and the lack of knowledge of services and violence amongst Latinos. As a result, many articles are still attempting to understand the differences between Latino and non-Latino victims, and how the needs of Latinos can be met.

### Understanding Domestic Violence

Much research has been done to understand what domestic violence is as a whole. There are different forms, and components of the abuse. Domestic violence is a problem that affects the lives of women and families both in urban and rural areas. At a general level, domestic violence can be defined as “the means used by a [a person] in order to assert their control and domination over their intimate partner, whether they are married or not (Lapierre, 2009; p. 318).” Under the umbrella of domestic violence there are different forms of abuse such as physical, sexual, financial, verbal, psychological and

emotional (Jeanjot, Barlow, & Rozenberg, 2008). These forms of abuse can lead to a multitude of things such as depression, post-traumatic stress, anxiety, and the list goes on. Children who grow up in families with intimate partner violence may suffer from a range of behavioral and emotional disturbances that can be associated with the perpetration or experiencing of violence later in life (Ibiloglu, 2012). Understanding of why it is that domestic violence exists has its manifestations that may be associated with particular cultural or religious groups (Lapierre, 2009). There is a stigma of divorce, and it being against one's religion. This is a form of abuse that is prevalent in every society, and is a cycle of abuse. As mentioned before, the research that has been done focuses on domestic violence effects on women, but little research has focused on possible differences between Latino women and non-Latino women.

#### Barriers faced by Latinos

Latinos are at a disadvantage for accessing and utilizing human services across the spectrum. There are many professional and personal barriers that were explained within the literature such service providers' inability to provide support, and services for the Latino community regardless of the services or supports sought out. Much of the research showed reoccurring themes such as language, immigration status, and cultural barriers. Results have revealed that several social, cultural, and political barriers exist for abused Latino women, including social isolation, language barriers, discrimination, and fear of deportation, dedication to family, shame, and cultural stigma of divorce (Lipsky, Caetano, Field, & Larkin, 2006).

In addition to the language barriers, low levels of education and income, and poor knowledge of existing services are contributing factors. Many Latinos are immigrants and undocumented, which may add real or perceived barriers to utilizing services within their community. Culture and immigration experiences might affect beliefs and make the experience of intimate partner violence different for Latinos (Kasturirangan & Williams, 2003). Many immigrant women may fear seeking help from authorities because of negative experiences in their home countries or fear of deportation which are very real and normal fears that I hear often within my community.

The research that I was able to find showed that there are differences between Latino and non-Latino women when it comes to domestic violence. There was research done about the help seeking difference between Latino and non-Latino victims of intimate partner violence. Latinos are at a higher risk of intimate partner violence (Dutton, Orloff, & Hass, 2000). Further, research has shown that Latino women underutilize social services such as seeking shelter (Ingram, 2007). The study found the services that were sought out by Latinos, were informal services such as support through extended family members, and other non-professional individuals. In many rural areas, the lack of Spanish-language services results in Latino church leaders functioning as social workers, career counselors, financial advisors, and so on for their congregations (Behnke, Ames, & Hanhock, 2012). Are the previously mentioned barriers keeping Latino domestic violence victims from seeking these needed services, or is it something else? In the literature over and over again you hear about these barriers; are they really the cause for the lower number of reports of domestic violence within the Latino

community? The only way one could find out this information is studying the population and getting more insight and data.

In an article found in the *Berkeley Women's Law Journal*, the author talked about removing the barriers for immigrant women with these new laws that protect all rights of people regardless of immigration status (Kwong, 2002). The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) of 2000 established under the original Act 11 was created to attempt to remedy inefficiencies in the original Violence Against Women Act. This addressed to improve the access to immigration protection, and to strongly enforce their access to these services that they were at a disadvantage of getting before (Kwong, 2002). This article was from 13 years ago, and recently the VAWA was reauthorized, yet nothing has really changed as shown in the literature. Latina victims of intimate partner violence tend to be younger and less educated (Ingram, 2007). These barriers are still relevant and the knowledge of these laws has yet to be taught to the communities and individuals who need it, so they can understand their rights regardless their immigration status.

The literature that I was able to find discussed the barriers to seeking services, the question is "what happens once action is taken and the perpetrator is charged with the abuse?" There is this lack of appropriate language services from the very beginning, and looking at the case of what has been done after someone is convicted of the abuse is still unclear. The criminal justice process is a lengthy and complicated process, and in most cases perpetrators are required to take batter's intervention classes; if they are available in the appropriate language. Research was done of Latino intimate partner violence perpetrators who were in Spanish-language treatment program designed to be culturally

appropriate for Latino immigrant men. Culturally-specific topics emphasized by participants and integrated into the program were effective, and these included, “parenting skills for men, gender roles, discussion of discrimination towards immigrants and women; immigration and changing gender roles; marital sexual abuse; and spirituality as related to violence prevention (Welland & Ribner, 2010; pg.1).” So it was education about their experiences, and the connection to the abuse. Results suggested the desirability of an empathic and culturally-sensitive approach, without diminishing responsibility of the abuse (Welland & Ribner, 2010). There is a significant gap in the literature on intimate partner violence among Latinos, and specifically on the perpetrators.

