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Predicting Physical and Psychological Abuse for White, Black, and Hispanic Married Women

Abstract

Research on intimate partner violence has fallen short in two ways. It has not compared predictors of physical versus psychological abuse nor has it compared the experiences of women in different race/ethnic statuses relative to both physical and psychological abuse. Using data from the National Survey of Violence Against Women Study, this paper examines the influence of race/ethnic status on intimate partner violence (IPV) in a sample of married Black, White, and Hispanic women who said they experience no abuse as an adult or were abused by their husbands (N=3,873). Findings indicate that a woman's race/ethnic status cannot predict physical abuse, net of other influences, but it can predict psychological abuse. Black women report higher levels of psychological abuse than do White women, net of all other influences, but Hispanic women do not differ from Black or White women in this regard. However, my results show that women who were abused as children suffer more physical and psychological abuse and college educated women, net of all other influences, report less psychological (but not less physical) abuse. Tests for interactions yield unexpected results. Black women who are employed full-time reported more psychological abuse than did Black women who are not employed full-time, a pattern that did not show for White women. Furthermore, higher levels of household income predicted more psychological abuse among Hispanic women whereas it slightly diminished the amount of psychological abuse reported by non-Hispanic women.

Predicting Physical and Psychological Abuse for White, Black, and Hispanic Married Women

Intimate partner violence continues to be a primary cause of injury to women in the Unites States and is considered a significant threat to the health and well-being of women (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2003; Corcoran, Stephenson, Perryman, & Allen, 2001; Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980).[1] Studies show that women are at greater risk of being harmed by an intimate partner than by a stranger (Tjaden and Thoennes, 1998) and that intimate partner violence accounts for approximately one fifth of all violence against women (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1998). However, statistics and studies on intimate partner violence focus on the more physical forms of violence and tend to ignore the various non-physical tactics abusers use to maintain control. It is of great import that we specify and differentiate the various form of violence that women experience and acknowledge the differences that exist.

Studies have demonstrated that intimate partner violence is an issue that affects many racial, ethnic, and cultural groups (Cazenave & Straus 1990; Campbell and Soeken 1999; Langford 1996; West 2004; Krug, Dahlberg, Mercy, Zwi, & Lozano 2002) but that Black women may experience higher rates of non-lethal violence by intimates (West 2004; Benson, Fox, Demaris, and Van Wyk 2000; Rennison and Welchans 2000; Tjaden and Thoennes 2000; Richie 2000; Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999; Neff, Holaman, & Schluter, 1995; Hampton and Gelles 1994). Partner homicide is one of the leading causes of death among Black women (Stark, 1990). A number of studies argue that Hispanics are also at an increased risk of abuse (Straus and Smith 1990).

However, many issues cloud our understanding of Black and Hispanic women's experiences with spousal abuse. First, relatively few studies have specifically addressed intimate partner violence among Black women (Morrison, Luchok, Richter, & Parra-Medina, 2006).

> Research surrounding victims' experiences of intimate partner violence has been extrapolated and imposed onto African American women without employing a rigorous investigation to determine if such findings are, in fact, applicable to them (Morrison, et al. 2006).

Second, many researchers posit that this relationship may be more due to social class rather than race (Rennison and Planty 2003; Nash 2005; Lee, Thompson, & Mechanic 2002; Hampton, Carillo, and Kim 1998; Straus and Smith 1990). Browne and Bassuk (1997) found that the majority of homeless women were victims of intimate partner violence. Lyon (1998) found that more than half of all women who received public assistance were once victims of intimate partner violence. Therefore, it makes it difficult to disentangle the relationship between race, class, and violence. For example, considerable evidence suggests that the most severe and lethal forms of physical violence occur disproportionately among low-income women of color (Benson and Fox 2004; C. West 2004, 2005). However, at times, women who are non-White are compared to Whites leading perhaps to more generalized statements about "women of color" rather than capturing the experiences of Blacks or African Americans (Websdale 1999). Others have argued that because of their chronic experiences with racism, Black women may protect Black men from being presumed pathological and abusive – thus fostering an underreporting of Black-on-Black crimes (Nash 2005; Richie 1996; Washington 2001). Also, African American women's perceptions of violence may differ from mainstream definitions (Garfield 2001), they may interpret the battering experience differently (Coley and Beckett, 1988), they may be more likely to be derogated (Murray and Stahly, 1987), and therefore they may be less likely to report abuse (Barbee, 2003; Manetta 1999). However, all of the above research findings focus on physical abuse rather than psychological abuse. Therefore, it is important to examine race, ethnicity, income, and other socio-demographic characteristics in relation to non-physical forms of abuse – namely psychological abuse because despite this growing

literature on the prevalence of wife abuse, little research has focused on racial variations. It is unclear whether Black women are at similar risk for these various forms of abuse.

