An exploration of accredited learning for the domestic violence sector in Ireland

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ABSTRACT

This study explores learning and recognition frameworks for domestic violence workers in four countries, the UK, USA, Australia and New Zealand. In analysing these programmes, my aim is to generate relevant knowledge and theory that can be used to inform an accredited learning programme for domestic violence workers and organisations in Ireland.

This study is located within a feminist research perspective that sees feminist research being connected in principle to struggle for social change. A multiple cross cultural case study was chosen as the research method. Employing a multiple case study as a research strategy, I analysed information from nine organisations that run accredited learning programmes for workers.

Two distinct approaches were found. The first approach provides a model which embodies characteristics of situated learning in a community of practice. The findings of this study are that this approach enables domestic violence organisations to include learning about the social change role of the domestic violence movement as well learning about the identity of self and movement in relation to socially constructed inequalities and oppressions.

The second approach is a model where programmes are mapped to national vocational education and training structures. Analysis of the findings suggest that accredited learning for domestic violence workers delivered within this context may constrain learning about the political aspects of domestic violence work as they impact on social change work and internal power relationships.

The primary conclusion of this study is that a model of situated learning in a community of practice can include formal recognition for domestic violence workers' experience and learning. Such a model of accredited learning synthesises feminist responses to male violence and feminist pedagogy to create a learning environment in which the domestic violence worker can become a competent member of a community of practitioners and of political activists concerned with social change.

Acronyms

AVA	Against Violence and Abuse
CAADA	Coordinated Action Against Abuse
NJADVP	New Jersey Association of Domestic Violence Professionals
NQF	National Qualification Framework
OCN	Open College Network
QCDFVR	Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research
WAFE	Women's Aid Federation England
WCDFVSWA	Women's Council of domestic and Family Violence Services Western Australia

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

What this study is about

This study explores learning and recognition frameworks for domestic violence workers in four countries, the UK, USA, Australia and New Zealand. In analysing these programmes, my aim is to generate relevant knowledge and theory that can be used to inform an accredited learning programme for domestic violence workers and organisations in Ireland.

The main rationale for investigating this topic area is that I believe it can generate useful knowledge for the domestic violence sector in Ireland. Collectively, domestic violence workers and organisations know a lot about which domestic violence responses work. However, we have not yet developed a corresponding professional development model that incorporates recognition of the expertise currently held by many practitioners and organisations within the sector. I believe that such a model represents an important piece of the architecture that will build the capacity of the domestic violence sector in its dual role as working for social change and responding in practical ways to women and children's experience of abuse and violence through the provision of a range of services. In exploring other learning and recognition frameworks, I am concerned with how such frameworks can both value, protect and build on some the key strengths of the sector in Ireland, as well as provide learning and progression routes for workers and organisations.

In this study, I examined nine accredited training programmes for domestic violence workers in four countries where English was the first language and that had well developed domestic violence sectors. My interest in carrying out this study is both political and professional. As a feminist, I work from an understanding of domestic violence as a manifestation of gender inequality. I am therefore concerned with how the domestic violence sector can support workers, organisations and the movement through education and learning to

be effective in seeking social change that will lead to greater safety for individual women and children and the elimination of gender based violence.

I have been employed in the domestic violence sector in Ireland for over twenty five years. I am concerned with the development of safe, accountable and effective responses to individual women and children. In Ireland and elsewhere, there exists evidenced based good practice which is underpinned by feminist principles on how to best protect women and children. To date this has not been formalised into a framework of standards, training and accreditation in Ireland. Work has commenced and is ongoing to develop a set of standards for the domestic violence services in Ireland. This work is being lead out by Safe Ireland, the Irish National Network of Women's Domestic Violence services. This standards project draws on the expertise and knowledge held within the Irish sector as well as evidenced based practice from other countries. A corresponding education and learning framework to support the consistent implementation and attainment of these standards will follow. This study will contribute to the development of such a framework by generating knowledge and theory on how organisations in other countries have supported the development of feminist practice in the organisations themselves and their workers.

The study of recognised and accredited learning frameworks for domestic violence workers was explored for two reasons. Firstly, in recent years there have been policy developments at national level that point to the possible imposition of standards and possibly standardisation, by the state, of domestic violence responses. The attempts by the domestic violence sector to influence these policy developments can be frustrated by the lack of recognition of the expertise and knowledge accumulated by organisations and practitioners. Secondly, domestic violence work as a profession is, with limited exceptions, not understood, recognised or valued outside of the domestic violence sector itself. I believe that the domestic violence worker can be disadvantaged in terms of career progression and access to higher education. This study therefore selected education and training programmes that provided recognition and accreditation to the individual worker. I was

particularly interested to find out how organisations integrated the prior learning and experience of workers in a qualifications framework.

Two further issues within the wider topic area of accredited learning for domestic violence workers were explored. The first is how domestic violence organisations and responses are informed by a multiplicity of perspectives and ensure equal access and equal outcomes for a diversity of women. In this study I explore how these training and education programmes address issues of power, privilege and entitlement as they operate across social divisions that create inequality and oppression.

Secondly, I contend that theories and practices developed within the radical adult education sphere provide insights for a pedagogic approach for domestic violence education and training. Radical adult and community education is concerned with empowering learners to analyse the social conditions that lead to inequality and oppression and to imagine alternative futures for society (Thompson, 1997). Imagining a future without violence and acting to effect the necessary change to realise this vision is the rationale of the domestic violence movement (Dobash and Dobash, 1994). In addition, learning and education has always been a core concern for social change movements and the domestic violence movement is no exception in this regard. With these shared goals of seeking radical social change through emancipatory education, I sought evidence of where the selected programmes integrated radical adult education theories and practices.

This study is located within a feminist research perspective that sees feminist research being connected in principle to struggle for social change (Hesse-Biber etal, 2004). A multiple cross cultural case study was chosen as the research method. Employing a multiple case study as a research strategy allowed me to identify a number of relevant cases that could be explored in detail thus eliciting a number of themes, issues and specific situations that acted as a springboard for theoretical reflection (Bryman, 2008, Creswell 2007). Programmes run by nine organisations in four countries were selected for content analysis. There is a wealth of information about these programmes that is not available to me through the use of content analysis.

Therefore, I would caution against any use of this report as presenting a complete picture of accredited and certified training programmes for domestic violence workers. Notwithstanding this limitation I argue that deploying a case study approach enabled me to acquire in depth information about these programmes to meet the aims of the study.

Structure of the thesis

The thesis is laid out as follows. Chapter 2, Context, provides a brief overview of contextual issues in Ireland that are of relevance to this study. A description of the Irish domestic violence sector is included in this chapter.

In chapter 3, Literature Review, I discuss some key theories and knowledge that frame this research. These include literature about the history and work of the domestic violence movement in Western English speaking countries and relevant theories from within the field of adult education.

Chapter 4, Methodology, describes the methodological approach to this study locating it within a feminist framework. This chapter includes a discussion on reflexivity and addresses ethical issues considered in the carrying out of this research.

A presentation and analysis of the findings is presented in chapter 5, Findings and Analysis. A short description of each programme is presented country by country preceded by a brief policy overview of that country. This is followed by an outline and discussion of a thematic matrix to enable comparison and contextualisation of the programmes reviewed. Two approaches to accreditation are discussed.

In chapter 6, Conclusion, a number of conclusions are drawn. These include suggestions as to the possibilities for the Irish domestic violence sector to develop an accredited learning programme based on theories of emancipatory education. This chapter also includes some discussion about specific contextual issues in Ireland that I argue should be considered in the development of such a programme.

In this thesis, I set out to gather information about existing accredited training programmes for domestic violence workers with a view to contributing knowledge and theory to the on-going work of the domestic violence sector in Ireland. Four core concerns frame the parameters of this study. The first of these is the potential of these accredited training programmes to strengthen the dual role of domestic violence organisations as being both social change agents and service providers to women and children. Secondly, an analysis of how prior experience and learning is formally recognised in the accreditation processes of these programmes is delineated. A third concern is the extent to which accredited training programmes addressed the intersection of gender equality and other equality issues as they impact on both survivors of male violence and workers and activists within the movement. The fourth concern addresses how theories and practices developed within the field of emancipatory education are used in domestic violence education programmes. In the next chapter I begin with a brief overview of contextual issues in Ireland that frame this research.

CHAPTER 2 CONTEXT

Introduction

In this chapter I briefly describe contextual issues that inform this research project. This chapter primarily focuses on describing the domestic violence sector in Ireland. A short overview of State policy in relation to domestic violence and adult education is also included.

Violence Against Women

Prevalence of violence against women

> Violence against women and girls is a problem of pandemic proportions. Based on country data available, up to 70 percent of women experience physical or sexual violence from men in their lifetime — the majority from husbands, intimate partners or someone they know. Among women aged 15–44, acts of violence cause more death and disability than cancer, malaria, traffic accidents and war combined. Perhaps the most pervasive human rights violation that we know today, violence against women devastates lives, fractures communities, and stalls development. It takes many forms and occurs in many places — domestic violence in the home, sexual abuse of girls in schools, sexual harassment at work, rape by husbands or strangers, in refugee camps or as a tactic of war (United Nations Development Fund for Women, 2013).

Described as perhaps the most pervasive human rights abuse by Unifem, gender based violence affects the lives of millions of women and girls. Findings from nearly eighty population-based studies indicate that between ten per cent and sixty per cent of women have experienced at least one incident of physical violence from a current or former partner (Ellsberg & Heise, 2005). In Ireland the first prevalence study in 1995 found that eighteen per cent of Irish women responding to a survey had experienced domestic violence (Kelleher and Associates and O'Connor, 1995). A national survey by the Crime Council of Ireland in 2005 found that one in seven

women in Ireland had experienced severe emotional, physical and sexual abuse at the hands of an intimate partner (National Crime Council 2005).

Policy context

In Ireland the National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based violence 2010 -2014 (Cosc, 2010) outlines a whole of government response to the issue of violence against women. It sets out a series aims and objectives to be achieved by government bodies by 2014. There has been no independent evaluation of the progress of this plan to date. Action 6.5 under the plan states that the HSE will

> Work in partnership with the national NGO networks to develop standardisation within specialist domestic violence services.

This action is currently being progressed by Safe Ireland who have been required under their current service level agreement with the HSE to develop a set of standards for all domestic violence services in Ireland. The responsibility for this and related actions will soon move to the new Children and Family Agency who will take over the core funding of frontline domestic violence services from the HSE. It is within this context that an accredited training programme for domestic violence workers will be developed

The domestic violence sector in Ireland

Morton (2003) carried out a study for the National Network of Women's Refuges and Support Services (NNWRSS, now Safe Ireland) on the issues and challenges for the domestic violence services in Ireland at that time. She noted that domestic violence services in Ireland were informed by three different founding influences: longer standing organisations grew out of either the feminist movement or from religious based social service agencies while newer organisations tended to work from a community development approach that recognised the need for social change as well as the need for frontline services. Morton (2003) also noted the increase in the social service approach to delivering domestic violence services at this time. The report

concludes that there is no consensus within Ireland as to core principles, guidelines or standards and recommended that the NNWRS facilitate organisations to agree a joint approach. Morton (2003) argued that such an approach could incorporate a balance between ideologies that emphasises the need for social services whilst at the same time stressing the need for social change.

There are currently 48 domestic violence services for women in Ireland, a number of which also provide services directly to children (Cosc 2011). Services provided by these organisations include helplines, refuge provision, support information and advocacy, court accompaniment, support groups for survivors of domestic violence, children's programmes and transitional housing. Many of these organisations also engage in campaigning work and awareness raising in the community is a key role for most of them (Safe Ireland 2013).

Safe Ireland is the national representative body for the majority of these organisations at national level and in dealings with the State. Dublin Women's Aid also engages in policy and lobbying work and has a policy, training and research remit (Women's Aid 2013). Both organisations are represented on the National Steering Committee on Violence Against Women. Safe Ireland, for instance, represents over forty domestic violence services on a number of sub committees under the National Steering Committee on Violence Against Women. It aims to provide a critical public voice on the issue of violence against women. Dublin Women's Aid influence policy and legislation through the production of research and policy paper submissions to relevant state bodies. Other national organisations including the National Women's Council of Ireland and AkidWa also lobby at national level on issues related to domestic violence. Protest based social change action is mostly concentrated around the 16 Days of Action against Violence against Women Campaign. Individual organisations use the opportunity of the annual human rights campaign to draw attention to the issue of violence against women and to demand state action and accountability (Women's Aid 2013).

Unlike the UK, Australia, New Zealand and the USA, there is no specialist domestic violence sector in Ireland. One organisation, Pavee Point have a specialist support agency on violence against women (Pavee Point 2013). They seek to inform culturally appropriate responses to Traveller and Roma women experiencing domestic violence. Two key activities are strategic influencing of government policy and providing training to Traveller organisations on good practice responses to women experiencing domestic violence. AkidWa are a national organisation run by and for Black and Minority immigrant women (Akidwa 2013). One of their three core areas of work is gender based violence with a focus on Female Genital Mutilation and domestic violence. AkidWa address the issue of violence against women through networking, policy work and capacity building. They work cooperatively with a number of frontline service responses at national level to lobby for improved responses to minority ethnic immigrant women, refugee women and women seeking asylum.

Statistics from Safe Ireland show that 7,797 women and 3,066 children accessed the domestic violence services in 2011. 42,383 helpline calls were dealt with showing a 10% increase on helpline calls in 2010. There was also an increase of admission to refuges with 2,129 admissions in 2011. On 2,537 occasions, women seeking crisis accommodation were not admitted to refuge because there was no space or no refuge in their area (Safe Ireland 2010, 2011)

Domestic violence services in Ireland received €17,650,000 in funding from the state in 2011. This represents a cut in funding to the sector of 10 per cent since 2009 annually from the state. (C. Gleeson, Safe Ireland, personal communication, 12th June 2013). Further cuts were experienced by all services in 2012 and 2013 but an overall figure on the accumulated percentage cut is not available. It is within this context of shrinking resources and growing demand for services that domestic violence organisations also work to support their staff and volunteers through education and training.

Training and education

Both Safe Ireland and Women's Aid provide training for domestic violence workers. Safe Ireland provides opportunities for network members to participate in education and training in relation to a number of key aspects of domestic violence work including responding to women who experience problematic substance use issues and training on integrating outcome evaluation into services (Safe Ireland 2013). Women's Aid has a specific training department. Their current training priorities are shaped by funding requirements and they prioritise training for HSE staff, Family Recourse Centres and Local and Community Development groups. Both organisations have explored the issue of accredited training for domestic violence workers (Women's Aid 2013).

Safe Ireland explored accreditation routes through existing structures for further and higher education in Ireland under the National Qualifications Framework [NQF]. Safe Ireland concluded that none of these was appropriate to the needs of the domestic violence sector (Safe Ireland 2008). The reasons given for this include that in a previous mapping exercise of workers profiles, Safe Ireland found that most workers employed in domestic violence sector in Ireland had already attained qualifications at higher level. They also assessed that the qualifications were not commensurate with the expertise of many workers in the sector. For these two reasons Safe Ireland concluded that there would be little incentive for current workers to pursue an accreditation route through the National Qualifications Framework (C. Gleeson, Safe Ireland, personal communication, 22nd March 2013).

The Women's Aid Domestic Violence accreditation project operated from December 2006 to December 2007. The aim of the project was to achieve clarity on identifying the optimal accreditation route for domestic violence workers. A study of existing accreditation routes in Ireland was carried out as well as exploration of a number of accredited training programmes in other countries (Women's Aid 2007).

As well as desk research, Women's Aid carried out research with domestic violence workers Ireland to gather their views of accreditation for domestic violence workers. There was support from all workers consulted for accredited training and strong support for the inclusion of the recognition of prior learning and experience. Recommendations about a possible accreditation route were not included in the report.

Adult education in Ireland

Policy

The White Paper on Adult Education (2000) was the first Government White Paper to address this area of education and remains the framework within which government policy is formulated. It establishes lifelong learning as a governing principle of educational policy and sets out government policy and priorities for future direction.

Much of the proposed priorities for the future direction of workplace learning were focused on the links between industry and education and there is little mention of the importance of strengthening work place learning for social services and none in relation to nongovernmental organisations and their role in the economy. In the area of recognising workplace learning, specific recommendations included the development of a system of accreditation that could be transferrable within the labour market and that would enable learners to gain entry to further courses of education.

2000 to 2002 was a period of unprecedented development in the adult education sector. Structures were developed, provision increased, support structures established and a national qualifications framework was developed (Keogh 2006). However, the structures required to bring adult education in from the margins and to provide a coordinated and coherent system for adult education in Ireland did not materialise (Murtagh 2009). He identified that the failure of the White Paper on Adult Education to live up to the promise of its more radical aspects due to the predominance of

Department of Education Training and Education [DETE] in leading out on adult education policy. This was because vocational education and training mattered to the DETE in its agenda of creating a competitive workforce whereas it remained a marginal area of concern and activity within Department of Education and Science.

National Framework of Qualifications

The National Framework of Qualifications (2011) is a system of ten levels based on nationally agreed standards of knowledge, skills and competence. As yet, standards in relation to domestic violence services have not been developed under this framework. Safe Ireland is considering mapping the agreed standards to this national framework when they are fully agreed and adopted by the sector (C. Gleeson, Safe Ireland, personal communication, 22nd March, 2013). Qualifications under the National Framework of Qualifications are awarded under the ten levels, level one being a certificate award and level ten being a doctoral degree.

Summary

This chapter has provided a brief overview of the context of domestic violence responses in Ireland. The description of the domestic violence is important as this study seeks to support the development of an accredited learning programme for domestic violence workers in Ireland. The next chapter reviews literature in three key areas of knowledge that frame the study of accredited learning programmes in other countries.

CHAPTER 3   LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter reviews literature in three broad areas relevant to the exploration of accredited learning for domestic violence workers. The first area concerns the position of the domestic violence movement as having dual roles to respond to women and children's safety and social support needs whilst also working for social change to address the underlying causes of violence against women. Two political ideologies underpinning the domestic violence movement's work will be addressed, emphasising the importance of a radical feminist perspective in maintaining the movement's social change agenda. The question of what constitutes feminist practice and some threats and challenges to the maintenance of this feminist practice is also reviewed. A brief overview of some of the challenges to maintaining feminist practice is included. Knowledge building in relation to all of these issues is a key focus for education and training for domestic violence workers.

The second area reviewed concerns adult and community education. The domestic violence movement has historically been involved in education and learning, utilising it as a tool in both its social change work and in building effective, accountable and safe responses to individual women and children. I argue for an approach to domestic violence education from within the radical tradition of adult education as both are part of the ongoing struggle for women's emancipation. Theories and practices of the adult and community education sector provide much useful knowledge and theory for education and learning within the domestic violence sector. I review literature on some of the key theories that I have identified as having relevance for this study.

As most of the programmes analysed are delivered within the context of a vocational and training structure, the final area examines a number of dilemmas and tensions associated with the location of domestic violence education within this field of lifelong learning. The relationship between accredited training and competency frameworks is examined. This section

concludes with literature that highlights some dilemmas associated with the professionalisation of domestic violence work.

Section 1 The domestic violence movement

The history of the international domestic violence movement

The domestic violence movement in Western English speaking countries (the focus of this research) emerged from within the wider feminist movement in the 1960s and 1970s. The multiple approaches, debates and discussions that have characterised the evolution of feminism as a movement and political ideology are reflected in the domestic violence movement's history and development. I will discuss two of the dominant approaches that are approaches from a liberal feminist analysis and those from a radical feminist analysis (Dobash and Dobash 1992).

