

LIFE COURSE CENTRE WORKING PAPER SERIES

From Intentions to Implementation: Improving Alignment between Domestic and Family Violence Policy Aims and Actions

Ella Kuskoff

Institute for Social Science Research,
The University of Queensland

No. 2019-25
December 2019

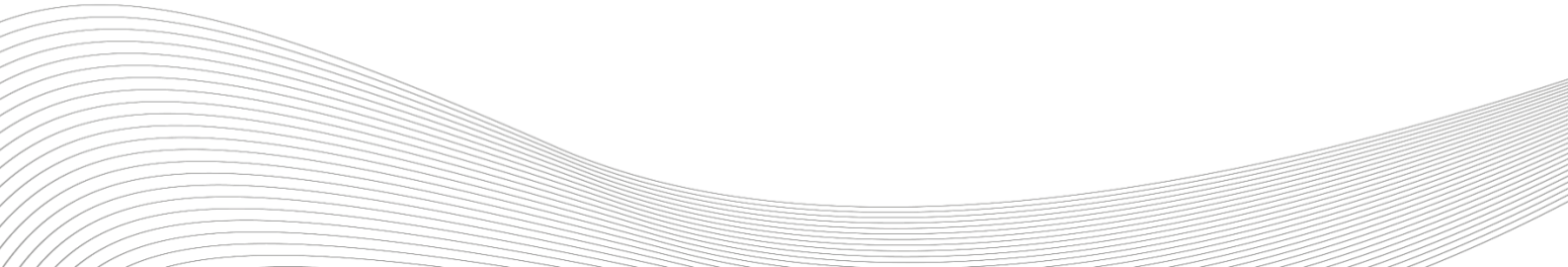
NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

In Queensland, changing cultural attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours has become a prominent aspect of domestic and family violence (DFV) policy. Indeed, the Queensland Government's Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016-2026 prioritises changing community attitudes and behaviours as one of the core guiding principles in its commitment to create a Queensland free of DFV. The aim of this principle is to target and positively influence the underlying culture that facilitates DFV, particularly against women.

Although there is significant evidence to support this aim, there is equally important evidence suggesting that public policies often contain barriers in their design or implementation that limit their ability to achieve their aims. In this paper, I present a critical discourse analysis of Queensland's DFV Strategy and related policy documents to examine whether such barriers exist in Queensland's approach, and their potential to impact on policy outcomes. My findings suggest that the current implementation of Queensland's Strategy undermines its guiding principle to change community attitudes and behaviours in four distinct ways.

Firstly, the Strategy erroneously assumes that changes in community attitudes will lead to changes in behaviours. Secondly, the Strategy disproportionately targets bystanders' responsibility to stop violence, at the expense of addressing perpetrators' responsibility to stop violence. Thirdly, the Strategy has thus far overlooked the importance of researching, implementing, and evaluating programs and systems that support perpetrators to change. Finally, the Strategy seeks to exploit the social power afforded to men, thereby reinforcing the gender hierarchy and women's subordinate position in society.

As well as providing an evidence-based discussion demonstrating why each of these barriers is problematic, I draw on current research evidence to offer actions that may better position the DFV Strategy to achieve its aims. Importantly, each of the suggested actions aligns with the current aims and framework of Queensland's DFV Strategy. A quick-reference guide to the findings, their implications, and potential reparative actions can be found in Appendix 1 at the end of the paper. I conclude with a discussion of the broader implications of these findings for future DFV policy development in states and territories across Australia.

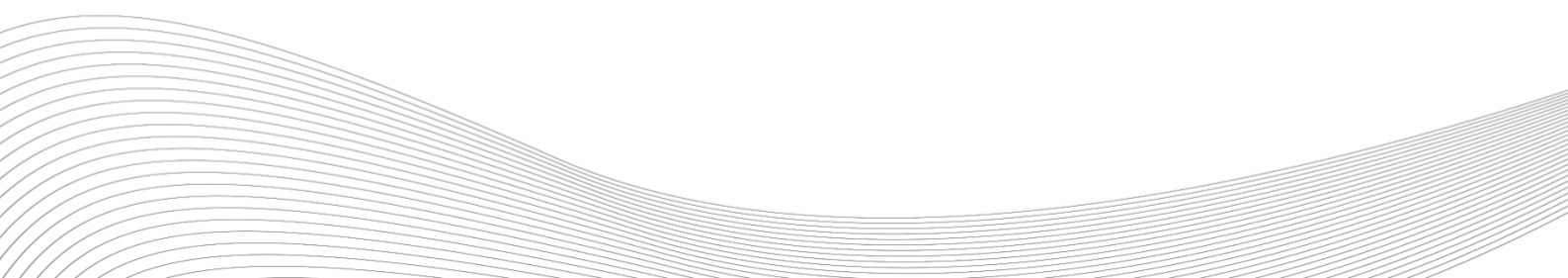


ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Ella Kuskoff is a PhD Candidate at the Institute for Social Science Research, The University of Queensland and Research Assistant at the ARC Centre of Excellence for Children and Families over the Life Course (Life Course Centre). Her research interests include gender, disadvantage, social policy, and research translation. Email: e.kuskoff@uq.edu.au

Acknowledgments: This research was supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship. I would like to thank Associate Professor Cameron Parsell and Dr Andrew Clarke for their valuable guidance and feedback. I am also highly grateful for the policy training provided by the Life Course Centre, as well as to my participants for so generously sharing their time and experiences.