While some have applied the concept of intersectionality to explain Black women's experiences with violence, few have examined this with respect to non-physical forms of abuse. Collins (1998) notes that the legacy of racial oppression place victimized Black women in a double-bind: seeking redress for the violence exposes their partner to systemic abuse from racist institutions. Bograd (1999) explains that

> the trauma of domestic violence is amplified by further victimization outside of the intimate relationship, as the psychological consequences of battering may be compounded by the 'micro-aggressions' of racism, heterosexism, and classism in and out of the reference group (p 281).

If this is true of physically abusive relationships, can this also hold true for psychologically abusive relationships? Is it possible that Black women are more likely to face psychological abuse in marriages and that the impact of this abuse differs between Black and White women? If Black women who experience physical abuse are doubly victimized – first by their spouse and then by society – then it logically follows that this experience is similar for Black women who experience psychological abuse (C. M. West, 2000). In fact, if society encourages Black women to "tolerate lousy behavior in Black men" (Rose, Campbell, and Kub 2000, p. 33, but see Stombler and Padavic, 1999) and remain in abusive marriages, then it is important that we examine the role of psychological abuse in the lives of Black women - especially considering that they remain in abusive relationships longer than White women (Hampton, Oliver, Magarian, 2003; Lawson, Rodgers-Rose and Rajaram 1999).

This study examines racial differences in predicting psychological and physical abuse in marital relationships. Specifically, the research addresses four major questions: (1) Do married Black women experience significantly more abuse than their White counterparts? (2) Are Black women more likely to experience one form of abuse over another? (3) How do other socio-demographic variables affect this relationship? and (4) Can we apply previous findings regarding predictors of physical abuse to psychological abuse? This paper uses OLS regression to analyze data from the National Survey of Violence Against Women.

Because the term *domestic violence* has had many meanings over the course of history and because it has also been used to refer to interpersonal violence between victims and offenders who are related to one another in non-intimate ways, for the purposes of this paper I use the term intimate partner violence (Hampton, et al. 2003). *Intimate partner violence* is defined as a pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviors used by a husband against his wife and often entails a "series of repeated actions, including those of greater and lesser severity, which has a cumulative impact on the victim" (Walby 2004). This paper examines physical and psychological abuse. In specifying the various forms of abuse, I define these in more detail. *Physical violence or abuse* is considered as "any use of size, strength, or presence to hurt or control someone else" (Wilson, 1997, p. 8) and refers to physical contact such as hitting, pinching, pushing, shoving, and the use of weapons designed to injure, hurt, endanger, or cause physical pain (Berry, 2000). *Psychological abuse* has been referred to by many terms including emotional abuse, emotional violence, psychological violence, controlling behavior and is defined here as "any use of words, voice, action, or lack of action meant to hurt or demean another person" (Wilson, 1997, p. 10) and refers to consistently doing things to shame, insult, embarrass or mentally hurt one's intimate partner. It may include such acts as withholding money, name calling, withholding affection, and extreme acts of jealousy. These acts are often used by one partner to gain domination over another and include limiting the partner's contact with others, controlling all money, insisting on knowing who the partner is with at all times and other behaviors intended to control one's partner.

Data and Methods

I use data from a national survey to consider whether race is associated with abuse by a current partner. The data come from the National Violence Against Women Survey (NVAWS).[2] Tjaden and Thoennes (1999) designed this cross-sectional study to document violence against women as well as women's experiences with violence. Sponsored jointly by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC), and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the survey aimed to further the understanding of violence against women – a requirement by the federal Violence Against Women Act. This nationally representative sample consisted

of 8,000 women who were 18 years or older in the United States. The sample was obtained by U.S. census region random digit dialing for interviews conducted by telephone using a computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) system. Interviews were conducted from November 1995 to May 1996. Female interviewers surveyed female respondents (more information on the methodology can be found in Tjaden and Thoennes, 1999 and information on the strengths and advantages can be found in Miller, 2006).[3]