Whether responding to male violence within intimate relationships from either a liberal or radical feminist perspective, a dual approach was taken by early movement activists. This dual approach sought to address the wider social realities that underpinned the prevalence of violence against women while at the same time establishing refuges, support groups and other practical supports for women experiencing violence within an intimate relationship (Dobash and Dobash 1992, O'Connor 2008). Collective action for social change is recognised as a necessity by these organisations. However, different understandings of social change coexists and I will discuss these here.

Liberal and radical feminist approaches to domestic violence
Liberal feminist approaches to domestic violence are characterised by work for institutional and societal change without seeking to dismantle those hierarchical structures that lead to female oppression and male violence against women. These responses are mostly focused on legislative change and on getting powerful institutions to co-operate in holding violent men to

account, therefore preventing re-victimisation of women (Dobash and Dobash 1992, Stark 2007). Mc Kinnon (1993, pg. 206) contends that approaches from a liberal feminist perspective do not stop male violence against women because criminal enforcement while suggesting that rape and battering are deviant:

> …punishes men for expressing images of masculinity…for which they are otherwise trained, elevated, venerated and paid.

This approach seeks to punish those actions that are deemed to be deviant or criminal but fails to identify or tackle the underpinning causes of violence against women.

Radical feminist approaches identify domestic violence as a manifestation of male domination and female subordination. Solutions are located in the dismantling or at least transformation of those structures, institutions and cultural norms that provide the context in which individual men use violence and abuse in intimate relationships. From this perspective, domestic violence is located along a continuum of male violence against women both within the public and private sphere (Kelly 1987). Radical feminists assert that the various manifestations of male violence are weapons used to subjugate women in the political system of patriarchy. Therefore, all forms of violence against women, whether in the private sphere of intimate relationship and family or in the public sphere, require radical political solutions (Bunch 1992). By recognising that gender oppression is socially constructed, radical feminism provides the domestic violence movement with the possibility to work for a reality beyond legislative and institutional change and towards a deconstruction and transformation of those social constructs that underpin the prevalence of violence against women (Barry 1995). The ultimate goal is the elimination of all forms of gender based violence.

Stark (2007) contends that while the radical feminist analysis had been contested from the earliest days of the domestic violence movement, liberal feminist perspectives grew in influence because of the imperative of addressing the concrete harms being inflicted upon women and children. Feminist responses therefore focused on institutional change to get greater

protection and safety for women and children. These responses, along with the energy and focus needed to develop and sustain services, absorbed most of the energy of the early domestic violence movement and still remain as the core work of anti violence organisations (Dobash and Dobash 1992).

Campaigning, policy work and engagement with the state have resulted in concrete gains for women and children through legislative and institutional reform (Pence and Shepard 1999, Shepard 2005). A feminist analysis has been mainstreamed into major international human rights instruments including the UN Vienna Declaration on Human Rights (2003) and the UN Beijing Platform for Action (2005) (O'Connor 2006, Reilly 2006). Individual domestic violence organisations and State coalitions have lead out on innovative and sophisticated responses that developed coordinated community responses (Harwin et al 1999, Pence and Shepard 1999, Shepard, 2005). Some of those have lead to sustained systems change resulting in the decrease in serious physical violence and female homicide in those areas where these programmes operate (Pence and Shepard 1999, Shepard, 2005).

These changes may not have radically challenged or overturned the political, economic and cultural realities that underpin male violence, but it is important to recognise and value the importance of these changes. This acknowledgement can exist alongside a critique of the domestic violence movement as having stalled as a revolutionary social change movement and the need to re-examine its origins, ideologies and goals (Stark 2007).

Engagement by domestic violence organisations and activists with the state is not without challenges. In this respect, I argue that movement activists working from a radical feminist perspective provide a critique that is essential if domestic violence organisations and practitioners are not to be co-opted by the state into initiatives that absorb time and energy but that do not effect real change. In the UK for example, Patel (1999, pg. 79) argues that multi agency initiatives have become increasingly mainstreamed but that these state promoted initiatives are diversionary and undemocratic substitutes for 'enhancing substantive rights or access to resources which make a material

difference to women's lives'. Women's domestic violence organisations often sought to work with the state to develop coordinated multi agency responses. In reality, when advocating for the changes that would make a real difference they have limited power when sitting at the table with state institutions. However, the existence of such forums can give the impression that the state is doing something about domestic violence. Kelly (1999) shares Patel's analysis but argues that multi agency forums informed by strong network of feminist organisations and activists can result is valuable changes for women and children without a watering down of radical feminist principles.

The erosion of feminist politics in domestic violence organisations can also come about as a result of increased discipline and scrutiny imposed by funders (Lehrner and Allen 2008). In order to attract much needed funding from the state and more conservative funding bodies, the tempering or abandonment of language that defines domestic violence as a social and political concern can be a strategic decision made by organisations. Modifying language alters meaning perspectives and working from within these altered meaning frameworks, organisations and workers begin to make sense of the world differently (Lehrner and Allen 2008). Thompson (1997, pg.79) argues that the danger in this kind of compromise is that 'you forget what's been relinquished in the pursuit of what has been achieved'. In the context of domestic violence work, this results in putting aside the political agenda for social change in exchange for 'a foothold in the system' (Thompson 1997, pg. 79). Lehrner and Allen (2008) argue that organisational ideology needs to be articulated and fostered through mentoring and training to avoid the risk that language utilised specifically for funders becomes unintentionally incorporated into internal organisational narratives and thus changes the nature of the work done. I would argue that it is important to ensure training, education and mentoring is delivered from a radical feminist perspective so that the pressures to conform do not result in slippage from radical feminist to liberal feminist and finally non feminist perspectives.

Liberal and radical feminism have co-existed in the domestic violence movement, sometimes in conflict but often synthesising to create useful

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collaborations in the best interests of abused women and their children (Dobash and Dobash 1992). The greater importance of maintaining a radical feminist analysis cannot be forgotten. I argue that to approach violence against women from a non radical perspective implies that the social and political factors underpinning the prevalence of male violence cannot be changed and that therefore violence against women will always be a feature of relationships between the sexes. A radical feminist perspective provides an emancipatory vision through which women and men can work collectively for a world in which violence against women and all oppressed groups will no longer be an inevitable reality in society (Barry 1995).

Different perspectives on why domestic violence happens and what to do about it also inform varying responses to individual women accessing domestic violence services. (Dobash and Dobash 1992). For example, some domestic violence organisations emerged from outside of the feminist movement with some being set up and run by churches and religious organisations and others by social workers or groups of individuals who were unaffiliated with the women's movement (Dobash and Dobash 1992, Morton 2003, Stark 2007).

Some responses sought to stop violence but were ultimately concerned with maintaining the family unit (Morton 2003). Other responses were based on a belief that domestic violence was caused by dysfunctional family dynamics or by a distorted pathology of the abusive man and/or the abused woman (Dobash and Dobash 1992). In the latter case, psychiatric, psychological and therapeutic responses, focused on changing the abused woman and the abuser are employed as the appropriate response. In both of these response frameworks, the power of the abuser never gets challenged and the abused woman is given the message that she has the responsibility to make the relationship work and/or to stop the violence (Dobash and Dobash 1992, Lehrner and Allen 2008, 2009). This message mirrors that of the abuser and sexist societal values that blame women when they are abused and that renders invisible the abuse of power by the perpetrator. It 'others' women experiencing domestic violence as passive victims, inadequate or

dysfunctional, in need of a social service from a professional with a greater insight into the woman's predicament than the woman holds herself (Bruckner 2001).

Feminist based practice

A radical feminist analysis in contrast recognises that domestic violence is located on a continuum of sexual violence that threatens the bodily, sexual and psychological integrity of all women (Kelly 1987, Stanko 1987). Working from this perspective, feminist domestic violence workers locate themselves in a position of solidarity with the woman seeking support from their organisations. Feminist responses to individual women's experience of male violence are therefore underpinned by a commitment to relationships based on empowerment and mutual respect (Dobash and Dobash 1992, Mullender and Hague 2001).

Listening to women and ensuring that their voices are central to the development of services is a core principle of all feminist informed responses (Dobash and Dobash 1992). Women's accounts of their experiences lead to an understanding that abusive men use multiple tactics to ensure their dominance in all key aspects of the relationship. (Herman 1992, Stark 2000). Coercive control is a key term now used to describe the systematic, intentional, incremental and subtle use of power to gain and maintain that dominance (Stark 2000). This understanding in turn informs responses that are focused on restoring control to the woman (Herman 1992).

Recognising women as the best assessors of risk, choice and agency is left with them (Kulkarni et al 2012, Allen et al 2004). Interventions are focused not only on what the woman can do to change but on how institutions and agencies operate to protect the woman and lessen the power of the abuser through holding him to account for his actions (Sullivan and Bybee, 1999). Recognising the impacts of coercive control, the limited safety provided by the state and respecting the woman's right to determine her own future,

responses are focused on maximising safety for the woman and increasing choices and options regardless of whether she stays with her partner or not .

Services and practitioners employing feminist practice have been consistently rated as the most effective agencies in responding to the experiences and needs of women who have experienced intimate partner violence. Sullivan and Bybee (1999) highlight three key aspects of a feminist based response that result in long term positive outcomes for women. The first of these was that the woman rather than the advocate guides the interventions. Secondly, the activities are designed to make various agencies and institutions within the community more responsive rather than to change the woman. These first two core elements are based on the third supposition which is that women experiencing domestic violence are competent human beings who are able to make sound decisions for themselves. Evaluations indicate that where these principles inform how organisations and workers went about their work, that women experienced increased safety and increased access to social and economic supports (Allen et al 2004, Fitzpatrick et al 2003).

Challenges to feminist based practice

Maintaining feminist based practice is a challenging task and requires that organisations employ a range of measures to support its consistent implementation. Richardson (2001) describes the numerous strategies that must be employed by domestic violence agencies to ensure that workers can sustain consistent practice whilst at the same time maintaining self care. Educational and training are but two of these strategies in a wider organisational framework focused on the maintenance of reflective practice which Richardson (2001) states is key to safe and effective practice with domestic violence survivors

These measures require money, time and commitment at all levels of organisations. Where this does not happen, erosion of movement ideology and slippage into individualised responses that fail to locate women's

experience within wider social and political realities can occur (Hammons 2008, Lehrner and Allen 2008, 2009). Specific impacts of this erosion of movement ideology and action are relevant when considering the issue of domestic violence education for workers in anti violence organisations.

A number of small scale studies have identified the impact of the erosion of feminist practice in organisations that originated from within the women's movement. Despite policy documents in one organisation that articulated a feminist analysis of violence against women, Hammons (2008) found that the workers expressed views of domestic violence causes and solutions from within a pathologising framework. Lehrner and Allen (2008) found a difference in practice responses to women with older women mostly working from within the social change analysis and younger workers adopting the individualistic pathologising framework. These differences existed within the same organisations. This tendency to pathologise and blame the victim was also identified in a study of shelter workers in Germany (Bruckner 2001)

Working from a de-gendered and pathologised perspective, these advocates asserted that solutions to domestic violence lay in changing the woman who experienced domestic violence. Their responses focused on the woman's coping skills and her need to 'set boundaries' (Lehrner and Allen 2008, pg. 226). If the woman returned to the abuser the domestic violence worker saw the woman as having failed to set boundaries and they inadvertently ended up blaming the woman for the violence and abuse she was subjected to (Hammons 2008, Lehrner and Allen 2008). This unintentional woman blaming attitude mirrors the abusive emotional and psychological tactics of the domestic violence perpetrator and is contrary to feminist practice that locates barriers to leaving in the power the abuser holds and in the cultural and societal context that provides permission to the violent man to behave abusively and without sanction.

Bruckner (2001) contends that a key factor leading to this approach was workers' impatience with the slowness of change and the fact that women often returned to their abuser. Without a clear analysis that identified the social factors that rendered leaving so dangerous and difficult, workers

sought the solution in focusing on what the individual could do to change their situation. Again the need for mentoring, education and training was highlighted as essential to ensure these organisations and their individual workers operated from a shared feminist analysis of domestic violence (Bruckner 2001, Lehrner and Allen 2008).

Inadequate responses to the multiplicity of women's needs

A number of aspects of the movements identity and work have been criticised both from within the wider feminist movement and from external sources. Key areas that need to be addressed include the lack of accessibility and appropriate services for disabled women (Mullender and Hague 2001, Thiara et al 2012) and the failure of the movement to integrate a response to women who experience domestic violence in same sex relationships (Renzetti, 1992). Inadequate responses to women with problematic substance use issues or who have a mental health issue have also been highlighted (Macy et al 2010, Mc Phail et al 2002) The capacity of domestic violence services to respond to women's experience of sexual violence has also been critiqued as being inadequate (Macy et al 2010, Mc Phail et al 2002). Black feminist commentators contend that an over emphasis on seeking criminal justice responses do not always serve the best interests of those women who come from communities that have experienced oppression and discrimination from law agencies (Richie 2000). In Ireland, the over representation of Traveller women in refuges and their under usage of community based advocacy and support services has been identified as an issue that requires innovative responses in collaboration with the Traveller community (Foley 2011).

Two explanations for these limitations have been identified. The first relates to the unitary focus on gender inequality as the underpinning cause of domestic violence. While critics of the unitary focus on gender inequality maintain a feminist analysis, they argue for an evolved approach that encompasses an understanding of multiple causes of domestic violence, most particularly when seeking to understand the experiences of marginalised women (Collins 1998, Donnelly et al 2005, Mc Phail et al 2007,

Richie 2000, Sokoloff and Dupont,). The second explanation is located in the movement's identity. The domestic violence movement has been characterised as a White woman's movement, and with increasing professionalisation, as a White middle class women's movement (Donnelly et al 2005, Richie 2000). Black activists and theorists have integrated a vigorous critique of the movement's failure to address class privilege as embodied in the mostly middle class backgrounds of its workers and Boards of Management (Richie 2000). The need for movement leaders to examine their own white and class privilege and how this impacts on how they understand the multiplicity of women's experiences, is highlighted as a priority issue (Donnelly et al 2005, Sokoloff and Dupont 2005, Richie 2000).

The failure to adequately address issues of class privilege, white privilege, racism and other social disparities and inequalities within the domestic violence movement weakens the movement in significant ways and undermines its attempts to effectively work for social change. Beth Richie (2000, pg. 1135) states that this failure:

> seriously compromised the transgressive and transformative potential of the antiviolence movement's potentially radical critique of various forms of social domination.

To address these challenges effectively, acknowledgement and honesty from movement leaders about internal divisions and inequalities is necessary. These authors propose that solutions lie in collaboration, innovation and a greater openness from within the movement to integrate multiple perspectives (Donnelly et al 2005, Sokoloff and Dupont 2005, Richie 2000). Knowledge production through both formal, non formal and informal learning within the domestic violence movement plays a significant role in this endeavour.

Summary

In this section, a review of literature outlining the origins and history of the domestic violence movement as having a dual role to respond to individual

women's and children's practical safety needs and to work for radical social change was provided. The question of what constitutes a feminist analysis and practice was discussed. Some of the key challenges to this analysis and practice were identified in relevant literature. I argue that the strengthening of responses to domestic violence underpinned by radical feminist analysis is a core goal of accredited learning for domestic violence workers. In the next section, I review literature on adult and community education that has relevance for the development of such an accredited learning framework for the domestic violence sector in Ireland.

Section 2   The domestic violence movement and radical adult education

Theories and practices of adult education

Education and learning are embedded in the domestic violence movement as in all movements engaged in the struggle for women's liberation (Thompson1997). Some of the most urgent struggles within the movement are those created by social divisions based on age, race, class, sexuality and disability Collins 1998, Donnelly et al 2005, Mc Phail et al 2007, Richie 2000, Sokoloff and Dupont). These concerns have been identified as undermining the potentially transformative nature of the domestic violence movement and as such are the subject matter for radical adult education for movement workers and activists. In the production of 'really useful knowledge', learners can engage in critical refection about social realities and shared responsibilities in addressing male violence and intersecting oppressions and injustices (Thompson 1997). Really useful knowledge as defined by Thompson (1997, pg 145) as:

> ....deriving theory from the authority of lived material experience, and using it in ways which connect with similar or related experiences of others, in order to establish a 'critical mass' which can join together to develop collective forms of social action to achieve political change

The section begins with a discussion of the concept of 'really useful knowledge' as understood from the perspective of radical adult education and feminist pedagogy. I see feminist pedagogy as being located within the tradition of radical education and as providing the foundations for an ideological framework as well as feminist practices in the development and delivery of domestic violence training programmes. This is followed by a review on literature of transformational learning and experiential learning as two aspects of emancipatory education that I argue are key to supporting the domestic violence worker as an adult learner and the movement in its social change agenda.

Radical adult education and feminist pedagogy

Radical adult education and really useful knowledge
Radical adult education is concerned with the creation of participative democracy. Through supporting learners to develop critical thinking, recognising human agency, fostering political growth and building confidence to challenge what is generally taken to be inevitable, radical adult education seeks to enable people to act collectively for emancipation from oppressive power structures and relationships. It is as bell hooks (1994) defines it 'Education as the Practice of Freedom'.

Through the production of 'really useful knowledge', learners are enabled to become critically aware of the social conditions that lead to all forms of oppression and to make the links between the different experiences of oppressed people (Thompson 1997, Santos 1999). Critical reflection is key but must be accompanied by a commitment to action if those social conditions are to be undermined and dismantled (Thompson, 1997). Within the tradition of radical adult education, feminist pedagogy is specifically concerned with the production of 'really useful knowledge' in the struggle for women's liberation and in this respect, theories developed within the field of radical adult education and feminist pedagogy provide the context in which education as a tool to address male violence against women can be delivered.

Origins of feminist pedagogy

Feminist pedagogy emerged out of the women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s as a specific educational standpoint that saw education for and by women as a form of empowerment and a tool for social change (Manicom 2013). Grounded in theories of conscientisation and praxis as first envisioned and developed by Paulo Freire (1993), feminist pedagogy developed as a parallel consciousness raising and political action movement for women's liberation. While some feminists dismissed Freire because of his alleged sexist assumptions and language, others argued that his pedagogy of the oppressed provided many insights that could be integrated into feminist theory and practice (hooks 1994).

Consciousness raising in both formal and informal learning situations lead to women to learn about their lives within the larger context of gender oppression. Barry (1995) describes the goal of consciousness raising as a political knowing of the personal reality that is carried into action. Consciousness raising confronts the knowledge and conviction that it present realities can be transformed. Barry (1995) describes knowledge generated through feminist consciousness raising as an active knowledge which she states is found and created in social action. This knowledge empowers women to imagine and to know another reality as possibility.

The confrontation of reality and knowing of another reality in tandem with action is the core concern of all feminist projects, including feminist pedagogy and feminist responses to male violence against women (Dobash and Dobash 1992, Maher 1987, Webb 2002). Radical feminist consciousness raising is integral to feminist pedagogy and synchronises with radical feminist activism against male violence (Barry, 1995)

Characteristics of the feminist learning environment

The feminist learning environment is distinguished by an intention to build community within the classroom and make connections to communities of resistance and struggle outside of the classroom (Webb 2002). Building a trusting environment where all members are treated equally and with respect

is a core concern. Privileging the individual voice as a way of knowing is emphasised (Maher 1987, Webb 2002, Weiler 1991). Feminist classrooms are not unproblematic however and defining a learning environment as feminist is not enough to ensure that all of these desired outcomes are attained (Manicom 2013).

