



SHAKTI

Domestic Violence against Ethnic Women: Literature Review

Siham El-Kafafi, Mengzhu Fu, Debbie Hager, Shila Nair, Nicola Paton, and Binu Santha

Introduction

This research has been commissioned by Shakti Community Council Inc. Shakti in several South Asian languages means “strength” and “power” and is a particularly feminine energy and symbol. Shakti was established to combat the problem of domestic violence against ethnic women in Aotearoa, New Zealand particularly Asian, Middle Eastern and African women by providing culturally appropriate services. Shakti has safehouse in Auckland, Tauranga and Christchurch. They are working towards setting up refuges in Wellington and Dunedin and developing their services in Australia (Fu, 2014).

The following are Shakti’s (2014) mission, vision and values:

Mission

To facilitate and ensure the good health and overall well-being of New Zealand’s migrant and refugee communities through culturally competent services within a culturally appropriate environment.

Vision

- » To facilitate a harmonious, multicultural New Zealand:
- » Where all immigrants are fully integrated into the New Zealand society in such a manner that they are able to exercise their rights and responsibilities
- » Where all immigrants can live a life of dignity, free from fear and violence
- » Where all immigrants are recognised as valuable contributors to the community and the economy.

Values

- » Facilitating a ‘violence-free society’ with zero tolerance to violence and abuse against women and children
- » Standing up and speaking out against all forms of discrimination, oppression and racism
- » Sustainable community development through empowerment of women and young women

Background

After the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, non-European migrants started arriving in Aotearoa/ New Zealand with the first Chinese person arriving in 1842. Since then, the population in Aotearoa/New Zealand has been growing in ethnic diversity. According to the 2013 census, people of Asian, Middle Eastern and African descent make up over 12% of the New Zealand population. This is an increase of 33% from 2006 and projections indicate that by 2038 the Asian population will become the second largest ethnic group in New Zealand. The median age of those who identified as Asian is 30.6 years.

The category of “ethnic” emerged to describe communities who are not Pākehā, Māori or Pasifika. By the government’s definitions, “ethnic” includes Asian, Middle Eastern, African and Latin American. We are using it as shorthand to mean Asian, Middle Eastern and African. Migrants and refugee background people from refugee backgrounds often face culturally specific challenges living in a diaspora. Integration into New Zealand society and labour market is fraught with challenges, that lead to serious limitations in access to services, employment and contributes to social isolation.

Ethnic Family Violence Strategy – A Rationale

New Zealand has the highest reported rates of intimate partner violence in the OECD countries and it affects all ethnicities, cultures, ages and socio-economic classes. Family violence disproportionately targets women, youth and children. It includes sexual abuse, child abuse, economic abuse, psychological abuse and physical abuse. There is discrimination in many families against rainbow young people.

There has been a substantial amount of research on family violence in New Zealand and concerted efforts at record keeping by official agencies. However, some forms of family violence are less well recorded and examined than others. This is especially true for the minimal research on family violence among minority ethnic groups (excluding Maori and Pacific groups) in New Zealand (The scale and nature of family violence in New Zealand: A review and evaluation of the Knowledge, Centre for Social Research and Evaluation, 2007).

One problem is that the official data collections do not use sufficiently precise ethnic classifications. For example, New Zealand crime statistics use the category “Asian” and do not differentiate between specific ethnic groups within this broad category. Family Violence Death Review Committee reports disaggregate the data for NZ Maori and Pacific people, but all other ethnicities are grouped together as 'other' and hence, it is difficult to infer much for Asian, African and Middle Eastern communities from these reports.

As Tse's (2007) study on *Family Violence in Asian Communities* recommended, further empirical research is required to obtain systematic data about immigrant communities and neighbourhoods, learn more about family structure, religious and customary practices, level of social integration and experiences of racism and discrimination. This would provide greater knowledge of modifiable risk factors, increase understanding of consequences associated with violence and advance the development and evaluation of new prevention strategies.

