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Social Factors Related to Domestic Violence among Hmong Adults

By

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MSW Clinical Research Paper

Presented to the Faculty of the

School of Social Work

St. Catherine University and the University of St. Thomas

St. Paul, Minnesota

in Partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Social Work

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The Clinical Research Project is a graduation requirement for MSW students at St. Catherine University/University of St. Thomas School of Social Work in St. Paul, Minnesota and is conducted within a nine-month time frame to demonstrate facility with basic social research methods. Students must independently conceptualize a research problem, formulate a research design that is approved by a research committee and the university Institutional Review Board, implement the project, and publicly present the findings of the study. This project is neither a Master's thesis nor a dissertation.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore social factors related to domestic violence among Hmong adults. The formal hypothesis for this research was: Social factors are related to domestic violence among Hmong adults. A total of 43 Hmong male and female adults were drawn from the community of St. Paul and Minneapolis, MN. The age of respondents ranged from 18 to 60 years old. Recruitment was accomplished through snowball sampling.

The instrument used for this study was developed and designed by the researcher. A thirty-two survey questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first section was divided into five categories of social issues: educational, acculturation, relationship, and individual issues. The second section consisted of demographic opinion-type questions regarding social factors that were found to be related to domestic violence, using a Likert Scale ranking. Data was analyzed and frequency counts and percentages were calculated for the total group of respondents. The relationships between variables were calculated using cross-tabulation.

The results of the statistical analysis indicated that those individuals who were married early experienced more depression than those who married later. Also, couples who had more problems in their marriage reported more depression, and victims' partners who are aware of domestic violence were the ones who controlled the relationship. The results did not show a statistically significant difference between family members who abused the victim or controlled their lives and other variables. Further research is needed to examine violence related to in-laws in the family.

KEY WORDS: Hmong, domestic violence, culture, patriarchal, depression

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Introduction

According to the Asian Pacific Island Institute on Domestic Violence (APIIDV, 2009), it is reported that between 41% and 60% of Asian women experience domestic violence at some point during their life time. Another study conducted by the APIIDV from 2000-2005, related to homicide, stated that over a 6-year period, 10% of the victims in the 160 cases in their study were Hmong.

When Hmong immigrated to the United States, the concept of domestic violence had been unknown in Hmong culture (Lyfoung, 2003), however, this is not to say that domestic violence did not exist in Hmong culture. Domestic violence had simply been viewed as a cultural norm within Hmong culture. According to Grossman et al. (2007), although domestic violence is a significant problem among Asian Americans is often ignored and remains invisible. Currently, domestic violence has gained attention in the Hmong community, especially since many incidents of domestic violence have led to homicide. In order to explore an explanation for the high rate of domestic violence in the Hmong community, the author will take a closer look at the problem.

This research, based on a quantitative study of the Twin Cities Hmong community, pertains to social factors related to domestic violence, particularly the specific social factors that are related to domestic violence among Hmong adults.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this research is to explore what social factors are related to domestic violence. In other words, what social factors are related to the rise of domestic violence in the Hmong community? This study is not directional in that there is no assumption of cause and effect between social factors and domestic violence. This study is intended to provide knowledge and understanding of social factors related to domestic violence to social workers, service providers, and the Hmong community. The researcher hopes the study will provide useful information to increase knowledge of domestic violence in order to educate and reduce any bias and improve gender equality, especially within the Hmong community. The researcher also desires that this knowledge will facilitate the community to work together to find solutions to this issue.

Hmong History

Hmong are an ethnic group whose origins are from China. During the 19th century, they immigrated towards Southeast Asian countries such as Thailand, Burma, Laos and Vietnam in hopes of escaping persecution in China. During the Vietnam War, the Hmong were asked to aid the United States in its Secret War against the Communists in Laos. After the U.S. withdrew its troops from Southeast Asia, the Hmong were left to flee from their homeland and many were politically persecuted by Lao Communists. In 1976, the U.S. Congress recognized Hmong as former CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) employees, and authorized them immigration to the U.S. (Vang & Her, 2014). According to the 2010 Census the Hmong population increased from 165,000 in 1990 to an estimated 260,076 in 2010. Today, Minnesota has one of the largest urban concentrations of Hmong, with approximately

66,000 living in Minneapolis and St. Paul and more than 60% of them living below the poverty line (Hmong National Development, 2015).

Definitions of Terms

The following terms are defined for clarity in their use throughout this research to provide a better understanding of their context.

1. Patriarchal: Male is the head of the family and decision maker.
2. Early marriage: Marriage before age 18 and a common cultural practice among Hmong.
3. First generation: An immigrant who is born outside the United States (Vang, 2014; as cited in Min and Kim, 2002).
4. Second-generation: Children are born to 1st generation immigrants (Vang, 2014; as cited in Min and Kim, 2002).
5. Acculturation: Refers to a process in which members of one cultural group adopts the beliefs and behaviors of another group (Vang, 2013, as cited in Berry, 2001; Rudmin, 2009; Yoon, Langrehr, & Ong, 2011).
6. Culture: Refers to a learned perspective that is unique to a particular group and common universal values are shared across members of that group (Ying et al., 2002 as cited in Pedersen, 1991, p.6).

Literature review

The literature review provides important context for understanding the findings of this study and the interpretation of the data.

Domestic Violence in Hmong Culture

Hmong's View of Domestic Violence. In Kaiser's (2003) study, she described how Hmong view domestic violence: "Individuals in the Hmong community hold a range of opinion[s] about whether or not beating's [one's] wife is considered [a] transgression. Some state very clearly that violence is not an integral part of Hmong per se, but rather of the sub-culture of violence that exists in many cultures" (p. 35). In Kaiser's (2003) study, Hmong men over 40 rejected the notion that physical abuse occurred in the Hmong community, and it was no more than an unusual incident. One Hmong community leader placed the blame on Hmong women, stating that they lie on purpose to police in order to get their husbands in trouble with the law. Lyfoung (2003) and Pillai (2011) stressed that the concept of domestic violence seemed almost nonexistent among the Hmong before they immigrated to the United States as it has usually been a part of the social structure and do not see it as an issue that requires intervention. Also, it is considered a private matter that is part of married life. Yick (2007) would agree and stated, "Intimate violence among Asian Americans and immigrants remains hidden social problem, in part influenced by cultural factors. Because of the collectivistic orientation of many Asian cultures, there is a concern about how disclosures of violence will affect the family, ancestral lineage and community" (p. 280).

Approaching Domestic Violence in Hmong Culture

Hmong Dealing with Domestic Violence. When a couple is faced with marital problems, the initial procedure is to seek advice from their clan leaders. The couple is

required to keep the problem private and to be dealt with by the family. Kaiser (2003) performed a study within the Hmong community in the Twin Cities where she interviewed a Hmong man (KX) in his 40's. He has worked in the social service field to gain deeper understanding of protocols to deal with abuse in Hmong families. KX explained the proper cultural roles of Hmong men and women and illustrated it with a story of his cousin who was abused by her husband. The cousin is a 50 year-old female who had been married for 35 years. Even though she discovered her husband was cheating on her and becoming physically violent towards her, she refused to call the police fearing he would divorce her. KX stated that she went to her husband's family to discuss his abusive behavior but nothing was resolved as her husband was not willing to cooperate. When she turned to KX who was the leader of her birth clan, for help, he only encouraged her to remain in the marriage in order to save face and not bring shame to the family. He counseled her to be patient and ignore her husband's behavior to avoid further beatings. KX also explained to his cousin that she needed to be a good wife and mother and continue to obey her husband in hopes that one day he will realize his wrongdoing and appreciate her. After this meeting, KX did not know whether his cousin was still being abused by her husband or not as she didn't mention it anymore. The outcome of this interview shows a typical example of how the Hmong cultural works when dealing with domestic violence. When a dispute occurs between married couples and abuse is involved, families would deal with the problems themselves rather than involve outsiders such as counseling experts or police. These protocols unfortunately do not favor the women much and very little consequence is placed on the men.

Hmong Culture Influences

The Patriarchal System. Hmong culture is highly patriarchal in nature and places a strong emphasis on the men as they will carry on the family name. They are given special privileges to be clan leaders and decision makers. They are the head of their household, the main bread winners and responsible for duties outside of the home. Women are expected to obey and follow their husband's order. Their main responsibilities include caring for the children, cleaning, cooking, and attending to their husband (Foo, 2002). According to Cerhan (1999), "Both family and clan leaders are very important to the Hmong social structure. They are the ones that make decisions for the families. Members of the clan are loyal and very supportive to the clan system" (p. 88). When the wife disobeys, misbehaves, or challenges the husband's authority, he may discipline her which can include physical abuse. According to Lyfoung (2003) domestic violence can occur in Hmong society when the man's role in the structure is threatened by the woman. Kaiser (2003) reported similar findings in interviews with Hmong men regarding a number of Hmong women's murders by Hmong men in the Twin Cities. The respondents answered that Hmong men who were raised in Laos felt they have lost their honor and respect since coming to America. Patriarchal societies are more tolerant and lenient toward men who neglect their role as husbands than they are toward women who neglect their role as wives. Women have difficulty resisting their husbands' violence since traditional beliefs around the value of family and marriage form the basis for a stable and respectful status in society (Pillai, 2001).

