

RESEARCH ARTICLE

A cross-cultural approach to issues of male dominance and domestic violence

T. Gunawardena¹, P. De Zoysa^{2*}, K. Jinadasa¹, K. Thurairajah¹ and N. Cruz¹

¹Shanti Maargam, Sri Lanka.

²Department of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Abstract: Harmful masculine norms, attitudes, and behaviours are considered the cause of most cases of gender-based violence against women and girls in most parts of the world. This premise applies to the patriarchal society of Sri Lanka as well. Regarding various policy-level efforts made to reduce the frequency of gender-based violence in Sri Lanka, this paper explores the efficacy of adapting a cross-cultural evidence-based approach to gender relations tried under the Parivartan programme in India in an effort to improve masculinity-based gender norms in Sri Lanka. The programme's content and consensual validities are assessed by using the Delbecq technique which involves experts from a variety of relevant fields. At the onset of the programme, each expert independently rates the relevant concepts and teaching techniques that are generally used by cricket coaches on male cricketers of 12-14 years. Towards the end, after a group discussion by experts, a second rating is made of the same concepts and teaching techniques. The two ratings are compared, and the programme is revised to suit Sri Lankan society. The Sri Lankan experience of the cross-cultural evidence-based approach to gender relations inspired by the Parivartan programme in India shows satisfactory content and consensual validities. Therefore, this paper argues that the Delbecq technique is a useful tool to devise in improving masculinity-based gender norms in the society of Sri Lanka.

Keywords: Cross-cultural adaptation, gender-based violence, masculinity, parivartan, violence against women and girls.

INTRODUCTION

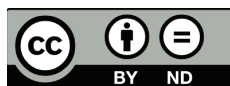
Research on gender-based violence in Sri Lanka reports that there is a prevalence rate of 18% to 72% across different geographical areas on the island (World Health Organization, 2018) and that survivors of sexual

violence are often stigmatised (CARE International Sri Lanka, 2013). Ironically, a higher percentage of females (75%) display gender inequitable attitudes (CARE International Sri Lanka, 2013) and even certain professionals maintain tolerant attitudes toward violence against women and girls (Haj-Yahia & De Zoysa, 2008). In this context, evidence-based community interventions aimed at preventing gender-based violence are treated as a necessity in Sri Lanka (Jayatilleke *et al.*, 2010)

While cross-cultural research indicates that societies with more stringent ideologies of male dominance have more intimate partner violence (IPV) (Levinson, 1989, as cited in Jewkes, 2002), it is observed that masculine ideologies are closely linked with attitudes and behaviours which can lead to the perpetuation of IPV. It is revealed in a study carried out in Sri Lanka that 40.6% of men reported that women should tolerate violence against them and that 57% agreed that to be a man they need to be tough (CARE International Sri Lanka, 2013).

For a considerably long time, models aimed at attitudinal and behavioural change in adolescents (Tuttle *et al.*, 2006; Shek & Sun, 2013) developed in one culture are subsequently adapted in other cultures too. In such cross-cultural adaptations, accounting for unique cultural nuances of the new culture is essential (Colby *et al.*, 2013) such as the qualities of the programme facilitators and characteristics of the population on which it is implemented (Ringwalt *et al.*, 2004). Such a thorough cross-cultural adaptation lends to a sense of

*Corresponding author (ptdz@sltnet.lk  <https://ORCID: 0000-0002-7382-6503>)



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ownership from the community stakeholders, impacting the programme's long-term sustainability (Botvin, 2004; Johnson *et al.*, 2004).

Suggesting reforms in gender norms and attitudes of men and boys with a focus on the negative developments concerned with masculinity, especially IPV, has become prominent in research interventions throughout the world (Flood, 2011; Ricardo *et al.*, 2012; Sweetman, 2013; Taylor & Barker, 2013). The programmes concerned with gender issues are mainly conducted with sports teams, schools, clubs, workplaces, and other institutions which have higher participation of men and boys (Jewkes *et al.*, 2015). According to statistics, there are only a few such programmes in Sri Lanka (World Vision & Promundo, 2013; CARE International Sri Lanka, 2013; Men Engage Alliance Sri Lanka, n.d.) and none of them involves sports as a medium of intervention. Hence, it is useful to implement many more programmes that utilise sports as a medium, such as Parivartan, particularly via cricket, which is considered the island nation's most popular sport. Further, these programmes should particularly target the youth population of 15-16 years, because, in Sri Lanka, the youths are reported to be most susceptible to harbour harmful gender norms (World Health Organization, 2018). Moreover, these programmes should facilitate self-reflection on the powers and privileges accorded to males. The harmful attitudes and behaviours of men and boys often negatively impact women and girls. Therefore, such programmes are considered effective in deconstructing harmful masculine norms and supporting males to change their negative attitudes and behaviours towards females (Lundgren & Amin, 2015).