Culturally specific forms of violence in Asian, Middle Eastern and African communities include dowry abuse, forced and underage marriage, honour-based violence, female genital mutilation/cutting and immigration-based forms of control and abuse are serious problems, which need to be brought to the attention of family violence and justice practitioners. Some of these forms of family violence are not well understood by health and other social agencies in New Zealand (Women's Health Watch 1997).

Objective of the Research

This document provides a literature review about domestic violence and culturally specific forms/types of violence, specifically against ethnic women in New Zealand. It also examines best practice responses to such violence. Even though anyone can be subjected to various types of violence, this research, has its main focus, domestic violence against ethnic women in New Zealand i.e., women who are from Asian, African and Middle Eastern backgrounds.

Furthermore, this literature review aims to draw attention to the gaps and resulting findings from the literature to enable Shakti to develop a framework that would assist in enhancing the current policies to meet the diverse needs of ethnic women. Those women are part of this multicultural society and they make many contributions to the community; accordingly, their safety and wellbeing is of vital importance to the whole society.

Definition of Violence

Violence is defined by the World Health Organisation as *“the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal development, or deprivation (2002).”*

The legal definition of violence and abuse from the NZ Family Violence Act, 2018:

(1) *In this Act, family violence, in relation to a person, means violence inflicted—*

(a) *against that person; and*

(b) *by any other person with whom that person is, or has been, in a family relationship.*

(2) *In this section, violence means all or any of the following:*

(a) *physical abuse:*

(b) *sexual abuse:*

(c) psychological abuse.

(3) Violence against a person includes a pattern of behaviour (done, for example, to isolate from family members or friends) that is made up of a number of acts that are all or any of physical abuse, sexual abuse, and psychological abuse, and that may have 1 or both of the following features:

(a) *it is coercive or controlling (because it is done against the person to coerce or control, or with the effect of coercing or controlling, the person):*

(b) *it causes the person, or may cause the person, cumulative harm.*

(4) Violence against a person may be dowry-related violence (that is, violence that arises solely or in part from concerns about whether, how, or how much any gifts, goods, money, other property, or other benefits are—

(a) *given to or for a party to a marriage or proposed marriage; and*

(b) *received by or for the other party to the marriage or proposed marriage).*

(5) Subsection (2) is not limited by subsections (3) and (4) and must be taken to include references to, and so must be read with, [sections 10](#) and [11](#).

Meaning of abuse

(1) A single act may amount to abuse.

(2) A number of acts that form part of a pattern of behaviour (even if all or any of those acts, when viewed in isolation, may appear to be minor or trivial) may amount to abuse.

(3) This section does not limit [section 9\(2\)](#).

Meaning of psychological abuse

(1) Psychological abuse includes—

(a) threats of physical abuse, of sexual abuse, or of abuse of a kind stated in paragraphs (b) to (f):

(b) intimidation or harassment (for example, all or any of the following behaviour that is intimidation or harassment:

(i) watching, loitering near, or preventing or hindering access to or from a person's place of residence, business, or employment, or educational institution, or any other place that the person visits often:

(ii) following the person about or stopping or accosting a person in any place:

(iii) if a person is present on or in any land or building, entering or remaining on or in that land or building in circumstances that constitute a trespass):

(c) damage to property:

(d) ill-treatment of 1 or both of the following:

(i) household pets:

- (ii) other animals whose welfare affects significantly, or is likely to affect significantly, a person's well-being:*
- (e) financial or economic abuse (for example, unreasonably denying or limiting access to financial resources, or preventing or restricting employment opportunities or access to education):*
- (f) in relation to a person unable, by reason of age, disability, health condition, or any other cause, to withdraw from the care or charge of another person, hindering or removing (or threatening to hinder or remove) access to any aid or device, medication, or other support that affects, or is likely to affect, the person's quality of life:*
- (g) in relation to a child, abuse stated in subsection (2).*
- (2) A person psychologically abuses a child if that person—*
 - (a) causes or allows the child to see or hear the physical, sexual, or psychological abuse of a person with whom the child has a family relationship; or*
 - (b) puts the child, or allows the child to be put, at real risk of seeing or hearing that abuse occurring.*

