



Exploring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives on a technological intervention for family violence.

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Aims



To understand the help-seeking behaviours of Indigenous peoples experiencing family violence.



To explore if a technological resource for family violence would be appropriate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders on Wadawurrung country



To determine what Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders on Wadawurrung country would find engaging from a technological resource for family violence

Interviews

- 23 Semi-structured, face to face interviews



- 9  14 

- Age range: 16 - 64 (Average 38 years)

Findings

- ❖ Barriers, barriers, barriers...
- ❖ Benefits of using technology:
 - The barriers to face-to-face are addressed
 - It's always there
 - Indigenous peoples are already embracing technology
- ❖ Challenges of technology use
 - Is it safe?
 - What about the Elders?



The barriers

Barriers to help-seeking:

- *“there's a lot of shame”*
- *“they'll take the kids away”*
- *“how do you trust somebody? “*
- *“a big blanket thrown over it”*
- *“you feel like a fish out of water”*
- *“everyone expects Aboriginals are going to be drug addicts, alcoholics, abusive”*
- *“lack of cultural understanding and support and respect”*

Overall perceptions of a technological resource

"I think it's a really good idea. Yep. Because its something that people can do in their lounge room."

(Interviewee four)

"I'd find it also very useful as a friend if um, someone I knew was going through it and I needed to get some quick advice for them, if I ... had something on my phone, everyone uses their phone nowadays"

(Interviewee one)

Benefits of using technology: the barriers are addressed

“You feel like a fish out of water”:

“I think that would be maybe a good starting point, as well, yeah, just to get the ball rolling because I think that's the biggest issue, isn't it, within family violence? ...How do I get this conversation happening? How do I initiate this?”

(interviewee sixteen)



Benefits of using technology: the barriers are addressed

“There’s a lot of shame”:

“sometimes if you don't want to ask, like for fear of whatever, whether it's shame, whether it's embarrassment, whether it's pride, whether it's anonymity, and this takes that all away and says, ‘Well, yeah, all of that is covered’.”

(interviewee five)

Benefits of using technology: the barriers are addressed

“They’ll take the kids away”:



“I feel like most people would use it because if they are experiencing it they don't actually have to confront anyone or face to face conversation. It's all anonymous and on the computer, phone or whatever, so no one will actually know and maybe they'll get the help they need without anyone knowing”

(interviewee eighteen)

Benefits of using technology: the barriers are addressed

“How do you trust somebody?”:



“It's really hard to ask for help and even acknowledge that it's going on. To have an online platform for some person to even just be able to talk to someone, even if it's not over the phone. Even if it's by SMS or anything like that. You're already creating - you're creating - you're igniting something in that person and letting them know that there's someone there that's going to be able to help them.”

(interviewee 22)

Benefits of using technology: the barriers are addressed

“Everyone expects Aboriginals are going to be drug addicts, alcoholics, abusive”:

“I think what it also does is it does allow anonymity as well, which for some people's really important... And it's not going to judge, is it? It's really going to just, "Okay, I'll fill this out and I know that someone will read it but they're not necessarily going to know that it's me, or I can use a different name.”

(interviewee five)



Benefits of using technology: the barriers are addressed

Lack of cultural understanding , support and respect :

“[You could]...present it in a culturally-safe with maybe elders talking on there with news and stories of families who have come out of family violence and showing that it's OK to talk about it and it's OK to seek help and assistance.”

(interviewee ten)



Benefits of using technology: It's always there

It's always there:

“If there was an online something that you could get help instantly and remain anonymous, in fact, it would revolutionise the whole system. The fact that you're in a terrifying situation and you have to stay in that situation for another six, eight, 12 weeks until someone can possibly see you is crap, really crap, and dangerous.”

(interviewee 19)



Benefits of using technology: it's already being embraced

Indigenous peoples are already embracing technology:

"It doesn't matter where they are from, central Australia or way up north in the Daintree, right to middle Sydney, everyone's got a phone, umm so they might not have access to fresh food (laughs), but they've got a phone so they will access things that way in a more anonymous sort of way"

(interviewee three)

I will go online and I'll book my taxi online, I'll book my Uber online, I do my banking online, I will - yeah, I booked a doctor's appointment online just the other week. So if something can be done online it's definitely preferred."

(interviewee twenty)

Benefits of using technology: it can facilitate healing

That cultural connection gives you a sense of safety. And a sense of belonging... You feel like you're getting nowhere and you can't do anything when it's just one, but when there's more and people supporting you and saying, "Be true to yourself, and be strong," ... just by offering you that cultural safety, or helping center or empower you, is sometimes enough to just get you over that line.
(Interviewee 13)

Technology use could have its challenges also

Issues about safety were flagged

"...maybe they have a shared account so they maybe don't want to see other people - because you can see what people have downloaded. Maybe they don't want other people to see that, what they've downloaded, because they might share the same Apple ID or download off the same account."

(interviewee 18)

Including the safety risks related to an untrusted government

"Oh, this is another way the government's going to keep track of us and they're going to data match and they're going to find out that I'm not ..." Do you know what I mean? 'Cause that's scary too. If you think of it, you think, "Oh my God, like, really? Am I being listened to?"

(interviewee five)

Technology use could have its challenges also

Some were concerned for people who do not have the technological means:

*“What if it's somebody who doesn't have access to the internet or somebody who doesn't have access to a phone?
What if it's an elder ...?”*

(interviewee 20)

Conclusions

- ❖ Indigenous peoples are optimistic about the potential of using technology to address family violence.
- ❖ Although there are challenges associated with the use of technology, these are no more significant than the barriers faced with normal help-seeking methods
- ❖ Addressing the existing barriers to help-seeking provides a rationale for the development of a co-designed technological resource for family violence, particularly as there are additional benefits to using it that are associated with convenience and accessibility

Where to from here?

Burndawan

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Thankyou !

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