Ann Manicom (2013) cautions against the romanticising of the feminist class room as one where women's lived experiences are the only material from which to critically analyse the social world. She points out that women's experience and narratives are also underpinned by dominant discourses that replicate and uphold unequal power structures. Manicom (2013) argues that in the feminist learning environment, the nature of women's experience must be deconstructed, in particular, with reference to differences and inequalities between women. Manicom (2013) also cautions against the assumption that collaborative and equal relationships will always exist. Feminist learning groups can be oppressive and voices can be silenced when there is not sufficient attention to the power differentials within the group. Manicom (2013) argues that the teacher or leader must take on as a specific project, the making visible and dismantling of power relationships in the classroom. This contributes to the goal of critical analysis of the social world as well as helping to forge relationships and solidarity across differences.

bell hooks (1994) also emphasises the role for feminist educators in naming and analysing differences and inequalities between women. Action to address oppression and inequality has to include the development of consciousness about privilege and entitlement that some women enjoy at the expense of both other women and some men. Audrey Lorde challenged feminists to recognise the oppression faced by women of colour, women living in poverty, lesbians and others and claimed that a failure to recognise these differences contributes to oppression. She stated:

> I am not free when any woman is unfree, even when her shackles are very different to my own. Nor are you. (Audre Lorde address to the National Women's Studies of America Conference, quoted in Thompson 1997)

The theories and practices of transformational learning delivered from within a feminist pedagogy provides an approach with which adult learners can recognise their own part in the replication of inequality and can participate in building solidarity across differences (hooks 1994). The following section discusses the theory of transformative learning.

Transformative Learning

Transformational learning has become one of the most defining characteristics of adult education (Taylor 2010). Building on the theories of both Freire and feminist consciousness raising, Jack Mezirow developed the theory of transformative learning; a form of learning that he claims should be the goal of all libratory adult education (Mezirow, 1997, 2000). Mezirow outlines his theory of transformative learning as a process by which adult learners transform their frames of reference by critically examining the assumptions that underpin their attitudes, values and beliefs. He argues that people are limited and constrained by habitual ways of thinking, feeling and acting and that a key goal of adult education should be transformative learning that supports learners to become autonomous, responsible persons. The theory of transformative learning draws from Habermas' theory of communicative learning which involves at least two people striving to reach an understanding of a belief or an interpretation of a belief. In communicative learning, the learner must engage in discourse with others to validate what is being communicated and ideally the goal is to reach agreement on what will be the most likely best judgement or decision. New perspectives are brought about as a result of learners paying attention to context, examining other points of view and assumptions, considering the implications of this new meaning perspective and identifying possible alternatives for them in both their personal and professional lives (Mezirow 1997)

There have been criticisms of the dominance of transformational learning as a theoretical framework in the field of adult education (Newman 2012). While

the use of the word transformative to describe all adult learning may be overstating the case, within the literature on transformational learning, there are examples of learning that lead to significant changes for the adult learner. These educational experiences enabled the participants to examine situations from a number of different perspectives. They were able to develop new and more useful ways of thinking about personal experiences as they related to social and political contexts and to take action based on that new understanding (Alacantra et al 2010, Stevens et al 2010). An example of transformational learning is provided by the European-American Collaborative Challenging Whiteness Group (2010, pg. 262) in their quest to gain greater insight and awareness about their whiteness and relationship to racism. They identified transformational learning that happened within an on-going process of Collaborative Inquiry as ideal for this process because:

> …white people's awareness about our relationship to race is one expression of a meaning perspective that is profoundly intractable and difficult to transform.

The group found that the longevity of the Collaborative Inquiry process enhanced their learning. This reflects Newman's (2012) contention that transformational learning comes about through a continuous process of developing consciousness through an accumulation of experiences over time.

Newman (2012) critiques the implication that transformational learning is a higher and better kind of learning and claims that the focus of all learning, whether instrumental or transformational should be that it is good learning. Different forms of learning, all of which have value are utilised in different learning situations. Informational learning, which seeks to increase our knowledge and our range of skills, brings valuable new content into our existing ways of knowing (Kegan 2000). This kind of learning activity is essential particularly in disciplines and professions where the learner is required to have a certain level of competency.

Brookfield (2000) similarly contends that the use of the term transformation learning is overused and that even where learners are engaged in critical

reflection, the outcome is not necessarily transformative. Critical reflection as an ideology has value in learning environments where a critical analysis of power relationships and dominant ideologies are essential learning outcomes. It enables people to 'recognise how uncritically accepted and unjust dominant ideologies are embedded in everyday situations and practices' (Brookfield 2000, pg.129). Critical reflection may lead to an increased awareness and deepening of knowledge, an understanding of different perspectives and a better grasp of nuances in the learner' understanding of issues in relation to power and hegemonic ideology. However, the learners deeply held beliefs and perspectives may remain largely intact and therefore, untransformed by this new knowledge (Brookfield 2000).

However, it is clear that where internalised meaning perspectives result in oppressive practices, that transformational learning has an important role to play. Transformational learning requires learning at different levels, cognitive, intellectual, affective and relational (Taylor 2010). In this respect, it may not be assessed as being better than informational and instrumental learning, which in some contexts is more important for the learner (Kegan 2000). But it is a different kind of learning that is essential if people are to transform frames of reference that have been informed by dominant and oppressive ideology.

Educational practices informed by the theory of transformational learning have something to offer a training programme that is aligned to a social change movement and are useful to consider in this context. The role of experiential learning has been emphasised as a core process in transformational learning and the next section will discuss two of the theoretical perspectives in this area: reflection on concrete experience and situated learning.

Experiential learning

Experiential learning encompasses the flow of meaning making in our everyday lives to the conscious formalising of experience into knowledge

production in created learning environments (Fenwick 2003). The domestic violence worker as a participant in accredited learning brings a wealth of life experience to the learning process. Whether they are a new and inexperienced worker, or a veteran with a long history of involvement in the domestic violence movement, they carry with them a biography of personal and professional life histories that as adult learners provide 'the resource of highest value' in the learning experience (Lindeman, 1961, pg 6 quoted in Merrimam et al 2007). The role of experience in learning is highly complex and there are different and contested understandings of why and how people use experience in the production of knowledge. (Merrimam et al 2007). These different theories are sometimes presented in the literature as being in opposition to each other but I argue that they each offer a perspective that has relevance for the questions asked in this study. I will briefly outline two of the predominant perspectives on experiential learning, reflection on concrete experience and situated learning that have relevance for this study

Reflection on concrete experience

Reflection on concrete experience is the prevailing paradigm within adult education and is also referred to as a constructivist theory of education (Fenwick 2003). From this perspective, the learner engages in active meaning making by building knowledge from her or his own experience. Reflective practice is emphasised as a core learning process in constructivist theory and was first described as a learning process by Dewey and later developed by Donald Schon (Merrimam et al 2007).

Kolb (1984) described experiential learning as a continuous process in which the learner creates knowledge as a result of a transaction between personal knowledge and social knowledge. In this process experiential learning occurs across four dimensions interacting in a continuous learning cycle. This is captured in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Kolb's cycle of reflection and action
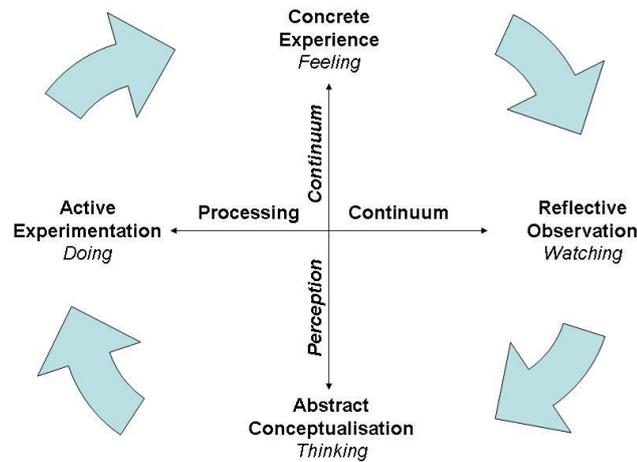
As can be seen from this learning cycle, Kolb (1984) states that the learning occurs across two intersecting continuums. These are a processing continuum where learning is aided by doing or watching and a perception continuum, where a learner learns from feeling and thinking. Reaching the end point of either end of these two continuums represents a step in the learning journey. The learner can enter the cycle of experiential learning at any point: learning as they have concrete experiences and feelings about that experience, by observing and reflecting on those experiences and feelings and looking for the meaning in them, by thinking about those feelings and experiences in an abstract way and acting on an intellectual understanding of the situation and by experimentation (Kolb 1984).

Another perspective of how learning happens within a cycle of reflection and action is provided by Wellington and Austin (1996). They outline five orientations in experiential learning. The first is an immediate orientation, focusing on basic survival. The second is a technical mode where societal needs take precedence over individual needs. Within this orientation, reflection is used to direct practice within predetermined guidelines and standards. The third orientation is a deliberative mode where the learner engages in meaning making through the discovery, assignment and

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assessment of experience within an educational setting. The fourth is a dialectical mode, where the learner engages in critical reflection on personal experience within an awareness and exploration of social and political contexts. The purpose of engaging learners from this orientation is to advocate for political and social awareness leading to action. The final orientation is the transpersonal mode, where the goal of education is universal personal liberation. Wellington and Austin (1996) argue that these perspectives are not competing and that educators should have respect for all of these modes of experiential learning.

Critics of the constructivist theory of experiential learning contend that it fails to take adequate account of the social, cultural and political context of people's experiences and how this is influenced by dominant ideology in society (Merrimam 2007et al, Fenwick 2003). Critiques also highlight that the focus seems to be on individual learning at the expense of collective learning and communities of learners (Fenwick 2003).

A further critique of the constructive paradigm comes from theorists who contend that experience cannot be split into individual parts, but is fluid and systemic and rooted in the situation in which the person participates. The following section defines an alternative perspective that encompasses this understanding, that of situated learning also known as participation in a community of learning.

Situated learning or participating in a community of learning
Situated learning is a theory developed by Lave and Wenger (Wenger 2010) the goal of which is that the learner becomes a full participant in a community of practice rather than simply learns about practice. Wenger (2010, pg 1) stated:

> The concept of community of practice does not exist by itself. It is part of a broader conceptual framework for thinking about learning in its social dimensions. It is a perspective that locates learning, not in the head or outside it, but in the relationship between the person and the world.

Situated learning as a theory proposes that participants learn as they engage and interact with the community, its history, assumptions, values, roles and

patterns of relationships (Fenwick 2003). It challenges the notion that knowledge is produced through conscious reflection and maintains that the process of knowing is essentially embodied, realised through action, and therefore worked out in a domain beyond consciousness (Fenwick 2003)

Within a community of learning, a dual process of meaning making and the production of physical and conceptual artefacts, including texts, tools and other objects, engages participants in a dynamic and continuous process. Over time, the participants' experience and the production of conceptual artefacts are intertwined to create a social history of meaning within that community. The produces a 'regime of competence' which is a set of criteria and expectations by which participants recognise membership of the community of practice (Wenger 2010). This competence includes an understanding of what the community is about and how this gives rise to its particular perspective. It enables the learner to engage productively as a participant in the community and to use its resources effectively and appropriately (Wenger 2010, pg.2) Learning is defined as:

> …not just acquiring skills and information; it is becoming a certain person—a knower in a context where what it means to know is negotiated with respect to the regime of competence of community.

Learning outcomes include that practices are refined, those practices that are harmful or dysfunctional are discarded and new practices are developed.

Critiques of the situated learning perspective point to the difficulty in a community of practice of preventing harmful, oppressive or dysfunctional practices and dynamics (Fenwick 2003). An important question is how does a community of practice break free from habitual ways of acting and remain open to different perspectives from outside of the community? Without attention to power as a central issue, a community of practice might just as easily replicate oppressive value systems and relationships as seek to transform them. Internal power dynamics and dominant value and belief paradigms could keep some participants at the periphery of the learning process whilst others are privileged as learners and knower's (Fenwick 2003). Theories and practices from within the situated learning perspective

would therefore need to be underpinned by principles of radical education and feminist pedagogy to ensure that both the experience of learning and the outcomes of this learning contribute to the overarching goals of emancipatory education.

Both of the perspectives on experiential learning as reviewed in this section, a constructionist framework and a situated learning perspective, offer useful insights into the *how* of domestic violence training. The recognition of prior experience and learning is a core characteristic of each. In the context of seeking to formally recognise prior learning and experience, I argue that these two perspectives on experiential learning provide a useful framework.

Three aspects of radical adult education were discussed in this section. I argue that these theories and practices are those best suited to the goals of domestic violence education both accredited and non accredited. Accredited learning for domestic violence workers in Western English speaking countries is primarily delivered from within a vocational education and training framework. The next section discusses some of the challenges inherent in delivering radical adult education from within such a framework.

Section 3   Vocational education and training and professionalisation

In this section I examine literature that explores issues in relation to accredited learning within vocational education and training structures and how this relates to the radical education and learning agenda that I argue should be at the core of the domestic violence movement's education agenda. I first discuss issues in relation to the development of competency frameworks which are then mapped to vocational education and training standards. Secondly, issues in relation to the emergence of vocational education and training as a dominant paradigm within the field of lifelong learning are discussed. Finally, I discuss a related issue, which is tensions

and dilemmas inherent in the increasing professionalisation of the domestic violence sector

Accredited training programmes exist in a number of countries including the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand. The findings section will show how most of these programmes are mapped to National Occupational and Training standards and as such, these programmes are now part of a mainstream vocational education and training framework. Whilst this has not yet happened in Ireland, it is possible that similar developments could follow in this country.

Domestic violence organisations place themselves as interveners in women and children's lives by developing and offering a range of services and practical supports. Interventions as delivered by the individual worker must be underpinned by knowledge and understanding of what works in maximising women and children's safety (O'Connor and Wilson 2002). A worker must be able to use that knowledge in the development of skills employed in one to one interactions with women, in group work or as advocates for women with third parties. In addition, workers need to know about the impact of vicarious trauma and must develop and utilise skills in self care (Richardson 2001). Women accessing domestic violence services need to have confidence that competent, skilled and professional workers will be on hand to respond to their needs.

The need to ensure the implementation and consistent attainment of standards therefore provides the context in which accredited training for domestic violence workers has happened and is referred to in standards documents in the UK and Australia (Kelly and Dubois 2008, Queensland Government Department of Families 2002, Scottish Women's Aid 2011, WAFE 2009). An internal report from Women's Aid Dublin (2007) and a report of a needs assessment from the Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research (2009) indicates that there is a perceived need and support for accredited training from workers themselves. The accreditation of domestic violence training as a method through who to ensure consistent good practice is not unproblematic however. Three areas

of concern are identified when considering the possible implications of accredited training for domestic violence workers.

Competency frameworks

There are a number of ways in which competencies are defined and set within standards frameworks. Some of these frameworks in the UK and Australia have been criticised for being positivist and reductionist, for ignoring underlying attributes of workers and for ignoring group processes (Hager and Gonczi (1996). Despite this criticism, Hager and Gonczi (1996) contend that competency frameworks can be developed from an approach that incorporates knowledge, values, attitudes and skills associated with foundational knowledge, and competencies needed for more advanced practitioners, including critical thinking, the ability to understand how things are related to each other and an understanding of ethics and values. They also argue that a holistic and integrated competency framework can include the need for reflective practice, an understanding of the importance of context and of the fact that there may be more than one way to operate competently.

This last point is important to emphasise given that one of the key concerns about the domestic violence movement is its identity as a White, middle class movement with marginalised women taking up peripheral positions within it (Donnelly et al 2005, Richie 2000). Working from this understanding, the development of a competency framework would need to be inclusive of the multiplicity of perspectives of a diversity of women (Collins 1998, Donnelly et al 2005, Mc Phail et al 2007, Richie 2000, Sokoloff and Dupont). It is possible that the development of a competency framework could serve to further marginalise already excluded and marginalised women if there was not a critical awareness of and priority given to these issues. Therefore I argue that a competency framework would have to be developed by and for those women who experience additional discriminations and oppressions.

Issues in relation to the development of competency standards mapped to accreditation have been discussed in the US crime victims advocacy sector. Fears that competency frameworks and aligned accreditation would result in

hierarchies and exclusions in the sector have not been realised according to Adkins (2001). She claims that competency frameworks with a credentialing process defined by the sector and for the sector create greater equality in the field of victim advocacy and that workers with various educational backgrounds have been able to participate and gain accreditation. In addition, gaining accreditation has resulted in workers being seen as experts in their area, enabling them to be more effective advocates for victims within the criminal justice system

Training versus education

Those concerned with radical adult education as an emancipatory practice have critiqued the replacement of education with training in policies and initiatives on lifelong learning. The emergence of vocational education and training as the predominant area of concern in the Irish and other EU government policies on lifelong learning is attributed to the influence of the dominant neo liberal paradigm in which education is viewed as a strategy in creating a flexible and competitive economy (Borg and Mayo 2005, Finnegan 2008). Murtagh (2009) identified that the failure of the White Paper on Adult Education (2000) to live up to the promise of its more radical aspects was because of the predominance of Department of Education Training and Education [DETE] in leading out on adult education policy. This was because vocational education and training mattered to the DETE in its agenda of creating a competitive workforce whereas it remained a marginal area of concern and activity within Department of Education and Science. Any accredited training programme developed within a national vocational training and education framework therefore, would be subject and shaped by the same influences.

Some of these influences result in a preoccupation with getting things done and a relegation of critical reflection on theory and practice as being a 'waste of time' (Thompson 1997, pg. 144). Students are required to think less and to concentrate on accumulating credits leading to qualifications. The focus for the learner therefore in the lifelong learning experience is about individual advancement whereas radical education is about collectivities.

This involves connecting lived experience of the self and others to establish a critical mass who can join together to develop forms of social action to achieve political change (Thompson 1997). Thompson questions whether this kind of learning can be facilitated within an educational setting that seeks to accredit learning and experience. This is a core question directing this course of this study.

Recognition of prior learning and experience [RPEL] within the context of vocational education and training has been formalised for the purposes of accreditation and gaining qualifications. The process of Recognition of Prior Education and Learning [RPEL] has been criticised as contributing to the increased focus on credentialism in education and as a process that forces previous experience into learning outcomes and goals that do not allow the learner to critically reflect on what they know and how they know it (Sandberg 2012). However, a conscious attention to the values underpinning an RPEL process and how it is conceived of in terms of its goals and delivery can result in significant educational benefits to learners while at the same time provide learners with recognised credentials (Stevens et al 2010). RPEL processes can include learning that is critically reflective and transformative. It has been used to accredit professionals who have not gained formal qualifications in their area or where no formal qualifications exist (Sandberg 2012). Delivered within the context of emancipatory education where both reflective practice and learning through membership of a community of practice is facilitated, I argue that a tailored RPEL process could be integrated into an education programme that has as its aims the dual role of service provision and social change.

Standards will soon be agreed for the Irish domestic violence sector and accompanying accredited may be developed as a consequence. This dual development would imply an increasing professionalisation of the sector. The next section will discuss some issues in relation to the professionalisation of domestic violence services.

Professionalisation of domestic violence organisations

Professionalisation has been welcomed by domestic violence organisations as enabling them to provide consistently high quality responses. This is in keeping with feminist principles of accountability to survivors of male violence and a commitment to ensure that domestic violence advocates and workers do no harm to victims and survivors through their interventions (Coleman and Mason 2005, O'Connor and Wilson 2002). Processes such as the differentiation of roles within organisations where previously responsibility was not clearly devolved, has lead to more effective working and the achievement of goals (Markiwicz and Tice 2002)

Despite the benefits there are concerns about the impact professionalisation is having on domestic violence organisations and their work. One of the impacts noted in a cross cultural study by Markowitz and Tice (2002) is that as women's organisations, including domestic violence organisations, have become increasingly professional, they have also become increasingly middle class. They refer to a number of cases where the original founding members were working class women or rural women who had a stake in the work and achievements of the organisation. However, they had been pushed aside when the composition of Boards changed to include more professional women and when salaried positions requiring certain qualifications were advertised. Bruckner (2001) also identified that qualifications have increasingly become a pre requisite of public funding in Germany and this has lead to the need for a differentiation of roles within women's' organisations and resulting hierarchy that did not exist in the early stages of the movement. Both authors argue that domestic violence organisations need to address the equality issues attendant to the professionalisation processes.