### Conceptual Framework

The complexity and intersectionality of Latino culture makes me believe that the Latino Critical theory can be applied directly to my research. I believe this theory is relevant in my research question I am asking if culture and language are barriers when Latino victims of domestic violence seek services. The Latino Critical theory brings to light that Latinos often carry multidimensional and complex experiences, which include their gender roles, cultural identity, and their multicultural roots (Berenes, 2011). There are multiple systems of oppression, racism, monolingualism, and discrimination that Latinos face and recognizing them is necessary (Inglesias, 2000). This theory I believe encompasses what I believe victims and even perpetrators of domestic violence must face within the society. As mentioned earlier the theory mentions the multidimensional and

complex experiences that Latinos face. The community as a whole needs to recognize these barriers, and complex experiences Latinos face and find ways to initiate change to better serve the community, something must be done or the cycle of abuse will continue.

## **METHOD**

### Introduction and Overview

My community project included collecting data from a questionnaire that was filled out by service providers, and analyzing the data to begin to understand what bilingual services are offered in the county, and what are the barriers that are faced by the Latino community when they seek domestic violence services from service providers.

### Instrument

The instrument of this study was a qualitative questionnaire that consisted of 13 questions, which ranged from multiple responses, closed ended, and open-ended short answer categories (see Appendix A for questionnaire).

### Study Population and Sample

The participants for my community project were service providers in Humboldt County who interact with victims, and batterers of domestic violence. Participants were selected from local community resource lists that in some way were correlated to domestic violence services within the community. They were the targeted group, to understand specific services within the community, and what is needed. The study group consisted of 14 participants (with an optimal goal of 15). All of the participants identified as service providers in Humboldt County (see Appendix B for subject recruitment letter).

## Research Design

The research design for this project is qualitative, using a structured questionnaire. I recruited the participants via email, or by telephone with an explanation of what the community project was. The participants were notified of their participation two weeks before the questionnaire was distributed to give the participants enough time to decide if they wanted to participate, and schedule a time and date with me (the principal investigator) face to face. I distributed the questionnaire, and the participants had an average of 10-15 minutes to complete it, there was no time limit if it exceeded this estimated time to complete the questionnaire. The time it took to take the questionnaire ranged greatly. Some participants took as little as 8 minutes, where some took an hour based upon the discussion regarding the topic of services for domestic violence victims. I opened a space for the participants to share their thoughts or concerns about the questionnaire with me. They were also more than open to ask questions while they filled out the questionnaire if any questions or concerns came up that need to be addressed. In order to keep confidentiality and security of the questionnaires after they were filled out, I was the only person handling the questionnaires. The questionnaires were distributed on an individual basis from February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2014 until March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014 in order for participants to have enough time to schedule and complete the questionnaire.

## Data Collection Methods

I completed the questionnaires in person or over the phone because it was convenient for the participants. The main reason I wanted to be there while the

participants were filling out the questionnaire was to answer any questions that might have arisen, or to clarify any of the questions. As mentioned before questionnaires were administered either by phone, or in person at the participant's office, or a preferred location. The data collection process included introducing myself, and thanking participants for their time in participating in my project. I asked if they wanted to proceed to take the questionnaire, if they responded "no," we either rescheduled or canceled. If they answered "yes" I briefly went over the informed consent form (see Appendix B). Once I got written consent, I then proceeded in conducting with the questionnaire.

#### Analysis and Synthesis of the Data

My community project collected qualitative data from the questionnaires. The questions were coded based on similar themes and categories that arose from the questionnaires. The data was interpreted based on these themes and categories and further explained throughout the write up of the collected data. Data was analyzed using qualitative method of Grounded Theory (coding).

## RESULTS

The first question on the questionnaire asked respondents to identify their agency service areas. A majority, nine (64%), of the participants stated that they serve all of Humboldt County. One of the special circumstances in Humboldt County is the geographical size and the outskirt areas in the county that need more emphasis, more services, and are less populated. The majority who participated are those in “central” Humboldt the more populated areas. See figure1 for reference. Eureka is the central mecca of human services here in Humboldt County.

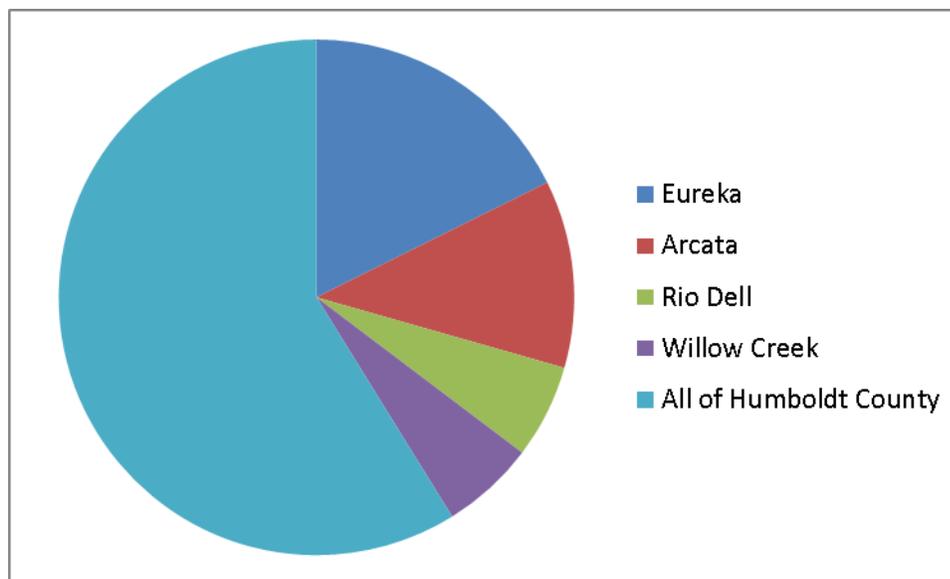


Figure 1 Illustrates where participants identified demographical agency service areas.