The survey included questions on respondent characteristics, mental health, and history of violence in past relationships, as well as psychological abuse, sexual abuse, stalking, and threat victimization in the current relationship. Respondents who disclosed victimization were asked detailed questions about the characteristics and consequences of that victimization, including injuries, medical assistance received, and perpetrator information.[4] Tjaden and Thoennes (2000) report a response rate of 72 percent for women participants.[5]

Sample for Analysis

I include only women in my analysis because women are more often the victims of intimate partner abuse (Corcoran, Stephenson, Perryman, & Allen, 2001, p. 393; Thoennes 1999; Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1995). While intimate partner violence is present in both marital and non-marital relationships, my interest here is violence experienced within the confines of a marital relationship. Research often fails to capture the experiences of Black women since they are so often combined with other racial groups to form an "other" group. This analysis focuses solely on the different experiences of White and Black women. I further restrict the analyses of the study to women who either report no abuse as an adult or abuse by their partner only. I excluded women who had been abused by persons other than their current partner. The total number of respondents in the sub-sample is 3,873.

Measures

Abuse. I measured abuse in terms of two dimensions: physical and psychological abuse. Within each form of abuse, I sum the individual indicators so that a higher score indicates greater abuse and a lower

score indicates less abuse (see further detailed explanation below) as it is more important to distinguish the extent of abuse rather than just whether or not abuse has occurred.

Physical Abuse. With regard to physical abuse, the survey asks whether the woman's current spouse has ever done any of the following: thrown something that could hurt; pushed, grabbed, or shoved; pulled hair; slapped or hit; kicked or bit; choked or attempted to drown; hit with an object; beat up; threatened with a gun; threatened with a knife or other weapon; used a gun; used a knife or other weapon (Table 1). This scale is a modified version of the Conflict Tactics Scales (Strauss, 1979). Rather than using a dummy variable, which would ignore the numerous tactics abusers employ, I summed the number of tactics they employed with regard to physical assault so that the index ranges from 0 (no abuse indicators reported) to 12 (every abuse indicator reported). Cronbach's alpha for the sub-sample is .85. Only about three percent of women report experiencing physical abuse in their current marital relationship and the most commonly reported indicators of abuse include being pushed, grabbed, or shoved and being slapped or hit. The least commonly reported indicators include using a gun, knife, or other weapon.

Psychological Abuse. Psychological abuse is also a summated measure of nine items including: "makes them feel inadequate"; "frightens them"; "tries to provoke arguments"; "shouts or swears at them"; and "calls them names or puts them down in front of others"; "is jealous or possessive"; "tries to limit contact with family and friends"; "prevents access to family income" (Table 1). Twenty percent of women in the sample reported having experienced at least one instance of psychological abuse. Cronbach's alpha for psychological abuse is 0.73. The most common indicator of psychological abuse reported is that their partner shouts or swears at them, must know who they are with at all times, and makes them feel inadequate. The least common is that their partner frightens them.

Sociodemographic variables. Previous studies have demonstrated that educational attainment, personal income, age of respondent, race, ethnicity, number of children in the household, and marital status are associated with intimate partner violence. Heise and Garcia-Moreno (2002) found that young

women (see also Weaver, Kilpatrick, Resnick, Best and Saunders 1997) and those below the poverty line are disproportionately affected by wife abuse (Bachman and Saltzman 1995; Cunradi, Caetano, and Schafer 2002). Ross and Huber (1985) find that financial need and the presence of children are directly associated with marital conflict and strife. However, it is unclear whether education and employment status are related to the likelihood of experiencing abuse (Cunradi et al. 2002; Perilla, Bakeman, and Norris 1994). This study includes the following socio-demographic variables in the analysis.

Race. Race is the main variable of importance in this study. Respondents were asked whether she was White, Black, Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian, Alaskan native, or mixed races. For the purposes of this paper, I will examine Black women in comparison to White women. Eighty-six percent of respondents were coded as White and just over five percent coded as Black/African American. Respondents whose race was coded as anything other than White or Black have been excluded as missing (8.6%).[6]

Ethnicity. Respondents were also asked about Hispanic origin. Approximately ninety-two percent of respondents reported being non-Hispanic. This category is separate from the race category whereby Black and White respondents may report being of Hispanic origin.