In adapting cross-cultural programmes on gender issues, consensus methods (De Zoysa *et al.*, 2007; Epstein *et al.*, 2015) are used, especially in the medical and nursing disciplines (Sitlington & Coetzer, 2015). They aim to achieve an agreement on a particular set of concepts by bringing together several expert opinions (Minas & Jorm, 2010). The key strengths of the consensus methods are concerned with the opportunity they allow the relevant experts to make a balanced participation and to diminish the pressure to conform to the traditional types of group discussions (Harvey & Holmes, 2012). The two main consensus methods are the Delphi technique (Linstone & Turoff, 1975) and the nominal group technique.

In the Delphi technique, experts are polled individually and anonymously, usually with a self-administered instrument, to provide opinions/ratings, in two or more consecutive rounds. At the second round (and subsequent, if any), a rating by other experts is

shown and allowed to change their original opinions/ratings, if required, by considering the others' opinions. But the experts never meet.

The nominal group technique is done in two ways: the Delbecq technique where the experts, having decided their individual opinions/ratings, discuss their differences in a structured face-to-face meeting, at a setting facilitated by another expert; and the Glaser technique where a structured meeting takes place between the experts who have formed opinions/ratings about the concepts under study, facilitated by a non-expert who has credibility with the relevant experts.

This paper reports the use of the Delbecq nominal group technique (Delbecq *et al.*, 1986) in the cross-cultural adaptation of a masculine gender norm-based transformative programme, Parivartan, in Sri Lanka (International Centre for Research on Women, 2009). The Delbecq technique is chosen over the other consensus methods because it allows the experts to meet (unlike the Delphi technique) and work collectively on the concepts that require agreement. Hence, issues that may need clarification could be discussed in a forum. The facilitation of this process by an expert (unlike in the Glaser technique) is considered as giving guidance to the entire process.

The Parivartan programme

Parivartan means 'transformation' in Hindi. The name for this programme has been coined so because of its objective of transforming the participants into culturally mature individuals. It has a masculinity-based norm transformation curriculum like the American programme 'Coaching Boys into Men' developed by the 'Family Violence Prevention Fund' in 2005 (Tolman & Edelson, 2008). Parivartan was developed based on the lessons learnt during the implementation of 'Coaching Boys into Men', a programme developed to reduce violence against women and girls, and to prevent gender inequity issues among school athletes in the USA (International Centre for Research on Women, 2009). It is based on the notion that sports coaches play a vital role in fostering healthy gender roles. Making use of role models, the programme employs coaches to disseminate positive ideas about masculinity and respect toward women. The original Parivartan programme was implemented by training 26 school-cricket-coaches and 10 community-mentors in schools and community settings in a large Indian city, respectively (International Centre for Research on Women, 2009). Evaluation of this programme has shown a clear change in gender-based attitudes and behaviours of the male athletes, except in their attitudes towards

women working outside their home environment. Moreover, as reported by female relatives, there is also a transformation in the perspectives and practices of the coaches and mentors themselves (Das *et al.*, 2015). A subsequent study on adolescents who have participated in the Parivartan programme or have completed it shows that while attempting to transform their attitudes towards gendered behaviour, they are opposed by parents who are strict on the traditional notions of gender roles. These athletes, though sometimes ascribing to the traditionally dominant male role also voice gender inequity and lobby for the empowerment of girls (Huynh *et al.*, 2020). Due to these initial outputs of Parivartan, it has now been expanded to girls for raising their self-esteem and educational aspirations too (Bankar, 2019). Parivartan, hence aims to decrease gender-based violence against girls and women by changing gender norms relating to masculinity. The long-term aim of the programme is to reduce discrimination against females and to promote gender equality. It is a three-year programme implemented with community cricket clubs and schools. The Parivartan curriculum is disseminated via cricket coaches as well as community youth mentors.