Domestic violence is psychological, physical, sexual or economic abuse that occurs among intimate partners, former partners, or whānau/family members (Fu, 2014). Increasingly the term used for this form of violence is “intimate partner violence” or “male partner violence”, since police investigations of violence between intimate partners overwhelmingly identify male perpetrators (UNICEF, 2000). The dimensions of non-physical violence, particularly power and control including emotional and psychological acts of violence, have been identified as more insidious and invisible than physical violence but significantly more damaging to women’s wellbeing (Merry, 2009). UNICEF (2000) defined domestic violence as the violence or harassment coming from the spouse, partner or other individuals in the family living within the same house or can be between people who are dating.

According to the data released by the World Health Organisation, one out of every three women throughout the world (30%) faces physical or sexual violence by her husband or partner she lives with. It was observed that this rate goes up to 38% in some regions. In addition, another important issue that must be emphasised is that murder of women by their husbands is at a rate of 38%, which is majorly associated with domestic violence (In Kizilgol & Ipek, 2018).

In New Zealand, 1 in 3 women will experience psychological or physical and/or sexual abuse from their male partner or ex-partner during their lifetime (Fanslow and Robinson, 2004). For some populations of women these statistics are even higher. Māori women are more than 2 times more likely to be victims of domestic violence than non-Māori, (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2017); Pacific women and children experience high rates of physical and sexual violence (La Va, 2018) and non-

Western ethnic minorities are also at high risk and while there is no standardised data collection, efforts have been made to determine prevalence using disaggregated data.

Duluth's model of Power and Control Wheel is being used in Shakti's women's refuges in New Zealand to identify the different types of abuse in intimate partner relationships (Pence & Paymar, 1993, In Fu, 2014). This model is based on spousal/partner abuse in a heterosexual relationship. It includes the dynamics of isolation; using male privilege; emotional abuse; economic abuse; intimidation; sexual abuse; using coercion and threats using children; and minimising, denying and blaming. Nevertheless, this model does not address parental and in-law abuses, or spousal/partner abuse in non-heterosexual relationships (Fu, 2014).

Fu (2014) further explains another concept of violence i.e. structural violence, which is created and maintained by institutional and hegemonic forces that structure the stratification of social life. Structural violence even though it is invisible, affects people's everyday life and accordingly becomes normalised. Merry (2009) further explained that structural violence includes poverty, racism, pollution displacement and hunger resulting from social and economic inequities.

Sexual violence

Sexual violence is defined as:

...any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work. Coercion can cover a whole spectrum of degrees of force. Apart from physical force, it may involve psychological intimidation, blackmail or other threats – for instance, the threat of physical harm, of being dismissed from a job or of not obtaining a job that is sought. It may also occur when the person aggressed is unable to give consent – for instance, while drunk, drugged, asleep or mentally incapable of understanding the situation (Jewkes, Sen & Garcia-Moreno, 2002, p.149).

This includes rape, and *“any act (verbal or physical) which breaks a person's trust and/or safety and is sexual in nature... (for example) rape, incest, child sexual assault, marital rape, sexual harassment, exposure and voyeurism.” (Auckland Sexual Abuse Help (ASAH), n.d.)*

Sexual violence occurs within abusive intimate partner relationships, the wider family, between strangers and in non-partner, non-family relationships (Fanslow, Robinson & Crengle's, 2007). Sexual violence in Aotearoa, New Zealand has a substantial impact on thousands of people, sometimes spanning generations. Some of these effects range from loss of life, mental and physical health issues, alcohol abuse and both medical and illegal drug use. Fanslow, Robinson & Crengle's (2007) research on sexual violence indicates that up to one in three girls will be subject to an unwanted sexual experience by the age of 16 years in New Zealand. The majority of those

incidents would be considered serious, with over 70% involving genital contact. Up to one in five women will experience sexual assault as an adult (Fanslow & Robinson, 2004).

