



Arts-based and visual methods for designing and evaluating domestic violence interventions

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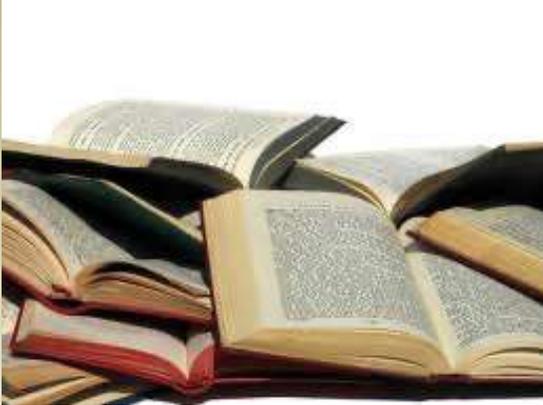
Johnson and Johnson (2001) have noted,
"Today, in every corner of the globe, some women are denied basic human rights, beaten, raped, and killed by men".



Violence against women is now widely recognized as a significant global problem, a major public health concern and one of the most widespread violations of human rights (Eng, Li, Mulsow, & Fischer, 2010; VicHealth, 2008).



Higher risk of violence is found in societies with traditional gender norms and roles, unequal distribution of power and resources between men and women, a normative use of violence to resolve conflicts, and cultural approval of (or weak sanctions against) violence against women (VicHealth, 2011; WHO, 2011).



Several studies have highlighted the impact of violence against women, particularly domestic/family violence, **on physical and mental health** (e.g. Coker, Smith, Bethea, King, & McKeown, 2000; Ellsberg, Jansen, Heise, Watts, & Garcia-Moreno, 2008; VicHealth, 2008; WHO, 2005), **including suicidal behavior** (Chowdhary & Patel, 2008; Davar, 2003; Devries et al., 2011; Ellsberg, et al., 2008; WHO, 2005).

Essay

Violence against women and suicide in the context of migration: A review of the literature and a call for action

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Abstract: Domestic violence and other forms of violence against women and coercion are well known to be substantial and widespread, with women more likely than men to be abused by partners and other family members. Domestic violence is a major precipitating factor for suicide, and ethnic minority, immigrant and refugee women are at higher risk for suicidal behaviour. This article reviews literature about suicide and domestic violence among ethnic minorities, immigrants and refugees to examine the relationship between the two. Further, it presents a 'call for action' for academics, policy makers and service providers engaged in suicide prevention. Higher risk of being victim of violence, additional forms of violence (immigration-related abuse), and greater barriers to seeking help, contribute to make women from immigrant and refugee backgrounds particularly vulnerable to suicidal behaviour. While violence against women is now widely recognized as a significant global problem, a major public health issue, and one of the most widespread violations of human rights, suicidal behaviour among immigrant women has received limited attention as a public health concern, and even less as a human/women's right issue. Suicide prevention must be addressed as a public health issue, and it is time for suicide to be considered also as a women and human rights issue.

Keywords: domestic violence, family violence, violence against women, gender-based violence, suicide, suicidal behavior, immigrant, refugee, ethnic minority, NESB, CALD, women.

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Violence against women

Twenty years ago, violence against women was not considered an issue worthy of international attention, but this began to change in the 1980s, as women's groups were organized locally and internationally to demand attention to the physical, psychological, and economic abuse of women (Alhabib et al., 2010). Gradually, violence against women has come to be recognized as a legitimate human rights issue and a significant threat to women's health and well-being (Ellsberg & Heise,

2005, cited in Alhabib et al., 2010). In particular, the landmark report published by the World Health Organization in 2002 gave global relevance to the epidemic rates and serious and long-term impacts of violence by positioning it as a leading worldwide public health concern. In 2005, the prevention of violence against women was set as a high priority (WHO, 2005). In this report, it was highlighted how domestic violence 'continues to be frighteningly common and to be accepted as 'normal' within too many societies' (p.VII), and that the perpetrators of the violence are often well known to their victims.