Gender Role Inequality. Like most Asian culture, men are valued, respected, and given more privileges than women. A Hmong female is taught at an early age to be submissive, listen to the man, and know her place in the family. In their home countries,

Hmong girls were more likely discouraged or even prohibited to attend school as they were needed to help the family with farming and household chores. In America, Hmong girls are often discouraged from attending college and encouraged to marry in early adulthood. There is lesser importance placed on her as she will not be the one to carry the family's last name. Lemoine (2012) gives further details on the Hmong female's role. He states, "She must be obedient and patient. She is not supposed to talk back and must obey her husband's every command. She must not be lazy and should do most of the daily chores, take care of children, and provide food for everyone in the house. Her pride is to do all these duties quite naturally without ever complaining" (p. 3). Men will use force when the structure is unbalanced, which is when women want independence. This has been the trend in gender role conflicts within many Hmong families.

Divorce is Discouraged. Divorce, more frequently than not, has been discouraged in the Asian culture as it is considered to bring disgrace to the women's family. Kothari (2007) stressed that people of divorce are viewed as damaged goods in the family, especially the children. Even women who are in bad marriages will remain in the marriage for the sake of keeping the family strong at all costs. A study conducted by Bhuyan (2015) with a group of Cambodian woman found that the women in the study did not divorce their husbands because they did not want the community to know about their family problems and also because they did not want the children to live without the fathers.

Shame also plays a big role in Asian cultures. Asian culture emphasizes collectivism while Western culture emphasizes individualism. As a result, Asian society is often referred to as shame-based cultures where social order is maintained through the use of shame.

According to Wong et al. (2011), in Asian culture, divorce was discouraged in order to save face. According to Ngo and Otley (2011), “The norm of Hmong culture shun and stigmatize female victims because sexual violence. Hmong families value their reputation so much that they would force daughters to marry their attackers. Hmong female victims of sexual assault are thus ‘shamed into silence’ by Hmong culture” (p. 99).

Justification. An interesting study conducted by Alvi et al. (2005) compared victimization with other races such as African American, Hmong, and Caucasian women from two public housing developments. In the study, 45% (n=40) of Hmong women agreed that a husband should have the right to discipline his wife; 52% of them also agreed that the husband has the right to have sex with his wife whenever he wants; 37.5% agreed that sometimes a wife seems to ask for beatings from her husband, 37.5% agreed that the husband or lover has the right to hit a woman if she had sex with another man; and 32.5% agreed that a husband or lover has the right to hit a woman if she refuses to cook and clean. The study also found that 35.3% of the Hmong women reported having experienced physical violence at least once in the past 12 months. The study shows that African American and Caucasian respondents had a much smaller endorsement rate for these items compared to the Hmong respondents. The most disturbing trend revealed in this study was the fact that Hmong women who agreed with male-privilege statements were 5 times more likely to be abused than other Hmong women. Traditional Hmong men view physical abuse as an acceptable method for disciplining a disobedient wife, while Hmong men who are more acculturated rejected the traditional patriarchy.

Another study was conducted by Yoshioka et al. (2001) with four Asian subgroups Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Cambodian on their attitudes toward marital violence. The majority of the participants reported finding violence justified in certain situations, such as a wife's sexual infidelity, nagging, and refusal to complete her household chores and responsibilities. The Southeast Asian groups were more supportive of male privilege and the use of violence in specific situations. In contrast, East Asians were more likely to oppose the use of violence. Hmong culture bears similarities to the Southeast Asian groups. For example, Hmong believe a man is justified in hitting his wife in certain situations such as failure to clean, cook, or remain faithful to her husband. Pillai (2001) pointed out that Asian men who hold patriarchal beliefs such as sexism and negative attitudes toward women consider violence against women to be justified; in fact, they believe that the woman is to blame for her husband's violence against her.

Economic Status Change. Women with jobs experience conflicts with their husbands because Hmong culture encourages males to be dominant in the family structure. When women become the breadwinners and lead the family, the men have a difficult time accepting the change. They may try everything; even physical abuse, to be in charge of the family and avoid losing their power (Menjivar & Salcido, 2014). In addition, an Asian woman whose income is higher than that of her husband is at a greater risk of experiencing violence at the hands of her spouse. Hmong husbands do not like to have authority wielded over them by women, so they attempt to claim their control and power through violence (Yang, 1997; Chung et al., 2008).

Early Marriage

Adolescent Marriage. Hmong have a history of marrying very early where girls as young as 12 years are married, especially in their home countries of Laos. Ngo & Otley (2011) stated that Hmong girls typically get married between the age of 13 and 16, and men between the ages of 18 and 30. Today, though not as common anymore, Hmong families still practice the tradition of young marriages even in America (Vang & Her, 2014). Many researchers indicate that marrying young may bring many difficulties to women including bearing children at an early age, lower educational achievement, financial instability, and marital problems (Vang & Bogenschutz, 2011; citing Astone and Upchurch, 1994; Bartz and Nye, 1970; Moore et al., 1993; Sharline, 1998; Teti and Lamb, 1989; Upchurch, 1993). Hmong women who married as teenagers have more marital problems than those who marry in adulthood, since they tend to have lower education and income. Thus, they are more likely to experience marital abuse (Vang & Bogenschutz, 2011). Therefore, early marriage can bring a number of burdens to a young couple who may not be ready to handle such tasks. This could lead them to become aggressive towards each other and possibly end up becoming violent.

The lifestyle in Laos was based on farming and children were essential to one's economic security. For this reason Hmong families tended to be large in number. Hmong girls typically married starting at about age 13 or 14 to support the in-laws and have their own families. Hmong wives need to obey their husbands and follow rules and expectations in the families. If they do not follow rules in the households, husbands will use force on them (Vang & Bogenschutz, 2014). Early marriages still remain a cultural practice in the United States even though the risk of dropping out of school and financial struggles are high.

Hmong Parents' Value of Education. Hmong families who still hold traditional values in the United States may not allow girls to obtain higher educations. Ngo & Otley (2011) discussed their findings with a Hmong female professional regarding gender issues. Ngo interviewed Mai Xiong, a Hmong policy advisor at the state legislature, and discussed issues of teenage marriage. She explained that parents want their children to succeed. But when she start working with their daughters and they are getting a bit more independent, making their own choices or it looks like their child is not going to get married within a certain age, they start to worry. Parents would tell her to encourage their daughters to attend the University of Minnesota instead of far away university. Parents have concerned that if their daughters are going far university, there are not going to be Hmong men at her school, and so they are not going to get married. Hmong parents are more concerned with them not getting married instead of getting an education. They are not supportive of their children's education which could lead teens to marry at a young age and drop out of school.

Financial Hardships. Couples who married as teenagers are more likely to drop out of high school and avoid higher education because of pregnancy or having to work full time to support their new family (Uecker, 2012). Not all, but the majority of young people who are married at an early age come from low income families. This creates more hardship as when they have financial struggles, their parents are unable to assist them (Uecker, 2012; as cited in Uecker & Stoke, 2008). Many researchers indicated that early marriages bring about many difficulties which can include having children, lower educational achievement, financial instability, and marital problems (Vang & Bogenschutz, 2011; citing Astone and Upchurch, 1994; Bartz and Nye, 1970; Moore et al., 1993; Sharline, 1998; Teti and Lamb, 1989; Upchurch, 1993). Hmong women who marry at an early age tend to drop out of

school, experience low income, marriage problems, and psychological distress (Vang & Bogenschutz, 2011).

Family Relationships

Abuse By In-Laws. The Hmong culture's foundation is strongly based on family, and while there are many praises that can be said about this, there are just as many struggles. One such struggle can be found in the relationships between daughters and their in-laws. In Kothari's (2007) study, South Asian women who live with their in-laws sometimes had more marital problems than those who did not. Sometimes the daughter in law is abused by her in-laws and the husband may participate or be an observer of his wife's abuse by his parents or siblings. Oftentimes the mother in-law encourages her son to keep his wife under control and blame the wife for the abuse. Raj et al. (2006) highlighted various forms of emotional abuse that South Asian victims received from their in-laws. The in-laws often prohibited daughter-in-laws from contacting her family members, limiting the time she is allowed to spend with her family, and generally isolating her from her family members. The in-laws also prevented the victim from taking responsibility for her own money. The mother-in-law might even try to influence the son to be abusive toward the daughter-in-law. Additionally, the in-laws, especially the mother-in-law, support the perpetration their son commits against his wife. Sometimes, the mother-in-law even blames the daughter-in-law, claiming that she deserves the abuse. Hmong women also have a similar experience with their in-laws. In-laws may emotionally abuse their daughter in law, but the issue usually remains hidden and isn't addressed in the home. However, there has been limited research on this issue and further research may be needed.