The two main resource items in the Parivartan programme are the Coaches' Handbook and the Training Cards (International Centre for Research on Women, 2009). The Coaches' Handbook focuses on the following aspects: the definition of gender, the need to respect known individuals as well as the unknown, the different types of societal violence, how being a male gives a sense of power to be used for the betterment of others, the qualities of positive masculinities (i.e.,) positively expressing masculinity through care, love and respect), and how to develop good facilitation skills. After following this programme, they are deemed to be suitable facilitators for the cricketing students on whom they use the Training Cards. The Training Cards encompass concepts that are discussed with cricketing students and include discussions about: respect, ethics, fair play and sportsmanship, personal responsibility, toxic masculinities, the impact that eve-teasing has on females, managing aggression, and ways to develop respectful relationships with girls. For each thirty-minute Parivartan session conducted by the coaches, one training card is used as a discussion point.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The process of adaptation mainly consists of five consecutive stages: Stage 1; Contextualisation of the manual through a desk review, Stage 2 translation of

the original Parivartan manual, Stage 3-evaluating the content and consensual validity of the programme by utilizing the Delbecq method, Stage 4-key consultation with the original author, and Stage 5-consultation with selective stakeholders within the educational sector in the three respective locations in Sri Lanka.

The contextualisation stage comprises three participants: the primary consultant of the project, an author of the original Parivartan manual, and a Sri Lankan gender specialist. The translation stage includes two translators who translate the English version of the manual into Sinhala and Tamil and two back translators who translated the Sinhala and Tamil versions back into English, respectively. The stage where the Delbecq method is used was implemented in a group consensus method with 18 experts: one school cricket coach, one national cricket coach, one national male cricketer, one national female cricketer, three teachers who teach 12-14-year-olds, four gender-consultants, one social-worker, two youth-service-officers, and one youth representative at the community level. These individuals were chosen for their expertise in cricket, gender, youth education, adolescent psychology, and community work with the youth. Stage 4 consists of two participants, where the primary consultant and an original author discusses findings following the Delbecq session with the experts. In stage 5 of the process, three stakeholder groups are contacted within the educational divisions in Colombo (5 participants), Galle (5 participants), and Nuwara Eliya (10 participants) to discuss the feasibility of implementing the adapted Parivartan programme among Sri Lankan school-going male adolescents. These key stakeholders consist of child rights protection officers, youth service officials, zonal education department personnel, and directors of education. Any educational personnel working under the purview of the Ministry of Education and who are also willing to take part in the stakeholder discussion are included in the sample for the stakeholder discussions.

MATERIALS

The Parivartan manual

The Parivartan manual consists of the Coaches' Handbook and the Training Cards. The Coaches' Handbook begins with an inspirational message by a leading international cricketer about the importance of gender equity, violence prevention, and respecting women and girls. Subsequently, the following aspects are included: the influential power of sports and coaches; a summary of each topic on the main concepts of the programme (such as gender, respect, masculinity,

violence and relationships); and five ‘teachable moments’ to show how the Parivartan message can be taught using different scenarios that might occur in the field (e.g. one teachable moment is titled ‘No Ball’ - where, during a cricket match there is an incident of emotional and verbal intimidation and a fight occurs between the home team wicket-keeper and the opposing team batsman. The match comes to a standstill. The ‘teachable moment’ includes watching these behaviours carefully, where first the coach considers how his players react to the situation; secondly, calling the players to him and discussing what happened and impressing on them that violence is not condoned; and thirdly, discussing the incident further once the game is ended).

The Training Cards encompass concepts that are to be discussed with cricketing students and include discussions of respect, ethics, fair play and sportsmanship, personal responsibility, masculinity, insulting language towards females, controlling aggression, and ways to develop respectful relationships with girls. For each thirty-minute Parivartan session conducted by the coaches with the cricketing students, one Training Card is used as a discussion point. The coaches are expected to adopt a facilitator role, rather than a teaching mode, during the Parivartan sessions.