The third question asked the respondents what the target population was of their agency, those who participated were able to mark off multiple populations. See figure 2 for reference. The top most chosen populations were, Low income populations with 12,

General public with 11, Multi-service with 10, and victims of domestic violence with nine. There was a lot of variety within the participants.

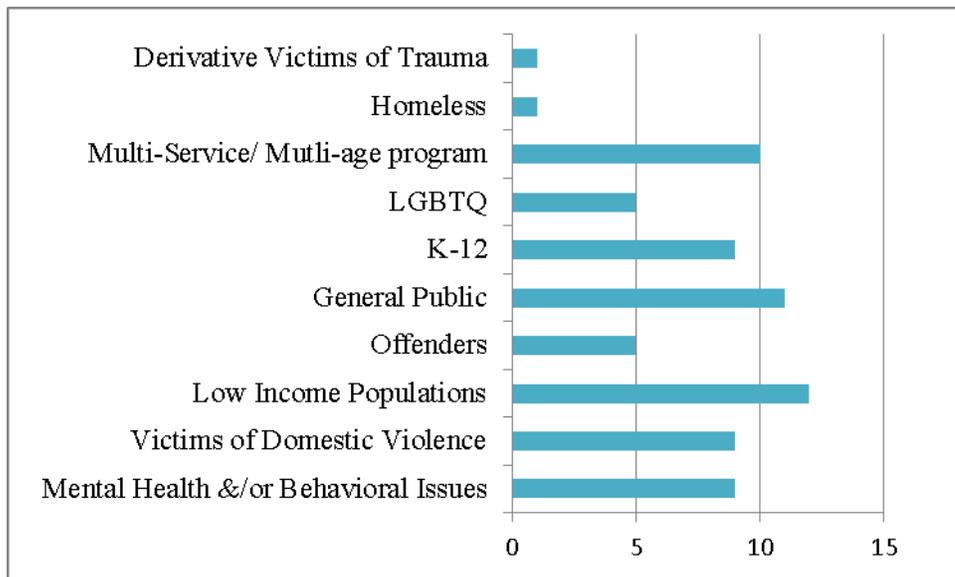


Figure 2 Illustrates participants target population(s).

For the fourth question I asked for respondents to identify the extent to which their agency works with survivors or perpetrators of domestic violence. Some respondents made it very clear that their agencies do not work with perpetrators, and work only with the victims and survivors. Six respondents marked that they work with victims and/or perpetrators frequently, on a daily basis. Two said they only do sometimes, such as once per week. Four marked rarely, and only work with victims and/or perpetrators on a monthly or quarterly basis. Two respondents said they worked with victims and/ or perpetrators somewhere between sometimes and rarely, and it just depends.

The fifth question asked participants, “Does the agency provide full-time bilingual services? (Someone on staff, Interpreter services by phone or in person).” This question brought lots of question from the participants, asking what was considered full-time, my response was 8 hours. This also brings up, what about those 24hour service agencies such as crisis centers? So this in a sense can be skewed because some agencies only have staff for 8 hour durations, but wished they had staff for the full 24hours. Out of the 14 participants, 11 said they have full-time bilingual services, I asked for them to specify what full-time time meant, 10 said they have staff, but only during certain hours, three said they use interpreter phone and in-person services. Out of the 14 participants, four said they do not provide full-time bilingual services.

The sixth question was a simple response question which asked participants, “What percentage of the clients you serve identify as Latino? (Latino is defined as someone who is from a country in Latin America, and does not speak English or has limited English skills).” Out of the 14 participants, two omitted to answer, because they were uncertain of the percentage, or they feared people would find out about their participation with the project. I stressed the confidentiality in the project. One participant answered without a percentage and wrote, “Have worked with Latino population, but only those proficient in English.” There was a lot of range of the percentages, to those who actively serve the Latino population versus agencies that do not get a lot of Latinos coming in for services due to location. The responses ranged from 1%; to three participants that said 100% of their clients identified as Latino. The mean being 49.36%.

The seventh question was a short answer category, which asked the participants, “What are the barriers you encounter as a service provider when working with the Latino population/community? I coded the responses from the participants and came across the most common barriers/themes. The results showed that the major barriers faced by service providers were lack of resources, language, immigration status, and cultural norms. See Appendix C for all responses. Lack of resources was mentioned from seven out of 14 participants:

“We do not have enough Spanish speaking services within our community.”