Age. Age is measured as a continuous variable of women between the ages of 18 and 97. The average age of the women in sub-sample is 45 years old.

Parental Status. Parental status is coded as a dummy variable where 1 = Presence of Children and 0 = No Children. Fifty percent of the sub-sample reported having children under the age of 18 in the household.

Income. Household income was measured categorically. I used the mid-points for each category in order to convert the variable to continuous form. For example, a response coded as 5 reflecting the range of $20,000-25,000 was recoded as $22,500. The average household income reported was $48,458.

Employment. Employment was determined by asking the respondent whether she was employed full-time, employed part-time, retired, unemployed and looking for work, student, homemaker, or "other".

I created a dummy category where 0= employed full-time and 1=not employed full-time. My sub-sample included 45 percent who were employed full-time and 55 percent who were not employed full-time.

Education. Education is measured using dummy variables of the amount of schooling completed, ranging from no schooling to post-graduate education. I use five categorical variables: less than high school, high school, some college, college, and post-graduate. I use a high school education as a reference group since this was the modal group. It is also inherently more interesting to compare those with less/more than a high school education to what is considered the norm. Nine percent reported having less than a high school diploma, thirty-six percent of women said their highest level of education was a high school degree, twenty-seven percent said some college, nineteen percent had a college degree, and almost 9 percent reported having post-graduate schooling.

Abuse Experienced as a Child. Because research has shown that experience with abuse as a child is associated with future abuse as an adult, I control for this (White and Smith, 2001). As with the other measures of abuse in this paper, I used a summated measure to examine the extent of child physical abuse the women had been exposed to. Respondents were asked whether they had experiences particular indicators of child abuse. The summated index ranged from 0 (no abuse) to 12 (experienced all indicators). Cronbach's alpha for this index was .73.

Findings

Social Predictors of Abuse

Table 2 presents the final models of OLS regression of physical and psychological abuse on race which illustrates several things: (1) physical abuse is not easily predicted using socio-demographic variables, (2) the knowledge of certain socio-demographic characteristics can help us predict psychological abuse, and (3) great disparities exist between our ability to predict physical and psychological abuse. Later I will discuss the implications of these findings. At the moment, it is important to note that there is no significant association between race and physical abuse.

Insert Table 2 Here

Tables 3 and 4 present the results of the OLS hierarchial regression of physical and psychological abuse on race. While race is *not* significantly associated with physical abuse, race continues to be a significant predictor of psychological abuse thus answering the question about who is abused. Below I discuss the relationship between abuse and each socio-demographic characteristic.

Insert Tables 3 and 4 Here

Race. Although no association exists between race and physical abuse, thus supporting Miller's (2006) findings, married Black women are significantly more likely to report more psychological abuse than their White counterparts. In examining Table 4, it is evident that even as other socio-demographic characteristics are added to the model, race continues to be a significant predictor of psychological abuse. To rule out the possibility that interactions between race and other characteristics were at work, I ran a series of interactions in the OLS models. Only the interaction between race and employment status was significant. Figure 1 demonstrates that Black women experience more psychological abuse than White women although the gap between Black and White women's experiences with psychological abuse decrease greatly when work status is controlled for. In both interaction models we see that the likelihood of experiencing psychological abuse for Blacks and Whites is contingent upon their work status where Black women who are employed full-time reported more psychological abuse than did Black women who are not employed full-time, a pattern that did not show for White women.

Insert Figure 1 About Here

Hispanic Origin. Hispanic origin, which as a separate category includes both White and Black women, was not significantly related to either physical or psychological abuse. However, because some research has argued that Hispanic of lower socio-economic status are more likely to experience abuse (Straus and Smith 1990) and the association between ethnicity and abuse changes from positive to negative when household income is controlled, I created an interaction between Hispanic origin and income. This interaction was significantly related to the experience of psychological abuse. When we look at the interaction between Hispanic origin and household income (Figure 2), we see a great change occur as household income increases. When household income is small, Hispanics experience significantly lower

amounts of psychological abuse than non-Hispanics. However, as household income increases, non-Hispanics experience less abuse and Hispanics experience greater abuse. When household income reaches about $42,500, the axes cross and Hispanics begin to experience greater psychological abuse than non-Hispanics. Higher levels of household income predicted more psychological abuse among Hispanic women whereas it slightly diminished the amount of psychological abuse reported by non-Hispanic women. Thus, the literature on Hispanic origin and physical abuse is somewhat correct and incorrect when applied to psychological abuse – the relationship between abuse and Hispanic origin is contingent upon household income, however higher-socioeconomic status Hispanics are more likely to experience psychological abuse than lower-status Hispanics. This is in contrast to the literature on physical abuse, which finds lower-socioeconomic status Hispanics more likely to experience physical abuse.