Stage 1: Contextualisation of the manual

Permission was obtained from the original author by the non-government organisation Shanthi Maargam, to contextualise and adapt to Sri Lanka the Parivartan manual (i.e., the Coaches’ Handbook and the Training Cards) which focuses on reducing violence against women and girls. Contextualisation of the manual was conducted by the primary consultant considering the relevant research relating to the gender norms, other gender norm transformation programmes, and particular needs of the Sri Lankan culture. At a discussion held with the original author from the International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW), the contextualised material was reviewed by a Sri Lankan gender specialist to retain the concepts that are suitable for the Sri Lankan culture.

Stage 2: Translation of the contextualised manual

After finalising the contextualised version, it was word-to-word translated into Sinhala and Tamil, the two local languages in Sri Lanka. The Sinhala and Tamil translations of the manual were then reviewed by two Sinhala-speaking and Tamil-speaking gender specialists to simplify the comprehensibility issues.

Stage 3: Delbecq method-based content and consensual validation of the translations

In this exercise, the Delbecq nominal group technique was conducted with 18 experts contacted via email based on their interest and availability to take part in the Delbecq. They were invited to a workshop on the practices of Parivartan and the objectives of the Delbecq. The experts were equally divided into six panels, each of which was composed of a gender expert, a cricketing expert, a teacher, or a youth services officer, to review the different sections of the Parivartan Coaches’ Handbook or the Training Cards. This distribution of experts among panels and the allocation of different sections to them were determined by the time available and the length of the text to be reviewed. They were then asked to rate the components allocated to them, on a Likert scale, by considering the appropriateness of each concept/section of the Sri Lankan culture and the target group of players and coaches. They were also asked to make suggestions on how to make the manual more appropriate to the local culture. A rating from 1-9 was given to each section of the manual where in an ascending order one indicates strong disagreement and nine indicates strong agreement. To avoid bias, in the first round, the experts were requested not to discuss their ratings with others. Subsequently, the experts were asked to discuss the section allocated to them with other experts on their panel. The discussion focused on the appropriateness of the concepts to the Sri Lankan culture, their applicability to the target group of athletes and coaches, and suggestions on how to make the curriculum better suited to Sri Lanka. A scribe was assigned to each panel to record the discussion outputs.

In the next step, each panel presented a brief outline of the respective section to a wider group of experts (i.e. to those who had not reviewed the section under discussion), along with suggestions on how to make the language more comprehensible and concepts more familiar. The wider group of experts were invited to provide additional suggestions on the sections being presented to them by other groups. After all the sections were presented, the experts were requested to re-rate their allocated sections using the Likert scale. They had shown their initial rating before the re-rating. Thereby, a pre-and a post-rating were obtained from each expert. As some experts were unable to participate in person, they were requested to answer via email. The inputs received online were considered secondary data.

Stage 4: Key consultations with the original author

After completing the Delbecq process, a discussion on the experts' ratings was held. Suggestions were obtained from the author of the original Parivartan programme. Based on this discussion, some changes suggested by the experts were incorporated whilst other changes that looked contradictory to the original aims of the Parivartan programme were discarded.

Stage 5: Key consultations with the selected stakeholders from the education sector

At the final step in gathering expert opinion from stakeholders in the education sector where the adapted version of Parivartan would be ultimately implemented, child protection officers, youth service officials, zonal education department personnel, and Directors of education in the Colombo, Galle and Nuwara Eliya districts were invited to separate open-group discussions within their educational zones, with the primary consultant and the project team. The main purpose of these open forums was to outline what the Parivartan programme entailed and to get the expert opinions on any possible revisions and suggestions concerned with the feasibility of its implementation.

RESULTS

Stage 1 and 2: Contextualisation and translation of the Parivartan manual

Following the desk review of the available literature on gender norm transformation programmes and a review of the English version of the Parivartan manual, the primary consultant deemed the manual appropriate at its face value for the Sri Lankan context. The discussion with the original author was used to clarify the meanings and their historical representation of certain concepts presented in the manual.

The initial translations made by the independent translators who were not experts in the field, based themselves on the literal meanings of words in the original Parivartan programme manual. Some of these translations did not accurately depict the intended conceptual meaning of words such as 'aggression' and 'violence'. Hence, an appropriate modification was made to these wordings during the translation stage based on the feedback received from the gender experts.