A study of a professionalisation processes in the community development sector in Ireland by Camilla Fitzsimons (2010) concluded that the impact of the increasing professionalisation through accreditation was that it privileged the outsider community worker, who was often middle class and largely educationally advantaged, over the local community development worker

who came from within the disadvantaged community and had experienced educational disadvantage. This was primarily as a result of the demands of the educational institution where the community development course was run for students to adhere to certain accreditation standards and processes. These requirements were more suited to and attainable by those outsider community workers who came from more privileged backgrounds. This unexpected outcome emerged despite an expressed commitment of the university department involved and many of the course tutors to work for social justice through delivering radical community education.

This experience and analysis suggests that providing an accredited education programme for domestic violence workers that transforms already existing inequalities and oppressions within the movement will be challenging. Accrediting domestic violence workers learning and experience could be fraught with the potential to work against the best intentions of sector leaders. I would argue for the inclusion of women from marginalised groups as leaders in developing such a programme to ensure that this unintended negative outcome can be avoided.

Summary

There have been considerable successes as a result of the activism and work of the domestic violence movement. As well as establishing an international network of thousands of frontline services, the domestic violence movement has generated an analysis of violence against women that underpins programmes, interventions and legislation in many countries (Lehrner and Allen 2009, Mc Phail et al 2007, O'Connor 2008). This chapter reviewed a number of studies which showed how a feminist analysis informs those responses to individual women that have been assessed by survivors of domestic violence as the most effective in enabling them to access safety and social and economic supports (Fitzpatrick et al 2003, Sullivan and Bybee 1999). The need to standardise this good practice across organisations is a driver behind the development of accredited training.

At the same time the domestic violence movement can celebrate numerous achievements, it struggles with many barriers and hindrances to the attainment of its primary goal, which is the elimination of violence against women (Dobash and Dobash 1992). A review of literature identified a number of challenges and tensions that I argue should be included as subject matter in an accredited learning programme for domestic violence learners. These include challenges as a result of the failure to include a multiplicity of women's perspectives and to become a movement defined by equal participation of the diversity of women. External pressures from powerful actors and institutions have lead to an erosion of feminist politics and practice within domestic violence organisations. All of these issues, dynamics and challenges provide subject matter for domestic violence education, including accredited learning programmes for workers.

A core concern of this study is the need for domestic violence organisations to provide education for workers on the dual role of social change and service provision. In the previous section I examined three aspects of radical adult education that I argue have much to contribute to an accredited learning programme on this dual role. The first is radical education and feminist pedagogy which provides an ideological framework and practices that underpin emancipatory educational programmes. These theories and practices provide an educational framework in which domestic violence education delivered from a feminist perspective can be a tool in the wider work of organisations to effect social and political change towards the elimination of all forms of violence against women.

The second aspect is that of the education and learning which aims to enable the learner to extricate ways in which oppressive ideology and values have been internalised. Regardless of a person's commitment to social justice, this is a lifetime's work (Lorde 1996) and meaning perspectives in relation to race, class, sexuality, disability and other issues can be 'profoundly intractable and difficult to transform' (European-American Collaborative Challenging Whiteness Group 2010, pg. 262). Transformative learning provides adult learners an opportunity to reflect on and transform

oppressive meaning perspectives and has become one of the predominant perspectives in adult education (Mezirow 1997, 2000, Newman 2012, Taylor 2010).

Finally, domestic violence workers as adult learners bring a wealth of experience into the learning environment. The interaction of knowledge gained through experience and reflection is core to how domestic violence organisations and sectors have developed and operated. Theories developed within the field of experiential learning including the cycle of learning (Kolb 1984) and situated learning (Wenger 2010) provide a theoretical and practice framework that is fitting to the goals of an accreditation programme for domestic violence work.

In the final section of this chapter, the opportunities and challenges inherent in establishing competencies and an aligned credentialing structure were discussed. Positive outcomes of such a development include the support given to domestic violence services to attain high quality and accountable services to women and children (Coleman and Mason 2005, O'Connor and Wilson 2002). Possible problems include the potential of competency frameworks and accredited training delivered within a vocational education and training structures to be exclusionary and divorced from emancipatory education for the purposes of social change (Thompson 1997). Whether an accredited learning programme can exist within the context of an emancipatory adult education is a question that is at the core of this study. The next chapter discusses the methodological approach to this study.

CHAPTER 4 METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study explores learning and recognition frameworks for domestic violence workers in four countries, UK, USA, Australia and New Zealand. The aim of this thesis is to examine how elements of these frameworks could be adapted for use by the Irish domestic violence sector. My reasons for choosing this topic area was that I believe this would be useful knowledge to generate for the domestic violence sector in Ireland.

Approaching this study from feminist standpoint theory, I endeavoured to access information and new knowledge as to how such programmes could redress gender inequality experienced by women in domestic violence organisations as workers and in access to higher education. Therefore, attention to accreditation that integrated the recognition of prior learning and experience was a core focus of this research. This study is also concerned with how difference and power inequalities within the sector can be addressed from a multiplicity of standpoints. I sought information about learning frameworks that would provide an opportunity for workers, organisations and the sector to engage in transformative learning towards the realisation of full equality and inclusion of all women, both within the sector and of all women who were affected by domestic violence and other forms of gender based violence.

This chapter outlines the research design, methods and procedures developed in the study. It begins by outlining the epistemological framework underpinning the research design. I then move to discuss in detail the research design documenting the selection and implementation of a case study approach and the use of content analysis as the method employed. I conclude with a reflection on relevant ethical considerations.

Epistemological framework

A key role for feminist researchers is to carry out research with the intent to produce useful knowledge that can be used to inform social and political change (Hesse-Biber et al 2004, Letherby 2003, Reinharz 1992,). This study is located within a feminist research perspective that seeks to illuminate previously unexamined aspects of women's lives, endeavours and accomplishments so that knowledge can be built upon for the future and on-going feminist struggle (Reinharz, 1992). By seeking information on and generating theory about what aspects of accredited training models for domestic violence workers could impact on the anti violence movement, I aim to contribute additional knowledge to the rich and extensive body of knowledge held within the Irish domestic violence sector.

My epistemological assumptions draw from feminist, post positivist theories that assert that research and the production of knowledge is never value free and that the researchers identity, history and ideological framework influence what is researched, how it is researched and how the data or empirical information is interpreted (Alvesson and Skoldberg 2010, Hesse-Biber et al 2004, Letherby 2003). An awareness of my own positionality as a woman who has worked in and remains within the domestic violence sector for 25 years means that I am studying a phenomenon that has real meaning and connection to my own history and current position as a worker in a domestic violence organisation. Letherby (2003) argues that feminist researchers should both acknowledge and value the pre-understanding of the researcher and the actual experience of carrying out research, politically and emotionally. An acknowledgement of this positionality and a genuine attempt to be reflexively aware of the relationships between all of these levels of engagement at each stage of the research process leads to greater openness and, honesty, accountability and transparency (Letherby, 2003). This contention by Letherby and other post positivist and feminist theorists (Alvesson and Skoldberg 2010, Hesse–Biber et al 2004) counteracts positivist critiques of feminist and post positivist research which claim that as feminist research rejects the possibility of objectivity, is ideologically driven

and carried out with the aim of furthering a political agenda, it is of no scientific value. My epistemological framework is centrally informed by the feminist critique of positivist research which contends that there is no such thing as 'hygienic' research and that a failure to acknowledge the positionality of the researcher as a key influence leads to less reliable, less good and therefore less useful knowledge (Letherby 2003).

Acknowledging my own subjectivity in the research process, I also work from an understanding that it is 'pragmatically fruitful to assume the existence of a reality beyond the researchers egocentricity and the ethnocentricity of the research community' (Skoldberg and Alvesson 2010 pg 3) and that a researcher should be able to say something useful and insightful about this reality. I accept that truth is partial, situational and subjective (Hesse-Biber et al 2004). In addition I believe that there are realities within the history and experience of the provision of accreditation and certification processes for domestic violence workers in other countries, that provide useful learning and insight for the domestic violence sector in Ireland and perhaps elsewhere. To generate knowledge that is useful and relevant to the sector, I was rigorous in identifying documents to analyse. I discuss these issues in more detail in later sections.

This study draws on feminist stand point theory. Therefore, I begin from an ideological position that gender and gender oppression are defining factors in how society is organised and operates (Harding 2004). Women's lived and concrete experiences (Hill-Collins 1990) , women's ways of knowing and women's voices are the starting point from which all feminist research proceeds (Oakley 2000, Hesse–Biber et al 2004, Letherby 2003). The idea of essentialising women's experiences was a critique levelled at feminist standpoint theory by more recent feminist theorists, who have challenged the problem of essentialism and have called for an approach to research that draws from multiple standpoints of a diversity of women (Hesse–Biber et al, Hill Collins 1990).

Black feminist theorists such as Patricia Hill Collins (1990) and Audre Lorde (1996) articulated ways in which black women's experience of gender oppression could sometimes be of less impact than their experience of racism and how experiences of racism and gender oppression intersected in Black women's lives. They asserted that feminist concepts of a commonality of experience and sisterhood may have no relevance for those women who have been excluded from mainstream, white, Western, middle class, feminist thought. In this study, I am always cognisant of my position as a white, middle class, Western European woman. Adoption of a critical feminist standpoint epistemology has enabled me to include the work and perspectives of a diversity of women.

Letherby (2003) and Leavy (2004) outline the theoretical framework of post modernism which critiques the view that there are knowable realities beyond the subjectivity of the researcher and the researched. Post modern theorists contend that there are no overarching truths or answers, only partial knowledges which are constructed in the specifics of time and place. Indeed feminist post modernist theorists challenge the notion of absolute categories in society such as 'woman' (Butler 1990). They critique feminist standpoint theory as having essentialised women as a category and argue that people make sense of their world and themselves in it through various discourses, which are changed and influenced over time by place, relationships and other processes and dynamics. Therefore, there is no objective self outside of discourse and knowledge itself is partial, relative and individual.

To apply this epistemological framework to feminist research would mean to deny my strongly held belief that people's experiences are profoundly embedded in material, political and cultural realities that can be known about and reported upon outside of the subjectivity of the researcher and researched. In over 25 years of listening and responding to women's accounts of the violence and abuse experienced at the hands of their male intimate partners, it is impossible not to identify the cultural, political and social norms and structures that provide the context in which abusive men operate in remarkably similar ways and in which institutions and society

repeatedly fail women and their children over and over again in key areas of access to safety, justice, housing and other human rights.

Research design

A multiple case study approach was chosen for this study. Reinharz(1992) contends that feminist case studies offer the potential to provide raw data and theory for secondary analysis and comparative research and cross cultural studies for future feminist research. As a domestic violence worker and activist I was aware that there was a dearth of research in this area. I was particularly interested in finding out how this area of work had been progressed in other countries where there appear to be well developed domestic violence responses and sectors, with a view to providing and contributing some knowledge with which the Irish domestic violence sector could continue to explore, reflect and deliberate on the way forward. Employing a multiple case study as a research strategy allowed me to identify a number of relevant cases that could be explored in detail thus eliciting a number of themes, issues and specific situations that acted as a springboard for theoretical reflection (Bryman, 2008, Creswell 2007). Case studies also provide the opportunity to provide for detailed descriptions of each case which in itself results in the drawing together of information of interest to the domestic violence sector in Ireland (Creswell,2007).

At the beginning of this study, I considered whether to begin with an exploration of domestic violence workers' perspectives on the need for accredited training and other related issues. However, I decided that it would more useful to ascertain to what extent and how accredited and certified programmes had been developed and progressed elsewhere, in what contexts these programmes were developed and what impact they had on the responses to domestic violence. This information I argue, will provide a base of knowledge from which a more informed exploration of the specific context, needs, consequences and other issues pertaining to training and professionalisation of the sector in Ireland could proceed. The number of

accreditation and certification programmes in the identified countries were limited and thus provided a clearly bounded multiple case study through which to achieve these research goals (Denscombe, 2003).

A case study approach also provided a framework to identify cases that could be compared for similarities and differences across countries. This provides an opportunity to engage in a cross cultural study and avoid or at least minimise an ethnocentric approach (Reinharz, 1992). Applying a cross cultural case study approach also guided me in searching for cross cultural material within countries where organisations lead by women from minority ethnic communities have developed specific responses to gender based violence.

Case studies have been criticised for being unrepresentative and not generalisable and therefore not conducive to generating theory (Bryman 2008, Reinharz 1992). However, given that the phenomenon of accreditation and certification of domestic violence workers is a relatively limited phenomenon, I believe that it is possible to generate useful knowledge from engaging in a multiple case study of a number of programmes from which themes, differences and similarities could be discussed. The intent of this study is not to claim that any of this knowledge is representative or generalisable but to provide a springboard for further exploration and reflection (Reinharz 2002, Denscombe 2003, Bryman 2008).

Sampling

In designing a multiple case study of accredited and certified training programmes developed and delivered by domestic violence organisations, I deployed purposeful sampling (Bryman 2008). This decision was prompted by a preliminary internet search for domestic violence training programmes in the Ireland, the UK, the USA, Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. Pragmatic reasons including the ease with which I could access and understand the literature, the necessity to limit the scope of the research given the time constraints of this study and finally, that each of these

countries have advanced domestic violence responses developed over the last 40 years informed this choice of countries.

For the preliminary search, I inputted specific search words selected on the basis of my own knowledge and the literature review. These were:

- Domestic violence training
- Domestic violence training and accreditation
- Domestic violence education
- Domestic violence certification
- Domestic violence and recognising prior experience
- Domestic violence networks
- Domestic violence coalitions
- Domestic violence services

I attached the name of the country to each variation.

Each search elicited numerous options and it quickly became clear that there exists a significant number and variation of domestic violence training programmes that carried some form of accreditation or certification with them. Worried that I could not possibly study all of these programmes for their relevance I downloaded materials from the web for an initial appraisal. I grouped the kinds of programmes into the following categories:

- Accredited training programmes developed by domestic violence networks or national/regional federations for their worker and volunteers
- Accredited domestic violence courses run in Universities and other third level educational institutions carrying accreditation up to Masters level
- Accredited domestic violence training programmes run by training and development companies, who specialised in domestic violence and gender based violence work
- Accredited domestic violence training courses run by training and development organisations who provided more general services in

organisational development, counselling skills, human services development and other areas or by further education colleges.

All of the information accessed during preliminary web based research was primary source material in that it was produced by the developer and deliverers of these programmes. The information accessed was in the form of web pages developed by these organisations in which they promoted and marketed their work.

Cognisant of the goals of this study and of the constraints imposed by the parameters of a Masters research thesis, I carried out a preliminary analysis of this information to determine which of these programmes, models and initiatives I should focus on for the purposes of this study. I decided to limit my study to those programmes developed from within the domestic violence sector either by a single organisation or consortium of organisations. This included those programmes developed by specialist agencies that were not service organisations or representative bodies for domestic violence services, but that were centrally involved in domestic violence responses in their country or State.

I identified twenty one programmes that fit the criteria established: one in Ireland, eight in the United Kingdom, four in Australia, seven in the United States of America, and one in New Zealand.[1]   The following table lists those programmes that fit these criteria. As previously noted most of the information necessary to undertake the content analysis has been accessed via the websites of the organisations selected for inclusion in this study (see bibliography for full citations).

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[1] Having searched for programmes using the search words outlined above in both South Africa and Canada, I was unable to access any information about accredited training programmes in those countries.

Table 1: Programmes meeting initial selection criteria[2]

Ireland			
Organisation	*Remit of organisation*	*Geographic area*	*Training with accreditation or certification*
Midlands Regional Planning Committee on Violence against Women (Women's Aid 2007)	Interagency committee set up under National Task force on violence against women with remit to coordinate regional implementation of recommendations. Not constituted as company or charity. No longer exists	Laois, Meath, Westmeath, Longford, Offaly	Yes

United Kingdom			
Organisation	*Remit of organisation*	*Geographic area*	*Training with accreditation or certification*
Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland	Lead voluntary organisation in Northern Ireland addressing domestic violence and providing services for women and children. Representative and support body for 10 domestic violence services	Northern Ireland	Yes
Women's Aid Federation England.	Lead voluntary organisation in England addressing domestic violence and providing services for women and children. Representative and support body for domestic violence services	England	Yes
Scottish Women's Aid	Lead voluntary organisation in Scotland addressing domestic violence and providing services for women and children. Representative and support body for Women's Aid domestic violence services	Scotland	Yes
Welsh Women's Aid	Lead voluntary organisation in Wales addressing domestic violence and providing services for women and children. Representative and support body for Women's Aid domestic violence services	Wales	Yes

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[2] All information has been accessed via the websites of these organisations. See bibliography for full details

United Kingdom			
Organisation	*Remit of organisation*	*Geographic area*	*Training with accreditation or certification*
Avert	Social enterprise established by Foyle Women's Aid with aim of preventing domestic violence through delivery of education and training	Northern Ireland	Yes
Against Violence and Abuse	A second tier charity[3], clients are other service providers. Provides support to service providers in their response to domestic and sexual violence	Great Britain	Yes
Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse	A national charity supporting a strong interagency response to domestic abuse	Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Yes
Refuge UK	National Charity addressing domestic violence including providing direct support services to women and children	Great Britain	Yes
Imkaan	Imkaan is a UK-based, second-tier, human rights organisation, with national membership. It is a black feminist organisation dedicated to addressing violence against women and girls.	United Kingdom	Yes
Australia			
Organisation	*Remit of organisation*	*Geographic area*	*Training with accreditation or certification*
Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria	Second tier state wide organisation who work to strengthen service and systems responses to domestic violence	Victoria	Yes
Lifeline	National suicide prevention charity	Australia	Yes
Women's Council for domestic and family violence services Western Australia	Representative body for 65 women's refuges and domestic and family violence services	Western Australia	Seeking accreditation for number of courses in their programme
Queensland centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research	Second tier organisation providing research, education and evaluation on domestic violence responses	Queensland	Yes

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[3] Second tier charity or organisation is an organisation that provides support to service providers in both voluntary and statutory sector through provision of training, research, policy development and other activities.

United States of America			
Organisation	*Remit of organisation*	*Geographic area*	*Training with accreditation or certification*
Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence	Umbrella state wide organisation for domestic violence services and other bodies responding to domestic violence	Delaware	Yes
Illinois Certified Domestic Violence Professionals, Inc.	Established to foster uniformity in domestic violence and partner abuse services	Illinois	Yes
Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence	State level body resourcing responses to violence against women and children and representing 28 direct service providers	Iowa	Yes
Kentucky Domestic Violence Association	State wide coalition resourcing responses to violence against women and children and representing 15 direct service providers	Kentucky	Certification for organisations by State licensure, workers must undertake number hours training for organisation to be certified
New Jersey Association of Domestic Violence Professionals	Professional body situated within statewide association that provides leadership, support and resources on the prevention of violence against women	New Jersey	Yes
Utah Domestic violence Council	Statewide domestic violence coalition improving intervention and prevention responses and representing Utah's domestic violence services	Utah	Yes
West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence	Statewide domestic violence coalition improving intervention and prevention responses and representing Virginia's domestic violence services	West Virginia	Yes

New Zealand			
Organisation	*Remit of organisation*	*Geographic area*	*Training with accreditation or certification*
Women's Refuge New Zealand	National women's organisation addressing domestic violence and representing 45 domestic violence services	New Zealand	Yes

The need to narrow this down to a manageable number for the purposes of a multiple case study required a further examination to ascertain if there was significant difference or similarities between programmes within each of the countries. The following table shows how programmes were compared for similarities and differences across a number of criteria.