Insert Figure 2 Here

Control Variables. Data in Tables 3 and 4 suggests that once other socio-demographic characteristics are added to the model, the association between age and abuse becomes insignificant. Women with children in the household are more likely to report being the victims of psychological rather than physical abuse than women without children in the household. With regards to income, it appears that a relationship between household income and psychological abuse exists where the greater one's income, the fewer reports of psychological abuse by their husband (Tables 3 and 4, model 5). This association continues persists even after other controls are added to the model.

The literature is unclear as to whether employment and education are important influences with regard to abuse. While the analyses found no significance between employment status and abuse, an interactional approach between employment status and race proved significant (as discussed above). Research has noted no consistent association between education and partner violence, and this analysis reveals that having a college education is protective against psychological abuse.

An interesting, but not necessarily surprising finding is the association between abuse experienced as a child and resulting physical and psychological abuse by one's spouse. Both OLS regression analyses demonstrate the highly significant relationship between physical abuse experienced as

a child and psychological abuse experienced as an adult. Regardless of all other demographic characteristics that are controlled for in the models, experiencing child abuse greatly increases the likelihood of experiencing psychological abuse by one's spouse. In fact, we see the explanatory power of both regression analyses (Tables 3 and 4, model 8) increase greatly once we control for abuse experienced as a child.

Discussion and Conclusions

While literature exists to address predictors of physical abuse, there is a lack of research with regards to predictors of psychological abuse. As Miller (2006) and Johnson and Ferraro (2000) have noted, we must distinguish and differentiate among various forms of intimate partner violence women may experience as the type of violence may dictate the proper social response. However, it must be noted that in the United States, the majority (if not entirety) of resources for preventing, aiding, and combating intimate partner violence are directed towards physical abuse rather than psychological abuse.

This study identifies factors that increase the risk of psychological violence but more importantly reveals that women from different racial and ethnic backgrounds differ in their risk of psychological abuse. The results demonstrate that we cannot simply apply the findings on physical abuse to psychological abuse as socio-demographic characteristics that increase the likelihood of physical abuse, do not increase the risk of psychological abuse and vice-versa. As we saw in Table 1, which compared the final models for predicting physical and psychological abuse, very few controls were significantly associated with physical abuse; thus supporting Miller's (2006) claim that no group of women is immune to *physical* domestic violence. We have a greater ability to predict which women are at risk of psychological abuse. The verdict is still out as to whether Black women are more likely than White women to experience physical abuse – with many researchers arguing that when significance is found, it is owed more to class rather than race. However, this research finds that Black women are significantly more likely than White women to experience psychological abuse at the hands of their spouses – regardless of income or education. Another contribution of this research is in locating an interaction between race and employment status as well as the interaction between Hispanic origin and household

income. Not working full-time is protective for Black women but perhaps harmful for White women. This is somewhat at odds with physical abuse research, which finds that Black women who are economically independent may be at greater risk of abuse as their partners uses abuse as a means of exerting control. Research on physical abuse finds that poor, Hispanic women are at greatest risk for abuse. However, this research found an interaction between ethnicity and income where as Hispanic women's household income increases, they become more likely to experience psychological abuse.

One limitation of this research is the exclusion of women who are not married. Black women are less likely than White women to be in marital relationships. Indeed, analyses using this data set confirm that Black women are significantly less likely to be married and significantly more likely to be single or divorced.[7] This lowered the percentage of Black women in the sample from approximately ten percent to six percent. However, the interest here was a comparison of Black and White women in marital relationships and it is important to note that the association between race and abuse was significant although the sample used for these analyses included only six percent Black. It is entirely possible that one reason Black women are less likely to be married is the presence of violence and abuse in the relationship.

Some theories exist as to why Black women may face an elevated risk of abuse in marital relationships. Hampton et al. (2003) reviews these in detail and points to structural, situational, and cultural contexts whereby Black men face intergenerational exposure to racial and gender oppression, adopt and construct alternative definitions of manhood, and use violence ans abuse as a means of exerting control over their spouse. We must however, be careful in applying the results of this research as cultural institutions of White America have historically distorted and exaggerated the images of Black men and women as violent (Bell and Mattis 2000; Bogle 1973; Hooks 1992; Jewell 1993; Akbar 1984).

