

The Bystander Approach to Violence Prevention: Considerations for Implementation in Europe

Abstract

Objective: In recent years there has been a growing awareness of the prevalence of sexual violence in UK university student populations yet prevention efforts are in their infancy. Evidence from the US shows that empowering bystanders to intervene to prevent violence rather than focussing on perpetrators or victims is a promising strategy particularly suited to university settings. Public Health England commissioned a bystander program, *The Intervention Initiative*, for UK universities. This paper discusses the theoretical underpinnings of the bystander approach and the challenges for practical implementation in Europe.

Method: We review findings from research relating to bystander theories, social norms theory and effective prevention programming which inform the development of maximally effective bystander programs. **Results:** Bystander programs are complex, multi-faceted interventions based on taking participants through the different stages required for an individual to move from inaction to action as described by Latané and Darley, 1969; 1970 in their organising framework for bystander intervention, and incorporating a social norms element. Programs which adhere to the principles for effective prevention as set out by Nation et al. (2003) are most likely to be effective. We demonstrate how these criteria informed the cultural specificity of *The Intervention Initiative* to UK university settings and the challenges in adapting the approach for European settings. **Conclusion:** More research is needed to develop and test bystander programs in different European countries in order to build an evidence base for effective prevention programming.

Key words Sexual assault, domestic violence, bystander, universities, intervention

Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that universities are significant sites for violence against women (DeGue, 2014; Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000), and environments where risk factors for violence converge (Powell, 2011; Schwarz, DeKeseredy, Tait, & Alvi, 2001; Schwarz & Pitts, 1995). In recent years, several surveys of UK university student populations have added to the international evidence base. For example, 25% of women reported experiencing sexual assault and 7% were classified as serious sexual assault (NUS, 2011), and 68.6% of women reported at least one incident of sexual harassment (Stenning, Mitra-Kahn, & Gunby, 2012). The data illustrate correlative negative consequences for victims in terms of their mental health, academic performance, ability to study and interruption of their studies (Stenning et al., 2012). Evidence collection is, however, in its infancy: no large scale representative study as to prevalence in the UK has yet been conducted and the studies to date use a variety of data collection methods and definitional terms (for a discussion of issues with data collection see Fenton, Mott, McCartan, & Rumney, 2016). Reliably exact prevalence data is thus not available – an issue compounded by the fact that UK universities are not under any legal obligations to collect data. Nonetheless, the emerging body of evidence from UK survey data does converge with similar results in the US (e.g. Fisher et al., 2000; Krebs, Lindquist, Warner, Fisher, & Martin, 2007) and does correspond with national datasets which identify young women, and students in particular, as at high risk of victimisation (MOJ/HO/ONS 2013; ONS, 2015). A further contributor to violence against women in UK universities is thought to be a particular social and cultural phenomenon associated with problematic male group behaviors, termed ‘lad culture’, which has been documented in the high profile popular media and discussed by a body of sociological research (e.g. Phipps & Young, 2015).

Public Health England (PHE), an executive agency of the Department of Health, commissioned a rapid evidence review of bystander intervention to establish the rationale for using this approach as a tool for the prevention of sexual and domestic violence in English

universities (Fenton et al., 2016), and a bystander toolkit for this setting. The ensuing toolkit, namely *The Intervention Initiative* (hereafter referred to as TII) (Fenton, Mott, McCartan, & Rumney, 2014), became the first evidence-based bystander program for the sector. The full program is available online at www.uwe.ac.uk/interventioninitiative. A small grant for the full statistical evaluation of TII in one university setting was made by PHE, the results of which are currently under review (Fenton & Mott, 2016). The purpose of this paper is to document and discuss the theoretical and empirical evidence base relating to bystander theories, social norms theory, criteria for effective prevention programming and the transtheoretical model, for effective bystander interventions and upon which TII is premised. The majority of existing bystander programs, as well as the predominance of evidence emanate from the US. As Stanley et al. (2015) point out, interventions cannot simply be transported across the Atlantic but need adaption for differing degrees of gender equality, culturally distinct concepts and language. Thus, this paper seeks to demonstrate the challenges in translating theory into practice in a different sociocultural context, as experienced in the development of TII. In particular, we document the importance of utilising an Expert Advisory Group (EAG), composed of national and regional experts in sexual and domestic violence, and in engaging with students. Throughout the development of TII we consulted extensively with a Student Bystander Committee (SBC) composed of students of different ethnicity, gender, age and year of study, recruited across different Faculties in our university. The focus on the theoretical underpinnings of effective bystander interventions and of TII is timely, for the pressure on UK universities to act has led to a proliferation of short interventions which do not adhere to the criteria for effective prevention, are not accompanied by an evidence base or theory of change, and are not being fully evaluated for positive and negative results.