Table 2 Shared or different characteristics of programmes

Ireland							
Organisation	*Programme*	*Internal standards/ quality framework*	*Internal accreditation/ certification*	*Part of state quality/ standards framework*	*Part of state accreditation/ certification framework*	*Required as part of state licensure*	*Other features*
Midlands Regional Planning Committee on Violence against Women[4]	Advocacy and domestic abuse	No	No	No	Yes – National Council for Vocational Awards, FETAC Level 5	No	No longer in operation?

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[4] This committee no longer exits and the course is no longer running. It is not included in the content analysis in Table 3.

United Kingdom							
Organisation	*Programme*	*Internal standards/ quality framework*	*Internal accreditation/ certification*	*Part of state quality/ standards framework*	*Part of state accreditation/ certification framework*	*Required as part of state licensure*	*Other features*
Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland	1.Understanding domestic violence 2.Court support 3.Group work and facilitation 4.Training for trainers within the domestic violence sector 5.Protective behaviours		1.No	Mapped to National Occupational Standards [NOS] . [5]	1-4.Yes –Open College network accreditation at award, certificate and diploma level 5.Protective Behaviours UK certificate	1.No 2. No	

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[5] 5 core occupancy standards for domestic violence work developed by Skills for Justice who are designated sector skills council licensed by government to develop support, monitor and review National Occupational Standards for professions involved in justice and community safety work.

United Kingdom							
Organisation	*Programme*	*Internal standards/ quality framework*	*Internal accreditation/ certification*	*Part of state quality/ standards framework*	*Part of state accreditation/ certification framework*	*Required as part of state licensure*	*Other features*
Women's Aid Federation England	Effective responses to domestic and sexual abuse delivered at three levels, award, certificate and diploma	Yes – National Service Standards for domestic and sexual violence.	No	Mapped to National Occupational Standards [NOS]	Open College network accreditation at award, certificate and diploma level	No	
Scottish Women's Aid	Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate	Scottish Women's Aid National Service Standards	Yes- Professional Development Award in Domestic Abuse Advocacy	Mapped to National Occupational Standards [NOS]	Accredited at OCN level 3 & 4	No Childcare workers and managers and refuge workers and managers must get qualified under Scottish Social service requirements to practice.	PDA in Domestic Abuse Advocacy joint developed with CAADA and ASSIST Scottish Women's Aid deliver suite of unaccredited training to workers on specific aspects of domestic violence work

United Kingdom							
Organisation	*Programme*	*Internal standards/ quality framework*	*Internal accreditation/ certification*	*Part of state quality/ standards framework*	*Part of state accreditation/ certification framework*	*Required as part of state licensure*	*Other features*
Scottish Women's Aid cont.						Qualifications under Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework and at different level depending on level of responsibility.	Attendance cert is given that can be added professional development portfolio and post registration learning for Scottish Social Services Council.
Welsh Women's Aid	Preventing and tackling domestic abuse and sexual violence at award, certificate and diploma level		No	Mapped to National Occupational Standards [NOS]	Open College network accreditation at award, certificate and diploma level	No	
Refuge UK	Level 3 Award: for domestic violence practitioners.			Mapped to National Occupational Standards [NOS]
.	Joint award with Skills For Justice Awards		
Avert	Websites under re-construction, no information accessed						

United Kingdom							
Organisation	*Programme*	*Internal standards/ quality framework*	*Internal accreditation/ certification*	*Part of state quality/ standards framework*	*Part of state accreditation/ certification framework*	*Required as part of state licensure*	*Other features*
Imkaan	Understanding the effects of DV on BME women Understanding forced marriage and 'honour-based' violence; Risk and Case Management	In process of developing national service standards for responding to BME women experiencing domestic and sexual violence			OCN accredited at level 2		
Against Violence and Abuse [AVA]	Working with people affected by domestic and/or sexual violence and problematic substance use	No	No	Mapped to National Occupational Standards [NOS]	OCN accredited courses at level 3		AVA have a range of training courses that are designed to fit with National Occupational Standards.

United Kingdom							
Organisation	*Programme*	*Internal standards/ quality framework*	*Internal accreditation/ certification*	*Part of state quality/ standards framework*	*Part of state accreditation/ certification framework*	*Required as part of state licensure*	*Other features*
AVA cont.	Meeting the mental health needs of domestic and sexual violence survivors						Most of these are not accredited however they focus on specialised areas of relevance to domestic violence workers
Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse [CAADA]	Independent Domestic Violence Adviser Training	Range of CAADA practice guidelines and toolkits for responding to high risk domestic violence cases	IDVA professional development award awarded by CAADA	Mapped to National Occupational Standards [NOS] CAADA is the Home Office endorsed provider of specialist IDVA training	Accredited at OCN level 3 & 4	Required to be recognised IDVA within MARAC system[6]	

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[6] Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs): meetings where information about high risk domestic abuse victims is shared between local public agencies. MARAC's being rolled out throughout UK under auspices of Home Office

Australia							
Organisation	*Programme*	*Internal standards/ quality framework*	*Internal accreditation/ certification*	*Part of state quality/ standards framework*	*Part of state accreditation/ certification framework*	*Required as part of state licensure*	*Other features*
Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria	Recognise and respond appropriately to domestic and family violence Provide crisis intervention and support to those experiencing domestic and family violence			Mapped to industry standards as defined by Australian Skills Quality Authority	Aligned to meet two units of nationally recognised training Community Services Training package		
Lifeline	Domestic Violence Response Training			Mapped to industry standards as defined by Australian Skills Quality Authority	Aligned to meet one unit of nationally recognised training Community Services Training package		

Australia							
Organisation	*Programme*	*Internal standards/ quality framework*	*Internal accreditation/ certification*	*Part of state quality/ standards framework*	*Part of state accreditation/ certification framework*	*Required as part of state licensure*	*Other features*
Women's Council for domestic and family violence services Western Australia	Skills Recognition Project				Community Work certificate III, IV and/or Diploma awarded through Dept Child protection and West Coast Institute of Training and Development		This is a recognition prior learning process for staff in domestic violence services
Queensland centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research	Course in responding to domestic and family violence			Mapped to industry standards as defined by Australian Skills Quality Authority	Aligned to meet three existing units of nationally recognised training Community Services Training package		

United States of America							
Organisation	*Programme*	*Internal standards/ quality framework*	*Internal accreditation/ certification*	*Part of state quality/ standards framework*	*Part of state accreditation/ certification framework*	*Required as part of state licensure*	*Other features*
Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence	Voluntary training and supervised practice based qualification		Domestic Violence Specialist Certification				
Ilinois Certified Domestic Violence Professionals, Inc.	Voluntary training and supervised practice based qualification		Ilinois Certified Domestic Violence Professional				
Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence	Mandatory training and supervised practice based qualification at two levels – Victim Counsellor and Certified Domestic Abuse Advocate for Coalition members only	ICADV Code of ethics	Iowa Certified Victim Counsellor Iowa Certified Domestic Abuse Advocate	20 hours training to be done as outlined in Iowa Code 915.20A[7]			

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[7] Iowa Code 915.20A covers victim counsellor/victim privilege when it comes to confidentiality. Workers must undertake this 20 hours training in order to claim this privilege

United States of America							
Organisation	*Programme*	*Internal standards/ quality framework*	*Internal accreditation/ certification*	*Part of state quality/ standards framework*	*Part of state accreditation/ certification framework*	*Required as part of state licensure*	*Other features*
Kentucky Domestic Violence Association	Mandatory training and supervised practice based qualification for Coalition members only		Kentucky Certified Domestic Violence Counsellors				
New Jersey Association of Domestic Violence Professionals	Voluntary training and supervised practice based qualification		New Jersey Certified Domestic Violence Professional	New Jersey legislative code on victim counsellor/client privilege	All workers and volunteers in domestic violence services must do minimum 40 hours training to be covered by victim counsellor/ client privilege.	No	

United States of America							
Organisation	*Programme*	*Internal standards/ quality framework*	*Internal accreditation/ certification*	*Part of state quality/ standards framework*	*Part of state accreditation/ certification framework*	*Required as part of state licensure*	*Other features*
New Jersey Association of Domestic Violence Professionals cont.					Not linked to state qualifications but State Child protection services requiring their advocates to undergo certification with NJDVP		
Utah Domestic violence Council	Specialised training provided minimum hours completed by employees of licensed domestic violence organisations				State of Utah license agencies on annual basis by Department of Human Services.		
West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence	Mandatory training/ super-vised practice based qualification for Coalition m		WVCDAV Certificate of Advocacy		Agencies must be licensed with State legislature,		

New Zealand							
Women's Refuge New Zealand	Women's refuge Advocate Training				National Certificate in Social Services level 4 (Work with abuse , neglect and violence		

From this analysis, it was clear that four of the programmes in the UK had been developed jointly by the four Women's Aid Federations, England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. I therefore chose to study one of the programmes in more depth as representing a type of accredited programme. I originally chose to study all of the other programmes in the UK as analysis indicated that while they shared some similarities, there were also significant differences between them and between them and the Women's Aid programmes. However, web pages for Foyle Women's Aid and their training company Avert were under reconstruction during the time this study was undertaken. As I was unable to access sufficient information on Avert's accredited training programme I decided to exclude it from the study.

Three programmes delivered by agencies in Australia were also similar in that they were delivered within the same Commonwealth accreditation framework and therefore had the same curriculum, structure, assessment criteria and accreditation standards. Again, I chose to study just one of these programmes as representing a type of programme being delivered in Australia. I identified one other programme lead by a State Domestic Violence Coalition that included recognition of prior experience and was endorsed by government.

The professional certification programmes developed and coordinated by individual state coalitions in the US was run in seven States and therefore I choose to study just one programme as typical of these programmes. I identified one accredited programme in Ireland. This ceased operation in 2008 and the sponsoring body, the Midlands Regional Steering Committee on Violence Against Women no longer exists. As there was little information available about this programme I chose not to study it. One programme was identified in New Zealand and this was selected for further examination.

In summary, I identified nine accredited or certified programmes for domestic violence workers that either exemplified a type of programme in their country of origin, or represented a different case to the typical or exemplifying case, or where the only programme within a particular country that I was able to identify.

The following questions guided the examination of each of these organisations accredited learning programmes:

- Which of these programmes address the dual role of domestic violence organisations in acting for social change and responding to women and children's needs through service provision? If so, in what way and to what degree do they do this? Is there any evidence of the outcomes of this training?

- Which of these programmes integrate recognition of workers prior experience and learning? If so, how do they do this and how have workers experienced this process?

- Have any of the programmes addressed issues of intersectionality and the multiple perspectives of a diversity of women? If so, has this been applied to a critical analysis of the need for transformation within the movement?

- How have the theories and practices of radical adult education been employed in domestic violence education programmes? Which theories and practices have been used and why? Is there any information on the outcomes domestic violence education from within the perspective of radical adult education?

Data analysis

Case studies allow for the researcher to use a variety of research methods to gain an in-depth understanding of a case. These can include surveys, interviews, focus groups, observations and content analysis (Bryman 2008, Denscombe 2003, Reinharz 1992). The geographical spread and the time differences between countries made the possibility of carrying out interviews with personnel involved in each of the programmes difficult. I therefore selected content analysis as the suitable approach for data analysis.

A content analysis is a systematic study of documents or other artefacts and cultural products (Leavy 2007). It is an unobtrusive method in that it is the study of non interactive texts and can deploy both a quantitative and qualitative approach (Leavy 2007, Denscombe 2004, Duffy 2010). I employed a qualitative content analysis of

information on websites of domestic violence organisations that develop, deliver or coordinate accredited and certified training programmes for workers and volunteers. I initially approached the content analysis using a problem orientated approach (Duffy 2010). This suggested three criteria; could these programmes contribute to the strengthening or weakening of the social change role of domestic violence responses, was the prior learning and experience of workers integrated into these programmes and if so how and what was the capacity of these programmes to address internal inequalities within the domestic violence sector. As the content analysis proceeded, other themes emerged from the documents themselves and I then went on to look for those themes as the study progressed.

Working from within a feminist epistemology, my study was concerned with the context in which the texts on the websites were produced and how particular perspectives and values underpinned this context. I was also concerned with looking for texts that presented a differentiated view of women's' perspectives, experiences and activities (Reinharz 1992). Reinharz (1992) and Leavy (2007) contend that as feminist researchers we must be as equally alert to what is absent from texts or pushed to the periphery as we are to what is included and central, to analyse the wider discourse and social groups that produced the documents.

The information accessed is mostly inadvertent sources (Duffy 2010) in that it was not produced specifically for the attention of researchers but to promote and market the organisations, specifically the training activity of the organisations and to raise awareness about the issue of domestic violence. A small number of evaluations or deliberate sources were accessed as part of this study.

Denscombe (2004) and Duffy (2010) caution that content analysis of documents sourced from the internet can lead to problems of authentication of authorship and the credibility of the information presented. In this respect, as I was analysing texts directly from the websites of the organisations whose programmes I was studying, this problem did not arise. The websites accessed were all typical of their type. They were produced to provide access to victims/survivors of domestic violence to information and services, provide access to practitioners and other supporters to information, to promote their own activities and market training, awareness,

education and other activities and events to their target groups. Follow up e mails and phone calls to each of the organisations that operated the programmes provided further verification of the authenticity of the websites from which the texts for content analysis were chosen.

Having identified which cases to include in the multiple case studies, I accessed the 'about us' pages on each organisations' website, which provided information about the organisation's mission, values, philosophy, programmes and current activities I also accessed specific pages on each website pertaining to training, accreditation and certification and any available evaluations of accredited or certified training programmes . I also followed up with emails to each of the chosen organisations informing them about this study and seeking access to any other documentation that was not on their website that related to their accredited and certified programmes. In all e mails I offered the option of a phone call to elicit this information and respondents opted for this rather than providing the information by email. Phone calls were made by appointment to designated staff members who had specific responsibility for training programmes within the selected organisations. I asked each of these key informants if there was any further documentation about the programmes I could access. In the vast majority of cases, there was no other information other than what was contained on their websites.

Limitations of method chosen

I am aware that the use of this one method results in a number of limitations to this research. Case studies offer the researcher an opportunity to understand how the different parts of a case are related to each other (Denscombe 2003, Reinharz 1992). They are holistic rather than focused on isolated parts of a case and should also include a study, description and interpretation of the historical, geographic, social and institutional context in which the case is located and the internal processes and dynamics of the case (Denscombe 2003). I was concerned before I started the study that relying on only content analysis as the sole method in a multiple case study, would mean that I would not be able to elicit the detail and depth needed in relation to context and relationships. However, content analysis of the documents accessible did provide ample material from which I could draw information that enabled the generation of some knowledge, theory and further

questions that will be of interest to the Irish domestic violence sector. At the same time, I remain aware that content analysis allows me as a researcher to go only so far in gaining a deeper understanding of these accreditation and certification programmes. Interviews, focus groups and observations would have the potential to elicit a more complex and holistic insight, appreciation and critique of these programmes.

Ethical considerations

As a feminist researcher, my intention is that this study will contribute to social change that will benefit women and children. Therefore I wanted to ensure I did no harm to domestic violence organisations and to the women and children they serve. I know from my own experience the struggles that women's organisations face to keep their different activities and programmes going in the context of unequal power relationships with the State that place women's organisations in a disadvantaged position. In the face of increasing pressures to justify their work to funders and to governments, resources for training and education are often scarce (Lehrner and Allen 2009). I did not want this study to be used to justify the withdrawal or reduction in resources or to be used as another way in which critics of the anti-violence movement could further undermine it.

Fine et al (2000) identify this ethical conundrum in writing on qualitative research, representations and social responsibilities when reflecting on their research into poor working class communities in two cities in the United States. They were concerned that including findings on some of the seemingly aberrant or criminal behaviour of some of the research participants (e.g. welfare fraud), would be used in what they termed the right wing assault on the poor. They argue that the researcher committed to social justice must reflectively engage with the materials to ensure they take responsibility for how they report on the findings and to think ahead about who might potentially read the report and how they might interpret it and use it. Taking responsibility does not mean hiding what they called 'bad stories' as opposed to 'good stories' but they advise all social researchers to ask themselves a series of questions. These include how researchers take responsibility for the representation

of the data and their analysis and in imagining how their study might be used by progressive, conservative and oppressive forces.

Using these questions as a guide, I considered how I could minimise the risk of this report being used to undermine women's domestic violence organisations as opposed to supporting and strengthening their work. This included ensuring that I connected the findings to the wider social, political and economic context in which they were situated and how these wider contexts impacted on responses to gender based violence. I also took care to describe the mundane aspects of developing and delivering these accredited and certified programmes as this also was a factor in how some programmes were structured and delivered in order to meet external accreditation and professional standards.

Fine et al (2000) advise that the researcher have conversations with informants and participants to negotiate interpretation. Good feminist research should seek to build collaborative understandings of the issues being studied and in this respect, this study is limited as I did not carry out interviews or focus groups. I am aware that there is a wealth of information about these programmes that is not available to me through the use of content analysis as my sole method and therefore, I would caution against any use of this report as presenting a full picture of accredited and certified training programmes for domestic violence workers. By utilising a case study approach, I was able to get in depth information about aspects of these programmes, but I do not claim that this study provides a holistic understanding of these programmes in all their complexities.

As a feminist researcher it is important to be sensitive to issues of power in the research process (Hesse-Biber et al 2004, Oleson 2000, Reinharz 1992). Issues of power relevant to this study relate to how choices about the research focus and questions were made, the selection of programmes to study and in the representation of the information. As discussed previously, purposeful sampling was employed utilising certain criteria for selection.

In terms of representation I was particularly aware of my own positionality as a feminist involved in domestic violence work. I remained reflexively aware throughout

the study of the relationship between my own theoretical framework and how I was interpreting the information. I sought to make this as transparent possible in the writing up of the report. In this way, I aimed to provide the reader with enough information from which they can follow the reasoning process that gave rise to the findings and conclusions.(Alveson and Skoldberg 2000, Letherby 2003).

While the websites accessed for this study are in the public domain, they were not produced for the purposes of research and analysis. It would have been possible to access the websites and carry out a content analysis without ever informing the organisations involved. However, recognising the power dynamics inherent in such an approach and out of respect for the organisations involved, I felt that it was important to inform them about the study and that I was examining one of their programmes. By e mail and in follow up phone calls with key informants in these organisations, I informed them of the reason why I was carrying out this study and the fact that it was part of a Master's thesis, what I was studying and how the information and knowledge generated would be used (Bryman 2008, Christians, 2000).

Issues related to acquiring consent from participants were not relevant to the design of this study. I had a number of phone calls with individuals in some of the organisations to seek access to further documentation. In the course of these phone calls, the informants shared some interesting information of relevance to this study. When this happened, I asked the informant if this information was documented anywhere and if so could I have access to this document. If the information was not documented, I asked the informant could I include this information and reference our conversation. I committed to sending a transcript of the section in the study that referenced the conversation for their feedback and also said that I would not reference our conversation if at any time they decided that they wished it not to be included. Five conversations with four individuals were referenced in the report and I e mailed the transcript of the relevant section to each individual to ensure that I was reporting accurately on this information and to seek their final consent to reference the conversation.