Financial Dependency. According to Bornstein (2006), some partners are dependent on their partners for financial support. The partner who controls all the financial means controls the other person too. Some partners also seek emotional support from their partners. Bornstein (2006) stressed that even though the partner is autonomous and independent, s/he needs emotional attachment and protection. When s/he becomes too dependent on the other person, this person can manipulate and use his/her power to be aggressive toward the spouse. This could lead to domestic violence. Even though a wife is working, she wouldn't be able to take responsibility for herself financially because the husband is the one who controls the income. The dependent partners find it difficult to leave since they are attached to and dependent upon their abusive spouses. It is very hard to break the cycle and abusive spouses continue abusing their victims. In Bhuyan et al. (2005) a study done with Cambodian women states that their husbands do not allow them to make decisions along with them. The husband is in full control of the financial resources and may use it for gambling instead of for the families.

Immigration Status. Some Asian spouses relied on their partners to get permanent status or citizenship for them since they were married through sponsorship. Their partner, especially men, may use that reasoning as a threat or to jeopardize her legal status. Weil & Lee (2004) states that battered Asian immigrant women may fear deportation if they report the abuse. The abuser may use threats and intimidation to jeopardize the victim's legal status. Asian women also are less likely to seek service or assistance for fear of being deported back to their home country due to their immigration status. Services are another factor hindering Asian women from seeking help because of language barriers. In addition, the system has failed to provide more funding for outreach and education for Asian

communities (Menjivar & Salcido, 2002). Many immigrants or refugees do not report their abuse to authorities in fear of deportation or perhaps brutality from authorities. Many immigrants and refugees have had bad experiences with police brutality in their country and this may prevent them from seeking assistance when they are abused by their partners. Kothari (2007) stated, “The issue of financial control and immigration status jointly compounds [the] issues of domestic violence. As they are frequently the secondary and dependent immigrants, women often feel the need to justify themselves in the eyes of their husbands and to live by their rules” (p. 16).

Language Barrier. Everyone is at a risk for domestic violence; however, immigrant women may face a more difficult time escaping the abuse. Immigrant women often feel trapped in abusive relationships due to language barriers and lack of social support. They are unlikely to report the abuse to the police when they do not speak English (Menjivar & Salcido, 2002). Even if she does end up dialing 911 regarding physical abuse, she probably wouldn't be able to explain the whole story to police. Isolation is another factor for immigrant women because they don't have their immediate family nearby. Menjivar and Salcido (2002) stated, “Isolation may occur more easily for immigrant women as many have left behind families and loved ones. They enter a foreign environment where they may not know the language, culture, or physical geographic area and may recognize only a few familiar faces” (p. 891).

Effects of Acculturation

Difficult Adjustment. First Hmong generation will most likely have a more difficult time adapting to a new culture. Wong et al. (2011) explains that immigrant women may be

exposed to additional challenges such as isolation and dependence that subjects them to greater risk for domestic violence. They may also experience culture shock in which they are exposed to new things that they were unprepared for resulting in psychological distress (George, 2012). Younger generations easily learn to cope with culture shock, but older generations will have a more difficult time. Yang (1997) stated that new immigrants often experience a crisis period where they suddenly become aware that life in the new country is not as easy as they had anticipated.

New Survival Skills. Adaptation to the America lifestyle demands new survival strategies. Patterns of early marriage and large families that were essential for survival in Laos are changing to patterns involving formal education, employment, delayed marriage, postponed first childbirths, and smaller families. Adapting to their new U.S. surroundings, however, has demanded that new knowledge and survival strategies be adopted (Vang, 2014). The younger generation has easily assimilated to the mainstream culture. Women have become the breadwinner because of their skills (Tatman, 2004).

Generational Conflicts. Children may rebel against their parents or reject some of the cultural norms. In Lee's (2007) study, Hmong girls have shaped gender roles in the Hmong community. More recently, more and more Hmong families are adjusting to American culture and adopting the belief that education should be equal for both boys and girls. More Hmong girls and women are getting their education because education is the key to better and higher-paying jobs. As Hmong girls adapt to American culture and the opportunities they receive, they are less likely to married young. As Hmong girls pursue gender equality, they also face conflicts with their parents about household chores. They

believe that equality should also apply to division of chores among boys and girls. Girls who challenge their parents' expectations around the household are believed to be bad daughters. Cultural clashes between both generations can throw the family into disagreement and this can bring chaos to the family.

Hmong children have become Americanized and behave outside of Hmong culture norms. This has led to disapproval among many Hmong parents because children are considered to act inappropriately towards adult when they fail to obey their parents. Hmong parents who still hold traditional values are often shocked by their children's behavior. They also think that America culture gives children too much freedom which causes them to act in very destructive ways and not respect the elders (Kaiser, 2005). Therefore, this can create problems for Hmong families if parents are not able to adapt to American culture.

Research Question

Although Hmong are settled in the United States and are adapting to the American culture, they are living within two worlds. This has created cultural clashes. In the past, openly discussing domestic violence was forbidden because it is considered a family matter but now it is a concern for everyone in the Hmong community. Limited empirical studies have been done on domestic violence in the Hmong population. However; there is a high level of physical and sexual abuse on Hmong women by their male partners as reported in current studies. This has caused many in the Hmong community to be very concerned about domestic violence in the community (Yim, 2006). The researcher believes that to gain an understanding about domestic violence in the Hmong community, it is good to examine the social factors that are related to domestic violence. The formal hypothesis for this research

was: Are social factors associated with domestic violence? A null hypothesis was: There was no relationship between social factors associated with domestic violence.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this research will be guided using two difference theories to examine social factors that contribute to domestic violence among Hmong adults. The transactional model of stress and coping and acculturation theory will guide the researcher when analyzing and discussing the data.

The Transactional Model of Stress and Coping

The transactional model of stress and coping was developed by Lazarus and Folkman in 1984 (Perrewe & Zellars, 1999). This theory is based on the evaluation of the processes of coping with stressful events, which resulted from the transactional relationship between the person and their environment from which stressors arise, and this transaction is dependent on external factors (Perrewe & Zellars, 1999).

This model has two conceptual main points of appraisal and coping (Perrewe & Zellars, 1999). The appraisal is composed of primary and secondary appraisals. The primary appraisal is the individual's evaluation of the significance of what is happening for his/her well-being. The secondary appraisal is the individual's evaluation of the stress and if they are able to manage it. Coping is the evaluation of strategies to manage the stressor (Perrewe & Zellars, 1999). This affects the psychological and physical well-being of a person and how a person appraises his/her resources to cope with the stressor.

Since this theory looks at the responses and adaptations to stressors, stress can become a problem when it rises higher or dips lower and when it becomes a negative feeling and results in maladaptive behavior. When a person has limited resources for coping, this person will participate in harmful activities such as violence.

Acculturation Theory

Acculturation theory was developed by John H. Schumann (Barjestch & Vaseghi, 2012). He studied six immigrant students, and one student named Alberto showed little progress in the acquisition process of English. As Alberto's lack of progress denied any satisfactory explanation in terms of cognitive development or age, Schumann stressed that Alberto's failure was caused by his limited contact with native English speakers. Alberto may be said to experience social and psychological barriers to acculturation. Schumann used these two factors to explain why individuals have difficulty learning a second language.

Acculturation relies on social and psychological processes (Barjestch & Vaseghi, 2012). This makes it difficult for second-language learners to study a language and learn the ways of the new culture. Individuals who have limited integration of the mainstream culture will experience social distance. Social distance does not allow people to learn a new language because they do not talk often with people who speak the main language, making it harder for them to learn the language (Chizzo, 2002).

Acculturation is looking at individuals transitioning from their own culture into another culture; where they acculturate or adopt the new culture's behaviors, values, customs, and language (Berry, 2005). When individuals are less acculturated, they may struggle more while living in the culture. The social and psychological factors discussed

above it difficult for them to assimilate to the new culture due to isolation and feelings of not being able to connect with people from the majority culture.

The transactional model of stress and coping and acculturation theory will examine effectively the relationship between social factors and domestic violence. The present research will address acculturation and stress issues that have affected individuals' behaviors.

Methodology

This study used quantitative data to examine social factors that influence domestic violence. The research question was: Are social factors related to domestic violence among Hmong adults? The researcher hopes to shed light on this problem and provide a better understanding of the social factors that influence domestic violence among Hmong adults. The Internal Review Board's approval was requested and received before any steps are taken towards recruiting participants.

Population

The population for this research was 43 Hmong male and female adults between the ages of 18 to 60 years old with a history of domestic violence. The respondents were from Saint Paul and Minneapolis areas. The respondents were collected through a snowball sampling strategy.

Sampling

In the nonprobability sampling design, a purposive convenience sampling method with a snowball strategy was used for gathering respondents. This study included Hmong males and females who were over the age of 18 and with prior experience with domestic

violence. Family members, friends of the researcher, and individuals who currently are experiencing any domestic violence were prohibited from participating. The researcher's contact information was distributed to Hmong stores in Saint Paul and Minneapolis, through family members, and Hmong professionals who showed an interest the study.

Instruments

Since the researcher could not find a suitable questionnaire measuring the relationship of social factors and domestic violence, the researcher developed his own questionnaire. The survey instrument consisted of 38 questions. Twenty-five questions were divided into five categories of factors which included; educational, cultural, relationship, socioeconomic, and individual. Thirteen questions were on demographics. The social factors questions are in Likert-type such as 1 – Never, 2 – Rarely, 3 – Sometimes, 4 – Often, and 5 – Always. The demographics questions were in a “yes” and “no” form.