Over and over again it was mentioned that there were not enough bilingual services, which is due to the lack of resources we have within our rural community. It is something that is very prevalent.

Language was another barrier which was mentioned seven times out of the 14 participants:

“Language barriers, such as other services don’t have bilingual staff, even if they do they are not there all the time; it’s the same for us when bilingual staff isn’t available.”

What was interesting was what was mentioned from this participant that even if some agencies do have bilingual staff, they might not be full time, and at times when people are seeking help people have to wait to receive the services, because of these language barriers. One participant mentioned:

“If it’s an emergency and the bilingual [staff] isn’t in or the other service providers don’t speak Spanish, we have to resort to asking a trusted adult to translate, and last resort is asking a child to translate during crisis.”

This brings to light the big barrier of language, and how at times some services are not able to meet the needs of non-English speaking clients within the community especially during crises. This also brings to light that especially with domestic violence disputes, or any forms of the abuse, that they can happen at any moment, especially during these emergency crisis moments when an immediate response is needed.

The eighth question was done out of my own curiosity; it asked participants, “Does your agency have a protocol to follow when a monolingual (non-English) client is referred for services or requests services?” 57% of participants said they do have a protocol to follow such as finding someone on staff, or getting and interpreting services (via phone or in-person), 43% said they do not have a protocol to follow at their agency or program.

One question asked participants, “Do you believe Latino community’s needs are being met through your agency? On a scale from 1 to 10. (10 being that their needs are always being met when they come into your agency).” The answers ranged from 1 to 9, with the mean being 6, one participant even stating:

“It depends on who you reach at the agency.”

I wanted to find out what trainings participants felt they needed within their agency or community which asked, “Please check if you need more training with the following topics at your agency or in the community.” I gave five choices with an option to list any other training they wished was provided. The three top choices marked were immigration and law, creating pathways for immigrant families, and cultural competency. Five participants marked off domestic violence. Seven marked off cultural competency.

Ten marked off immigration and laws. Three marked off sexual assault training, and nine checked off creating pathways for immigrant families. Other trainings that were filled in were, mental health, training for Spanish speakers to better their Spanish skills out in the field, education and advocacy, and immigration and laws pertinent to education, and domestic violence.

The last question was another short answer question which asked participants, “What do you feel you need as a service provider so that you can better met the needs of the Latino community?” This was an open-ended question, which allowed for participants to share ideas, needs, and opportunities for the community to better serve the Latino community; this gave more of the qualitative data. What was found was the connection with the barriers mentioned earlier within the questionnaire.

“Understand the cross cultures, we need culturally responsive services, and have a diverse workforce. People need to openly talk about culture. Ask clients if what you are offering fits the family. Accessibility of services to everyone, it’s the law. People need education about their rights. There needs to be civil engagement, it’s up to us to bring up these policies, issues, and concerns.”

“We need to recruit more bilingual people to work in these agencies, and we need to educate more clients about the issues surrounding domestic violence.”

Participants mentioned how having bilingual services can help better serve the Latino community. Participants also mentioned educational trainings can inform the community about their rights, laws, policies, and services. See figure 3 for themes mentioned in this question.

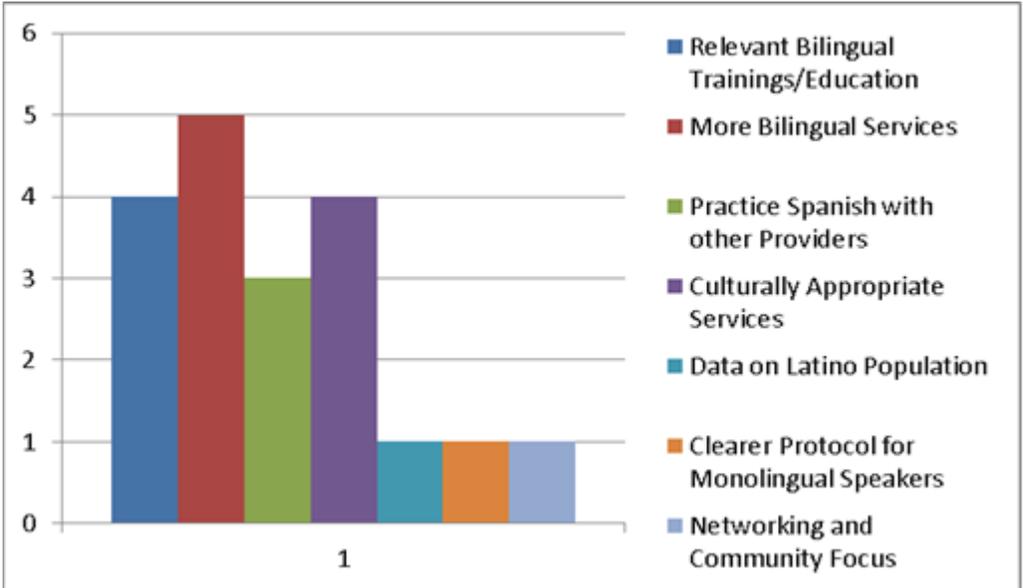


Figure 3 Themes of what is needed within the community.