Hampton et al. (2003) noted the need for scholars, policy makers, public officials, and those working directly with physical abuse victims to be culturally competent to the needs of Black women in order to more effectively provide services and interventions; however, this is also true in working with

Black women who are experiencing psychological abuse. Black women's involvement in an abusive relationship should not be considered identical to White women (Oliver 2000).

Intimate partner violence is quickly being recognized as a major public health issue (Hampton, Oliver, and Magarian 2003; Campbell and Soeken 1999; Langford 1996) but often the attention is focused on physical abuse rather than psychological abuse, which may have differing consequences.

This work is an important contribution to understanding the relationship between race/ethnicity and psychological abuse. While other characteristics are important when examining predictors of abuse, race is perhaps one of the most important as the constraints that face Black women differ greatly from those facing White women. Previous research shows that Black women are less likely to have knowledge of or use domestic violence shelters (Few 2005; Wilson, Cobb, and Dolan 1987) and less likely to report abuse (Manetta 1999) due to institutional racism and a historical distrust of social services (McNair and Neville 1996). Knowledge that Black women are more likely to experience psychological abuse can help shape social policy and also help us to develop appropriate social services and therapies. Many studies, including this one, make Black-White racial comparisons without focusing on within-group differences (Hampton and Gelles 1994; Lockhart 1987). While this research confirms the impact of race and ethnicity on the likelihood of experiencing psychological abuse in marriage, future research should focus on the differential experiences of different groups of Black-Americans and Hispanics.

Notes

1. Because of the secretive nature of intimate partner violence, it is very difficult to determine exact statistics, especially since there are many differing definitions and extensive under-reporting (ACF, 2001). However, it is reasonable to assume that self-reported and officially-reported data underestimate the prevalence due to factors such as lack of recollection, unwillingness to acknowledge illegal or inappropriate behavior, wording of the study question, and refusal to see minor aggression as assault (Buzawa, 2003; France, 1996 in Corcoran; Corcoran, Stephenson, Perryman, & Allen, 2001).

2. This study is also known in the literature as the National Violence Against Women Survey (NVAW).

3. The findings from this study are consistent with other studies in this field of research. While this topic is highly sensitive in nature, the data are high quality. The methodological rigor was such as to maximize the quality of the data. The researchers were careful to account for these issues in that female respondents were interviewed by female interviewers. Since we are dealing with the subject of spousal abuse, and recognizing that the abuser could be present during the time of the interview, interviewers were trained to recognize and respond appropriately to cues that might indicate that the respondent was concerned about being overheard. Furthermore, since respondents were chosen and the interviews were conducted by telephone, the findings do not represent the violent experiences of women in households without a phone. This may mean an under-representation of certain demographic characteristics such as households that are poor, headed by single females, located in rural or intercity areas and renters. This is not seen to be a major problem with the study as in 1994-1996 approximately 94% of the United States population resided in homes with at least one telephone.

4. Men were also surveyed but for the purposes of this paper not included in the analysis. The sample was stratified by U.S. Census region to control for differential response rates by region. If the household contained more than one eligible adult, the adult with the most recent birthday was chosen as the respondent.

5. Participation rates were calculated using the following formula: Number of completed interviews (including those screened out as ineligible)/the total number of completed interviews, screened out interviews, refusals, and terminated interviews. When only eligible participants are considered, the completion rate is 97 percent.

6. The sample under-represents minority women. This is a limitation of the study as Garfield (2005) shows how African American women's experiences with violence are different than those of their White counterparts.

7. Bivariate analyses show that Black women are significantly ($p<.000$) less likely to be in a married relationship. Analyses also confirm that no significant association exists between race and abuse with the inclusion of married and unmarried women. More importantly, the relationship between race and psychological abuse is only significant when only married women are included in the analyses – thus suggesting that the nature of marital relationships is different for Black and White women where when married, Black women experience more abuse.

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NOTES TO WORK ON:

1. arguments for married only: other articles have; black women are less likely to get married and if research has shown them to be more likely to experience violence in relationships, this may explain it and it is important to see if married black women experience more;
2. include citations from pat, Irene, and verna
3.