Research has shown that the issue of sexual violence has been ‘double silenced’ across ethnic minority communities in New Zealand (Rahmanipour, 2016). Honour, in terms of community and family honour, are the major factors for the practice. Prospective issues of underreporting, prejudiced practices by men and the internalisation of the ideals of sexual violence by the communities, contribute to the ‘double silencing’ of sexual violence across ethnic minority communities (Rahmanipour, 2016).

Culturally Specific Forms of Violence

There are specific forms of violence that ethnic women (Asian, Middle Eastern and African) are subjected to and there are various similarities and trends of such practices in these specific ethnicities which are different from others due to their cultural background. Accordingly, we could say that policies dealing with domestic violence should consider the special cases and differences of ethnic women and emphasise that “one size fits all” model of intervention and response does not work for everyone.

Culturally specific violence includes but is not limited to:

- » Dowry abuse
- » Honour-based violence
- » Forced and underage marriage
- » Post-conflict aftermath
- » Immigration abuse
- » In-law Abuse
- » Intergenerational cultural bullying

Dowry Abuse

This traditional practice is most prominent among the Indian sub-continent, and has been adopted by parts of the Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities (prior to both countries declaration of independence) (Somasekhar, 2016). Despite having been banned in India since 1961, the practice remains and in the context of NZ, it is sometimes linked to residency, hence immigration complications. Men who have permanent residency or citizenship in New Zealand have leverage to bargain for larger sum of dowry, even continuous payment, as their spouse would have the prospect of obtaining similar status after marriage (Somasekhar, 2016).

Similar ideas has been reiterated by Panda and Agarwal (2005) in a research reporting on survey results from 502 married women (between the ages of 15-49) in 2001 in Kerala State of India. It was determined that women’s property ownership affected physical and psychological violence

negatively at a significant level, where in, women had more right of speech and had an increased sense of empowerment.

Honour-based violence

Historically, honour-based violence and “honour” killings have occurred in North Africa, Middle Eastern, South Asian, Latin American and Southern European societies (Korteweg, 2012). Essentially, communities where such practices occur usually highly value the concept of communal or familial honour and shame (Mayeda et al 2018). This sense of collective honour is tied to the integrity and piety of women and girls, hence, “dishonourable” actions of women and girls bring “disrepute” and “shame” to their communities and families. Most frequently shame is brought when women and girls do not exercise their sexuality in accordance to the wishes of their family/community. This can be seen when the family members of the victim threatens to kill her when she refuses to continue her marriage with her arranged husband.

In cases of honour-based violence, the associated risk (from individuals or communities) is extremely high, potentially fatal. The party who perceives the slight may seek restoration by removing the source of the shame (usually women and girls who bare the responsibility of upholding honour in the first place). This manifests into various different needs, such as refuge accommodation, and relocation of the victim.

Perceptions of honour and shame have been explored in a study in collaboration with Shakti on young people’s perspectives on intimate partner violence in ethnic communities (Mayeda and Vijaykumar, 2015). Few studies have analysed the experiences of those affected by honour-based violence in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Forced and Underage Marriage

Forced marriage is a human rights violation that exists across Asian, Middle Eastern and African communities. This practice can be seen as a method of controlling women and girl’s sexuality, hence preservation of collective honour. For example, Shakti has dealt with a case where a girl of 14 was forced to marry her rapist as it was perceived that her loss of virginity prior to marriage would bring shame to the family should the incident be known in the community. Forced and/or underage marriage has sometimes been practiced on girls who have acculturated to the mainstream society, as a means to prevent the “Westernisation” of the next generation and preserve the family and community’s cultural integrity.

The research by Priyanca Radhakrishnan in 2012, on “Unholy Matrimony: Forced Marriage in New Zealand”, suggests that forced marriage cannot be considered as a cultural issue, but as a

form of violence against women, influenced by socio-political factors which is practiced by some people. The focus here is on “honour” and “shame” which are concomitant to the issue of forced marriage.

Post-conflict Aftermath

The status and wellbeing of women is influenced by oppressive and harmful practices, which sometimes are caused by religious and political revolutions and development in their countries. The effects of war or political and economic instability also have a direct impact on the treatment of women, post their relocation to New Zealand.