The evidence base

Bystander intervention programs have been gaining traction in the field of violence prevention over the last two decades and are now recognised as good practice (Ricardo, Eads & Barker, 2011). This is reflected by both legal and funding requirements in the US (Coker et al., 2014; DeGue, 2014). Whilst specific programs such as ‘Bringing in the Bystander’ (e.g. Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan, 2004; 2005) have been recognised as promising and as having ‘substantial potential’ (DeGue et al., p.359), rigorous evidence such as randomised control trials is limited, particularly with regards to the primary outcome of a reduction in the incidence of violence, which is extremely hard to measure and beset by methodological problems (see Fenton et al., 2016, p.35 for a discussion). Recently, Coker et al. (2014) provided evidence of the success of bystander prevention at the community-level, reporting on campus-level data for violence victimisation and perpetration across three campuses, one of which had implemented the ‘Green dot’ bystander program. A randomised stratified sample of ‘Green dot’ campus students (those who attended campuses where the program had been delivered to some members of the community) reported lower rates of victimisation and perpetration than the non-bystander campus students.

There is substantially more evidence available for positive changes in bystander behavior and risk factors for violence perpetration and victimisation (for a brief summary see Fenton et al., 2016, p.6). Evaluations of bystander programs include indirect or proxy measures, firstly, to evaluate the likelihood of prevention using measures known to correlate with incidence of violence where incidence cannot be measured, and secondly, to ascertain whether and how programs are working by assessing whether participants are passing through the stages for becoming prosocial bystanders (discussed below). The evidence base indicates that bystander intervention approaches may be particularly suited to addressing the prevention of violence in university settings and have the potential to contribute to culture change at the community level. It should be noted that the preponderance of evidence relates to sexual violence and

that there is little research evaluating domestic violence prevention in universities (Banyard, 2014). Nonetheless, it is noted in the literature that there are many common components for prevention education (Hamby & Grych, 2013 in Banyard, 2014). Leading theorists are now calling for prevention efforts which combine these different but related forms of violence against women within which victimization may co-occur (Banyard, 2014). Accordingly, TII is designed to prevent both sexual and domestic violence.

Developing TII: Bystander Theories

Advantages of framing participants as bystanders

A prosocial bystander is someone who is not directly involved in a problematic event as a victim or a perpetrator, but who witnesses the event and intervenes in a positive way. The bystander thus simultaneously sends a powerful message to the wrongdoer and to other bystanders about the social unacceptability of the behavior and the social acceptability of challenging it. Over time, the more interventions are made, the more the social norms which condition behavior will shift. Empowering bystanders to intervene has become recognised as a potentially powerful prevention tool, not simply because it is intuitive, but because the focus on bystander action is positive and inclusive (Berkowitz, 2013), devoid of the negative connotations and stigma associated with perpetration and victimhood. Indeed, earlier prevention efforts which tended to focus on men as potential perpetrators and women as potential victims were both ineffective and resisted (Anderson & Whiston, 2005; Banyard et al., 2005; Lonsway et al., 2009; Tabachnick, 2008). One initial consideration for implementation in Europe is as to whether there are particular historical or culturally specific factors at play which inhibit a population's prosocial intervention **behavior rendering** bystander programming likely to be ineffective.

Men, in particular, are challenging to engage in violence prevention: men may perceive gender-based prevention efforts which identify and critically explore the role of gender / masculinity in the aetiology of violence as inherently antagonistic towards, and blaming of, men (Casey et al., 2012). By positioning men as positive agents for change and ‘part of the solution’ (Berkowitz, 2009; 2011; 2013) rather than potential perpetrators, men can be positively engaged as ‘social justice allies’ (Fabiano et al., 2003). While such positioning is a theoretical and pedagogical device concerned with how men explicitly hear messaging, educators must not lose sight of the implicit theoretical understanding that some male participants may be (potential) perpetrators. In framing violence prevention as an issue for which everyone in the community can take responsibility (Berkowitz, 2013), the approach underlying TII is the fostering of a *shared social identity* as a prosocial bystander amongst university students, potentially reducing the scope for defensiveness, hostility and subsequent resistance, which serve only to impede receptiveness to learning and attitude change (Fenton et al., 2016). This is particularly important because interventions are underpinned by the understanding that sexual violence and domestic abuse are forms of behavior rooted in gender relations which form part of a social pattern of violence against women, and are both a cause and a consequence of violence against women (e.g. Hester & Lilley, 2014).