Data Collection

This was a quantitative research and an exploratory survey study designed to gather data through a four-page questionnaire with 38 items. The data collection consisted of the two following steps:

The first method was by word of mouth to family members and friends who may know anyone qualified to participate in this study. The author also contacted agencies working with former Hmong victims of violence about the research. In addition, flyers (Appendix F) were posted at local Hmong grocery stores in St. Paul and Minneapolis to recruit Hmong women and men for this study. The researcher did not receive any response or contact from Hmong individuals interested in taking the survey (Appendix C). The reasoning perhaps could be that this is a very sensitive issue and private matter that is not easily

disclosed to just anyone. Also, individuals did not know the author so they may be reluctant to participate. They may not have wanted to disclose their experience with domestic violence to a stranger. Furthermore, they may not want to share their problems with an outsider as they do not want an outsider to know about their problems. However, one of the researcher's committee members, who is a domestic abuse advocate, helped to administer surveys on her clients. A Hmong therapist also helped to administer surveys on his clients. They were qualified to administer the surveys because they were professionals who spoke both speak English and Hmong. They were able to translate survey questions (Appendix C), consent forms (Appendix A or B), Script for recruitment purpose (Appendix D), and resource information (Appendix E) from English to Hmong for individuals who were not proficient in English or Hmong. The researcher's sister helped pass the survey questions and consent form to her co-workers. They were proficient in English and they were able to complete the survey on their own time. The author collected a total of 43 surveys for this research and the information gathered throughout this study was grouped together. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science 21 in a two-step process. First, frequencies were compiled to gain general knowledge of the demographic distribution of the respondents. This was followed by a series of chi-squared analysis, which enables cross-tabulation.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the quantitative data. Quantitative data was used to describe a type of information that can be counted or expressed numerically (Monette, Sullivan, & DeJong, 2011). The data analysis used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences software program (SPSS 21). Data analysis was conducted using frequency and descriptive tests. Cross tabulations, chi square analysis, and correlations were used to

examine the relationships between domestic violence (dependent variable) and social factors (independent variable). The question this study attempted to answer was the following: what social factors were related to domestic violence among Hmong adults? The hypothesis for this research was: acculturation and socioeconomic factors were related to domestic violence among Hmong adults. The null hypothesis for this study was that there was no relationship between these two factors related to domestic violence.

Consent and Confidentiality

This research study was designed to protect all participants. To protect each human subject, a proposal was submitted to the researcher's MSW Clinical Research Committee. Upon the committee's approval, an application was sent to the St. Catherine University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB evaluated and approved the content and procedures of this research to ensure that there were no risks to the human subjects in this study. At the beginning of the survey, a consent form was provided that clearly defined the purpose of this research (see Appendix C). The procedures were explained to participants, which involved reading the consent form, agreeing to participate, and answering the survey questions, with the option of stopping at any time. Risks and benefits were addressed, in which there were minimal risks and no direct benefits for participating. An explanation of confidentiality and anonymity during the research process and the voluntary nature of the research were also provided. The contact information of the researcher and the researcher's faculty advisor were provided. Participants were then asked to sign the informed consent and select the option of whether or not they agreed to participate in the study.

Findings

The purpose of this study was to quantitatively examine the social factors related to domestic violence among Hmong adults. The formal hypothesis for this research was: Are social factors associated with domestic violence among Hmong adults.

All of the 43 respondents in this study were Hmong male and female who live in Saint Paul and Minneapolis areas. In line with the demographics of the Hmong population generally, this was an older sample with the majority of the respondents in the 40-50 age range. The distribution of selected sample demographics is displayed in Tables 1 & 2. All survey respondents did not answer some items, meaning that there were some missing data which is not presented.

Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science 21 in a two-step process. First, frequencies were compiled to gain general knowledge of the demographic distribution of the respondents. This was followed by a series of chi-squared analysis, which enabled cross-tabulation.

Descriptive Statistics

Demographics. Participants were asked a number of questions regarding their demographics. Variables included gender, age, marital status, education level, birth place, how long they have lived in the United States, victim or abuser, generation, proficient in English, and income status. (See Tables 1, 2 & 3).

A total of 43 surveys were completed. 78.6% (n=33) of the respondents were female and 21.4% (n=9) were male. The age of the participants ranged from 20 years old to 60 years

SOCIAL FACTORS RELATED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG HMONG ADULTS

old, with an average (mean) age of 35 years old. 47.6% (n=20) respondents reported being married, 11.9% (n=5) reported being single, 21% (n=9) reported being widowed, 19% (n=8) reported being divorced. For country of birth, two percent (n=1) of the respondents reported they were born in the United States while 97.6% (n=41) were born outside of the United States. Regarding how long respondents have lived in the United States, seven percent (n=3) of respondents reported they have lived in the United States for less than five years, 23.8% (n=10) reported they had lived in the United States for six to ten years, 7.1% (n=3) reported they have lived in the United States for eleven to fifteen years, 12% (n=5) reported they have lived in the United States for sixteen to twenty years, 26.2% (n=11) reported they have lived in the United States for twenty-one to twenty-five years, 12% (n=5) reported they have lived here for twenty-six to thirty years, 4.8% (n=2) reported they have lived here for thirty-one to thirty-five years, and 7.2% (n=3) reported they have lived here for thirty-six to forty years. Regarding whether or not they were the abuser or the victim, 83.3% (n=35) of the respondents were victims/survivors, none were abusers, and 16.7% (n=7) did not respond to that question. Regarding generational status, 92.9% (n=39) of the respondents reported that they were first generation and 7.1% (n=3) reported being second generation.

SOCIAL FACTORS RELATED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG HMONG ADULTS

Table 1. Demographics

		n=42	%
Gender	Male	9	21.4
	Female	33	78.6
Age	20-25	2	4.8
	26-30	1	2.4
	31-35	7	16.7
	36-40	8	19.1
	41-45	6	14.4
	46-50	10	23.8
	51-55	2	4.8
	56-60	6	14.3
Marital Status	Married	20	47.6
	Single	5	11.9
	Widowed	9	21
	Divorced	8	19
Born	United States	1	2.4
	Outside United States	41	97.6
Years of living in the United States	0-5	3	7.2
	6-10	10	23.8
	11-15	3	7.1
	16-20	5	12
	21-25	11	26.2
	26-30	5	12
	31-35	2	4.8
	36-40	3	7.2
Abuse status	Victim/Survivor	35	83.3
	Abuser		
	Missing	7	16.7
Generation	First Generation	39	92.9
	Second Generation	3	7.1

Table 2: Education, English Ability, and Income

		n=43	%
Education level			
	No education	32	76.2
	High school/GED	8	19
	Associates degree	1	2.4
	Bachelor’s degree		
	Masters or Higher	1	2.4
Speak and Write English			
	No	20	47
	Poor	10	23.8
	Fair	7	16.7
	Good	2	4.8
	Excellent	3	7.1
Individual income level			
	20,000 or less	33	78.6
	20,000- 25,000	1	2.4
	25,000- 30,000	2	4.8
	30,000-35,000	2	4.8

Education, English Ability, and Income

In regards to education, seventy-six percent (n=32) of the participants reported they had no formal education, 19% (n=8) reported had a high school diploma/GED, 2.4% (n=1) reported they had an associates degree, and 2.4% (n=1) reported they had a master’s degree.

In regards to English speaking ability, forty-seven percent (n=20) of respondents reported that they couldn’t speak English, 23.8% (n=10) reported poor English, 16.7% (n=7) reported speaking fair English, 4.8% (n=2) reported speaking English well, and 7.1% (n=3) reported speaking English excellently.

Regarding income, seventy-eight percent (n=33) of respondents reported their income was \$20,000 and below, 2.4% (n=1) reported income was \$20-\$25,000, 4.8% (n=2) reported income was \$25-\$30,000, 4.8% (n=2) reported income was \$3-\$35,000, and 7.1% (n=3) reported their income was \$35,000 and above.

Cross Tabulations**Table 3:** Experience with Domestic Violence

	Years	n=42	%
Experience with abuse			
	0-5	12	28
	6-10	6	14.3
	11-15	2	4.8
	16-20	4	9.6
	21-25	1	2.4
	26-30	4	9.6
	31-35	1	2.4
	36-45	1	2.4
	Missing	11	26.2
Abused by family members			
	Yes	11	26.2
	No	31	73.8
Victim reported abuse to authorities			
	Yes	14	33.3
	No	27	64.3
	Missing	1	2.4
Partner knows laws forbid DV			
	Yes	20	47.6
	No	20	47.6
	Missing	2	4.8

Participants' Experience with Domestic Violence

The question was asked, "How long had you been abused by your partner"? Twenty eight percent (n=12) respondents reported that they had been abused for five years, fourteen percent of the respondents reported they had been abused by their partner for six to ten years, four percent of respondents reported they had been abused by their partners for eleven to fifteen years, nine percent (n=4) of respondents reported they had been abused for sixteen to

twenty years, two percent (n=1) of respondent reported he/she had been abused by their partner for twenty-one to twenty-five years, nine percent (n=4) of respondents reported they had been abused for twenty-six to thirty years, two percent (n=1) of respondents reported he/she had been abused for thirty-one to thirty-five years, two percent (n=2) of respondents reported they had been abused for thirty-six to forty-five years, and twenty six percent (n=11) of respondents are missing an answer to this question. The question was asked, “Had you been abused by family members?” Twenty-six percent (n=11) of respondents reported they had been abused by family. Seventy-three percent (n=31) of respondents reported that they hadn’t been abused by family members. The question was asked, “Did you report to authorities about the abuse?” Thirty-three percent (n=14) of respondents answered they had reported to authorities, sixty-four (n=27) of respondents reported they hadn’t reported to authorities, and two percent (n=1) of respondents didn’t respond to this question. The question was asked, “Did your partner know about laws that forbid domestic violence?” Forty-seven (n=20) of respondents reported that their partners knew about the law, forty-seven (n=20) of respondents reported that their partners did not know about the law, and four percent (n=2) of respondents were missing an answer to this question.