As shown in figure 3, the themes very much ranged, but were reoccurring in some aspect. To get a better look at all answers see Appendix C for all responses. What many of the participants believe is needed within the community is more bilingual services, more relevant trainings and education, and culturally appropriate services.

## DISCUSSION

Overall, what was surprising for me was those who decided to participate within my research. A majority of those who participated in my research are those who are already actively involved in working with the Latino population, I believe it skewed my data in the sense that they are trying to make changes within their agency to better serve the population. I was really hoping that those who participated were those who don't currently offer bilingual services, but I didn't get the participation that I hoped for. It makes me question why they did not want to participate, since it would be anonymous, and beneficial to the community to know the information. Could it have been shame, or embarrassment that their agency has done nothing to adapt to the growing population within Humboldt County? I won't know and don't know, I can only assume. One participant did mention that if the funding was there, they would hire bilingual workers.

I would also like to discuss the amount of participants I had, my optimal goal was 15, and ended up getting 14. I was disappointed with amount of participants I had, there wasn't the diversity that I wanted. I mention diversity as different groups and individuals throughout the county (not just those focused on working with the Latino community). Would it have been different if I put up flyers, instead of calling each and every agency I could think of in Humboldt County? Maybe; I could only do so much recruitment in my project, with my time limit, schedule, and demands pressed upon me in my full-time class schedule. I was only able to recruit 30 participants. This was a limitation in my project.

I am happy that those who are passionate in working with the Latino community participated in my project. However, my intent was to collect data from those who aren't a part of that community. Within Humboldt County there are services directed towards the Latino population, even a coalition called LatinoNet whose mission is to improve the quality of life for Latino families here on the north coast, and has over 150 members, me being one of those members. There is also Promotoras which is a subcommittee of LatinoNet who has the same mission. There are also programs dedicated to the Latino community such as Paso a Paso. Change is here, and it's happening within the community, but it is not universal or prevalent in all agencies throughout the county. There are no agencies in Humboldt County who are dedicated to the Latino community, who knows what the future may hold.

I wanted to briefly talk about cultural competency; it was one of the critiques brought up in my project by one of the participants in my questionnaire. They asked if cultural competency is really tangible by service providers. It made me question something that is very much embedded in our social work practice, as shown in the code of ethics that we follow. What is cultural competency? Is it something we can ever achieve? The simple answer is no. We will never fully know a culture, we can only be humble, and acknowledge that we don't know it all. It's a learning process for everyone, we need to be culturally humble.

I was happy to hear the participants talk about what they believe is needed within the community to better serve the Latino population. People's eyes lit up, and they talked about a place where all people could have access to services they sought. May it be more

bilingual services, or a way to get more relevant bilingual trainings and education for the whole community, not just service providers. These answers were not surprising for me, reaffirming my assumptions of what I have experienced within the community. The results showed that the major barriers faced by service providers were lack of resources, language, immigration status, and cultural norms. What many of the participants believe is needed within the community is more bilingual services, relevant trainings and education, and culturally appropriate services. Some participants even wished there was a place for them to practice and learn their Spanish skills so they can provide more relevant language services. Connecting back to the Latino Critical theory and what I mentioned in the literature review Latinos often carry multidimensional and complex experiences, which include many things like gender roles, language, cultural identity, and their multicultural roots. These are relevant things we must keep in mind, and create change within the agencies and programs we work in. Domestic violence victims cannot wait to receive services, they cannot come back later when a translator is present, and their life can be at risk. It's a serious matter, and language shouldn't stop anyone from receiving services.

There are so many opportunities within the community to initiate change. May it be asking your agency or program what is the protocol when a monolingual clients comes in seeking services, or advocating for language services. It's up to us to speak up, and initiate action. My recommendation is for another master's student to get the Latino community's perspective and input on these services, or find out what Latino victims of domestic violence went through to get the support and services within the community.

## REFERENCES

- Ames, N. , Behnke, A. , & Hancock, T. (2012). What would they do? Latino church leaders and domestic violence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 27(7), 1259-1275.
- Berenes, V., (2011). Working with Latina Women Exposed to Domestic Violence.
- Davidson, L.L., Grisso, J.A., Garcia-Moreno, C., Garcia, J., King, V.J., & Marchant, S. (2001). Training programs for healthcare professionals in domestic violence. *Journal of women's health & gender-based medicine*, 10(10), 953-969.
- Dutton, M.A., Orloff, L.E. and Aguilar Hass, G. (2000). Characteristics of help-seeking behaviors, resources and service needs of battered immigrant Latinas. *Georgetown Journal on Poverty Law & Policy*, 2 (2), 245-305.
- Ibiloglu, A. (2012). Domestic violence. *Psikiyatride Guncel Yaklasimlar*, 4(2), 204-222.
- Iglesias, E. M. (2000). Identity democracy, communicative power, inter/national labor rights and the evolution of LatCrit theory and community. *LatCrit Primer*, 2, 9-98