Engagement with the student body is indicated **in determining** how to engage men and counter any potential resistance, as different European settings will experience differing levels of cultural acceptability and receptivity to such messaging. **For example, our SBC recommended that, in developing a UK intervention, we should introduce bystander theory in a neutral context, avoid words associated with feminism, give men space to process emotions about the gendered aspect of violence and reiterate that male participants** are not being blamed. Further, in situating responsibility for violence prevention within the community as a whole, attention is diverted from strategies positioning women as victims as responsible for

avoiding risky situations, which can only be a ‘sticking plaster’ solution as they do not reduce perpetration (DeGue, 2014; DeGue et al., 2014; Lonsway, 1996; Schewe & O’Donohue, 1993; Schwartz et al., 2001). Indeed, such strategies reinforce the normativity of male violence and may actually increase perpetration by promoting motivated offending and reducing capable guardianship (Fenton et al., 2016, p.22).

Bystander organising framework

Empowering bystanders to intervene requires situating prevention programming within the theoretical organising framework for understanding bystander behavior, as developed by Latané and Darley (1969, 1970) and applied to sexual assault (Berkowitz, 2009). Thus, in order to move from inaction to action, a bystander must notice the event, understand that it is problematic, decide that they are part of the solution and thus assume responsibility for helping, and lastly, have the relevant skills to be able to intervene (Banyard, 2011; Berkowitz, 2009; Powell 2011). These four stages should underpin the content layout of an intervention. For example, TII is structured as eight **one**-hour sessions: Sessions 1-5 cover stages 1-3 and stage 4 is covered in sessions 5-8. Further, interventions should apply the processes of change as identified by Prochaska and DiClemente (1983; 1984; 1986) in their transtheoretical model of change (TTM), and applied to violence prevention and bystander intervention by Banyard, Eckstein and Moynihan (2010). The TTM describes 10 processes of change through which individuals progress in changing adverse behaviors (for a table summary see Fenton et al., 2016, p.31).

Bystander theories and the TTM as applied to the prevention of violence against women

- 1. The first three stages for bystander intervention: Noticing the problem, interpreting it as problematic and feeling responsible*

There is no evidence that knowledge, crucial for noticing the problem, can in and of itself produce behavioral change. Knowledge about sexual violence per se has not been shown to affect rates of perpetration of sexual violence (Breitenbecher, 2000; DeGue et al., 2014). The process of achieving behavior change is complex, encompassing multiple stages and requiring time, and thus one-off standalone prevention efforts designed to increase knowledge alone are unlikely to be effective (DeGue, 2014). Knowledge is, nonetheless, a critical precondition to intervention, without which, behavior cannot be noticed and identified as problematic. It is also key to the consciousness-raising process of the TTM. Indeed, lack of awareness about sexual and relationship abuse has been correlated with lower self-reported bystander behavior (Banyard et al., 2014), and knowledge has been correlated with improvement in attitudes (Banyard et al., 2005). The requisite knowledge for prevention of violence against women, as indicated in the literature, pertains to the ability to recognise risk factors for victimisation and perpetration, impact on victims, behaviors along the continuum of sexual violence (such as sexism, hostile attitudes towards women, rape myth acceptance), early warning signs of domestic abuse and potentially dangerous situations as they occur (Banyard et al., 2004; Banyard, 2011; Brown et al., 2014; DeGue, 2014; DeGue et al., 2014; Powell, 2011 (see Fenton et al., 2016)).