Summary

This chapter outlines the methodological framework for this study and the method chosen. At the centre of my epistemological approach is the intention to contribute to social change by providing useful knowledge for the domestic violence sector in Ireland. Reflexivity was at the centre of the study. In addition, I was open and transparent with the organisations selected for the study. This study employs a case study approach and the reasons for this were explained in this chapter. These included that accredited and certified training courses as a phenomenon presented a small number of bounded cases, analysis of which could elicit themes and issues that facilitated the generation of theory. Content analysis was chosen as the most pragmatic way in which a variety of programmes in five countries could be studied. Twenty one cases in all met the preliminary selection criteria and a further analysis for differences and similarities between the cases resulted in nine programmes being included in the study. The findings from the research process are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

In this chapter I present the findings and analysis drawn from a content analysis of the nine programmes selected for in-depth study. The accredited training programmes examined include five in the United Kingdom, one in the United States of America, two in Australia and one in New Zealand. As discussed in chapter 4 a content analysis of information available on the relevant websites of the organisations that operated these programmes was carried out. Reports pertaining to the programmes accessed through these websites were also analysed. This chapter is laid out as follows. The next section presents the findings country by country with a brief description and overview of each of the nine programmes. In the following section, I present a detailed thematic matrix drawing together in tabular form the main themes that emerged from the content analysis. This enables comparison and contextualisation of the various programmes. The fourth section discusses the two distinct approaches to accreditation emanating from the content analysis. The final section concludes the chapter.

Description of programmes

United Kingdom

Policy overview
The current UK Government strategy on domestic and sexual violence, 'Ending Violence against Women and Girls 2010 – 2016' is coordinated and lead out by the UK Home Office. The role of the Government is identified as supporting effective practice through sharing of knowledge and setting of standards supported by training. The strategy recognises the important role of specialist services and aims to support their sustainability within the constraints of current funding climate. The

Strategy refers to the National Occupational Standards as setting a benchmark for service provision for all domestic violence services.

National Occupation Standards

The National Occupational Standards [NOS] are statements of the standard performance that is expected across a range of occupations and professions. They included the specifications for the underpinning knowledge and understanding of each standard. The standards are applied in every part of the UK and describe the performance required of an individual in the work place. The NOS are developed by employers in the specific occupational areas. Sector Skills Councils are designated to lead out on and coordinate consultations towards the development of agreed standards for their specific occupational areas. Skills for Justice are the designated sector skills council for all areas related to justice and community safety. Domestic and sexual violence organisations worked collaboratively with Skills for Justice to agree five core job areas; refuge support worker, outreach support worker, children and young people support worker, helpline support worker and independent domestic violence advocate.

Open College Network

Open College Network [OCN] is a national awarding body operating in Northern Ireland, England and Wales. They are an education charity that works with businesses, communities and employers to create qualifications for a range of occupations and professions. OCN qualifications start at level 1 which is an entry level qualification requiring junior GCSE's. The awards level increases to level 8, Doctorate level. Individual agencies can become OCN accrediting bodies or can seek to have specific courses accredited through the OCN. Courses with OCN accreditation must meet national accreditation standards set by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulations.

Overview of accredited training programmes

Information about nine organisations that deliver accredited training for domestic violence workers in the United Kingdom was accessed. These are outlined in Table 3.

Table 3: UK Organisations

Women's Aid Federation North Ireland	Women's Aid Federation England	Scottish Women's Aid
Welsh Women's Aid	Imakaan	Avert
Against Violence and Abuse	Coordinated Action against Domestic Abuse	Refuge UK

Eight of these organisations with the exception of Imkaan, have mapped aspects of their training against the UK National Occupational Standards [NOS]. As Imkaan's training focuses specifically on responding to Black and minority ethnic women who experience domestic and sexual violence, there is no corresponding NOS as yet developed for responding to this target group. All of the organisations provided unaccredited training focused on wide range of topics.

Most of the accredited training, with the exception of Scottish Women's Aid, was accredited training through OCN. OCN does not currently operate in Scotland.[8] Accreditation is at level 2 or 3 which is equivalent to lower and higher GCSE's in the UK. Five of these programmes were studied in more detail. The rationale for which programmes were selected and the coding system used for analysis are described in Chapter 3. I will now present a brief description of each of these five programme follows.

Women's Aid Federation England

The accredited training run by the Women's Aid Federation England [WAFE] typifies those run by all four of the Women's Aid Federations in the UK. WAFE's National

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[8] Scottish Women's Aid has developed an accredited training course with CAADA for Independent Domestic Violence Advisors. Children's workers and refuge workers are required to access accredited training through the Scottish Social Services Council. Like all other federations, Scottish Women's Aid provides a suite of training for workers covering many aspects of domestic violence, non one of which is accredited as yet.

Learning and Development Centre provide education and training for its members and for a range of agencies and practitioners. WAFE provide qualifications through training accredited through the OCN at three levels, Award, Certification and Diploma. Training at Award level is targeted at new workers and volunteers. It is comprised of three modules and is run over six days. Successful completion of this course carries six OCN credits. Certificate level is targeted at workers who have at least two years experience. It is comprised of four modules and is run over 10 days, carrying 24 OCN credits. Attainment of the certificate enables a worker to progress to the Diploma Course. The Diploma course is for experienced workers who have completed the certificate level course and who wish to specialise in particular areas of domestic violence work. Participants can choose from a number of specialist modules, each of which carries a specific number of OCN credits. The modules are run over one or two day courses. To be awarded a Diploma, the participant must accumulate 37 OCN credits at level 3. Successful completion of the Diploma course provides a progression route for workers onto a Degree course on domestic abuse in Worcester University.

Imkaan

Imkaan is a black feminist organisation that represents the expertise and perspectives of specialist Black and Minority Ethnic domestic violence services in the UK. Their website describes their focus as being on the needs and aspirations of women 'in the diaspora', including (and not limited to) women who define as African, African-Caribbean, Black British, Kurdish, South Asian and South East Asian (Imkaan, 2013). Imkaan's training includes a number of courses that are accredited through OCN. One is accredited at level one and two and two are accredited at level 2.

Refuge

Refuge describes itself as the largest single provider of specialist domestic violence services in the UK. With Skills for Justice, Refuge has launched two qualifications under the Qualifications and Credit Framework [QCF]. One of these is targeted at workers in domestic violence services and is awarded at level 3 under the QCF framework. The course to attain this qualification consists of three units.

Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse

Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse [CAADA] is a national charity. They state that their work focuses on *'saving lives and saving public money.'* In addition, a key goal is to support a strong multi agency response to domestic abuse focused on early intervention and the prevention of re-victimisation. CAADA supports and develops the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference process most particularly by developing the role of Independent Domestic Violence Advisors [IDVA]. To be employed as an IDVA, a person must undergo CADDA's IDVA training and be accredited by them. The accredited IDVA course is described as the only specialist IDVA course in the UK and is accredited at OCN Level 3. It is a fourteen day course delivered in five blocks. Target participants are domestic violence workers, practitioners about to start domestic violence work and managers of domestic abuse services.

Against Violence and Abuse

Against Violence and Abuse [AVA] is a second tier organisation. AVA's provide consultancy, good practice support and training to a range of agencies and practitioners, both state and nongovernmental. The focus of much of AVA's work, including training, is about developing responses to specific aspects of domestic and sexual violence such as domestic and sexual violence and substance misuse, domestic violence and sexual violence and mental health illnesses. A number of their courses are accredited through the OCN at level 3.

Australia

Policy overview

The National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Children aims to coordinate actions to address gender based violence across the eight states and territories of Australia. Like the United States, both federal and state or territorial law and policy provide the context within which responses to violence against women are delivered. Each State or territory has its own legislation and policy directed by a set of common goals, targets and timeframes in the National Plan. Priority areas include the agreement and attainment of service standards to victims and their families. This requires that services ensure that responses are based on evidence on what works

best in both preventing and responding to domestic violence. Increasing the cultural competency of mainstream services to Minority Ethnic and Indigenous women and empowering indigenous women to take leadership in the area of domestic and family violence are also named as priority areas for action.

National occupational and training standards

Accredited training for a number of professions in Australia is delivered within the context of competency standards established and monitored by the Community Service and Health Industry Skills Council. Five competency areas have been established for domestic violence work. These are optional units to acquire in boarder courses in community services and health care. Training and training standards are approved under the Australian Qualifications Framework. To be eligible to deliver this training, organisations or individuals must gain Registered Training Organisation [RTO] approval.

Overview of accredited training programmes

Four accredited training programmes were identified in Australia. The organisations that ran these programmes are outlined in Table 4.

Table 4: Australian Organisations

Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria	Education Centre Against Violence, New South Wales
Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research	Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services Western Australia

As the programmes run by the Domestic Violence Resource Centre in Victoria, the Educational Centre Against Violence in New South Wales and Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research [QCDVFVR] were mapped to the national competency units and approved under the Australian Qualifications Framework, they therefore had the same prospectus and assessment procedures. I chose the QCDVFVR programme as exemplifying these programmes for further study. The reason I chose this programme was the accessibility of information from the QCDVFVR website that also provided information about how the programme was developed as well as an evaluation of the first course run for workers. A different

model including recognition of prior learning has been developed by the Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services Western Australia and further information on this programme is included in the this section.

Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research

The Queensland Centre for Domestic Violence and Family Research [QCDFVR] aims to enhance and support good practice responses to domestic and family violence across Queensland. The QCDFVR developed an accredited course for frontline practitioners including domestic violence workers. It carries accreditation in three units under the Australian Quality Training Framework and is mapped to the national competency framework. The course is delivered by organisations and individuals who are Registered Training Organisations under the Australian Qualifications Framework. The QCDFVR developed and monitors a process whereby recognition of prior learning and experience can be included in assessment towards accreditation.

Women's Council for Domestic and family Violence Services Western Australia

The Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services in Western Australia [WCDFVS] is the Peak body in that state supporting and representing a network of domestic violence services. The WCDFVS provides training for both members and non members and are seeking to have this accredited under the Australian National Quality Training Framework. They have also worked in partnership with the Department for Child Protection and the West Coast Institute of Training in Western Australia to provide workers with an opportunity to gain an award in Community Work Service levels 3, 4 or at Diploma level through a process of recognition of prior learning and experience.

New Zealand

Policy Overview

New Zealand has a standards framework for a number of occupations and professions and related accredited training mapped to those standards. However, there was no information about specific standards for domestic violence work. The New Zealand Qualifications Framework provides qualifications at 10 levels providing certificate at levels 1 to 4 and diplomas at levels 5 and 6 up to a Doctoral degree at level 10.

Women's Refuge New Zealand

Women's Refuge is the foremost national organisation addressing domestic violence in New Zealand. It has a Family Violence Training and Research Institute and through this offers domestic violence workers the opportunity to gain a National Certificate in Social Studies at level four. This is attained through successful completion of 60 hours training and a six month placement in a service. The training meets the standards as established by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority.

United States of America

Policy overview

Domestic violence responses are delivered within the context of both federal and State legislation and policy in the United States. The Violence Against Women Act [VAWA] was landmark legislation passed by the US Senate and Congress in 1994 and re-authorised in 2013. It provides for a strong legislative response to perpetrators of violence against women and for funding for services such as helplines, shelters and court support programmes. State legislatures also pass specific laws and budgets for domestic violence services within the context of VAWA. Within each state a coalition of domestic violence organisations act as a support and representative body for domestic violence services. There are a number of national organisations who provide representation at a national level as well as taking the lead in research and development of good practice and policies. A number

of these national organisations are run by and for Black, Minority Ethnic or Indigenous communities.

Certified domestic violence professionals

No information in relation to accredited training programmes was accessed as a result of internet searches. However a model of recognition and professional development through which domestic violence workers are certified as domestic violence professionals exists in a number of states. The domestic violence professional certification programmes are developed by and for the domestic violence sector. Information from seven states that run this certification programme was accessed through the National Domestic Violence Resource Centre. Information in relation to certification programmes in other states was not available.

Certification programmes for domestic violence professionals are run by State coalitions and are a combination of training and supervised practice hours. The number of supervised and training hours varies from between States. Certification for domestic violence workers is mandatory in four of the seven states, Utah, Iowa, West Virginia and Kentucky and is voluntary in three states, Illinois, New Jersey and Delaware. Certification is granted for a period of two to three years. Renewal of certification is gained through undergoing continuing professional development which can be a combination of participation in training, seminars, conference and state coalition meetings. Training must be provided by approved trainers and training organisations and supervision must be provided by an approved supervisor. New Jersey was the first state to develop the certification programme and a number of states followed suit and developed similar programmes with some variations. As New Jersey exemplifies the certification programme, I have chosen to study its programme in more detail.

New Jersey Association of Domestic Violence Professionals

New Jersey Association of Domestic Violence Professionals [NJADVP] are a branch of the New Jersey Coalition of Battered Women and they run the New Jersey Domestic Violence Specialist certification and re-certification programmes. The NJADVP was established to provide recognition and standards for the domestic violence sector in the state and grew out of a joint effort by victim's advocates and shelter workers in the 1980s. The aim of the NJDVAP certification programme is to

provide a process through which standards could be set and maintained and domestic violence workers' expertise could be recognised. Through establishing a professional certification, the NJADVP aim to exert a stronger influence on other agencies and institutions response to domestic violence.

To qualify for certification an applicant must complete 180 hours of domestic violence specific education and 1000 hours of direct service experience with clients. This includes 180 hours of directly supervised work. Typically, the worker will work for the certification over two to three year period although some of the 1000 hours of direct service provision can have been completed prior to commencing the certification process. Direct service hours must be verified by an approved supervisor and be in a combination of fourteen different task. To be re-certified, the applicant must provide proof of participation in twenty one hours of domestic violence specific education over the previous two years. The certification process is open to professionals beyond the domestic violence sector itself, including police officers, social workers and counsellors.

A number of organisations are approved training centres including all twenty nine domestic violence services in the State of New Jersey. Individual courses run in universities or other settings are also approved and a number of credits are obtained on completion of these. The NJADVP has its own training institute and runs a number of certified courses each year.

Summary of this section

Nine programmes were described in this section. Eight of these programmes, located in the UK, Australia and New Zealand have a number of similarities. The accreditation applied to these programmes occurs within their countries National Qualification Frameworks. Accreditation is at levels equivalent to second level lower or higher certifications or Diploma level. In both the UK and Australia, these courses and qualifications are mapped to National Occupational Standards specific to domestic violence work. This study found no equivalent standards in New Zealand. All of the courses were short courses providing the participant with an opportunity to gain credits. Only one programme resulted in workers gaining a qualification from a suite of qualifications including an award, a certificate and a diploma.

The professional certification process in the United States represents a different model. This model is operated in at least seven states and creates a clear route for a worker to become a certified domestic violence professional. The programmes require the applicant to participate in domestic violence specific education and to prove a certain amount of practice hours. A number of these hours must be directly supervised by an approved supervisor. Re-certification is gained by participation in continuing professional development activities over a two to three year period, depending on the requirement of the certification body.

While all of the programmes have been developed by and for the sector, the USA certification programme is the only model where the domestic violence sector has created, monitored and maintained full control of the practice and qualification standards. In one area, that of client privilege, this is state mandated. However, the overall process of certification of domestic violence professionals remains in the control of state level certification boards that are based within the sector at state coalition level.

Overall, five of the programmes studied were developed and delivered by a federation or coalition organisation that represented a network of frontline domestic violence services. Four programmes were operated by what was termed in the UK as a second tier organisation. These are organisations who do not provide a direct service to women and children but who provide a service to both statutory and non-governmental agencies through policy development and support, research and training. I will now present the thematic matrix devised from the content analysis

Thematic Matrix

In this section, I present the thematic matrix I devised to enable comparison and contextualisation of the programmes reviewed. The information is organised by country and then by organisation. It represents a detailed and in-depth analysis of the programmes. Six key themes emerged as being of significance and which correlate to the aims of the study: organisation's social change role; accredited

training addresses social change role and feminist practice; accredited training includes multiplicity of perspectives and addresses limitations in sector; learning about multiplicity of perspectives and limitations in sector outside of accredited training; use of adult education theory and practice in accredited training; use of adult education theory and practice outside context of accredited training

Table 5: Thematic Matrix

United Kingdom						
Organisation	*Organisation's social change role*	*Accredited training addresses social change role and feminist practice*	*Accredited training includes multiplicity of perspectives and addresses limitations in sector*	*Learning about multiplicity of perspectives and limitations in sector outside of accredited training*	*Use of adult education theory and practice in accredited training*	*Use of adult education theory and practice outside context of accredited training*
Women's Aid Federation England [WAFE]	Grew out of women's liberation movement. Engages in campaigns and political lobbying to end violence against women and children Locates domestic violence in the abuse of power and as rooted in historical status of women in family and society Links to and collaborates with other campaigns for women's social, political and economic rights.	Module on domestic and sexual violence within a social and historical context in certificate programme Optional Dip module on feminist theory and domestic violence in Diploma programme 10 core principles reflecting feminist practice underpin their standards framework	Optional modules in Diploma course on equality and diversity issues, mental health, drug and alcohol use, responses to women's experiences of domestic violence	Jointly runs AYA project with Imkaan to build resilience of specialist Black and Minority Ethnic domestic violence sector. Conference workshops and training focused on wide range of issues including focus on gender analysis, responses to BMER women lead by BME women	Attainment of knowledge, increased understanding and skills No information about learning theory informing or practice used in courses.	Conference, seminars and other training indicate the WAFE fostering critical reflection Training in Aya project in partnership with Imkaan targeted at building resilience of BME services sector Online survivor forum provides opportunity for mutual support and informal learning. This Privileging women's experience as useful knowledge.

United Kingdom						
Organisation	*Organisation's social change role*	*Accredited training addresses social change role and feminist practice*	*Accredited training includes multiplicity of perspectives and addresses limitations in sector*	*Learning about multiplicity of perspectives and limitations in sector outside of accredited training*	*Use of adult education theory and practice in accredited training*	*Use of adult education theory and practice outside context of accredited training*
Imkaan	Feminist and human rights organisation Understanding gendered nature of violence against women and girls and of intersecting factors of age, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability. Utilises a Human Rights approach	Training focuses on good practice responses to Black, Minority Ethnic and Refugee women. Creating understanding of the complexity of diverse of women's experience and needs and cultural contexts	Central focus is Black, Minority Ethnic and Refugee [BMER] women's perspective and expertise and bringing this to bear on wider movement and other agencies. States awareness of multiplicity of issues and intersectionality	Working in partnership with WAFE to protect specialist services through the Aya project	Creating awareness and increasing understanding Little information about learning theory informing or practice used in courses. Training involves interactive learning between course tutor and participants	Primary goal is knowledge building by black and minority ethnic women, for BMER women to define their perceptions of human rights and their own priorities Training in Aya project in partnership with Imkaan targeted at building resilience of BME services sector Development and support role to services, informal and non formal learning through peer support, information provision and capacity building

United Kingdom						
Organisation	*Organisation's social change role*	*Accredited training addresses social change role and feminist practice*	*Accredited training includes multiplicity of perspectives and addresses limitations in sector*	*Learning about multiplicity of perspectives and limitations in sector outside of accredited training*	*Use of adult education theory and practice in accredited training*	*Use of adult education theory and practice outside context of accredited training*
Refuge UK	Names violence against women as unacceptable No gender analysis but does state its focus is on women and children States they provide a voice for the voiceless Campaigns for change to policy and practice Research report on financial abuse does have gender analysis and links to wider campaigns for change, Names domestic violence human as a rights issue	No information accessed	No information accessed	Research on forced marriage Specific focus on eastern European women Specialist refuges	Stated training to ensure women and children receive support from professional support from experts equipped with best practice skills and knowledge. No information about learning theory informing or practice used in courses.	Range of online resources making information, knowledge accessible and available to many.