Stage 3: Delbecq method-based content and consensual validation

The content and consensual validity of the Parivartan programme were assessed by the Delbecq nominal group

technique. The expert ratings were analysed using Scott & Blacks' (1991) three-point categories of 1-3, 4-6, and 7-9. The decision of what to retain and what to discard in the Sri Lankan version was made based on the following criteria: at least 70% of the expert ratings are at or above 4. In content validation, all sections in the Coaches' Handbook and the Training Cards received a rating of 4-6 or 7-9. Accordingly, the only section which received a 1-3 rating was the one on "how respect can be shown to family and friends, and women and girls?". However, one expert rated all these between 1-3 while the other four rated them as 4-6 or 7-9, and hence that section was retained (Scott & Black, 1991). In the consensual validation, all ratings were found either in the 4-6 or in the 7-9 categories. Hence, the Sinhala and Tamil validated versions of the Parivartan programmes were considered favourable.

Based on the Delbecq process, the Sri Lankan version of the Parivartan was developed with its unique features. For instance, the original version of Parivartan indicated gender as male and female, but in the Sri Lankan adaptation, transgender was also included as a classification of gender in keeping with the changes in time (Parivartan was first introduced in 2009 and the adaptation to the Sri Lankan context took place in 2020-2021). In the masculinities section in the Coaches' Handbook (ICRW, 2009), experts suggested emphasising that masculine qualities are not only displayed by males but also by females or transgender individuals - an aspect not pronounced in the original Parivartan.

The idea of respect focused in the original Parivartan programme centred on showing respect towards women and girls. However, the Delbecq experts opined that rather than focusing on respect towards females, in particular, the youth should be taught the importance of respecting everyone. However, when discussing with the original author, it was decided to retain the original focus on respecting women and girls (only), as the intention of the programme was to establish respect towards women and girls, thereby facilitating the reduction of violence against them. Furthermore, more examples than those in the original version were provided for harmful masculine behaviours - such as the expectation of males to be unemotional (e.g., boys not being allowed to show fear when they see a snake). The 'Power and Privilege' aspect, which was placed in the masculinities section of the original version, was taken as a separate section in the Sri Lankan version where different types of power one experiences in life were explained as: power-over, power-with and power-at. Power-over was defined as controlling the actions or choices of another person or group of people, limiting their freedom and

opportunity; power-with was explained as working in equal partnership with others and supporting those in need; power-at was described as recognising one's power and ability to affect change. How these varieties of power relations would work in the context of an adolescents' life were also given in the translations. The decision to separate this concept of power from the category of masculinity was taken due to the need to emphasise how power operates at different levels in society. Further, Gaining Consent was also added as an additional section in the Coaches' Handbook. As suggested by the experts, two more sections were added to the Training Cards: being an ally for those who do not have power or are underprivileged, and how to face any societal opposition when the gender transformation process takes place in the athletes after being part of the Parivartan curriculum. In the eighth Training Card, methods that coaches can use to train athletes on managing aggression were also included, as this was considered an important aspect not covered in the original programme. Among the methods that can be used to further extend the message of the Parivartan programme beyond the cricketers, social media campaigns were also added whereby the athletes can make webcasts and post videos on how they respect females.

A general opinion expressed by all the Delbecq experts was the importance of the coaches having an attitudinal shift before conducting the programme on the athletes. Hence, a manual for the coaches was also developed. It was also emphasised that the training given to coaches should not stop after the initial training of the content in the Coaches' Handbook. There should be a mentoring programme through which coaches are provided further guidance in their own gender-based norm transformation process.

Stages 4 and 5: Key consultations

The key consultations with the stakeholders were conducted in several locations in the country, on the cross-culturally adapted Parivartan manual, which helped to identify the implementation issues of Parivartan in Sri Lanka. As an example, in the Nuwara Eliya district, in the Central Province of Sri Lanka, the key stakeholders were doubtful about using cricket as the sport selected for the pilot study, since volleyball is more popular in the region. Therefore, it was decided to implement it via whichever the established sport in the selected area rather than limiting it only to cricket.