To facilitate behavioral change within a bystander program, knowledge needs to be accompanied by motivation to act, that is, assuming a sense of responsibility (e.g. Banyard & Moynihan, 2011). Thus, bystander programs address other conditions for intervening, such as increased empathy for victims - which, in addition to being a motivating factor for intervention, has theoretical importance as a protective factor for perpetration (Banyard et al., 2004; Powell, 2011) - and the fostering of critical understandings of participants' own attitudes towards violence (e.g. McMahon, 2010) and gender inequitable attitudes. Attitudinal change is important in a bystander model because it may be related to wider positive benefits

which improve primary, secondary and tertiary bystander intervention behavior - such as a more accepting and supportive environment for victims at disclosure (e.g. Paul & Gray, 2011).

There is strong evidence for the effectiveness of bystander programs in generating positive changes in attitudes towards victims and violence against women. Several studies report significantly improved rape myth acceptance scores (Amar, Sutherland, & Kesler, 2012; Banyard, Moynihan, & Crossman, 2009; Banyard, Moynihan, & Plante, 2007; Cares et al., 2015; Coker et al., 2011, Foubert & Newberry, 2006). Other studies report significant reductions in sexism (Cissner, 2009; Stewart, 2014).

The evidence base suggests that knowledge, attitude and beliefs, and increased empathy are related to intermediate outcomes for becoming an active bystander (Banyard, 2011; Brown et al., 2014). Interventions should explore bystander theory, prevalence of violence in the student community, gender inequitable attitudes, empathy, and facts about sexual violence and domestic violence. TII does this in sessions 1-4 and these correspond with the consciousness-raising, dramatic relief, environmental re-evaluation, social liberation, counter-conditioning and self re-evaluation processes of the TTM.

Effective interventions must shift attitudes supportive of gender-based violence. A gender-transformative approach, an increasingly utilised technique in health programming in recent years (Dworkin, Fleming, & Colvin, 2015), is indicated. Critical exploration of gender inequality (the most commonly identified attitudinal risk factor for men's violence against women (Fulu et al., 2013; Ricardo et al., 2011) and norms relating to masculinity and femininity is suggested. This is particularly challenging because of the need to negotiate between the theoretical imperative to explicitly address gender and masculinity-related norms, which are noted as having the strongest impacts on men's behavior and beliefs

(WHO, 2007 in Casey et al., 2012), and the importance of not generating resistance. We found the participation of the SBC, and male students in particular, to be critical in mediating these tensions and for addressing the engagement of male participants in our particular country – specific context. It is also important to generate a critical understanding of the continuum of sexual violence and the importance of intervening to prevent underlying sexist behavior within this: McMahon & Banyard (2012) indicate that college students may have trouble identifying “low and no risk” situations as being appropriate for intervention, and McMahon (2010) and McMahon, Postmus & Koenick (2011) found that college students were less willing to intervene to prevent everyday sexist behavior and less likely to refuse to participate in sexist activities that were not overtly related to sexual violence.

Imperative for noticing the event and for consciousness-raising is a detailed understanding of rape and sexual assault, and domestic violence, situated within the framework of the first three steps for bystander intervention. TII introduces bystander theory and critically explores gender in the first two sessions, and thus lays the common theoretical groundwork for coverage of both sexual violence (Session 3) and domestic violence (Session 4). Presenting information about injunctive norms - such as about the strength of social disapproval of violence - is likely to be more effective than information about descriptive norms – such as low reporting rates for violence (see Paul & Gray, 2011).

Whilst the relationship between knowledge of the law and changing one’s behavior as a result is neither straightforward nor substantiated in the literature, there is limited evidence that knowledge of law may have some positive effect on behavioral intent (Withey, 2010). From a criminological perspective, a more certain understanding of what behavior constitutes a criminal offence in a specific jurisdiction - particularly perhaps as regards those behaviors which are documented as commonly occurring in a specific country setting - can increase conditions for decreased motivation to perpetrate and increased capable guardianship,

including increased likelihood of reporting and potential confidence to intervene (Fenton et al., 2016). Reduction of rape myth acceptance (RMA), which is linked to the acceptance of sexual violence and is a predicting factor in the actual perpetration of sexual violence (McMahon, 2010), is also indicated. RMA serves not only as an attitudinal measure per se but is linked to responsibility and intervention. McMahon (2010) found that those students who endorse more rape myths are less likely to intervene as bystanders and further, that “those students who do not believe that perpetrators have committed sexual assault are especially less likely to engage as bystanders” (p.9). This suggests a link between law education and RMA, such that “education is clearly warranted to provide accurate information about what constitutes rape as well as addressing issues of perpetrator accountability” (p.9).