Table 4: Early Marriage and Depression

Marriage under 18	Depression						Total	
	Rare		Occasion		Frequent		n	%
	n	%	N	%	N	%	n	%
Yes	3	7.1	3	7.1	25	59.5	31	73.8
No	1	0	2	4.8	8	19	10	23.8
Total	4	9.5	5	11.9	33	78.6	42	100

p= .025< .05

Early Marriage and Depression

Table 4 shows that, of all respondents who have been married before the age of 18, 3 (7.1%) felt that they rarely have been depressed, 3 (7.1%) felt that they have been occasionally depressed, and 25 (59.5%) felt that they have been frequently depressed. Of all the respondents who had not been married before the age of 18, 1(0%) felt that they rarely have been depressed, 2 (4.8%) felt that they have been occasionally depressed, and 8 (19%) felt that they have been frequently depressed. The cross-tabulation demonstrates that in the sample, those who have been married before the age of 18 were more likely to have been depressed than those who were not married before the age of 18. The p value for this was .025, making it a significant finding.

Table 5: Conflicts and Depression

Conflicts	Depression							
	Rare		Occasion		Frequent		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Rare	0	0	3	7.1	4	9.5	7	16.7
Occasion	1	2.4	2	4.8	8	19	11	26.2
Frequent	3	7.1	0	0	21	50	24	57.1
Total	4	9.5	5	11.9	33	78.6	42	100

$p = .034 < .05$

Conflicts and Depression

Table 5 shows that, all respondents who had rarely experienced conflict with their partners, no participants reported feeling rarely depressed, 3 (7.1%) felt that they were occasionally depressed, 4 participants (9.5%) felt they were frequent depressed. Of all the respondents who had occasionally experienced conflict with their partners, 1 participant (2.4%) felt that they were rarely depressed, 2 (4.8%) felt that they were occasionally depressed, and 8 participants (19%) felt that they were frequently depressed. Of all the respondents who had frequently experienced conflict with their partners, 3 (7.1%) felt that they were rarely depressed, none felt occasionally depressed, and 21 (50%) felt that they were frequently depressed. This cross-tabulation demonstrates that in the sample, not surprisingly, those who frequently experienced conflict in their relationships were more

likely to feel depressed than those who only rarely or occasionally experienced conflict in their relationships. The p value for this relationship was .034 making it a significant finding.

Table 6: Partner Knows the Laws And Controls the Relationship

Partner aware of the laws	Controls relationship						Total	
	Rare		Occasion		Frequent		N	%
	N	%	N	%	n	%	N	%
Yes	6	14.3	5	11.9	11	26.2	20	47.6
No	10	23.8	7	16.7	3	7.1	20	47.6
Total	16	38.1	12	28.6	14	33.3	40	100

p= .027< .05

Partner Knows the DV Laws and Controls the Relationship

Table 5 shows that all respondents who reported that their partners were aware of DV laws six respondents (14.3%) felt that their partners rarely controlled them in their relationship, five participants (11.9%) felt that they had been occasionally controlled by their partners, and 11 (26.2%) felt that they had been frequently controlled by their partners. Of all the respondents who reported that their partners were unaware of the DV laws ten participants (23.8%) felt that their partners rarely controlled them, 7 (16.7%) felt that they have been occasionally controlled by their partners, and 3 (7.1%) felt that they have been frequently controlled by their partners. The cross-tabulation demonstrated that in the sample, those who reported their partners were aware of the DV laws were more likely to be

controlled by their partners than those who partners were not aware of the DV laws. The p value for this relationship was .027, making this a significant finding.

Table 7: Abuse by Family Members and Restricted Gender Roles

Abuse by family	Restriction of gender roles							
	Rare		Occasion		Frequent		Total	
	N	%	N	%	n	%	N	%
Yes	3	7.3	2	4.9	5	12.2	10	24.4
No	4	9.8	9	22	18	43.9	31	75.6
Total	7	17.1	11	26.8	23	56.1	41	100

p =.447> .05

Abuse by Family Members and Gender Role Restriction

Twelve percent (n=5) of respondents reported they had been abused by a family member and frequently had a limited gender role in their relationship meaning they had to stay within their culturally defined gender roles. Forty-three percent (n=18) of respondents reported they weren't abused by family members and that there were no limitations on gender roles in their relationship. The cross tabulation demonstrates that in the sample, the majority of respondents reported that there were no gender restrictions in their relationship by family members. The p-value for the chi-square of the variables abuse by family members and gender restrictions is .447. Since the p-value is greater than .05, we fail to reject null hypothesis. Therefore, this data does not support the research hypothesis that there is a

significant association between individuals who experience abuse by family members and restrictions on gender roles in their relationship.

Discussion

Domestic violence is a global problem that affects every culture. Unfortunately, instances of domestic violence are increasing and gaining wide visibility among Hmong adults. This research explores the social factors that are related to domestic violence among Hmong participants. The formal hypothesis for this research was: Social factors are related to the rise of domestic violence among Hmong adults. This was tested using a variety of statistical techniques. The findings of this study did not support the hypothesis.

Early Marriage and Depression

This study found a statistical significance relationship between marriage under 18 years of age and depression. Couples who married at an early age were more likely to have low coping mechanisms in dealing with stresses that arise in their relationship. One stressor is related to financial struggles. Although financial situations are a problem for most people, it is more so for the uneducated. Mostly individuals who married at an early age tended to have low educational attainment. Without higher education, they may experience difficulty in finding a well-paying job and the chances of getting a job promotion are scarce. In addition, their resources are limited, especially if they are unable to communicate well in English.

According to research, young adults who marry at an early age may most likely come from disadvantaged families. Their parents may be uneducated and likely poor, they are often not well educated, and tend to earn a low income. They are socioeconomically disadvantaged. Their parents can't help them financially when they have financial struggles (Uecker, 2012; in cited Uecker & Stoke, 2008). Financial problems can lead to couples having tensions in their relationship. Stress can cause a couple to act aggressively towards each other and it could lead to violence. Accordingly, in Vang & Bogenschutz's (2011) study, Hmong women who married in their teens tended to have low education, lower income, marital problems, experience more marital violence, and experience more depressive symptoms.

Another problem for young couples, especially the women, is the expectation of her role as a wife, daughter in law, and mother. Hmong culture lays a fairly large demand on her to do all three roles well. If her performance is not up to par for her spouse's family, she is at risk of being ridiculed, sent back to her parent's home, or even divorced. For this reason, Hmong mothers place a strong emphasis on their daughter at an early age to cook and clean. For many young girls and women, the concept of being this "superwoman" creates much pressure and burden. Vang and Bogenschutz (2014) explained the following:

Marriage in Hmong culture is bound by strict rules that require wives to obey the male head of the household. More often than not, physical, emotional, and sexual abuse of women who do not fulfill their gender expectations is tolerated by family members due to strong traditional of patriarchy. (p. 4)

Conflicts and Depression

It was statistically significant that couples who dealt with conflicts were prone to experiencing depression. Couples who have conflicts and frequent arguments were most likely to experience depressive symptoms. Perhaps there are three factors related to this. First, the gender role in a marriage within Hmong culture has reversed when one partner, often the female, assimilates to American culture while the other has not. Since American culture values gender equality, the role of the Hmong men is challenged. Hmong women can suddenly adopt the role of leader in the household, and Hmong men feel inferior and less valued. Yang (1997) discussed the following:

A variety of factors are said to lead to problems for Hmong men after resettlement. Women are finding it easier to find work outside the home and to learn English. The traditional male role of decision maker is increasingly devalued as children seek more independence. Furthermore, since youth often serve as intermediaries between adults and mainstream institutions because of their language skills, this again reverses traditional power relationships. The ability of a male head of household to provide for his family is greatly diminished with even the AFDC checks made out in the mother's name. Too often stories circulate of once powerful military officers and village chiefs living in isolated poverty and dependent on others. (p.1)

Therefore, Hmong men perceive that they are losing their social status to Hmong women and the younger generation. They may attempt to reclaim their control or power by force toward their partners. Chung et al. (2008) highlighted that Asian women who earn more income

than their husbands and have more decision-making power have a greater risk of experiencing violence at the hands of their spouses.

