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Canadian Domestic Homicide
Prevention Initiative



Cultural Considerations of Intimate Partner Violence Offender Treatment in Canada: An Exploratory Study

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Literature Review

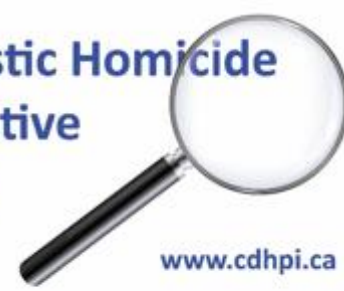


- Mandatory arrest policies increased the number of intimate partner violence offenders. Community-based spousal abuse programs became a frequent treatment response (Gondolf, 2002)
- The Duluth model is one of the most mainstream modes of treatment for IPV in North America (Gondolf, 2002)
- Program success rates are mediocre, due to the undervaluing of alternative needs that minority populations may require (Coulter & VandeWeerd, 2009; Gabora et al., 2007)
- Researchers suggest avoiding essentializing participants, and taking cultural differences into consideration to provide more individualized and effective treatment (Gondolf, 2002; Jackson et al., 2003)

Research Question



What challenges or useful strategies are there in the current administration of intimate partner violence treatment programs with members of various cultural groups in Canada?

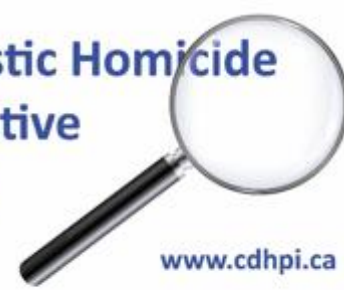


26 key informant interviews

- Immigrant/Refugee, Indigenous

Coding Themes	
<i>Challenges</i>	<i>Useful Strategies</i>
Program dropout	Shared offender and facilitator demographics
Lack of culturally sensitive approaches	Recognition of personal trauma/stress
Judicial system adversity	Culturally focused treatment

Results - Challenges



Program Dropout

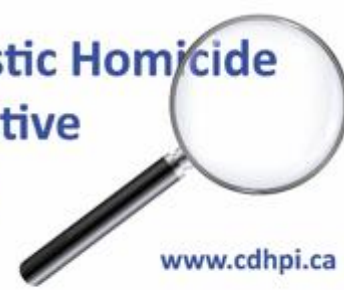
“... they don’t particularly want to go to those types of PAR programs because sometimes the communities are very small and they feel that other people may become aware” (Participant 1)

Adversity to the Judicial System

“Immigrants may have had some frustrating experiences with RCMP where I just don’t feel that the RCMP are very well trained in dealing with situations where they don’t necessarily understand or when they’re having trouble communicating with someone” (Participant 10)

“They are overrepresented in the criminal justice system, they are overrepresented in the jails, they are overrepresented in probation parole offices, they feel targeted” (Participant 2)

Results – Challenges cont..



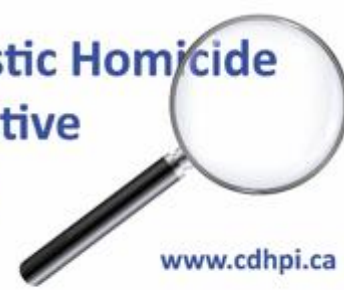
Lack of culturally sensitive approaches

“I have the impression that there are people who fall through the cracks because we can’t offer help in their language” (Participant 18)

“But I think anytime participation is mediated in some way by an interpreter it means that the experience might not be quite as rich as if it was occurring in the language of the participants” (Participant 15)

“One thing is our program is a very white program, so looking at it from a colonial point of view, there are certain issues here that some of the guys might not be able to identify with” (Participant 20)

Results – Useful Strategies



Shared offender and facilitator/supervisor demographics

“We all go through awareness training but sometimes they just want to work with a person that’s Indigenous” (Participant 4)

“Having the ability to serve that client in their language makes a huge difference” (Participant 2)

Recognition of Personal/Cultural Trauma

“So for them, when they arrive, they are traumatized. They’re in a state of shock because of what they’ve been through in their country” (Participant 19)

“It is very intergenerational and it is very, very tied to the historic aspects of the social history that went on. It is like a cultural PTSD” (Participant 8)

Results – Useful Strategies cont..



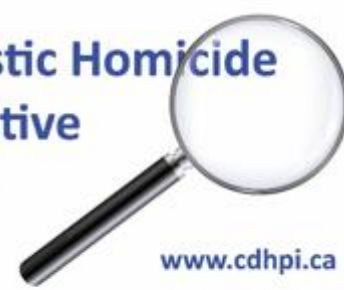
Culturally focused treatment

“So our Elder right now is a woman and she sits down and goes through their history. They have lots of conversations and come up with what their healing path is going to be” (Participant 7)

“We have, you know, referrals to other agencies that we know are offering similar program but more programs with an Indigenous cultural component to it” (Participant 17)

“Aside from that we do a lot of outsourcing, so if someone’s from Vietnam we would find a Vietnamese community agency that could assist them” (Participant 6)

Ongoing Doctoral Research



- IPV treatment programs receiving participant referrals from specialized domestic violence courts
- Many programs are designed to be “culturally-neutral”
- Programs are modified to provide treatment one-on-one when barriers exist
 - Culture/language, safety concerns due to identity, female perpetrators

BUT...

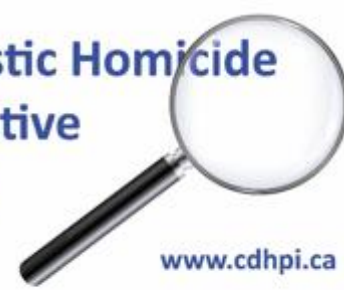
Facilitators specifically highlight that peer support and encouragement in group treatment is one of the most beneficial elements of the intervention programs.

Conclusion



- Secondary data analysis – research questions must be developed with existing data
 - Ongoing research provides support for results
- Consistency with the literature and information provided by Canadian-based informants
- Contextual understanding of participants is required for program success
- “One size fits all” approaches do not address the needs of minority populations

References



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