Understandings of domestic violence need to be situated within a wider contextual understanding of the gendered aetiology, prevalence and impact of domestic abuse. Of key importance here will be the country-specific framework for addressing domestic violence and the amount of available data for university settings which pinpoints particular manifestations of coercive and controlling behaviour which need to be addressed (such as stalking and online abuse). In the UK we encountered a dearth of quantitative data about domestic violence in student populations as student surveys have concentrated far more on sexual violence. Thus, the input of the EAG and national data became particularly important in designing this session. For example, an interactive empathy exercise was scripted for TII by a public health specialist from our EAG. We identified that recognising the early warning signs of domestic violence was key for this population, and therefore key for intervention strategies (see Fenton et al., 2015).

Banyard (2011) suggests that “women may be more likely to help victims, while men may be more likely to try to stop perpetrators” (p.218). There may be a multitude of factors which

motivate different individuals into action and the use of varied, multi-faceted techniques is indicated.

Having addressed the first **three** steps for bystander intervention, participants should be assuming increased motivation, responsibility and likelihood to act, in readiness for learning skills to intervene. Importantly, “an additional outcome of these cognitive and attitudinal shifts for participants will be a concomitant decrease in their own likelihood to perpetrate violence” (Fenton et al., 2016, p.23). This exemplifies how the bystander approach holds a multi-faceted theoretical promise to prevent violence. Another layer of sophistication is added by incorporating social norms theory into bystander programming to mitigate some of the barriers to bystander intervention (Berkowitz, 2009; 20**13**).

Social Norms Theory

Of particular import for intervention is the mutually reinforcing interplay of pluralistic ignorance and false consensus (Berkowitz, 2013). Pluralistic ignorance occurs when individuals misperceive the desire of others to intervene, which in turn prevents them from intervening. This lack of intervention leads the wrongdoer to suffer from false consensus, the incorrect belief that others are like oneself when they are not (Berkowitz, 2009; 2013).

The social norms approach to behavior change is a theory and evidence-based approach aimed at correcting the misperceptions which influence behavior (Berkowitz, 2003; 2013).

The social norms in this context relate to peer norms in society and the community that are supportive of violence against women. In terms of perpetration, Schwartz et al. (2001) found significantly higher rates of male violence on campuses where male peer norm support for violence was present. Thus, misperceptions of peer support for violence – that is, a false consensus belief in the acceptability of violence against women may “facilitate violent behavior in men” (Berkowitz, 2010 p.12; Berkowitz, 2013; Fabiano et al., 2003; Gidycz,

Orchowski & Berkowitz, 2011; Loh et al., 2005; Kilmartin et al., 2008 and in relation to intimate partner violence see Witte & Mulla, 2013). Misperceptions about other men's supportive beliefs may also act as inhibitors to bystander intervention. The relationship between peer norms and intervention is important and there is some evidence as to its significance (Banyard & Moynihan, 2011; Brown & Messman-Moore, 2010): peer norms are variables for intervention (Banyard, 2011), thus correcting negative misperceptions about peer norms should facilitate prosocial behavior. Brown and Messman-Moore (2010) found that perceived peer norms were related more strongly to willingness to intervene than participants' own attitudes towards sexual aggression.

Reliance on second hand messages about social norms misperceptions from reported studies – most likely from the US - even where participants were college students will not capture culturally specific social norm misperceptions. In the development of TII it was theorised that it is likely to be maximally effective to correct participants' own norms (see Witte & Mulla, 2013) through providing direct feedback on participants' own norms and their perceived peer norms collected by questionnaire before the start of the intervention. Such social norms questions should be adapted for individual country settings and based on the available evidence for that population. In correcting the misperceptions of the social norm held by intervention participants, the key message for participants is that it is far safer to intervene than they thought, which in turn can act as an enabler and a motivator, to intervention.