It was noted in the key consultations that most of the stakeholders normalised both physical and verbal sexual harassment between the adolescent girls and boys. They opined that it is the expected behaviour with

the development of secondary sexual characteristics. Furthermore, a majority was also of the opinion that certain types of behaviour (especially those considered verbal harassment) are expected behaviour from males. Therefore, these stakeholders opined that someone not behaving in this so-called 'normal' way might feel unnatural/awkward and might even get bullied by his peers for being so. This highlights the importance of changing biased attitudes amongst the stakeholders who will be implementing this programme if it is to be successful.

DISCUSSION

The objective of this paper is to describe the cross-cultural adaptation process of the Indian masculinity-based gender transformation programme, Parivartan, in the Sri Lankan context, among Sinhala and Tamil-speaking coaches and athletes in the country.

A review of the cross-cultural adaptation of psychometric instruments and programmes indicates the importance of ensuring that the concepts in the original psychometric instrument/programme bear conceptual equivalency to the population it is being adapted to (Antunes *et al.*, 2012). In the adaptation of psychometric instruments, this is ensured through a literature review of the concepts assessed and their applicability to the target culture. This procedure was also used in the cross-cultural adaptation of the Parivartan programme though such a literature review is not deemed essential for the adaptation of programmes, unlike in the psychometric instruments. However, by doing so, it captured the needs of the local culture as well as identified possible elements in the local culture that should be considered during the cross-cultural adaptation process. After this contextualisation, Parivartan was cross-culturally adapted through a Delbecq, which is a useful consensus method for the cross-cultural adaptation of programmes (Harvey & Holmes, 2012).

The results of the Delbecq technique recommend the use of seven experts (McMillan *et al.*, 2014). However, this paper highlights that bigger groups can be more effective and could generate more useful data. The 18 experts in this study were allocated to panels of five members each. The panels consisted of either Sinhala or Tamil-speaking experts. Such an allocation of experts to the panels enabled easy facilitation as well as an improvement of their focus on their entrusted tasks. A feature of the Delbecq technique is the need for experts to meet in one place (Potter *et al.*, 2004), which enhances the facilities for the discussion of programme concepts. However, this limits the accessibility of experts at the grass-root level who cannot travel and whose input would be valuable for an adaptation process. The present

research endeavoured to overcome this limitation by asking such grass-root level experts to respond by e-mail and considering their data as secondary evidence.

The original Parivartan programme was developed in India in 2009, a decade before its adaptation to Sri Lanka. To enhance the effectiveness of a programme it is necessary not only to consider the differences in cultures but also the differences in the time periods. As time changes, it is necessary to identify the needs and demands of the culture that the programme hopes to serve (Johnston *et al.*, 2009, as cited by Colby *et al.*, 2013). This was reflected in the many conceptual as well as training-based incorporations suggested by the Delbecq experts. For instance, social media campaigns were the main way experts recommended for carrying the message of Parivartan, beyond the athletes, to other young people in schools or the wider community. Moreover, print media-based awareness programmes, including slogans and awareness messages during events such as ‘big matches’ (i.e., inter-school cricket matches), and messages on tickets for such events were also suggested.

After the Delbecq, consultation with stakeholders in different locations of the country has had to decipher the implementation issues, if any, of the Parivartan. It was clear at these consultations that the transmission of the Parivartan message via cricket might not be the best option as other sports are more popular in certain areas of the country. This highlighted the importance of cross-cultural adaptations that consider specific sub-geographical locations and the characteristics of a given sub-population (Ringwalt *et al.*, 2004). Another important aspect that was noted during the stakeholder consultations was the need to change the gender-based attitudes of the stakeholders themselves. Many stakeholders considered violence against women and girls as something that is expected from men and boys. Therefore, a great consideration is to be made when choosing facilitators who are to deliver gender-based norm transformation programmes such as Parivartan, to young people.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper aims to present the cross-cultural adaptation process of an Indian curriculum on a masculinity-based gender norm transformation programme for 12-14-year-old Sri Lankan cricketing students. Several steps were involved in the cross-cultural adaptation process starting with 1) the initial discussion with the original author, 2) the contextualisation of programme documents, 3) the translation of the original programme manual into the local languages, 4) the application of the Delbecq

procedure, 5) the discussion of the suggested changes at the Delbecq with the original author, 6) the consultations with the stakeholders in key regions in the country, and 7) the pilot testing of the programme in Sri Lanka. The Parivartan’s Sinhala and Tamil adaptation was deemed to have good content and consensual validity. Based on the suggestions of the Delbecq experts, changes unique to the Sri Lankan culture and the current time period were incorporated into Parivartan’s Sri Lankan version. Hence, the Sinhala and Tamil versions of Parivartan could be effectively used in Sri Lanka for transforming masculinity-based gender- norms.