Secondly, Hmong couples who were lacked the communication skills to solve marital conflicts or work through them. As the Hmong adapted to American culture, they faced many new issues include new problems in the marriage or with the family. They need to adopt new tools to use. In Vang's (2014) study, Hmong need to adopt new knowledge and strategies for survival in the new culture. The data show slightly that the first Hmong generation is not as proficient in speaking, reading, and writing English compared to later generations. Without formal education, they may have a hard time learning new strategies to deal with problems that may arise. When they lack necessary resources, their problems are more likely to increase. This could result in harboring resentment that builds up and is carried over into the next argument. In other cases, talking about such issues results in verbal abuse or even physical fighting. Sometimes, couples will avoid talking to each other to avoid conflict.

Thirdly, Hmong parents may have cultural clashes with their children. Parents may not have the skills to deal with their children's behaviors because the children have become Americanized and they may behave differently from their parents' expectation or rules in Hmong culture. According to Kaiser (2005), "particularly those who hold more traditional values, reported that many Hmong parents in the United States are dismayed by their children's inappropriate behavior. They believe that American notions of freedom and egalitarianism influence children in very destructive ways (p.3).

In addition, Hmong girls pursue gender equality in education. They also seek gender equality in household chores. They believe that household chores should be divided equally for boys and girls. However, they face conflict with their parents' expectations and rules in the household. Girls who challenge their parents' expectations and rules in the household are believed to be a bad daughter (Lee, 2007). Therefore, cultural clashes between both generations can throw the family into violence because they don't know how to deal with these problems.

Partner Knows DV laws and Controls the Relationship

The findings on partners that acknowledge DV laws are more likely control the relationship in an abusive way was statistically significant. Partners, usually Hmong men, who have an awareness of the domestic violence laws, are still the ones who control the relationship in an abusive way. Studies have proved that there are statistically a high percentage of those who know that the law forbids domestic violence, yet still commit violent acts. There can be many reasons as to why one may batter their spouse or significant other. One reason may be due to unresolved internal psychological struggle because they seek to gain authority and control over their partners (Rosen, 1991). This also could include having low self-esteem or becoming jealous. For example, if the man becomes dependent on the woman, he may be threatened by any moves on her part towards independence even though she has no intention to do so.

Although Hmong men acknowledge domestic violence laws prohibit violence against women, they often disregard them. They batter women because they know women are vulnerable, especially immigrant women who do not speak English. They know women rely

on their support including financial, emotional and other resources. Men can manipulate and abuse women who depend on them. They may threaten the woman if she tries to report the abuse to police. According to Menjivar and Salcido (2002), Weil & Lee (2004), and Bornstein (2006) women who become too dependent on their partners may be manipulated by their spouses and the spouses may attempt to use their power to be aggressive and get their ways. Domestic abuse, for centuries, was viewed as a norm and a form of discipline that was often seen with approval without much consequence for the abuser. In a study by Pillai (2001), in Asian culture, men who hold patriarchal beliefs that support sexism and negative attitude towards women will consider violence against women to be justified. A study conducted by Alvi et al. (2005) compared victimization of Black, Hmong, and White women from two public housing developments. The Hmong woman group had higher rate of validation that for men to hit their wife is justified. They tended to perceive wife-beating as a personal issue that should be kept within the family, and they oppose any involvement outside of the family, especially law enforcement. Men, who had a negative view on gender equality, especially in marital relationships, will devalue their partner and were more likely to be abusive. They didn't see her as their equal and they only felt she was important for the purpose of bearing children and being a good wife or mother (Pillai, 2001).

Another factor that contributes to men who control the relationship in an abusive way is violent socialization within the family of origin; when individuals were raised in violent households, where they watched their mothers abused by their fathers and where they themselves were abused. Hmong parents, especially those from the older generation, are often uneducated so they aren't able to teach their children how to treat both males and females respectfully and equally. Rosen (1991) pointed out that when the individual doesn't

have good objects or parents to teach them good morals as they are growing up, he/she may act aggressively or violently as a result. This in turn often underlies domestic violence.

Family Members and Restrictions on Gender Roles

The findings of this study did not support the relationship between family members who restricted roles in the family and domestic violence. This finding was surprising, as it is inconsistent with previous research. A larger study is needed to examine the role of strict gender roles and domestic violence. Furthermore, the survey items that measured acculturation were limited.

However, there are some discrepancies between the literature and the results. The literature did discuss the issues of the divorce and shame as factors related to domestic violence, but the data contradicted this. Interestingly, the data indicated that psychological distress was related to familial conflict in that those who reported more conflict reported more domestic violence.

In this study of social factors related to domestic violence among Hmong adults, a stress and coping framework developed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984; as cited in Peerewe & Zellars, 1999) was used to conceptualize and examine the relationship between psychological stress and coping resources. Ways of coping with stress are determined by cognitive appraisal and included both cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage stresses that are appraised as taxing. The stress and coping framework acknowledges the importance of personal and environmental stress (stressful life events, psychological distress and their effects on Hmong adult physical and psychological well-being. Coping resources usually include spiritual, family support, financial, and social support. Based on the stress and coping

framework, life events that caused stress (psychological stress and acculturation stress) was negatively associated with coping resources such as family support, social support, and community resources as shown in the results among participants who experienced psychological distress related to domestic violence. Therefore, those with higher coping experienced less stress and vice versa.

The acculturation framework developed by Schumman (Barjestch & Vaseghi, 2012) was used to conceptualize and examine how transition to American cultural affected behavior toward domestic violence among participants in this study. The acculturation framework acknowledges the importance of social and psychological factors and their effect on how individuals transition and adapt to the new culture. Hmong couples who are less acculturated are more likely struggle with life in the new culture. They may have fewer resources, such as less income, education, and English proficiency, to assist them in adapting to the new culture. They may feel migration stress and grief and face adaptation difficulties including poverty. This may create problems for these couples. They may argue and act violently toward each other going through this process because they may have low coping mechanisms to handle psychological distress.

Strengths and Limitations

This study uses a quantitative cross-sectional research design. The use of surveys allowed the researcher to gather responses from participants quickly, and review results in a less time consuming manner compared to interviewing. Also, the quantitative research

design allowed the researcher to provide a hypothesis before the data was collected. Because quantitative research provides an objective approach, the survey results were independent from the researcher. Furthermore, the data collected was presented in a precise and numerical manner. Interpretation of the results was based on statistical analysis increasing the reliability of the results. Finally, the researcher has a strong connection with the Hmong community in the Minneapolis and Saint Paul area which helped during recruitment of subjects for the study.

There are also limitations to this study. Although this is quantitative research, it was still important to pay close attention to any biases that may occur when collecting and analyzing data since the researcher has a connection with the Hmong community. In addition, only a small number of individuals were surveyed, meaning that the ability to generalize the results of this research was limited. Next, the majority of respondents who participated in this survey reported lower education and lower income status than expected within the Hmong population. The results of this study may not transfer to all segments of the population whose education and income levels may differ from those of the research subjects. This research was based on snowball sampling methods, which limited the scope of research participants who could have been recruited into this study. Furthermore, limited speaking English and low socioeconomic status of research participants may indicate a lower degree of acculturation toward American culture which may have resulted in results skewed towards a less acculturated sample. The survey was difficult to translate from English to Hmong for participants who had no English; therefore, their full understanding of the survey questions may have been limited; thus affecting their ability to answer the questions fully. The result may be different among individuals from the second generation, and among those

with higher education and socioeconomic status, and who were more acculturated to American culture.

Implications for Social Work Practice

Understanding diversity is a critical component in social work practice. The National Association Social Work Code of Ethics states the following with regard to Cultural Competence and Social Diversity:

1. Social workers should understand culture and its function in human behavior and society, recognizing the strengths that exist in all cultures.
2. Social workers should have a knowledge base of their clients' cultures and be able to demonstrate competence in the provision of services that are sensitive to clients' cultures and to differences among people and cultural groups.
3. Social workers should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability.

Clinical social workers who work with the Hmong population or any other diverse population must increase their cultural competency. One way to enhance cultural competency skills is through ongoing education in this area. Another way for clinical social workers to increase cultural competence is through collaboration with other Hmong

professionals. Clinical social workers also need to be aware of Hmong culture and beliefs. A person from one culture probably cannot be completely competent in a different culture; however, there are some important basic factors that social workers should keep in mind when working with diverse populations. Clinical social worker workers can use social work skills that include empathy, caring and understanding toward the clients. When clinical social workers are working with Hmong clients in relation to domestic abuse, clinical social workers need to use caution and understand Hmong client's views on the issue as well as the influence of culture on the client's decisions. Domestic violence is a very sensitive issue in Hmong culture. Because Hmong believe in saving face, they rarely talk about the problem of domestic violence to the outside world. Family is of utmost importance, and therefore, often, Hmong may not disclose their abuse to professionals. They feel this is an internal problem that does not need outside help (Kaiser, 2003).

Clinical social workers need to be attentive to client's self-determination. Self-determination in Hmong culture is not based on individuals need but on the needs of the collective group which refers to family and community. In Western cultures, individualism and independence are highly valued, but Asian cultures focus on interdependence and collectivism (Well & Lee, 2004; as cited in Yoshikoka & Dang, 2000). Hmong clients may consult with family members before they can make any decisions regarding treatment. Kothari (2007) pointed out that family decisions are more important than individual ones and that every decision that an individual makes reflects on the family.