Domestic violence can encompass a wide range of behaviors including verbal abuse, threats, coercion, harassment, intimidation, manipulation, physical and sexual abuse, criminal damage, rape,



How understanding the role of culture can prevent suicide

The increasing domination of biological approaches in suicide research and prevention, at the expense of social and cultural understanding, is severely harming our ability to stop people dying – so run the clearly set out arguments and evidence in this lucid book by leading social scientists and suicide researchers.

In the first part of this book, instead of simply comparing suicide in different countries, the authors review and examine the fundamental issues of why culture is of vital importance in understanding and preventing suicidal behavior, what the “cultural meaning” of suicide is, and where current research and theory are leading us.

The second part of the book then presents (and, importantly, also critiques) exemplary recent research, including a quantitative and qualitative study on the meaning of suicide in Australia, India, and Italy, which is reported in detail, as well as other studies on correlates of suicidal behavior in Kuwait and the US, on a culturally specific form of suicide (sati), and on the role of cultural conflict in South Korea.

In the concluding section, the editors highlight both the necessity and the challenges of conducting good culturally sensitive studies, as well as suggesting solutions to these challenges. This volume is thus essential reading for anyone involved in suicide research and prevention.

“An eye opening book which also will hopefully open the minds of all professionals concerned with suicide and suicide prevention encouraging them to use more culture-oriented and multidisciplinary approaches and attitudes.”

Prof. Benedetto Saraceno, Director of WHO Collaborating Center on Mental Health, University of Geneva, Switzerland

“Wise, excellent, and original...an important book for all persons involved in suicide prevention.”

Prof. Sergio Perez, Founder of World Psychiatric Association’s Suicidology Section and Founder of World Suicidology Net

This valuable book, if well used, will not only help to save human life and human capital, but also help society to understand a fundamental philosophical issue facing us all: the meaning of life and the value we place upon it.

Prof. Kamaldeep Bhui, Wolfson Institute of Preventive Medicine, Queen Mary University of London, UK

I was completely captivated by the book which is a landmark in the study of culture and suicide. A perfect mix of precision and compassion.

Prof. Lakshmi Vijayakumar, Founder of SNEHA; Melbourne University and Griffith University, Australia

“This book is a wake-up call to suicidologists.”

Prof. Michael Kral, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, IL

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Suicide and Culture

Understanding the Context

E. Colucci
D. Lester

Suicide and Culture
Understanding the Context



Erminia Colucci and David Lester (Editors)
with Heidi Hjelmeland and B. C. Ben Park



Arts-based and Visual methods

The story of arts-based research practices is one about holistic approaches to research...

The story began at the intersection of social justice movements, theoretical advances and paradigm expansion. But now is unfolding in new and exciting directions as the qualitative paradigm shifts and the formerly segregated roles of self, artist, researcher and teacher are allowed to fuse...

(Leavy, 2009)



In *Arts-based inquiry*, art forms such as poetry, music, visual art, film, photography, drama and dance, are essential to the research process itself and central in:

- formulating the research question
- generating data
- analysing data
- and presenting/ disseminating the research findings
- ...for designing and evaluating interventions!

Why we should use such methods?!

- The appeal of the arts extends beyond academia: the turn toward artistic/visual forms of representation brings research to broader audiences.
- The arts can grab hold of people's attention in powerful ways, making lasting impressions. Arts is (or can be) immediate!
- The arts have the capability to evoke emotions, promote reflection, and transform the way that people think (...) Research conducted or presented via arts-based methods retains a transformational capability.
- In addition to accessing and (re)presenting subjugated voices, these methods are well suited to projects in which the researcher is after multiple meanings: arts-based practices lend themselves to multiplicity (in contrast to positivist research).

From Leavy, 2009 (p 255-256)

The advantages in the use of arts-based/visual methods

- Estrella and Forinash (2007) observed that narrative and arts-based approaches to research have allowed us to explore the marginalized, controversial, and disruptive perspectives that have often been lost in more traditional research methodologies.
- Arts-based/visual methods can be a tool to engage participants in a more empowering research process.
- Austin and Forinash (2005) argued that new perspectives, insights and understandings cannot always be translated into words.