2. Possessing the skills to act

The final stage in bystander theory is possessing the requisite skills to be able to intervene safely in a wide range of situations. A prosocial bystander must have confidence in their skills and self-efficacy to be able to help in addition to actually possessing the skills required. A perception of having a “skills deficit” has been found to be a significant barrier to

intervention, particularly for women (Burn, 2009 in Banyard, 2011). Studies have found significantly increased efficacy (confidence to intervene) scores for bystander intervention programs (e.g. Banyard et al., 2009; Cissner, 2009; Moynihan, Banyard, Arnold, Eckstein & Stapleton, 2011; Cares et al., 2015). Assuming responsibility for action is not sufficient: programs which equip participants with skills for intervening are more likely to be successful (Tabachnick, 2008). To be able to intervene in the field of sexual and domestic violence prevention requires “situation-specific skills” (Banyard, 2011) for both ‘in the moment’ interventions and supportive interventions post-disclosure. A good proportion of an intervention should be devoted to the acquisition of relevant and specific skills, confidence to intervene and intervention strategies, which correspond with the social liberation, stimulus control, helping relationships, reinforcement management and self-liberation processes of the TTM. TII, for example, dedicates sessions 5-8 to intervention skills.

The work by Berkowitz (2009; 2013) constitutes the mainstay of the teaching on interventions: we note saturation in the literature on theoretical strategies for intervention. Best examples from bystander programs worldwide such as handouts with tips and phrases and examples of interventions, should be incorporated and adapted for cultural country-specific situations, language and contexts.

Role-play is indicated. Not only does role-play assist in developing communication skills (e.g. Nestel & Tierney, 2007), but research also suggests that the very act of role-playing may in and of itself contribute to opinion change on the part of participants in the desired direction (e.g. Janis & King, 1954). The role-plays thus may contribute in a multi-faceted way towards promoting intervention. Male engagement with role-play is important because male participants are likely to have many opportunities to practice bystander intervention yet simultaneously be less committed to intervening (Brown et al., 2014). Role-play scenarios should be developed in conjunction with an EAG and with the student body, to ensure

authenticity, salience and contextual suitability for the population. Crucial to the success of role-play is that it reflects not only real-life situations and contexts but is written in the language used by participants (e.g. Fenton et al., 2015; also McMahon et al., 2011).

The theoretical and methodological complexity of bystander programs is illustrated by the logic model for TII in Figure 1, which sets out the internal processes participants will pass through to achieve behavior change. Bystander programs have multi-faceted prevention capabilities (Banyard et al., 2004) and **aim** to fulfil two main interlinked purposes in order to deliver the distal outcome of a reduction in violence at the community level (Fenton et al., 2016). The first main purpose is that potential bystanders are able to recognise and intervene to prevent problematic behaviors or events. The second main - and reinforcing - purpose is that **programs** will operate strategically to change a number of the attitudes, beliefs, social and cultural norms and peer group relationships among participants which both create conditions or contexts that facilitate perpetration, and impede bystander behavior (Fenton et al., 2016, p.20). In addition to the theoretical plan for internal change, as discussed above, there are a number of important characteristics, or scaffolding, for effective prevention programming which exist externally of individual participants, to which bystander interventions must adhere.

Good Pedagogy for Effective Prevention

Well-established and widely recognised criteria for effective behavior change are set out by Nation et al. (2003) and echoed by experts in adult education (e.g. Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 2011). The criteria are divided into three categories: the characteristics of effective prevention programs; principles matching program to target population and principles related to implementation and evaluation. The criterion that interventions should be theory-driven

has been discussed at length above. What follows is a discussion of how the remaining criteria should be followed.

Comprehensive, dosage and timing

As complex interventions, bystander programs require time: longer programs appear to have more impact (Banyard, Moynihan & Plante, 2007) and single-session interventions “are not effective at changing behavior in the long term” (DeGue, 2014, p.1). Interventions should be cumulative and sequential, and delivered over time to ensure repeated messaging at a point in time of maximal effectiveness such as entrance to university. Educators will need to consider the practicalities of implementation and delivery in their specific setting, at the point of development.

Bystander programs can be effective with mixed groups (Lonsway et al., 2009). Whilst there is a difficulty in ensuring male attendance at voluntary classes and “many men who need to hear the message may strategically avoid these classes” (Rich et al., 2010, p. 274), this must be balanced against the resistance that may be provoked by compulsory programs. We suggest that the preferred approach may be to introduce a program such as TII as a compulsory or timetabled program, backed up by visible affirmative institutional messaging about expected attendance. This model has been successfully trialled (Fenton & Mott, 2015; Fenton & Mott, 2016, under review). Retaining the same facilitator per group throughout the program will also foster ongoing relationship building between peers, and peers and facilitators.