Clinical social workers need to be aware of their attitudes and behaviors when working with diverse groups. Social workers need to recognize their own biases, beliefs,

values, limitations, and countertransference in relation to diverse populations. One study found that White therapists were biased against Latinos and, therefore, had a lower empathy for Latino clients (Kouyoumdjian et al., 2003). To avoid biases, clinical social workers need to respect the fact that their clients' beliefs are different from theirs. For Hmong, traditional beliefs about family and gender roles often support the notion of male privilege. Men are viewed as the heads of the household and the authority figure, which hinders women's ability to speak about abuse.

Clinical social workers must not only try to understand the client's distressing experience, but also the impact of oppression and discrimination in a client's life. Social workers need to understand the beliefs and behaviors of the client's culture that are in conflict with American laws. Clinical social workers should help the client understand the laws when appropriate. Hmong individuals may mistrust the American systems due to bad experiences.

Implications for Social Work Research

The findings of this research and literature disclose a wealth of information regarding social factors and domestic violence among Hmong adults. Unfortunately, limited research has been conducted on the Hmong community, especially with regard to domestic violence. There is still a great need to learn more about Hmong culture in order to understand the impact of social issues, especially with respect to domestic violence. Since the literature points to high rates of domestic abuse within the Hmong community (APIVD, 2014), there is also a need for more empirical research in order for practitioners to gain more knowledge

about domestic violence and the cultural interventions needed to reduce domestic violence in this community. Additionally, because research shows that Hmong are shown to experience some form of psychological distress, and that often, psychological distress can be related to domestic violence, more research is needed pertaining to mental health especially among Hmong men who are often the perpetrators. As more empirical evidence is gathered, hopefully, an intervention will be developed to address this issue and prevent Hmong men from acting aggressively toward their partners.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to determine whether social factors were related to domestic violence among Hmong adults. The formal hypothesis posed for this research was that there were social factors that led to domestic violence. The findings were not found to support the hypothesis. However, early marriage and domestic violence were related to higher reports of depressive symptoms. The causal relationship is unknown and would require further research.

Research indicates that domestic violence is a prevalent issue in the Hmong community. Domestic violence has become a “crisis” and this has become very difficult for the Hmong community to deal with. However, the Hmong community needs to work together to end domestic violence. This can start with treating both genders equally. According to Lemoine (2012), the cause of domestic violence is gender inequality. Hmong

SOCIAL FACTORS RELATED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG HMONG ADULTS

men must be able to change their behaviors and view women as not someone below them, but equal as their partners, change can occur.

Finally, to understand domestic violence in the Hmong community, clinical social workers need to understand the cultural beliefs and the worldview of their clients. This will help social workers provide better service to clients from the Hmong community.

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Appendix A: Information and Consent Form

Saint Catherine University

Social Factors Related to Domestic Violence among Hmong Adults

Introduction:

You are invited to participate in a research study investigating the social factors related to domestic violence among Hmong adults.

This study is being conducted by Ace Xai Chang, a graduate student at St. Catherine University under the supervision of Dr. Pa Der Vang a faculty member in the School of Social Work. You were selected as a possible participant in this research because you are Hmong and you have a history of domestic violence. Please read this form and ask questions before you agree to be in the study. If you can't read in English or Hmong, I will explain these consent and survey forms verbally in Hmong to you.

Background Information:

This study is to find out whether social factors are related to domestic abuse among Hmong adults. This study is also aimed to provide further research on domestic violence in the Hmong community.

Procedures:

If you decide to participate, I will ask you to sit with me, the researcher, for an approximately 20 to 30 minutes to answer these survey questions. These surveys will cover questions on social factors such as education, cultural, relationship, socioeconomic, and individual that

related to domestic violence. You can choose to terminate any time you want without any consequences. This survey will take place in a private setting in a conference room, clinic, and public library.

Risks and Benefits of being in the study:

Confidentiality will be strictly adhered to; the risk to participant in this study is psychological discomfort and discussion of personal experience could bring up emotions that are painful and could leave participants feeling depressed. To minimize this risk, you will be reminded that you can stop the survey at any time without any penalties. You will be given information on resources for experience of abuse as well as hotline information for people to talk to in case of abuse or suicidal ideation. There will no benefits for your participation in this study.

Compensation:

You will not be compensated for participating in this research study.

Confidentiality:

Any information obtained in connection with this research study that can be identified with you will be disclosed only with your permission; your results will be kept confidential. In any written reports or publications, no one will be identified or identifiable and only group data will be presented. The completed surveys and electronic files will keep in a protected USB. Any storage device the researcher uses, including a flash drive will be password protected and or encrypted in case it might be misplaced, lost, or stolen. The researcher will also keep identifiers in a separate location from the study data. There will be no identifiers stored with the data on the device. The researcher and adviser will be the only ones have access to the

data. I will finish analyzing the data by May 18th, 2015. I will then destroy all original reports and identifying information that can be linked back to you. However, I am also a mandate reporter and it is my responsibility to report any harm you currently received or you have harmed your partner or other people. I may have to release confidential information to proper authorities as required by laws.

Voluntary nature of the study:

Participation in this research study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not have any penalties and will not affect your future relations with St. Catherine University in any way. If you decide to participate, you are free to stop at any time without affecting this relationship with Saint Catherine University or the researchers.

Contacts and questions:

My name is Ace Chang. You may ask me any questions you have at this time. If you have any questions later, please feel free to contact me, 507-208-2298 or the faculty advisor Dr. Pa Der Vang at 651-690-8647; she will be happy to answer them. If you have other questions or concerns regarding this study. You may also contact Dr. John Schmitt, Chair of the St. Catherine University Institutional Review Board at (651) 690-7739 or jsschmitt@stkate.edu.

You may keep a copy of this form for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read or understand the above information. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent to participate in this study.

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Even after signing this form, please know that you may withdraw from the study any time.

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Researcher

Date

Appendix B: Consent Form Hmong Version

KEV POM ZOO RAU TXOJ KEV SOJ NTSUAM

Daimntawvpiavtxogdabtsi:

Kuvyog Ace Chang (EsTsab), ibtus tub kawmntawvnyob tom St. Catherine University. Tussaibxyuaskuvyog Dr. Pa Der Vang (PajDawbVaj, ibtusxibfwbqhiasntawvnyobntawmlub school of Social Work. Kuvthov caw koj los komtes los nrogkuvtshawbnrhiavtxog vim li caspebHmoobtxijnkawmmuajkev sibntaus. Kuvxavkomkojkoomtesvim kojmuajkevtsishaumxeebyastas los.YogkojtsispaublusMekalosislubHmoob, kuv mam txaisraukoj.

Lubpomthiajntawmdaimntawvsojntsuam:

Daimntawvsojntsuam no xavpaubtxogmuajdabtsithiaj liuarautxijnkawm sib ntaus, thiabsojntsuamkompaubntxivtxogtxijnkawmtxojkev sib ntau.

Yuavpib licas

Yogkojtsaussiabthiabpom zoo, kuvyuavkomkoj los sivlis 20-30 natis los saudaimntawv no. Covlusnoojntawmdaimntawv no yuavqhiastxogdabtsithiaj li uarautxijnkawm sib ntau. Kojxavtsumtsissaudaimntawv no thaumtwg los yeej tau, yeejtsismuajteebmeemraukoj.

Phomsijthiabkevpadawbxwb:

Txuas yam kojhais, qhia,thiabsauhauvdaimntawv no yeejtsismuajleejtwgyuavpaubtxog. Daimntawvsojntsuam no yuavrovthamtxogkojclubneejyastas los, uaskojraugkevtximtxom, yuavmuajkevnyuajsiab, tusaib, chimsiab, mob siab, npautawg,

yogthaumkojuadaimntawvsojntsuam no,
kojmuajkevnyuajsiabheevdhaulawm,kojyuavtxumthawmtwg los
yeejtau,tsismuajteebmeemabtsisraukojhloli,yogkojxav tau kevpub los
pebmuajcovkoomhuamyuavpabkoj tau txhualubsijhawm.
Uatsauguaskojpabkoomtesuadaimntawvsojntsuam no.

Koomtesdawbxwb:

Tsismuajkhoompligdabtsisraukojtxojkevkomtestxogdaimntawvsojntsuam no.

Tswvtsis pub leejtwgpaub:

Tejntaubntawv los ntaumtxojkevsojntsuam no yeejmuab KHAWS CIA ZOO ZOO.
Daimntawvkojsau no yeejyuavtsismuajmuajleejtwgpaubhaistiaskojyogtussau.
Covntaubntawvsojntsuam no kuvyeejmuabciakom zoo thiabtivthaiiv zoo
komtsismuajleejtwgpomlosismuab tau. Tsuavyogkuvtusxibfbwqhiasntawvthiabkuvthiaj
liyuavsaiib tau covntawvsojntsuam no.
Kuvyuavmuabtejntaubntawmsojntsuamuakomtiavraulub 5 hlis 18, 2015.
Kuvyuavmuabtxuatxia yam rhemtawmstis pub paubtxogkoj.

Kuvkujyogibtusneegmuajfeemxyuasyuav tau qhiasrau NOM TSWV
yogkuvpaubhaistiaskojtustxijnkawmmuajkojntauslosiskojmuablwmntusneegntaus.