- Ingram, E. (2007). A comparison of help seeking between latino and non-latino victims of intimate partner violence. *Violence Against Women*, 13(2), 159-171.
- Kwong, D. (2002). Removing barriers for battered immigrant women: A comparison of immigrant protections under vawa i & ii. *Berkeley Women's Law Journal*, 17, 137-136.
- Lapierre, S. (2009). Domestic violence. *Social Work and Society*, 7(2),
- Lipsky, S., Caetano, R., Field, C. A., & Larkin, G. L. (2006). The role of intimate partner violence, race, and ethnicity in help-seeking behaviors. *Ethnicity and Health*, 11(1), 81-100.
- National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (2007). Domestic Violence Facts. [http://www.ncadv.org/files/DomesticViolenceFactSheet\(National\).pdf](http://www.ncadv.org/files/DomesticViolenceFactSheet(National).pdf)
- State of California, Department of Finance, Report P-1 (County): State and County Total Population Projections, 2010-2060. Sacramento, California, January 2013.
- Welland, C., & Ribner, N. (2010). Culturally specific treatment for partner-abusive latino men: A qualitative study to identify and implement program components. *Violence and Victims*, 25(6), 799-813

## Appendix A. Questionnaire

Student Investigator: Anna Anguiano

Faculty Advisor: Cesar Abarca

### Questionnaire for Latino Domestic Violence Services in Humboldt County

1.) Identify agency service areas:

- a. Eureka
- b. Arcata
- c. Fortuna
- d. McKinleyville
- e. All of Humboldt county
- f. Other (specify):

2.) Purpose of agency:

- General Social Service       Legal services       Correctional Facility or program
- Violent Offender Program       Sexual assault crisis center
- Domestic Violence Crisis Center       Behavior Health Center       Family Resource Center
- Other:

3.) Target population (circle all that apply):

- a. Adults and/or children with Mental Health and/or Behavioral Issues
- b. Victims of domestic violence
- c. Low income populations
- d. Offenders
- e. General public
- f. K-12
- g. LGBTQ
- h. Multi-service/ Multi-age program for adults and/or children
- i. Other (specify):

4.) Extent to which agency works with survivors or perpetrators of domestic violence?

- a. Frequently (daily)
- b. Sometimes (once per week)
- c. Rarely (once per month, or per quarter)
- d. Never

5.) Does the agency provide full-time bilingual services? (Someone on staff, Interpreter services by phone or in person)

- a. Yes
  - i. If yes please specify:
- b. No

6.) What percentage of the clients you serve identify as Latino?" (Someone who is from a country in Latin America, and does not speak English or has limited English skills)

7.) What are the barriers you encounter as a service provider when working with the Latino population/community? (Ex: Language, unable to communicate, cultural norms, traditional values, transportation, etc).

Explain:

8.) Does your agency have a protocol to follow when a monolingual (non-English) client is referred for services or requests services?

Explain:

9.) Do you believe Latino community's needs are being met through your agency? On a scale from 1 to 10. (10 being that their needs are always being met when they come into your agency).

Your agency would receive a rate of: \_\_\_\_\_

10.) Does your agency have sustainable positions that are Spanish speaking? Ex: Recruit bilingual positions, part-time, on call, etc.

- a. Yes
- b. No

11.) Please check if you **have** participated in trainings with the following topics at your agency or in the community:

- Domestic violence     Cultural Competency     Immigration and laws
- Sexual assault         Creating Pathways for Immigrant Families
- Please list any other trainings that you thought are relevant:

12.) Please check if you **need** more training with the following topics at your agency or in the community:

- Domestic violence     Cultural Competency     Immigration and laws
- Sexual assault         Creating Pathways for Immigrant Families
- Please list any other trainings you wish were provided:

13.) What do you feel you need as a service provider so that you can better met the needs of the Latino community?

Explain:

## Appendix B. Consent Form

**Informed Consent**  
**Opportunities and Challenges for Latino victims of Domestic Violence in Humboldt County**

This questionnaire has been created by a Graduate Student of the Masters of Social Work program at Humboldt State University. The questionnaire/survey/ is a part of a community project that is focused on domestic violence services offered to the Latino population in Humboldt county, and service providers interactions with this population. This questionnaire is completely optional, and you may stop at anytime. The following Consent Form is to explain the details about the questionnaire.

**Consent Form**

I understand that he/she will answer any questions I may have concerning the investigation or the procedures at any time. I also understand that my participation in any study is entirely voluntary and that I may decline to enter this study or may withdraw from it at any time without jeopardy. I understand that the investigator may terminate my participation in the study at any time.

The questionnaire will be set-up, and administered by a Graduate Student at a location of choice by the participant (either on campus at Humboldt State University, or in a preferred location like an office of participant's). Filling out the questionnaire is estimated to be around 15-20 minutes. The purpose of the questionnaire/survey is to understand which domestic violence services in Humboldt County are bilingual, and what some of the challenges/barriers are for service providers when working with the Latino population. The questionnaire will consist of a series of questions that further examine what services are doing when monolingual Spanish speaking populations come into these agencies.

The questions will ask for service providers to remember their experiences about interacting with the Latino population. Direct quotations may be used from the open-ended questions. Participants may experience minimal discomfort, to minimize these risks; you will be informed at the beginning of the questionnaire that you have the right to decline answering a question, and that no names or other identifying information will be asked.