In refugee communities where relocation was due to civil-unrest and war, there has been a trend of men exerting control over their families, as that is perceived to be the only means of control they have. For women wanting to escape violence, this is complicated by an attitude of distrust toward authorities such as the police existing in migrant and refugee communities, particularly those from developing countries. A substantial amount of work needs to be done by these authorities and the case-workers from refuge and other violence/social and health services to gain the trust of women from refugee backgrounds, and to enable them to approach the police for complaints, or pursue due protection or rights through the court system.¹

Around the world, the major factors that contribute towards violence against women are economic restructuring, men's reaction towards loss of secure employment, transnational migration of women workers which may create a platform for abusive exploitation, the growth of a sex trade, financial liberalisation and crises, armed conflict and post-crisis reconstruction efforts and the deleterious gendered impacts of natural disasters (True J, 2012). Economic globalisation and development are resulting in new challenges for women's rights and assisting in creating new opportunities for women's economic independence and gender equality. This suggests that when women have access to dynamic resources and revel in social and economic rights, they tend to be less vulnerable to violence (True J, 2012).

According to Aotearoa Resettled Community Coalition (ARCC), many refugees in New Zealand are alone or separated from family members. Refugee men face multiple challenges in the society such as multiculturalism, social cohesion and status, family dynamics such as family cohesion, intergenerational issues and substance abuse, communication barriers such as societal perceptions and public attitudes, and marginalised employment opportunities (ARCC, 2016). This unsettlement of the families can promote abusive behaviours.

¹ [Intimate partner violence in Australian refugee communities: Scoping review of issues and service responses](#); Alissar El-Murr, CFCA Paper No. 50 — December 2018

Immigration Abuse

As mentioned, immigration processes can be seen as an additional form of control, which is unique to migrant communities. Women who are kept on precarious status, such as their husband's sponsorship, can face additional pressure and overt threats from their abuser. Previously, Shakti has seen a rapid increase of women affected by domestic and family violence, who are kept on sponsorship or other forms of temporary status such as visitor's visa. Many of the cases involved women being brought to NZ after marriage with promises of a better life and education, but are instead kept by the husband and the in-laws in servitude.

Shakti has had to lobby with Immigration NZ over the years, which led to a review of the off-shore stations' implementation of their assessment process. Immigration abuse contributes to abuse in Japanese and Filipino communities, as inter-racial marriages are undertaken in these communities on the premise? of long-term settlement in the country.

Issues Associated with Family and Domestic Violence

Issues associated with family and domestic violence can be associated with? The divide between individualism and collectivism, which are augmented by issues related to identity and gender, racism, colonisation and culture. The variances and similarities across innumerable ethnic worldviews covering Asian, African and Middle Eastern communities could form a basis of a new framework or strategy to work with immigrant women survivors and their families incorporating the fundamental human rights of individuals above and beyond oppressive cultures and tradition (Nair S, 2017).

Research by Gee, (2016), proposed that immigrant women from Asia who experience domestic violence often face particular socio-cultural challenges and barriers that prevent them from understanding the experiences they face, asking for help and accessing necessary interventions. Immigrant women are predominantly defenceless in domestic violence situations and the act has long-term psychological implications affecting women's health and welfare.

In-Law Abuse

For many ethnic women experiencing domestic violence in the context of a marriage, the abuse is not necessarily solely from the husband. With patrilocal residence after marriage as the norm for many ethnic communities, women often live with the husband's family. Several studies in New Zealand have documented this phenomenon of abuse from mother-in-laws, father-in-laws, sister-in-laws and brother-in-laws in South Asian and Chinese families (Somasekhar 2016; Fu 2014; Gee 2016).

The nature of the abuse could be physical, psychological, financial and spiritual (using religion). In Fu's (2014) research, two young marriage migrants of Indo-Fijian descent had disclosed physical and psychological abuse by their in-laws. In one participant's account, she had been under video surveillance, prevented from leaving the home and made to work in the house like a servant and received beatings almost every day from her mother-in-law (Fu, 2014). This abuse is common across ethnic communities where the expected living arrangements for married women is with the husband's family.