The advantages in the use of arts-based/visual methods

- Foster (2007) also pointed out that the arts offer a way for researchers and research participants to examine their lived experience, to reflect creatively upon this, and to know themselves **more deeply**. In addition to these qualities, Foster asserted that the arts can also guide an **enriched** writing of research and **vivify** the dissemination of results.
- An arts-based research method may assist in eliciting rich information and generates insight and understanding of **complex, multifaceted issues** (Daykin in Liamputtong & Rumbold, 2009).

The advantages in the use of arts-based/visual methods (Colucci, 2011)

- Arts can make the report of the research outcomes easier/more effective
- Allow access to meanings and systems of beliefs that might be otherwise inaccessible
- Challenge preconceived ideas more than any other method
- Build high levels of intimacy, empathy and mutual understanding.

The advantages in the use of arts-based/visual methods (Colucci, 2011)

- Respect people who are unable to use (or use efficiently) writing and reading as primary means of communication or cannot use them at all.
- Arts can reduce the 'distance' between researcher and researched.
- Karvinen (personal communication, 2009): "In a cultures like Luo-culture you get easier contact with local people, they are interested about the "Western technologies"



Example 1: Domestic/family violence among immigrant Indian women

Colucci, E., O'Connor, M., Field, K., Baroni, A., Pryor, R., & Minas, H. (2013). Nature of domestic/family violence and barriers to using services among Indian immigrant women. *Alterstice. International Journal of Intercultural Research (Special Issue: Intimate partner violence and cultural diversity)*, 3(2).

Colucci, E. & Pryor, R. (2014), Prevention of violence against women, in Okpaku, S. (Ed.) *Global Mental Health*, Cambridge University Press

O'Connor, M. & Colucci, E. (2016). Exploring domestic violence and social distress in Australian-Indian migrants through community theater, *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 53(1), 24-44



Participatory action research: performance ethnography

This project aimed to explore the social and cultural aspects of domestic violence as perceived by Indian women living in Australia and barriers to accessing services.

**PROMOTING FAMILY HARMONY
SAFETY and WELL BEING**

Please join Australia India Society of Victoria, The University of Melbourne, Drummond Street Relationships & Third Way Theatre.

Help us to support our community to understand the issues behind domestic violence and find the best ways to tackle this problem, present in most cultures.

**WE USE GROUP DISCUSSIONS AND THEATRE
NO ACTING EXPERIENCE IS NECESSARY!**

You just need to be a **woman of Indian background**, engaged about the topic and able to volunteer some of your time to build short plays to be performed in the community.

WE ARE RUNNING 3 INTRO SESSIONS AS TASTERS...SO PLEASE COME ALONG AND FIND OUT MORE.

TIME: MARCH 2011

WHERE: LOCATION TO BE CONFIRMED

RSVP-MANJULAO@UNIMELB.EDU.AU OR 0419354482

FUNDED BY LSB AND AISV.
A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN:





Method

Indian immigrant women took part in focus group discussions and forum theatre workshops to produce short plays, based on the research data, that were then presented to the larger audience to elicitate further data.

Practices of "theatre by the people and theatre for the people", such as street theatre, have a long tradition in the Indian culture (see Capila & Bhalla, 2010), thus this method was regarded as a powerful mean to engage the Indian community and to promote change through increasing awareness and agency







Forms of violence...

Physical (beating, hitting, punching)

Sexual (particularly difficult to identify and disclose)

Religious (e.g. not letting her go to the temple, not let her pray, not let her cook food to offer to God)

Emotional (lack of freedom, being humiliated and blamed, expected silence)

Social (controlling behaviour, not allowed to talk to others)

Verbal

Financial (also dowry-related)

Barriers

Generic barriers

Acceptance of inequality and violence against women

“When a girl child is born in India, the man is head of the family and she always told that girls should be submissive and not argue”.

Expectation that a woman will **maintain silence** in such situations

“The best strategy in any situation for an Indian woman is to keep quiet and maintain the silence and suffer”.

Social stigma towards a woman victim of violence

“People don’t want to be associate with a woman who has put herself in that situation”.