Txiavtximsiabthiabtxojkevsojntsuam:

xawmkojuadaimntawvsojntsuam no txogibnrabxwbeskojtsiskamsauntxivlawm los,
yeejtsismuajteebmemraukojli,kojyeejmuajcaitxiavtximsiabkoomtesthiabtsiskoomtes los
tsismuajkevtusiab , thiabteebmeemabtsisraukoj los ntaumlubtsevkawmntawv no.

Muajlusnoogthiabyuavhusrauleejtwg:

Yogkojmuajlusnoog, tsisnkagsiab, kojhukuv (Ace Chang- (507) 208-2298;

losishuraukuvtusxibfwbqhiasntawvyog Dr. Pa Der Vang (PajdawbVaj-- (651-690-8647);

losishurautusneejsaibthiabtuavpebtejtawvsojntsuamyog Dr. John Schmitt, 651-690-7399 or jsschmitt@stkate.edu.

Yogkojxav tau daimntawv no luamkhawvcia los yeej tau.

Tsaussiabkoomtes:

Kuvnkagsiabthiab totaubtxogcovntawvuakuvnyeem no. Kuvtejlusnoog los twbteblawm raw li lubsiabxavthiab. Kuvpom zoo los koomteb los uadaimntawv no.

Even after signing this form, please know that you may withdraw from the study any time.

Kojoyeejmuajcaitsisuadaimntawvno thaumtwg los yeej tau, txawmkojtwbkoskojclubnperaudaimntawv no lawm.

Saunpetusneegkoomtes

hnuv

Saunpetusneegpovthawj

hnuv

Appendix C: Domestic Violence Survey

Participant needs to focus on the time of his/her experience with domestic violence.

Education Factors

1. What was your last year of school?

No formal education High school 2 years of college. (AA)

4 years of college. (BA) Master or Higher.

2. What was your partner's last year of school?

No formal education High school 2 years of college. (AA)

4 years of college. (BA) Master or Higher.

3. Are you proficient in English? (Speaking, reading, and writing English)

1. No 2. Poor 3. Fair 4. Good 5. Excellent

4. Are you proficient in Hmong? (Speaking, reading, and writing?)

1. No 2. Poor 3. Fair 4. Good 5. Excellent

Acculturation Factors

1. Do you like traditional foods? (Ex: Hmong food, rice, vegetables)

1. No 2. Rarely 3. Occasionally 4. Frequently 5. Always

2. Do you like American food? (Pizza, McDonalds etc)

1. No 2. Rarely 3. Occasionally 4. Frequently 5. Always

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3. Are there restricted gender roles in your relationship?

1. No 2. Rarely 3. Occasionally 4. Frequently 5. Always

4. Do you and your partner socialize/associate with non-Hmong?

1. No 2. Rarely 3. Occasionally 4. Frequently 5. Always

5. Do you and your partner make decisions together?

1. No 2. Rarely 3. Occasionally 4. Frequently 5. Always

Relationship Factors

1. Do you and your partner spend time together?

1. No 2. Rarely 3. Occasionally 4. Frequently 5. Always

2. Do you and your partner have good intimacy?

1. No 2. Rarely 3. Occasionally 4. Frequently 5. Always

3. Were there controlling behavior or demands in the relationship?

1. No 2. Rarely 3. Occasionally 4. Frequently 5. Always

4. Were there extramarital affairs in your relationship?

1. No 2. Rarely 3. Occasionally 4. Frequently 5. Always

5. Do you and your partner argue in your relationship?

1. No 2. Rarely 3. Occasionally 4. Frequently 5. Always

Socioeconomic Factors

1. What was your income? What was your partner's income?

SOCIAL FACTORS RELATED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG HMONG ADULTS

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Below 20,000.00 | 1. Below 20,000.00 |
| 2. 20,000.00-25,000.00 | 2. 20,000.00-25,000.00 |
| 3. 25,000.00-30,000.00 | 3. 25,000.00-30,000.00 |
| 4. 30,000.00-35,000.00 | 4. 30,000.00-35,000.00 |
| 5. 35,000.00 over | 5. 35, 000.00 over |

2. Do you depend on your partner for financial support?

1. No 2. Rarely 3. Occasionally 4. Frequently 5. Always

3. Does your partner depend on you for financial support?

1. No 2. Rarely 3. Occasionally 4. Frequently 5. Always

4. Do you and your partner get government assistance? (SSI, MFIP)

1. No 2. Rarely 3. Occasionally 4. Frequently 5. Always

5. Do you and your partner have financial problems?

1. No 2. Rarely 3. Occasionally 4. Frequently 5. Always

Individual Factors (Circle if you or your partner have problems)

1. Did you or your partner have jealousy problems?

1. No 2. Rarely 3. Occasionally 4. Frequently 5. Always

2. Did you or your partner use drugs/alcohol?

1. No 2. Rarely 3. Occasionally 4. Frequently 5. Always

SOCIAL FACTORS RELATED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG HMONG ADULTS

2. Did you or your partner have low self-esteem?

1. No 2. Rarely 3. Occasionally 4. Frequently 5. Always

4. Did you or your partner have anger problems?

1. No 2. Rarely 3. Occasionally 4. Frequently 5. Always

5. Did you or your partner have stress/depression problems?

1. No 2. Rarely 3. Occasionally 4. Frequently 5. Always

Demographic Questions

1. AGE _____

2. GENDER: MALE _____ FEMALE _____

3. STATUS: MARRIED _____ SINGLE
_____ WIDOWED _____ DIVORCED

4. You are participating in this survey as a:

Domestic Victim/Survivor: _____

Domestic Abuser: _____

5. Were you born in United States or outside of the United States?

Inside United States _____

Outside of United States _____

6. If you were born outside of the United States, how long have you been living in the United States? _____

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7. What do you consider yourself?

1st Hmong generation: _____

2nd Hmong generation: _____

8. If you are married, were you married before the age of 18? (Hmong culture)

Yes _____

No _____

9. How long have you been with your partner? _____

10. How long did the abuse last? (DATES)? _____

11. Have you been abused by family members (both sides of the family)?

Yes _____

No _____

12. Have you ever reported any domestic abuse incidents to authority?

Yes _____

No _____

13. Do you or your partner know that there are laws prohibiting domestic abuse?

Yes _____

No _____

Appendix D: Script for Recruitment Purpose

My name is Ace Chang, and I am a graduate student at Saint Catherine University/ University of Saint Thomas in the School of Social Work. I am conducting research on social factors related domestic violence among Hmong Adults. I am focusing my research on the opinions and insights of individuals who have had past experiences with domestic violence. This research will help social workers and the Hmong community gain more understanding about domestic violence and how to address this issue culturally.

You will be asked to participate in an approximately 15-20 minutes survey. Your name will be kept confidential, and I am the only person who has access to this data. There are no identified risks in participating in this study. This topic may bring up issues that are hard to deal or emotional arousal. There are no direct benefits to being involved in this study. However, you can get your voice heard on the topic of domestic violence. It will provide useful information for social workers and the Hmong community. Your input would be greatly appreciated since research on domestic violence among Hmong adults is limited.

There is no pressure to participate in this study. You can terminate the survey at any time. I will go through a list of survey questions and consent form with you in Hmong. If you have any further questions, you can contact me at 507-208-2298 or my adviser Dr. Pa Der Vang at 651-690-8647 who also speaks Hmong.

Appendix E: Resources

1. Asian Women United/House of Peace: **612-724-8823** (24 hour crisis line/shelter; Services for women victims of domestic violence; Hmong, Cambodian, Vietnamese, Hindu & Japanese speaking advocates; Court advocacy; Help with Orders for Protection.
2. C.U.H.C.C.:**612-638-0700**; Services for Hmong, Lao, Cambodian, Somali, and Vietnamese battered women; Bilingual workers. www.ahc.umn.edu/cuhcc/.
3. Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women Crisis Line: **651-646-6177**; Referrals; Shelter information; Services for victims of sexual assault; Domestic violence; Prostitution. 651 646-0994 24 hour crisis line will connect to closest shelter.
4. St. Paul Intervention Project: **651-645-2824**(24 hour crisis hotline); Information;Referrals; Support groups; Legal advocacy in criminal and civil court matters; Includes Hmong and Spanish advocates. www.stpaulintervention.org

Counseling Services

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 1. Natalis Counseling and Psychology Solution | 651- 379-5157 |
| 2. The Family Partnership | 612 341-1670 |
| 3. Wilder Foundation Southeast Asian Service | 651-280-2310 |
| 4. True Thao Counseling Service | 651-771 2155 |
| 5. Bethesda Clinic | 651-227-6551 |
| 6. Center for Victims of Torture | 612-436-4800 |

SOCIAL FACTORS RELATED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG HMONG ADULTS

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 7. Nystrom & Associates, Ltd. | 651-628-9566 |
| 8. West Side Community Health Services | 651-222-1816 |
| 9. AKV Psychological Services | 651-283-3794 |
| 10. Ramsey County Mental Health Crisis line | 651-266-7900 |
| 11. Hennepin County Mental Health Crisis line | 612-596-1223 |

Appendix F: Flyer