Challenges faced by Victims

Research has suggested that women who undergo family and domestic violence are constantly challenged. They lose their sense of reality and coherence, and lose their ability to trust their own perceptions of events. Such women's behaviours should be understood as reasonable responses to living in intolerable situations. Women in such circumstances require safety and constructive support to recuperate (Hager, 2001).

Research on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ+) people, proved that the health and wellbeing of this group of Asian young adults in New Zealand is neglected and they face family rejection, alienation within the mainstream rainbow community, and a lack of access to information and care. This results in a deep sense of social exclusion affecting their health and well-being. This group of ethnic population has gained strength and perspective through greater awareness of structural racism and heterosexism, developing multicultural competencies, sovereign living skills, and with the help of social support (Amerasinghe, 2018).

Family violence is a serious social issue among young women of South Asian origin living in New Zealand. These women face challenges during various phases like migration, family violence, refuge life and further advancement in life. Putting a stop to structural and gender-based violence requires the development of an intersectional understanding of equality and violence and also strategies to deal with them in a practical and applicable manner (Fu, 2014; Fu, 2015).

It must be noted that the issues Shakti has had to work with are extremely varied given the diverse cultures served. The forms of violence described above are some of the more prominent issues that arise from certain ethnic groups; it is by no means an exclusive list. Factors such as age, gender identity, sexuality, sex characteristics and immigration status of the primary victim need to be accounted for when discussing these issues. These issues are seen to be relatively unique to ethnic communities, giving rise to different sets of needs for risk management and recovery.

Furthermore, Dr Jennifer Hauraki and Dr Vivien Feng (2016) discussed the following common cultural value in Asian communities:

Collective culture: Asian cultures are collectivistic which differs from the individualistic mainstream New Zealand culture. Accordingly, Asian cultures put more prominence on family duty, tolerance and achieving success over individual need. Accordingly, an individual's actions impact on the whole family, ancestors and future generations. Hence, individuals tend to suppress their needs to keep unity and harmony within the family (Futa, Hsu et al., 2001; Te Pou, 2010).

Family structure: Asian families are more structured and hierarchical. Males and elders are respected and given more power as they are seen as authority figures with decision making powers (Futa, Hsu et al., 2001 in Hauraki & Feng, 2016).

Conformity: Asian cultures endorse restrictions due to the high emphasis on conforming and obeying rules and guidelines. Accordingly, keeping harmony is value over individual creativity and assertiveness (Futa, Hsu et al., 2001 in Hauraki & Feng, 2016).

Shame and guilt: The concept of shame or loss of face is common among Asian people (Te Pou, 2010 In Hauraki & Feng, 2016). It means that the individual can bring shame to both the immediate and extended family. Accordingly, individuals suppress their desires and needs so as not to bring shame to the whole family by disclosing their problems.

Attitudes towards sex and sexuality: Asian culture is traditional when it comes to sexuality. Hence, discussing sexual violence is considered a taboo for public discussion and is surrounded with embarrassment, awkwardness and mystery (Futa, Hsu et al., 2001 In Hauraki & Feng, 2016). While there are commonalities, patterns and norms across many Asian cultures, it must also be noted that culture is not fixed and variations exist within Asian communities need to be accounted for. There is also resistance to these cultural norms by women, youth and children and challenges to domestic violence. The agency of survivors and victims of Asian and ethnic communities have also been highlighted (Fu, 2015).

Empirical Research on Intimate Partner Violence in Ethnic Communities in New Zealand

Research conducted by Gee (2016) investigated Chinese women's experience with domestic violence in New Zealand. The research reported that Chinese immigrant women who were exposed to domestic violence situations suffered from long-term psychological harm to their health and wellbeing. It was proposed that the husband's power and control tactics over Chinese migrant women was derived from traditional cultural beliefs and gender role expectations. The research conducted a multidimensional analysis that indicated that a combination of individual,

interpersonal, cultural, contextual, and structural and community factors impact on Chinese immigrant women's ability to make sense of the violence and abuse and to employ help-seeking strategies which accordingly led to the social isolation of the abused women.