After the questionnaire is filled out, the graduate student will put them in a folder. The responsible investigator will be the only one with access to the data. No names or other identifying information will be asked. The questionnaires will be kept confidential, and will be destroyed on May 20th, 2014.

If you have any concerns with this study, contact the Chair of the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, Dr. Ethan Gahtan, at [eg15@humboldt.edu](mailto:eg15@humboldt.edu) or (707) 826-4545

If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant, any concerns regarding this project, or any dissatisfaction with any part of this study, you may report them—confidentially, if you wish—to the Dean for Research & Sponsored Programs, Dr. Rhea Williamson at [Rhea.Williamson@humboldt.edu](mailto:Rhea.Williamson@humboldt.edu) or (707) 826-5169.

Contact information of Primary Investigator: Anna Anguiano [ama67@humboldt.edu](mailto:ama67@humboldt.edu).  
Contact information of Faculty Advisor: Cesar Abarca (707) 826-4448 or  
[Cesar.Abarca@humboldt.edu](mailto:Cesar.Abarca@humboldt.edu)

Thank you for your time. The information will help the community better understand the support and resources needed for domestic violence services offered to the monolingual Spanish speaking Latino population here in Humboldt county.

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

### Appendix C. Email Recruitment Letter

Dear [participant's name],

I am writing to ask if you would like to voluntarily participate in a research project entitled "Opportunities and Challenges for Latino Victims of Domestic Violence in Humboldt County?" This research aims to identify what some of the challenges/barriers are for service providers when working with the Latino population, and find out which services are offered that offer bilingual services. I hope you will be willing to participate in this study.

If you agree to participate, I will be administering questionnaires that may take about 15-20 minutes to complete. In the questionnaire, you will be asked questions about what percentage of the clients you serve identify as Latino?" (Someone who is from a country in Latin America, and does not speak English or has limited English skills), as well as what services your agency offers, and what you believe is needed as a service provider so that you can better met the needs of the Latino community.

At the end of this email is a further explanation of your rights as a subject of research conducted through Humboldt State University. Please read the material carefully. By agreeing to participate in the study, it is implied that you have read and understand your rights.

If you would like to participate, please respond to this email or contact the number below to schedule a time to take the questionnaire. If you have any questions feel free to email or call me.

Sincerely,

Anna Anguiano

Graduate Student  
Department of Social Work  
Humboldt State University  
Email: ama67@humboldt.edu  
Phone: 760-277-7045

## Appendix D. Data Results

Student Investigator: Anna Anguiano

Faculty Advisor: Cesar Abarca

## Questionnaire for Latino Domestic Violence Services in Humboldt County

## 1.) Identify agency service areas:

- a. Eureka **3**
- b. Arcata **2**
- c. Fortuna
- d. McKinleyville
- e. All of Humboldt county **9**
- f. Other (specify): **East Hum.1 SoHum 1**

\*Some participants picked multiple locations\*

## 2.) Purpose of agency:

- General Social Service **8**       Legal services **1**     Correctional Facility or program
- Violent Offender Program **1**     Sexual assault crisis center **1**
- Domestic Violence Crisis Center **2**     Behavior Health Center **1**     Family Resource Center **4**
- Other: **Counseling/Therapy. Health Insurance. Enrollment. Educational Health.**

## 3.) Target population (circle all that apply):

- a. Adults and/or children with Mental Health and/or Behavioral Issues **9**
- b. Victims of domestic violence **9**
- c. Low income populations **12**
- d. Offenders **5**
- e. General public **11**
- f. K-12 **9**
- g. LGBTQ **5**
- h. Multi-service/ Multi-age program for adults and/or children **10**
- i. Other (specify): **Homeless. Derivative victims of Trauma, Varies depending on program in agency.**

## 4.) Extent to which agency works with survivors or perpetrators of domestic violence?

- a. Frequently (daily) **6**
- b. Sometimes (once per week) **2**

- c. Rarely (once per month, or per quarter) **4 +(2 answers where between sometimes & rarely)**
  - d. Never
- 5.) Does the agency provide full-time bilingual services? (Someone on staff, Interpreter services by phone or in person)
- a. Yes **11**
    - i. If yes please specify: **(Interpreters phone/in person 3), (Staff 10), (During certain hours 4) \*Participants put more than one answer\***
  - b. No **3**
- 6.) What percentage of the clients you serve identify as Latino?" (Someone who is from a country in Latin America, and does not speak English or has limited English skills)

**30-50%, 100%, 1% or less, 70%, 17%, 15%, 20%, 45%, 100%, 100%, 35%. No answer= 2**

**1 Answer: Have worked with Latino population, but only those proficient in English.**

7.) What are the barriers you encounter as a service provider when working with the Latino population/community? (Ex: Language, unable to communicate, cultural norms, traditional values, transportation, etc).