Varied teaching methods and fostering relationships

Use of a wide variety of pedagogical techniques is indicated, such as presentation of material by facilitators on slides, techniques to encourage active participation, group discussion, interactive exercises and role-play skills training. These methodologies also contribute to

continued safety and security in participation and enduring relationship building, facilitating the enhancement of positive group norms. Participant interaction may in itself contribute to changing social norms.

Sociocultural relevance

Educators should take care to utilise quantitative and/or qualitative data which is taken from country-specific student surveys or national data to ensure that the problem of sexual and domestic violence is conveyed as proximal and salient to participants' lives and lived experiences. Visual and engagement aids such as YouTube clips, prevention videos, excerpts from documentaries, posters from prevention campaigns and role-plays should be culturally and linguistically specific. This may represent a particular challenge, depending on the stage of development of resources in a particular country-setting. Faced with a dearth of UK-English motivational films, for example, our SBC made a culturally relevant film to accompany TII and the in-house development of such resources is indicated.

Well-trained staff

Benefits of peer educators are their credibility and connection with students (Flores & Hartlaub, 1998), and their ability to act as role models for appropriate behavior (e.g. Banyard et al., 2004). However, the use of professional, skilled and highly trained facilitators is supported by Anderson and Whiston (2005) in their review, and Lee et al. (2007) note that delivery should be "by prepared, competent facilitators who are able to foresee potential controversies and strategically create learning opportunities" (p.16). Peer educators require expensive intensive training (Cissner, 2009) and we question how much training would be sufficient to equip inexperienced students with the skills they need to deliver a complex and socially sensitive intervention and handle potential disclosures. It is therefore suggested that

an appropriate university-led response, is to use trained and experienced facilitators / university staff.

Outcome Evaluation

A self-report learning outcome questionnaire is indicated to give facilitators a good measure of how, and if, the program is meeting its learning objectives, its acceptability to students, and to facilitate ongoing review of the program (e.g. Fenton & Mott, 2015). However, in order to measure the effects and success of a program, a pre and post evaluation using appropriate measures for attitudinal and behavior change, and adapted for culture and language, should be conducted. It is also important to check for ‘backlash’. Some interventions are in fact harmful, achieving the opposite effect to that intended (Flood, 2006; Hilton et al., 1998; Hilton, 2000), which may ultimately lead to a potential increase, as opposed to decrease, in violence.

It is striking how well the theoretical stages for becoming a bystander map onto these more general criteria for effective behavior change.

Conclusion and Future Directions for Research

Research shows that prevention grounded in bystander theories and social norms theory has the potential to be effective, particularly in student populations, when interventions simultaneously adhere to the criteria for effective prevention programming and the transtheoretical model for change. Motivating the bystander to be willing and able to intervene to prevent violence and thus to change the social norms supportive of violence and of increased intervention is a potentially powerful prevention tool that can shift the responsibility for ending violence to the community.

Results from student evaluations (Fenton & Mott, 2015) of TII are excellent, and the results of the first statistical evaluation of TII are promising, suggesting some capacity to effect

behavioral change (Fenton & Mott, 2016, under review). This indicates that meticulously designed, theoretically evidenced bystander interventions have the potential to successfully cross the Atlantic and to be translated into different country contexts. In its coverage of both 'sexual violence' and 'domestic abuse' within the same theoretical framework, TII is at the forefront of prevention programming and goes some way to answering the questions raised by US theorists as to the limitations of the one type of violence at a time approach.

The translation of the bystander approach into other European settings will require careful and detailed attention to the social, cultural, economic, political, religious and historical contexts within which violence against women occurs in these countries. Every aspect of the intervention must be adapted using socioculturally relevant materials ensuring that it is salient and proximal to the lives of intended participants. This may be particularly challenging where materials are less obtainable and educators must be prepared to develop their own materials. To this end, the participation of an EAG and a SBC, including males in particular, is absolutely critical throughout the design phase, and especially in gauging receptivity and acceptability within particular country-specific contexts.

A great deal more research is needed and interventions need to be tested in and across different country university settings and demographics to identify the variables and factors at play for potential bystanders in these cultural contexts. Such research should be set within further enquiry into the prevalence and incidence of violence against women in all its forms in European universities. Only then can complex strategic ecological models be developed in order to address it fully.

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