The majority of the women in this study utilised a mixture of formal and informal intervention seeking help from informal support networks during crisis times. It was an interesting finding of the research that the Chinese women were re-victimised by religious leaders and faith community members which calls for a much needed safe and trusted community space for those Chinese women to share their experiences without being seen in a negative manner by outsiders. Accordingly the research recommends a focus on community education and intervention that offers adequate assistance and support to Chinese women in domestic violence situations (Gee, 2016).

Somasekhar's (2016) PhD research aimed to shed light on the cultural perspectives that foster violence and abuse of migrant Indian women in New Zealand. It reported on how the process of migration, involving the uprooting and complete relocation of the women along with their partners, affected immigrant Indian women's safety. Her thesis revealed the barriers they confront when seeking help against domestic violence by paying particular attention to the socio-cultural aspects of the Indian diaspora in New Zealand.

Somasekhar (2016) reports that patriarchal attitudes and a sense of male entitlement are pivotal in perpetuating and tolerating domestic violence. Furthermore, it reaffirms the role played by the in-laws i.e. the emotional, physical and financial abuse of women exposed via continued dowry demands after the wedding. Women reported isolation imposed on them by their spouses in New Zealand, who exercised power and control over them by keeping their immigration status uncertain. Accordingly, women couldn't seek help as they were afraid of bringing shame upon their family and community.

In addition, the research further reported that the Indian migrant community were tolerant of domestic violence and usually colluded with the abuser. Even after the Indian migrant women left their abusive partners, they were still abused by their partners through using their children, by outmanoeuvring them in the Family Court and preventing them from having access to the children (Somasekhar, 2016).

Those same findings of Shakti's research and Somasekhar (2016) in relation to violence against ethnic women (i.e. women's social isolation, women's dependency on men due to immigration visa status, women facing community ostracism when leaving their abusive partners, normalisation of family violence, and other issues related to policy gaps and limited availability

of services, such as legal, police, medical services etc. has been reiterated by a study project team headed by Migliorino et. al., (2018). The Migliorino et al., (2018) project aimed at increasing the understanding of the nature and dynamics of violence against immigrant and refugee women in Australia.

Another study by Nafiseh Ghafournia (2017) explored the role of religious values on intimate partner violence or faith-based prevention and intervention strategies in Muslim communities. The study was conducted with Muslim immigrant women in Sydney, Australia, with the aim of providing an understanding of how religion intersects with culture, gender, and immigration. The findings included the positive role of religion and spirituality in cases of domestic violence; negative role of religious leaders in domestic violence; perception of the relation between religion and domestic violence, and the intersection of culture and religion.

Current measures taken towards minimising Domestic Violence against Ethnic Women

Investigations by Human Rights Watch have found that in cases of domestic violence, law enforcement officials frequently reinforce the batterers' attempts to control and demean their victims. Even though several countries now have laws that condemn domestic violence,

when committed against a woman in an intimate relationship, these attacks are more often tolerated as the norm than prosecuted as laws...In many places, those who commit domestic violence are prosecuted less vigorously and punished more leniently than perpetrators of similarly violent crimes against strangers. (UNICEF, 2000).

Research conducted by Wharewera-Mika, J. M. & McPhillips, J. M. (2016) from the Te Ohaakii a Hine National Network Ending Sexual Violence Together in New Zealand and funded by Lottery Community Sector Research Fund and ACC aimed at providing guidelines for mainstream crisis support services for survivors of sexual violence. The research initial stage provided the following 15 principles for good practice bearing in mind the main premise of the work of sexual assault support services is to work for victims/survivors and to have their needs heard and met. The document further provides practical examples to illustrate further in depth illustrations in relation to the execution of those principle. Principle no. 5 - "culturally informed and resourced" for services to be culturally safe for diverse communities is mentioned.

