

Acculturation and Conflict in Mexican Immigrants' Intimate Partnerships: The Role of Women's Labor Force Participation

Violence Against Women


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Joseph G. Grzywacz,¹ Pamela Rao,²
Amanda Gentry,³ Antonio Marín,¹
and Thomas A. Arcury¹

Abstract

This study explores women's workforce participation as a potential agent for acculturation, and how it shapes conflict dynamics within intimate partnerships among Mexican immigrants. Analysis of in-depth interview data from 20 immigrant Mexican women and men believed to be in violent relationships indicated that women's employment following migration created several sources of intracouple conflict by challenging gender-based norms and behaviors surrounding the division of household labor, financial decision making, and how women and men interact within intimate relationships. Immigrant Latino women tended to embrace an assimilation strategy for acculturation, whereas immigrant Latino men embrace a separation strategy.

Keywords

acculturation, conflict, dual-earner families, Mexican immigrants, women's employment

Acculturation, the process of individual and cultural change that occurs when members of different cultural groups come into extended contact (Berry, 2004), is believed to influence the personal relationships of immigrant women and men from Mexico who are currently living in the United States. Flores, Tschann, Marín, and Pantoja (2004), for example, suggested that acculturation creates a source of stress that contributes to marital conflict among

¹Wake Forest University School of Medicine, Winston-Salem, NC

²Farmworker Justice, Washington, DC

³University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Corresponding Author:

Joseph G. Grzywacz, Department of Family and Community Medicine, Wake Forest University School of Medicine, Medical Center Boulevard, Winston-Salem, NC 27106

Email: grzywacz@wfubmc.edu