This study is not without limitations. The translation of the Coaches’ Handbook and the Training Cards was conducted as a forward translation only. There was no backward translation (Neuman, 1997), due to time constraints. If the backward translation process was utilized, the conceptual equivalence of the programme contents could have been enhanced. However, before the Delbecq process, the translations were reviewed by the two gender experts, ensuring the conceptual equivalence between the original and the adapted. Even though the typical forward and backward translations were not employed, the use of the gender experts ensured that the Sinhala and Tamil versions were conceptually equivalent to the original version. However, there were instances when perfect conceptual and literal equivalence could not be achieved. Some terms such as gender-based violence became complex when translated into Sinhala and Tamil and hence, it was ‘heavy’ for the lay population to identify. Therefore, such terms were made less pronounced after the translation process was streamlined to reduce the initial discriminatory tone. These difficulties have been found to occur commonly when translating cross-culturally (World Health Organization, 1997). Another limitation of the study is that this programme was adapted for 12-14-year-old Sinhala and Tamil-speaking youths who are frequently schooling. Therefore, it might not be appropriate for intellectually challenged children or children with learning difficulties. Therefore, further research will be needed to explore the possibility of expanding the use of this programme to such groups of children, and indeed to implement and assess the effectiveness of the cross-culturally adapted Parivartan in Sri Lanka.

Lessons learnt

The lessons learnt could be broadly categorised into two sections: those relating directly to the methodology employed during the cross-cultural adaptation, and those that generally apply to programme adaptations.

The Delbecq consensus method was found to be effective when conducting the cross-cultural adaptation of the Indian masculine gender-based norms transformation programme, Parivartan, to the Sri Lankan culture. It provided the opportunity to gain local (i.e. Sri Lankan) experts' opinions on the concepts and techniques included in the Indian original programme and to gain a more holistic idea about the workability of such a programme in the local culture. Time efficiency was the main benefit of using this method in comparison with the Delphi technique, which entails a longer waiting period to receive a response from the experts who contacted it. One main methodological limitation was apparent during the Delbecq technique; though the Delbecq technique requires experts to have individually reviewed the sections assigned to them before attending the Delbecq workshop, many experts due to their busy schedules had not followed these instructions. Therefore, whether a thorough understanding of the programme concepts was gained is debatable.

The importance of maintaining the authenticity of the original programme in introducing it to the local culture was highlighted, where certain suggestions made by the experts to make the breadth of the target concepts more general were not retained (e.g., one such suggestion was to include all humans in the concept of respect, rather than only women and girls, as in the original version). Because, by doing so, the original intention of the programme, which is to develop respect towards women and girls would be lost. It was understood that during a cross-cultural adaptation process, it is important to retain and give due credit to the core intention of the programme.

The intention of adapting a programme developed in another culture is to ensure that the programme can be effectively applied to most of the regions in the local culture. Hence, several consultations were conducted with the various stakeholder groups around the country during the cross-cultural adaptation process. However, during the stakeholder meetings held in the Central region of the country, it was seen that the gender norms - though expected to be like the other parts of the country - were widely different. Therefore, the importance of taking into consideration the possible sub-community differences were highlighted. Moreover, it was also noted that discussing with stakeholders about programme implementation of a 'sensitive programme' such as gender-based norm transformation was a challenge. Most of the stakeholders whose support would be needed for the ultimate implementation of the programme also shared hegemonic notions of masculinity and

therefore, displayed resistance to the implementation of such programmes which contradicted their notions of masculinity. Therefore, the need to address the attitudes held by individuals who might not be the direct audience of the programme was also learnt during the consultation sessions.

The need to take into consideration the time lapse between the design of the original programme and that of its current adaptation was also emphasised during the implementation process. This was mainly to do with the communication medium, through which the programme concepts are transmitted to the target audience. In an attempt to address the changes in communication trends over the years, the technique of social media was incorporated as a possible medium of communication within the programme.

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