The second phase of the Wharewera (Mika, J. M. & McPhillips, J. M, 2016) research demonstrated responsiveness and cultural sensitivity to diversity in the context of sexual violence crisis support services. Guidelines were developed to provide crucial information and knowledge of appropriate and safe practices for frontline staff and services to improve the experiences of victims/survivors from the Māori, Pacific, LGBTI+, men, Muslim women, disability and Asian communities and cultures.

A research project by Dr Jennifer Hauraki and Dr Vivien Feng (2016) aimed at identifying what comprises good practice for supporting Asian survivors of sexual violence. They obtained their knowledge from the experience of Asian stakeholders and professionals working in Auckland with Asian survivors of sexual violence. The findings were that following the good practice guidelines provided the opportunity for transparency and accountability with service partners, NZ Police and DSAC (now MEDSAC) trained medical staff, with service funders and our community. The good practice was further developed into recommended guidelines for mainstream crisis support services to inform their service development and practice. While these principles have been developed for the sexual violence sector, they have yet to be adapted to domestic violence responses.

Recommendations

UNICEF (2000) confirmed that domestic violence is a health, legal, economic, educational, developmental and human rights problem. Accordingly, strategies should be designed to operate across a broad range of areas depending upon the context in which they are delivered. Some of the key areas for intervention should include the following:

- » Advocacy and awareness raising
- » Education for building a culture of nonviolence
- » Training
- » Resource development
- » Direct service provision to victim survivors and perpetrators
- » Networking and community mobilisation
- » Direct intervention to help victim survivors rebuild their lives
- » Legal reform
- » Monitoring interventions and measures
- » Data collection and analysis
- » Early identification of 'at risk' families, communities, groups, and individuals.

These areas are not mutually exclusive; interventions may touch upon several areas at once. Above all, five underlying principles should guide all strategies and interventions attempting to address domestic violence:

- » Prevention
- » Protection
- » Early intervention
- » Rebuilding the lives of victim-survivors
- » Accountability

The following recommendations has been adapted from the Wharewera-Mika & McPhillips (2016) for volunteers and professionals in crisis services working with women from ethnic background (i.e. Asian, Middle Eastern and Indian):

- » **Workforce development:** Training and education for sensitivity to ethnic women and values that pertain to gender roles, marital relationship and family dynamics from their religion's perspective.
- » **Cultural awareness:** Assessing the extent the ethnic woman has assimilated into the western culture. Gauge their present situation for example their education, employment, relationship, culture, ethnicity, amount of time they have stayed in New Zealand, to what extent are their religious values important for them.
- » **Cultural competency training:** Appropriate cultural workshops are a necessity that are provided by ethnic women who are competent or have the skills to work with people (e.g. leaders who are aware of the social issues, social workers, people who work with minorities and immigrants, etc.).
- » **Language barriers:** Ethnic families when they come often don't know English and they don't exactly understand the context of the situation they are in, so there have to be people of their own language who explain this to them.
- » **Understanding the broader impact of sexual violence** on not only the victim/survivor but also ethnic women wider whānau and community (related to shame and judgement).
- » **Awareness of any stereotypes** one might have about the ethnic woman's community, and a readiness to address these by accessing further education about them. This will include understanding the Muslim ethos (underpinnings) that support women's rights and do not accept the sexual abuse and violence against women, and keeping an open mind and being informed of diverse views and cultures. For example, a Muslim from India may have a different worldview than a Muslim woman from a Middle Eastern country.

This literature review explains the population being investigated as ethnic women from Asian, Middle Eastern and African countries living in New Zealand and describes the various forms of violence against women that are culturally specific – these are:

- » Dowry abuse
- » Honour-based violence
- » Forced and underage marriage
- » Post conflict aftermath
- » Immigration abuse
- » In-Law Abuse
- » Intergenerational cultural bullying.

Missing from this review – and still in development -- is an investigation of current New Zealand frameworks to address family violence, particularly Māori and Pacific frameworks, and a discussion of best practice in relation to violence against ethnic women who are not living in their home countries. This information will be included in the final version of the review.

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