Explain:

**At times fear of reaching out to services. Due to undocumented status. We do not have enough Spanish speaking services within our community.**

**Traditional norms w/in the Latino Culture. Undocumented status.**

**Not as much support in community, such a small number of Latinos here.**

**Language barriers, such as other services don't have bilingual staff, and for us when bilingual staff isn't available. Going beyond advocate role, and possibly jeopardizing confidential relationship. Wait time in regard to waiting for an interpreter. The legal system correlates with language barrier, and not having bilingual staff. Other agencies have utilized children for translation during emergencies.**

**Transportation.**

**Language barriers. Are not able to meet the needs of non-English speaking clients.**

**Language barriers, cultural norms, traditional values (conflicting w/ children & parents). Referral of services that is bilingual and finding those services.**

**No community support. Language, unable to communicate. Cultural norms.**

**Difficulty finding skilled simultaneous interpreters. Family or work schedules seem to make it difficult for Latino people to participate (cultural norms + work.)**

**Transportation.**

**Lower standard of care across services, because of language barriers. Lack of resources. No interpreters/ translation of information.**

**Language. I don't know if there is a Spanish speaking provider in the DV service area. Cultural norms, traditional values, transportation. Child care, lack of extended family, immigration status.**

**Transportation and legal services.**

**No bilingual resources to refer families.**

**All of the above, it makes a big difference when someone is there to speak to the client.**

8.) Does your agency have a protocol to follow when a monolingual (non-English) client is referred for services or requests services?

Explain:

**Yes. Protocol is to find services that address the needs of the individual/ community, whether it's getting an interpreter in order to provide services. Or referring to another agency.**

**Yes. Interpreter on staff.**

**Yes. Interpreter services.**

**Yes. Staff, and during emergencies a trusted adult.**

**Yes. Staff.**

**No. Unable to provide services to these clients.**

**No. Workers usually just have to use best judgment and practices. Have access to language line or interpretation services.**

**Yes. Call interpreter and hope they can reconnect with individual.**

**Yes. Staff, or seek help from partner agencies.**

**Yes. Interpretations (phone/in person)**

**No, we always have bilingual staff**

**No.**

**No.**

**No.**

9.) Do you believe Latino community's needs are being met through your agency? On a scale from 1 to 10. (10 being that their needs are always being met when they come into your agency).

Your agency would receive a rate of: **8, 9, 7, 7, 8, 4, 5, 1, 7, depends on who you reach, 8, 8, 8, 6**

10.) Does your agency have sustainable positions that are Spanish speaking? Ex: Recruit bilingual positions, part-time, on call, etc.

a. Yes **10**

b. No **4**

11.) Please check if you **have** participated in trainings with the following topics at your agency or in the community:

Domestic violence **14**    Cultural Competency **9**    Immigration and laws **7**

Sexual assault **8**    Creating Pathways for Immigrant Families **5**

Please list any other trainings that you thought are relevant:

Other: BIP (Behavior Intervention Plan), Ethics, Drug & Alcohol Abuse, Trauma interventions.

12.) Please check if you **need** more training with the following topics at your agency or in the community:

Domestic violence **5**    Cultural Competency **7**    Immigration and laws **10**

Sexual assault **3**    Creating Pathways for Immigrant Families **9**

Please list any other trainings you wish were provided:

Other: **Mental health. Above trainings with regard to Latino culture.**

**Training for Spanish speakers to better their Spanish skills in different areas.**

**Education/ Advocacy**

**Immigration and laws pertinent to education, and DV.**

13.) What do you feel you need as a service provider so that you can better met the needs of the Latino community?

Explain:

**Being trained/ educate in the new laws that affect our Latino/ undocumented community such as ABI660, DACA, Obama Care, and coverage for undocumented families.**

**We need to recruit more bilingual people to work in these agencies. And we need to educate more clients about the issues surrounding domestic violence, counseling, and mental health.**

**More people to practice, and learn Spanish with.**

**More bilingual legal representatives. More county and community based agencies recruiting bilingual staff. Full time bilingual staff, not just someone who comes in 4 hours a week.**

**More training in Mental health, and legal training on Latino community.**

**Bilingual service providers.**

**Being able to refer Latino families to relevant services that are culturally appropriate especially for court ordered services.**

**A better understanding of cultural norms, and religious practices. Wish I spoke Spanish.**

**More conversational Spanish speaking opportunities for self, and co-workers, particularly to discuss “work-type” topics. Maybe with other service providers to learn vocabulary in a conversation, relevant context. Clearer referral/resources + protocol for agency to serve mono-lingual Spanish speakers. Local training program to develop a pool of able interpreters. Better data on Latino population that can be used for grants, programmatic decision-making, training and hiring. Some people were afraid of census workers, wonder If this skews data that we use.**

**Understand the cross cultures. Culturally responsive services, and have diverse workforce. Culturally congruent. Change w/in the agencies culture/ structure. People need to openly talk about culture. Ask clients if what you are offering fits the family. Accessibility of services to everyone, it’s the law. Opportunities to learn English with the community. Make sure kids are speaking family’s language. People need education about their rights. There needs to be civic engagement, it’s up to us to bring up these polices, issues, and concerns. Keep up awareness.**

**To continue to network with other service providers that serve clients in common so that we can strengthen a safety net for our community and the families whom we serve.**

**That the trainers are bilingual and bicultural**

**For people to understand the struggles for immigrants living in the USA. More agencies who have bilingual/ bicultural staff to be able to refer clients; especially for legal issues (immigration being the main one.) Also, services for DV victims who are Spanish speaking.**

**On staff full time person that speaks Spanish.**