United Kingdom						
Organisation	*Organisation's social change role*	*Accredited training addresses social change role and feminist practice*	*Accredited training includes multiplicity of perspectives and addresses limitations in sector*	*Learning about multiplicity of perspectives and limitations in sector outside of accredited training*	*Use of adult education theory and practice in accredited training*	*Use of adult education theory and practice outside context of accredited training*
Against Violence and Abuse [AVA]	Recognises gender inequality as cause and consequence of violence against women and girls Violence against women and girls gross violation of human rights Recognises intersection issues of sexuality, disability, ethnicity, gender identity and age Stated aim is social change towards ending of violence against women and girls	Focus on risk and safety Understanding how attitudes and beliefs impact on practice	Core focus of training is to integrate response to women experiencing domestic violence who also experience problematic substance use, mental health problems and homelessness	Ensures case studies reflect diversity of clients, ensure information about diversity of organisations and agencies included. Hosts websites and gives technical support to peer lead group for women drug users and for LGBT DV forum. Supports survivor lead responses e.g. Conference "Who's movement is it anyway", specifically addressing movement identity issues	Equality statement on how training delivered, specific measures to ensure all learners can participate equally. Open to all regardless of prior academic, educational background. Minimises use of text, verbally explains all materials and takes time to explain any written assignments, Uses variety of learning tools and accepts variety of assignments types	Evaluations suggest that much informal and non formal learning taking place outside of accredited courses but not possible to discern theory and practice informing this. Conference on survivor lead initiatives about gathering and generation new ideas, returning sector to survivors

United Kingdom						
Organisation	*Organisation's social change role*	*Accredited training addresses social change role and feminist practice*	*Accredited training includes multiplicity of perspectives and addresses limitations in sector*	*Learning about multiplicity of perspectives and limitations in sector outside of accredited training*	*Learning orientation, use of adult education theory and practice in accredited training*	*Use of adult education theory and practice outside context of accredited training*
Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse [CAADA]	Goal is to save lives and save public money Role is to transform UK response to domestic violence by supporting early intervention Aims to halve the number of high risk victims and halve time it takes victims to seek help from 5 to 2.5 years.	Safety focused, risk focused, outcome focused Empowering victims Mobilising community resources on behalf of the woman	Focus in training on violence in same sex relationships, diversity considerations, mental health and substance use issues, homelessness, honour based violence, forced marriage and sexual violence	Tool kits on line including information on responding to BME women	Increasing knowledge Developing and expanding skills Building confidence Developing expertise about criminal justice system No information about learning theory informing or practice used in courses.	No evidence

United States of America						
Organisation	*Organisation's social change role*	*Accredited training addresses social change role and feminist practice*	*Accredited training includes multiplicity of perspectives and addresses limitations in sector*	*Learning about multiplicity of perspectives and limitations in sector outside of accredited training*	*Learning orientation, use of adult education theory and practice in accredited training*	*Use of adult education theory and practice outside context of accredited training*
New Jersey Association of Domestic Violence Practitioners [NJADVP]	States violence against women in any form a fundamental element of oppression of women. Role is to address historical and continuing cause of this oppression. States NJADVP holds a feminist awareness of the patriarchal origins of domestic violence	Basic 150 hours training includes modules on the historical and theoretical perspectives on violence against women. Modules on gender issues and empowerment, looking at wider issues in relation to women's position and expectations in family and society.	Modules in issues of race and culture including focus on racism. Exploring responses to domestic violence within indigenous communities Modules on substance use and mental health and sexual violence. Modules on violence against LGBT, older women	All learning potentially used for accrediting worker for initial or re-certification	Modules include a focus on creating heightened awareness in learner of their own position in relation to power differentials in society. Expressed focus on power as central issue in educational approaches to domestic violence. Highlights importance of continuing education of workers	All learning potentially used for certification and re-certification of worker

United States of America						
Organisation	*Organisation's social change role*	*Accredited training addresses social change role and feminist practice*	*Accredited training includes multiplicity of perspectives and addresses limitations in sector*	*Learning about multiplicity of perspectives and limitations in sector outside of accredited training*	*Learning orientation, use of adult education theory and practice in accredited training*	*Use of adult education theory and practice outside context of accredited training*
New Jersey Association of Domestic Violence Practitioners [NJADVP] continued…		Learning carrying credits includes participative workshops on feminist origins of domestic violence movement	Modules on understanding and values regarding violence and prejudices		Experience gained both before and during certification contributed to final certification. Some CPD hours can be gained through attendance meetings forums, acknowledging informal learning Course on training techniques incorporating knowledge on adult learning	

Australia						
Organisation	*Organisation's social change role*	*Accredited training addresses social change role and feminist practice*	*Accredited training includes multiplicity of perspectives and addresses limitations in sector*	*Learning about multiplicity of perspectives and limitations in sector outside of accredited training*	*Learning orientation, use of adult education theory and practice in accredited training*	*Use of adult education theory and practice outside context of accredited training*
Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research [QCDFVR]	Operates within a feminist and intersectional analysis Sees domestic violence as an expression of unequal power relationships between men and women Recognises domestic violence as an abuse of human rights Recognises intersectionality of women's experiences shaped by race, class, ethnicity, disability. Services must be just equally accessible to all	Understanding theories of domestic violence Understanding of power and gender as central issues in domestic violence Risk and safety focused	Training on issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women Training on issues for people who are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds Training on issues for women in same sex relationships, women experiencing elder abuse, women in rural areas	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reference group Holds annual indigenous forum Online newsletter includes focus on indigenous perspective	Developing knowledge and understanding Developing skills sets Reflection on values attitudes and experiences Recognition of prior learning integrated into course	Hosts conferences, seminars facilitating non formal training

Australia						
Organisation	*Organisation's social change role*	*Accredited training addresses social change role and feminist practice*	*Accredited training includes multiplicity of perspectives and addresses limitations in sector*	*Learning about multiplicity of perspectives and limitations in sector outside of accredited training*	*Learning orientation, use of adult education theory and practice in accredited training*	*Use of adult education theory and practice outside context of accredited training*
Women's Council of Domestic and Family Violence Services Western Australia [WCDFVSWA]	Identifies that domestic violence is underpinned by patriarchal beliefs. Recognises domestic violence as a human rights violation.	Basic course includes module on feminist analysis on VAW		Courses include indigenous perspective on domestic violence Specific workshop on intersection of gender race and class analysis	Process of recognition of prior learning for workers to get qualification in community work service level 3,4 and diploma	No evidence

New Zealand						
Organisation	*Organisation's social change role*	*Accredited training addresses social change role and feminist practice*	*Accredited training includes multiplicity of perspectives and addresses limitations in sector*	*Learning about multiplicity of perspectives and limitations in sector outside of accredited training*	*Learning orientation, use of adult education theory and practice in accredited training*	*Use of adult education theory and practice outside context of accredited training*
Women's Refuge New Zealand	Cornerstone of response is parallel development ensuring Maori women needs met in way that best suits Maori Holds feminist analysis on violence against women Committed to collectivism and lesbian visibility	Supports feminist practice in refuges, bottom up approach Accredited programme includes feminist analysis and a focus on the Treaty of Waitangi, the founding document of New Zealand. This is the context for parallel development	Prominence of bicultural approach, parallel development of responses to Maori and non-Maori women	Structural mechanisms within network to ensure parallel development including equal numbers of Maori and non-Maori women at leadership level, sharing of all resources equally, separate Maori and Tauiwi (non Maori) gatherings, Maori caucuses commitment from non-Maori women to ongoing training about de-colonisation	Delivered within context of parallel development approach	All learning within context of parallel development approach

All of the nine organisations articulated a social change goal. This was defined in various ways and ranged from addressing the underlying root causes to violence against women to halving the number of high risk victims of domestic violence and saving public money. Seven of the nine organisations articulated a feminist analysis of violence against women. One organisation, Refuge UK stated that violence against women was a human rights issue and the remaining organisation, CAADA, carried no information on its understanding of a theoretical framework on violence against women.

Information on the aims and content of training programmes was limited. General course titles made it difficult to discern to what extent the training included a focus on feminist practice within the social change role of organisations. However, a close examination of underpinning organisational ideology suggested feminist practice informed their training. In four cases, an inclusion of feminist perspectives and a historical analysis of domestic violence were included. In general, training was focused on a range of issues including risk assessment and safety planning, good practice responses, responding to Black, Minority Ethnic and refugee women's experience of domestic violence and the intersection of domestic violence and substance use issues.

Seven of the organisations addressed a multiplicity of perspectives in their accredited training. The Women's Council in Western Australia do not have accredited training but do provide a route to qualification through recognition of prior learning experience and their courses for workers do include this perspective. Learning about the multiplicity of perspectives is facilitated by all organisations outside of accredited training. As is illustrated in the thematic matrix there was significant variance between organisations in terms of the kinds of learning the amount of learning opportunities provided.

There was minimum information about the learning orientations underpinning the course delivery. There were two exceptions to this. The Against Violence and Abuse [AVA] provided information about their commitment to facilitating all learning styles and to maximising the inclusion of a diversity of learners through using a variety of tools and assessment processes. The New Jersey Association's programme stood

out as providing a different sort of educational approach through its professional certification programme. The integration of adult education theory and practice was evident from an analysis of this programmes information, indicating that the NJADVP provide learning opportunities for workers within a situated learning perspective.

Two distinct approaches to accredited learning are evident within the thematic matrix. The first approach refers to the professional certification system as developed by the New Jersey Association of Domestic Violence Professionals. The second approach is located within the eight other programmes that were developed and mapped to National Occupational Standards and Training. What distinguishes these approaches is the type of accredited learning process, inclusion or not of supervised practice as part of the learning, re-certification requirements and the forms of learning activities recognised in a worker's progression to accreditation. I now turn to a more detailed analysis of these two approaches. The discussion is framed with reference to the theory and knowledge of adult education.

Approaches to accreditation within the programmes

The New Jersey Association of Domestic Violence Professional Certification Process

I suggest that the analysis of relevant documents indicates that the New Jersey Association of Domestic Violence Professionals [NJADVP] provide an exemplary model for domestic violence workers accredited education. The NJADVP provided a way in which learning about the social change role of the domestic violence movement could be included in an accreditation process. In addition, learning opportunities that enabled workers to critically reflect on some of the internal issues for the sector is provided and can be used to gain credits towards certification. By enabling workers to gain credits for learning within a situated learning perspective, the NJADVP created a possibility for workers to become a certain person, a 'knower in the context where what it means to know is negotiated with respect to the regime of competence of community' (Wenger 2010, pg.2).

Experiential learning in a community of practice

Within the community of domestic violence practitioners in New Jersey, workers can learn about what it means to be a competent member of that community through working with more experienced members, attending team meetings, supervision, training, conferences and workshops (Wenger 2010). All of these learning experiences are documented and verified in the process of certification. Political activities and experiential workshops are also validated as learning experiences in which workers increase their competencies. The inclusion of these learning contexts within the professional certification model and the fact that certification is only granted after the completion of 1000 hours of supervised practice, suggests that experiential learning is highly valued.

The length of time this certification process takes and the requirement that workers be re-certified every two years is likely to contribute to building the capacity of workers as social change activists and thereby strengthens the social change role of the movement. Experiential learning is built into the certification process as a systemic and fluid process, not as learning that has a fixed point and an end (Kegan 2000, Newman 2010). In this way, learners are likely to be facilitated to engage in the kind of critical reflection about power and dominant ideologies in the company of 'critical friends' that will help sustain 'people's commitment to the critical journey and the transformations it involves' (Brookfield 2000, pg.147).

Critical reflection and transformational learning

There was some evidence that opportunities for transformational learning were provided by the NJADVP in their accredited training workshops. These workshops facilitated workers to critically examine their own identities and how this impacted on their work. The Association also ran workshops critically examining the domestic violence movement's response to racism and class discrimination. It is possible that for some learners, these workshops deepened their knowledge about and insight into other perspectives. They may have gained a more complex and nuanced understanding of various power relationships and dynamics but they may not have changed their existing meaning framework (Brookfield 2000). At the same time, a learning goal of critically examining self and the movement as being politically situated in relation to unequal power relationships in society could have enabled

some workers to radically restructure their meaning framework (Mezirow 1997, Taylor 2010). The intention to critically reflect on the movement's identity and position with reference to class and race indicates that the NJADVP employ critical reflection as part of their social change role (Brookfield 2000). Therefore, critical reflection is used in the political sense, enabling workers to reflect on their work but also to reflect on unjust and oppressive ideologies that underpins the prevalence of male violence.

Critical reflection aids learners in decentring their knowledge from a subjective knowing to a more objective perspective (Mezirow 1997, Stevens et al 2010). New perspectives are brought about as a result of learners paying attention to context, examining other points of view and assumptions, considering the implications of this new meaning perspective and identifying possible alternatives for them in both their personal and professional lives (Mezirow 1997). Critical reflection as a political ideology provides the potential for domestic violence movement activists and workers to become more empowered through knowledge generation. It increases their capacity to reject the dominant ideology that sees gender inequality as inevitable, unproblematic and unconnected to the prevalence of male violence and to more fully know that gender based violence 'is not inevitable and has been "constructed" and can therefore "be deconstructed"' (Barry 1995, pg. 86).

By providing learning opportunities for workers in more formal learning environments the NJADVP are enabling workers to generate knowledge by relating their informal learning gained through experience to formal learning. These formal learning opportunities provided within a situated learning setting are underpinned by a radical feminist perspective.

Hammons (2008) highlights how organisations' policy documents can come to lose their meaning in an organisation when ideology, principles and knowledge are not actively embedded within an organisation's day to day work. An examination of some of NJADVP's information on the basic 150 of training and their on-going continued professional development opportunities suggests that issues of power as it relates to gender, race, sexuality and disability are emphasised in formal and non-formal learning opportunities.

An inclusive model?

The NJADVP claim that their programme ensures inclusion of a diversity of workers as no prior academic experience is needed to enter into the certification process. There may have been initial resistance from some within the movement to establishing a certification programme on the grounds that certification would create greater exclusion for those who had not attained a higher education. However, this has not materialised and workers with varying levels of education have participated and have achieved certification. (L. Carson, NJADVP, personal communication, 23rd April 2013). This reflects the views of Adkins (2001) who contends that fears about the exclusion of workers who have experienced class and educational disadvantage in a professional certification process for crime victim advocates have not materialised.

Limitations of findings in relation to Professional Certification Process

The content analysis of the selected documents did not provide any insight into the identity of NJADVP's members or leaders and whether Black, Minority Ethnic, lesbian or disabled women were equally included. Nor was I able to discern to what degree the certification programme made a difference to the practice of the organisations or practitioners when addressing some of the key issues highlighted in the literature review as limitations within the domestic violence movement (Donnelly et al 2005, Sokoloff and Dupont 2005, Richie 2000). Although the NJADVP Certification model exemplifies a situated learning model that encompasses many of the characteristics of emancipatory adult education theory and practices, further study is needed into learners' experience of this process and the impact of the professional certification model on the movement's identity, work and struggles.

Accredited training within a vocational education and training framework

Informational and instrumental learning

Eight of the organisations accredited training was shaped by and mapped to the requirements of existing National Frameworks for Occupational and/or Training

standards. Domestic violence organisations influenced the establishment of these occupational and training standards but they undoubtedly would have had to fit in to an already existing framework of vocational training and education. All of the accredited training programmes were primarily focused on informational learning aimed at building knowledge and understanding of the issue of domestic violence and intersecting issues. These programmes also provided for instrumental learning, developing workers' skills in responding to individual women (Kegan 2000). In all cases, learners are expected to come to know about already existing knowledge frameworks, principles underlying good practice and good practice guidelines. In this respect, the information suggests that learning is being done within a technical mode, where societal need takes precedence over that of the learner (Wellington and Austin 1996). In the context of domestic violence training, this means that the worker needs to learn how to be competent within the already prescribed guidelines and standards as set nationally by the state, nationally or regionally by the sector or locally by an organisation. By focusing on informational and instrumental learning within established guidelines and standards, it could be assumed that these accredited training programmes were preoccupied with getting things done at the expense of generating really useful knowledge for the purposes of social change (Thompson 1997). There was some evidence however, of opportunities for critical reflection on issues of power as it relates to gender, race class and other social divisions being provided by the training organisation.

Within this informational and instrumental learning orientation, some of the organisations did include content that explored the historical and gendered roots of male violence against women. Where this was explicitly named, all of these organisations, WAFE, Imkaan, QCDFVR, WCDFVSWA, and Women's Refuge New Zealand identified as feminist and all of them located the prevalence of violence against women within the oppression of women. AVA did not identify as a feminist organisation but clearly articulated a feminist analysis of violence against women in its web pages.

Other modes of learning
One of the striking features of the information studied was the absence of information on learning modes, methods or any information about the organisations'

theory of learning. However, the absence of information in the documents analysed does not necessarily mean the absence of different modes of learning employed by them. The content analysis suggests that training was primarily provided for informational and instrumental learning. Yet, it is hard to imagine that no critical analysis or meaning making was facilitated. This is especially so for WAFE, Imkaan, AVA, The Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research, The Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services in Western Australia and Women's Refuge New Zealand where information suggests they are avowedly political and engage in other activities aimed at deconstructing taken for granted assumptions about gender, race and power. However, informational and instructional training is not designed to unearth intractable and internalised oppressive meaning perspectives. For example, being trained to understand issues for Black and Minority Ethnic women is not the same as critically examining the underpinning ideology or racism and white privilege that shapes the everyday realities for these women. Nor does it lead to the kind of learning transformations that are needed if oppressive meaning frameworks are to be exposed to scrutiny and abandoned in favour of more useful, accurate and just understandings of how power operates across social divisions in society (Mezirow 1997, 2010 Taylor 2010). Seeking evidence of how these accredited programmes went beyond providing for participants to learn about issues of power, inequality and privilege, there was some evidence of different learning orientations. These included the use of critical reflection as an ideological framework and a short accredited course that was delivered by an organisation that employs a learning strategy with characteristics of a situated learning perspective.

Critical reflection

Critical reflection as an ideology has value in learning environments where a critical analysis of power relationships and dominant ideologies are essential learning outcomes. It enables people to 'recognise how uncritically accepted and unjust dominant ideologies are embedded in everyday situations and practices' (Brookfield 2000, pg. 129). In a number of cases learners are facilitated to reflect on various issues including attitudes and beliefs that effect how practitioners might respond to domestic violence survivors.

The Women's Council in Western Australia provided specific education analysing the intersection of gender, race and class and this suggests that a critical analysis of power relationships and dominant ideologies was part of the learning curriculum (Brookfield 2000). The Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research [QCDFVR] include reflective practice, experiential learning and modules supporting participant's ability to identify issues of power and gender in domestic and family violence.

Two organisations Imkaan and AVA explicitly aimed to bring different perspectives to learners through accredited training. Imkaan provided training informed by the perspectives of Black and Minority Ethnic women and AVA focused on the need to integrate responses to survivors that experienced problematic substance use issues, mental health illness or homelessness. The need for these specific and specialist education programmes is important due to the historical exclusion of these perspectives and women from the movement. I assume that issues of power and exclusion as they operate more widely in society and within the movement and constituent organisations would be discussed in providing learners with a framework to understand the problem and change their practice. Whether learners are facilitated to be critically reflective in this endeavour or whether this training was information and instructional was not clear from the documents.

