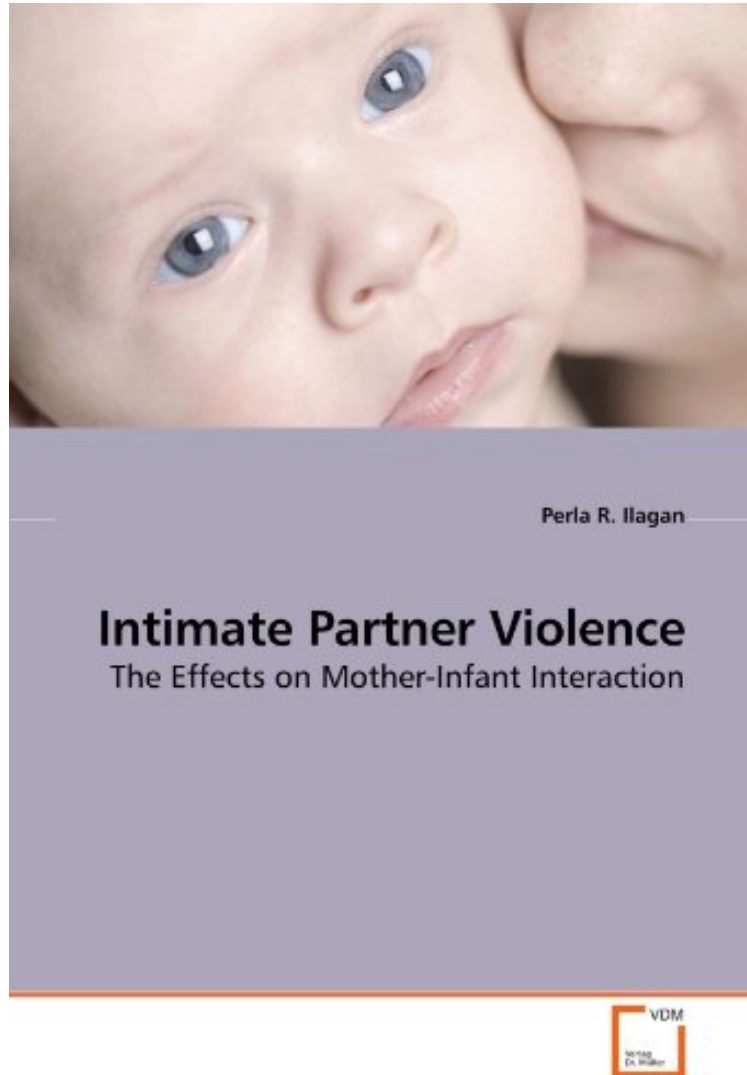


Intimate Partner Violence: The Effects on Mother-Infant Interaction

Perla R. Ilagan

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Mother-infant interactive behaviors have critical implications for the cognitive and socio-emotional development of the infant. This process requires positive smooth interactions for the infant's optimum growth. The presence of intimate partner violence compromises this process and puts the health of the mother and the infant's developmental competence at risk. Currently, there are no reported studies on the effects of intimate partner violence on the Filipino mother-infant relationship. This study examined the quality of Filipino dyadic interactions in the presence of intimate partner violence. The findings indicated that fifty eight percent of the mothers in this sample experienced some type of abuse from their husbands or partners. Differences were found in interactive behaviors between the abused and non-abused mothers. Social support and the mothers' level of education were found to affect their abuse predicament. The quality of mother-infant interactions is important because of its impact on the developmental outcomes for the infant and intimate partner violence has been implicated as one detrimental influence on maternal and infant health. Strategies to enhance culturally relevant patterns of interaction need to be developed for this population and abuse assessment screening must become a part of health care for all Filipino women.