Fear for the possible consequences of the disclosure:

(be blamed and re-victimised; deportation/visa fear; fear of being isolated)

“People say there must be something wrong with her, that is why the husband is beating her”

Lack of freedom and dependency

“My phone was trapped, each conversation I took and each email I sent was trapped”.

Lack of evidence

“In Australia the domestic violence is only called when you are physically beaten up but that didn’t happen to me. so I couldn’t prove it that it is domestic violence.”

Lack of violence awareness, of information and knowledge about laws and their rights.

“You don’t realize you have been affected (...) you haven’t been brought up that [emotional abuse] is domestic violence. It’s just that these are not clearly defined”.



Service-specific barriers

Cultural background of the professional;

"If it took me 5 minutes to explain my name, how long is this person (talking about services) going to take even with my first problem".

Culturally sensitiveness of the intervention provided by services;

"Go too fast", expect them to do "too big steps".

Lack of knowledge about services: what, where and how to access them.

"The biggest barrier to seeking help is that people don't know who to tell"

Bureaucratic barriers as lengthy waiting lists, assessment and consent forms;

"Signing forms is frightening especially if you are a migrant".

Confidentiality, privacy and trust in the services;

"She has fear of disclosing anything on the paper because she think that this might go to her husband".

Social stigma when engaging with a mental health service;

"The immediate answer as why do you want to go to Dr. X, I know her, she is a psychiatrist, what is wrong with you?"

Migration-related issues.

"(..) they feel very isolated and don't know who to go to and what help is available."



Arts/visual-based design and evaluation

The findings from this arts-based project were fed back and used to design culturally-sensitive and faith-based DV interventions.

Furthermore, the immediate impact of this action research was evaluated using videoed interviews and film during and after the short plays.



TASKFORCE ON DV/FV IN INDIAN COMMUNITY

Working group between community and state organizations has been formed. It met once a month, its role is to discuss, advise, support and create networks of communications between the service organizations on one hand and the Indian community on the other.

Organized International *Women Day, White Ribbon Day*...joined forces with the Jewish Taskforce and included members from Islamic organization and other cultural groups (Bangladesh, Pakistan...).



Example 2: Domestic/family violence and suicide in the Philippines: An ethnographic documentary (under completion)



Currently, the Philippines and the Vatican are the only two sovereign states in the world that still prohibit divorce.

AIMS

This project aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the experience of domestic/family violence among women in the Philippines and successful help strategies.



Data are being collected and will be presented by means of visual methods, specifically ethnographic documentary.

The experiences collected through this project will contribute to designing and improving DV prevention strategies while also representing a powerful medium for advocacy and public awareness.



Example 3: *The Most Significant Change:*
using participatory video for monitoring
and evaluation



Participatory Video and Most Significant Change

<https://mailchi.mp/insightshare/pvmsctoolkit>

“This is a participatory approach to monitoring, evaluation and learning that amplifies the voices of participants and helps organisations to better understand and improve their programmes.”
(Insightshare, 2021)



Participatory Video is a process in which participants film, edit, and screen videos on topics important to their livelihoods and communities.

PV can be used as part of a development project to enhance community participation, support project monitoring and evaluation, and gain and capture important insights from within the projects and communities on video (Lemaire & Savage, 2012).



The **Most Significant Change (MSC)** approach involves generating and analysing personal accounts of change and deciding which of these accounts is the most significant - and why.

MSC is particularly useful to help different stakeholders to understand the [cultural/religious] values that other stakeholders have in terms of "what success looks like" - criteria and standards for outcomes, processes and the distribution of costs and benefits (BetterEvaluation, 2021).



Participatory Video and MSC

The combined use of Participatory Video and MSC aims to gather qualitative data from the 'stories of change' that the local community chose that could be communicated in an accessible way to stakeholders, funders and partners.

The final video reports are used to share the evaluation process and key learnings with diverse stakeholders/decision-makers (e.g. screenings)

PV MSC can be used as a stand-alone in-depth qualitative M&E methods or to develop criteria and standards for outcomes measured through quantitative tools.

THANK YOU/Grazie!



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<http://movie-ment.org>