

Women's Employment Status and Intimate Partner Violence in Mexico

ABSTRACT

Findings from studies examining the effect of women's employment on the risk of intimate partner violence have been mixed. Some studies find greater violence towards women who are employed, while others find the opposite relation. In this paper I suggest that statistical models used to test the association between female employment and domestic violence suffer from a problem of endogeneity. Far from being an independent predictor of violence perpetrated against women, female employment is itself determined by the level of control exercised by a woman's partner. Controlling partners will actively prevent women from working, and are also more likely to physically harm their partners. Specifying employment as an endogenous variable reverses its estimated effect on violence. Data are drawn from a nationally representative sample of women in Mexico.