Situated learning

In only one out of these eight cases was it possible to discern how an organisation explicitly provided a process for workers to learn as participants in a community of practice (Wenger 2010). Information about the parallel process of Maori and non Maori leadership and development used by Women's Refuge New Zealand indicates that learning about multiple perspectives and the privileged position of non Maori women in the context of decolonisation imbues all of the work of this organisation, including their accredited training. Women's Refuge New Zealand provide an example of a situated learning perspective where the explicit intention is to attend to power issues as they impact on both Maori and non Maori women's perspectives, positions and contributions to the movement's work. This situated learning model is explored in more detail in the next section where learning outside of the accredited training context is discussed.

These eight accredited training programmes are used to establish a base of foundational knowledge from which workers can deliver safe, accountable and effective responses to women and children who have been subjected to domestic violence. The findings suggest that they are not used by these organisations in their social change work nor in addressing some of the intractable problems associated with the movement's failure to successfully address issues of race and class. There are some examples of the use of critical reflection within these courses and one example of where an accredited course is delivered within a situated learning perspective with characteristics of a community of learning.

Those organisations that include content on the social and historical roots of male violence against women were those that held a feminist analysis. It is probable that these organisations see their accredited training as being one learning strategy amongst many in their work to provide feminist based responses to women and to work for social change. To understand how learning outside of the context of accredited training is provided it is necessary to examine other activities and work of these organisations.

Learning and education outside of the context of accredited training
Education and learning outside of the context of accredited training is provided by these eight of the organisations. There are considerable differences in the kind and amount of learning opportunities offered. Evidence suggest that six of these organisations employ creative, innovative education strategies to address the key issues that are troubling and weakening the movement as one which truly embodies and enacts feminist principles. I will now briefly discuss four examples of such learning outside of the context of accredited training.

The Women's Refuge New Zealand's employ a unique approach called parallel development. This approach is underpinned by Women's Refuge New Zealand's commitment to the Te Tiriti o Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitiangi) which is the founding document of New Zealand. The intention is that Maori women's perspectives stand equally beside the perspectives of non Maori (tauiwi) women and

that equality between Maori women and non Maori women is core to all work of the national movement.

Parallel development is a partnership process whereby all structures and work are led by and for both Maori and non-Maori women. Resources are shared equally between Maori and non-Maori services. There is equal representation of Maori and non-Maori women in decision making bodies and there are a number of parallel staff positions such as a Maori service development officer and a non-Maori service development officer. Separate Maori and non-Maori gatherings are held each year to enable staff to discuss issues from the Maori perspective. A Maori caucus meets at all local, regional and national gatherings. All public addresses are done by a Maori and non-Maori woman together. This approach implies that Women's Refuge New Zealand strongly identifies as a Maori as well as non-Maori women's movement and that all training, education and learning, both formal, non-formal and informal occurs from within that context.

In this model of organisational structures and processes can be seen situated learning in action where participants learn as they engage and interact with the community, its history, assumptions, values, roles and patterns of relationships (Wenger 2010). It demonstrates a learning environment where the process of knowing is essentially embodied, realised through action, and therefore worked out in a domain beyond consciousness (Fenwick 2003).

A second example which privileges experiential learning is found within WAFE and AVA. They employ strategies to ensure that survivors of domestic violence are recognised, valued and supported as knowledge producers, again, showing the value placed on experiential learning. WAFE provides an online survivors' forum where mutual support is provided and women experience is privileged. AVA have run events and provide resources about survivor lead initiatives, and like WAFE, privilege women's lived experiences as really useful knowledge (Hill Collins 1990) . AVA ran a conference called 'Whose Movement is it anyway?' which aimed to address the increasing invisibility of survivors in the movement as a result of increasing professionalisation. The conference showcased a number of creative and innovative survivor lead initiatives and challenged organisations to change their

practices to include survivors as activists and leaders in their work to tackle violence against women.

A third example involving generating 'really useful knowledge' can be found in two UK organisations, WAFE and AVA. Both organisations work in partnership to build the resilience of the Black and Minority Ethnic Women's domestic violence sector in resisting their obliteration by conservative state policies and funding cuts. Training is one of the strategies in this partnership initiative and as such implies the generation of useful knowledge in a collective struggle against conservative and oppressive forces (Thompson 1997).

A fourth example refers to the notion of separate spaces. For instance, one of Imkaan's primary goals to generate knowledge by supporting Black and Minority Ethnic women to define their own perceptions about human rights and to decide on their own priorities in a space separate from white women in the community. In a similar fashion, the Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research hold an annual Indigenous forum at which a maximum of 20% of participants can be non-Aboriginal. Like Women's Refuge New Zealand, whilst the QCDFV is not solely an indigenous people's organisation, they recognise the need for forums and caucuses to enable indigenous members to learn, debate and decide on their own terms and to use this knowledge and perspective to inform the movement as a whole. By claiming spaces that are for Black, Minority Ethnic and Indigenous women only, these women have created the possibility to develop responses to violence against women that are outside of the assumptions, values and limitations of the mainstream movement that is dominated by white women's leadership and perspectives.

Information on learning and education outside of the context of accredited training was very limited when it came to two organisations, CAADA and Refuge UK. These were the two organisations that did not identify as feminist nor proffer an analysis of domestic violence as being rooted in social and political inequalities and gender oppression. Refuge UK provide information on a number of initiatives to build knowledge of Black and Minority Ethnic women's experiences through research and it is likely that this knowledge is included as content in their training programmes. However, no information about specific learning strategies was identified.

The CAADA programme has three out of seventeen topic areas that explore multiple perspectives of domestic violence. However, their website carried no information about the organisation's understanding of intersecting issues such as race, class and disability status nor any information on other work to address these issues. Whilst is cannot be assumed that a critical awareness of unequal power relationships across multiple social divisions does not imbue the training CAADA delivers, the absence of any analysis of this kind on its website provides no evidence to the contrary.

The location of these eight accredited training courses within a National Occupational and Training Standards framework may constrain the inclusion of content about the more political aspect of domestic violence work. This context also results in learning in these courses being primarily informational and instrumental although there are examples of where critical reflection is facilitated. By contrasting the educational and learning opportunities provided by most of these organisations outside of the context of accredited training courses, it is possible to see how accredited training mapped to National Standards constrains these organisations in providing emancipatory learning in these programmes.

The accredited training programmes are used to establish a base of foundational knowledge from which workers can deliver safe, accountable and effective responses to women and children who have been subjected to domestic violence. In this sense, these programmes are not claiming to be anything other than a vocational training opportunity for workers and yet there remains a problem in how this model of domestic violence training could ultimately be used by conservative forces to erode the political underpinnings and agency of those organisations at the frontline of domestic violence work.

Summary

This chapter presented findings and analysis in relation to nine accredited learning programmes for domestic violence workers. Two distinct approaches were found. The first as exemplified by the New Jersey Association of Domestic Violence Professional provides a model which embodies characteristics of situated learning in

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a community of practice. Analysis of the selected documents suggest that this approach provides opportunities for many different kinds of learning opportunities, including informational and instrumental, critical thinking and transformative learning. The findings of this study are that this approach enables organisations to include learning about the social change role of the domestic violence movement as well learning about the identity of self and movement in relation to socially constructed inequalities and oppressions. The implications of these findings are discussed in the next chapter along with some thoughts about possibilities for the Irish domestic violence sector in developing and accredited learning programme for workers.

CHAPTER 6   CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This study started out to examine accredited learning programmes for domestic violence workers in other countries. The goal was to generate information and knowledge about these programmes that could inform the development of such a programme for the domestic violence sector in Ireland. The study found two different approaches to accrediting and recognising domestic violence learning and experience. One was a professional certification model that was found only to operate in the United States of America. The second was accredited training mapped to national occupational and training standards. This approach was employed in the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand. A number of conclusions in relation to inspirations, possibilities risks and challenges drawn from an analysis of the findings are outlined in this chapter.

A model for learning in a community of practice

The New Jersey Association of Domestic Violence Professionals process of professional certification provides a model for accredited domestic violence training that is part of a holistic and integrated learning environment. Workers gain accreditation through participation in a community of practice where experiential learning is emphasised through the necessity for workers to have completed one thousand hours of practice before gaining accreditation. In this way, experiential learning is valued and emphasised as central to the worker's journey to professional certification. The requirement for the worker to participate in ongoing training to maintain certification implies that workers are also expected to take time to critically reflect on their knowledge, continue to learn about the complexities of domestic violence and to keep up to date with evolving perspectives and analysis.

The longevity of this attention to situated learning which includes opportunities for more formal learning experiences embodies much of the key characteristics of emancipatory education (Alacantra et al 2010). In this context, learners are engaged in a continuous cycle of reflection and action where they are feeling, watching,

thinking and doing as they engage with both situated learning and reflective practice (Kolb 1884, Wenger 2010).

This model provides an example of situated learning within a community of practice underpinned by radical feminist analysis of power as it relates to socially constructed divisions and oppressions. In this context, feminist responses to male violence and feminist pedagogy can be synthesised to create a learning environment in which the domestic violence worker can become a competent member of community of practitioners and of political activists concerned with social change.

The use of content analysis does not enable a study of how this education approach affects the kind of social change and internal movement change that is necessary to address violence against women. However, it does provide an inspirational model that could be further explored in developing an education programme for domestic violence workers in Ireland.

Accredited training mapped to a national vocational training agenda

The second approach found in this study was accredited training that was mapped to vocational education and training policies and structures at national level. Eight programmes in three countries were studied. The learning in these programmes was primarily informational and instrumental, enabling learners to increase their knowledge and skills in delivering responses to individual women experiencing domestic violence. Without access to a greater number of evaluations, it is not possible to generalise on the outcomes for learners on these courses. However, from those that were available, it is clear that those that were evaluated were effective. Participants highly valued the training and assessed that they had increased knowledge, skills and their confidence as a domestic violence practitioner. In addition, AVA's evaluation indicates that training resulted in policy and practice changes within organisations. This lead to more inclusive responses to women who also struggled with problematic substance use issues and mental health illnesses or who experienced homelessness.

There was no information on whether workers felt that the accreditation made a difference to how they felt about their position or identity as domestic violence practitioners. Neither was there any information about whether workers perceived the accreditation to hold any value for them in relation to their positioning as professionals within a competitive labour market. However, more experienced workers expressed a high level of satisfaction with the courses, despite the fact that the accreditation provided was mostly at a foundational level. This indicates that workers value and appreciate the opportunity to step out of frontline service provision and to reflect on their experience in the context of already agreed standards and guidelines.

Evidence of some use of critical reflection on issues related to unequal and oppressive power relationships as they operate in society and impact on domestic violence responses was also found. Those organisations that were avowedly feminist and clearly articulated social change goals were also those who were more likely to include, however limited, this critical analysis within accredited training programmes. They were also more likely to provide for learning opportunities outside of the accredited training context in which workers learned in a more fluid, creative and innovative environment. There were examples of where theories and practices of emancipatory adult education were included in some of these learning situations.

The analysis of findings indicate that these accredited training programmes serve a purpose in providing training for workers to become competent practitioners in services responding to individual women and children. However, it seems that the attachment of these courses to national vocational education and training structures limited the potential for these accredited courses to provide education and learning on the political and social change role of domestic violence organisations. In addition, critical analysis and transformational learning providing domestic violence workers with an opportunity to reflect on and transform oppressive meaning perspectives was also limited and in most cases, seemed to be absent from these programmes.

These accredited training courses provide learning and accreditation for the worker on only one aspect of the dual role of domestic violence organisations that is as a

provider of safe, accountable and effective services to survivors of domestic violence. There are a number of potential risks that arise from attaching domestic violence training to foundational accreditation within a national framework that excludes education on the social change role of the domestic violence movement.

Erosion of feminist practice

There are a number of risks associated with accredited training attached to a national vocational education and training agenda. The first of these is that similar programmes can be delivered by organisations and individuals divorced from a political analysis of the social factors leading to violence against women. In this situation, workers don't get the opportunity to be a part of generating really useful knowledge through participating in non-formal and informal learning situations imbued with the political analysis of feminist organisations (Thompson 1997). This will not only render invisible the need for a radical social change but will impact on feminist practice with individual women. A number of studies have demonstrated how workers shift into individualised responses focused on changing the woman in the absence of a strongly articulated and held political analysis by the organisation in which they work (Hammons 2008, Lehrner and Allen 2008). In these studies, the importance of a political education and mentoring was highlighted as essential if feminist practice was to be sustained.

Exclusion of feminist domestic violence organisations by the state

A second and related problem is that as commissioning of domestic violence services driven by a neo liberal ideology grows, the State now has an opportunity to grant contracts and funding to those organisations that can provide trained and accredited workers but that do not bring with them the inconvenience of a critical stance of the State and an annoying habit of demanding radical social change. In the context of demands from government funders for evidence of outputs, throughputs and outcomes, the original goals of the feminist anti violence movement, risk been over taken by a neo liberal agenda, concerned primarily with saving public money and 'getting things done'. Thompson (1997, pg 150) describes this preoccupation with 'rolling up the sleeves' to 'get things done' as a form of action without reflection. She contends that disclaiming theory in the pursuit of practicalities:

…..sustains systems of oppression rather than acknowledging the complexities of how power and ideologies operate. It doesn't, in the end, do anyone we care about any favours.

It also brings with it the risk that in the struggle to survive, women's domestic violence organisations will succumb to donor discipline and scrutiny and conceal, temper or abandon feminist principles, resulting in a significant weakening of the movements' potential to effect radical social change towards the elimination of violence against women (Markowitz and Tice 2002).

Implications for the Irish domestic violence sector

The project to establish national standards is at an advanced stage and therefore the Irish domestic violence sector will soon be in a position to consider how training and education will support the attainment and consistent implementation of those standards. Accreditation may or may not be part of a new education and training framework. It is likely to be seriously considered as the limited amount of evidence and my own experience suggests there is strong support for this from workers. This study explored two approaches to accrediting domestic violence education for workers, each of which offer possibilities for the domestic violence sector to consider in developing an accredited learning programme.

I contend that domestic violence workers need to know how to learn to be competent members of a community of practice that acts for social change and that provides frontline services for women and children. The New Jersey Association of Domestic Violence Professional certification process presents an example of an approach that provides for situated learning in such a community of practice.

This model, drawing on theories and practices from within the field of radical adult education provides domestic violence workers an opportunity to learn as members of a community of practice. Learning for the domestic violence worker is about:

…not just acquiring skills and information; it is becoming a certain person—a knower in a context where what it means to know is negotiated with respect to the regime of competence of community (Wenger 2010, pg 2).

Within this situated learning perspective, informal experiential learning would be equally valued alongside formal learning. Embedded within the synchronistic joining of feminist domestic violence work and feminist pedagogy, domestic violence workers as learners would be empowered to critically reflect on issues and to learn how to participate in transforming their worlds (Freire 1993). Through conscientisation, domestic violence workers will be further empowered to unveil the world of oppression and through the interaction of reflection and action, act collectively for social change (Freire 1993). They would be able to make connections to struggle beyond the learning environment and their immediate experience providing them with a more accurate understating of the nature of power as it relates to issues of gender, race, sexuality and disability and thus being able to create solidarity across differences (hooks 1994). As a model of learning and recognition developed by the sector and for the sector, movement ideology can be embedded in learning opportunities.

Specific issues within the Irish context

I am aware of a number of specific issues that would need to be considered for such a model to be considered appropriate for the Irish context. Firstly, as Morton's study of domestic violence service in 2003 shows, there is no shared ideology about the underpinning factors leading to domestic violence within the sector in Ireland. She recommended that organisations be facilitated to agree a joint approach that incorporates a balance between ideologies and that emphasises the need for social services while simultaneously stressing the need for social change. The standards project being lead out by Safe Ireland is informed by these recommendations and will result in coherence in how the sector delivers services to women and children. The standards are underpinned by principles of feminist practice but do not extend to the social change role of domestic violence organisations. Before a corresponding education programme including learning about this role could be developed, the sector would first have to agree shared understandings about the root causes of violence against women, the kind of change needed to tackle this and what role the sector has in contributing to these changes. It is possible that the sector may not be able or willing to engage in this shared exploration given that it is comprised of groups with diverse ideologies. Releasing workers to take time out for this shared

exploration would also be a significant challenge in the context of successive funding cuts to frontline services over the last five years.

A second issue to consider is that the development of such an education framework that carries with it recognition of workers experience and learning would require significant resources. The New Jersey Association of Domestic Violence Professionals has a staff of four who are located within the wider state coalition organisation that has a large staff engaged in other areas of the coalition work (L. Carson, NJADVP, personal communication, April 23rd, 2013). Safe Ireland, the national network for women's domestic violence services in Ireland has only two and half fulltime positions with which to carry out a wide range of activities and work on behalf of the sector. In the current funding climate, additional and significant resources would need to be accessed to enable the development of such a programme.

A third issue relates to the identity of the domestic violence sector in Ireland. There is a lack of literature on the challenges facing the Irish domestic violence sector created by its identity and issues of marginalisation. However, I contend that the sector in Ireland works with many of the challenges and limitations that domestic violence sector in other countries experience. The difference in the Irish context is that we have no specialist domestic violence services for Black and Minority Ethnic women other than the Pavee Point Violence against Women Project that responds specifically to Traveller and Roma women (Pavee Point 2013). There is small but growing sector of women's organisation lead by and for Black and Minority Ethnic women with AkidWa taking up a predominant position at national level (AkidWa 2013). I argue that such organisations could provide a much needed perspective in the development of an accredited learning programme for domestic violence workers. There has been much work done to address the key issues for the domestic violence sector in other countries. I would argue that following the leadership of Black, Minority Ethnic, disabled and other marginalised women who have developed expertise in responding to gender based violence is essential if the Irish domestic violence sector is to ensure that an accredited learning programme is inclusive and emancipatory. Without this multiplicity of perspectives and leadership at the centre of such a development, the sector risks replicating rather than

eradicating the oppressive ideologies and practices that underpin all forms violence and oppression.

Finally, the drivers behind the development of accredited training within a vocational education and training framework that undoubtedly centrally influenced developments in the UK, Australia and New Zealand, also exist in Ireland. Like these countries, Ireland has a vocational education and training framework through which many aligned professions have accessed accreditation and qualifications. Safe Ireland in a comprehensive review of these structures concluded that they did not provide the level or type of accreditation suitable for the domestic violence sector (Safe Ireland 2008). However, given that Safe Ireland and all domestic violence services will be funded in the future under service level agreements with the new Children and Family Agency, there are likely to be demands and requirements placed on organisations in relation to standards and training. The challenge for the sector may be to resist a pull into a vocational education and training structure our if core funders demand this.

I would argue, that a more suitable home for domestic violence education is within the field of adult and community education, where education for the purpose of both personal and societal transformation and liberation is a core focus. Foundational training ensuring that workers are competent service providers can also be delivered from within an adult education framework, and so can transformative and radical education for social change.

These considerations and others are for the domestic violence sector to deliberate. They lend themselves as areas for further study and would be ideal for participatory research and action lead by and carried out within the domestic violence sector itself. Should funders' demands require accredited training for domestic violence workers within the state vocational education and training architecture, the sector could consider a hybrid model. This model could provide foundational training for all new and inexperienced workers through successful completion of these courses. It could also provide for the recognition of prior learning for more experienced workers as provided for in the Queensland Centre's accredited training course. This foundational training could be the first step on a longer, more holistic and integrated model of

situated learning in a community of practice as exemplified by the New Jersey Association of Domestic Violence Professionals.

Rather than try to develop this holistic and integrated model after a state imposed or state influenced model of accredited training is imminent or implemented, I would suggest that the domestic violence sector move to claim this educational and learning space for itself. In this way the Irish sector could work collectively to create a truly emancipatory model of education as the practice of freedom. (hooks 1994) I argue that this is the most suitable form of education for a movement whose ultimate goal is to contribute to a new world in which women, children and all oppressed peoples can live with safety, dignity and freedom.

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