DISCLAIMER: The content of this Working Paper does not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the Life Course Centre. Responsibility for any information and views expressed in this Working Paper lies entirely with the author(s).



ABSTRACT

The Queensland Government's Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016-2026 prioritises changing community attitudes and behaviours as a core guiding principle in its commitment to create a Queensland free of violence. Although there is a significant body of research that supports this aim, there is equally compelling evidence to suggest that policies are often designed or implemented ways that are not conducive to achieving their desired aims. As we approach the halfway point in the Strategy's 2016 to 2026 timeline, it is timely to analyse both the Strategy and its implementation thus far, and consider the barriers that may be preventing the policy from achieving its full potential. Using a critical discourse analysis methodology, I identify a number of such barriers, including an assumed link between attitudes and behaviours; a disproportionate focus on cultural change among bystanders; the invisibility of perpetrators, and; the implicit reinforcement of the gender hierarchy. I discuss each of these barriers in relation to current research evidence and, drawing on this evidence, suggest actions that the Queensland Government may take to help mitigate these barriers. I conclude with a discussion of the broader implications of these findings for future policy development in Australia.

Keywords: domestic and family violence; public policy; critical discourse analysis; Australia

Suggested citation: Kuskoff, E. (2019). 'From Intentions to Implementation: Improving Alignment between Domestic and Family Violence Policy Aims and Actions'. *Life Course Centre Working Paper Series*, 2019-25. Institute for Social Science Research, The University of Queensland.

1. Introduction

Researchers and policymakers alike are increasingly recognising the important role that cultural attitudes and behaviours towards women play in facilitating domestic and family violence (DFV). Indeed, contemporary policy research suggests that DFV policies that seek to change culture and improve gender equality may be comparatively well-positioned to address DFV (Abraham & Tastsoglou, 2016; Jewkes, Flood, & Lang, 2015; World Health Organization, 2009). Queensland's current *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2026* is one such policy, which specifically acknowledges that DFV is “founded in cultural attitudes and behaviours, gender inequality, discrimination and personal behaviours and attitudes” (Queensland Government, 2016, p. 2). Achieving “a significant shift in community attitudes and behaviours” is therefore the leading objective underpinning the Queensland Strategy (Queensland Government, 2016, p. 15).

To ensure the Strategy achieves its goals, the Queensland Government releases routine action plans, which are then independently evaluated and reviewed. Although the action plan reviews are important to monitor whether the Strategy is being delivered as intended (Deloitte, 2019), there is currently limited consideration of whether the intentions for delivery fully align with the core aims of the Strategy's guiding principles. This is problematic, as research suggests that there are often barriers embedded in the design and implementation of policies that prevent them from achieving their desired aims (Choudhry, 2016; Morley & MacFarlane, 2008; Morrison, 2006). As we approach the halfway point in the Strategy's timeline, it is timely to analyse whether such barriers exist in the Queensland Strategy and, if so, consider actions that can be taken in the final action plan (due for release in 2022) to ensure the implementation of the Strategy is fully aligned with its aims and values over the remaining years.

Using a critical discourse analysis methodology, this paper explicitly identifies the policy barriers that may be limiting the Strategy's progress towards achieving its leading objective of shifting attitudes and behaviours. Drawing on qualitative interviews with members of the policy community as well as peer-reviewed research evidence, I demonstrate why these barriers are significant and why they must be addressed. For each barrier, I suggest strategies that may be implemented within the

current framework of the Queensland Strategy to improve the alignment between the Strategy's aims and its delivery. A quick-reference guide to these findings, their implications, and potential reparative actions can be found in Appendix 1 (p. 25). Finally, I discuss the implications of my findings more broadly, including how they can inform the development of future DFV policies in states and territories across Australia.

2. Queensland's Policy Context

Queensland does not have a history of strong DFV policy. Indeed, Queensland's historic treatment of the issue has been characterised by inconsistent recognition of DFV as a policy problem and piecemeal policy approaches that lacked coherent, overarching strategies (Lillyman, 2015). In 2009, the Bligh Government released the state's first whole-of-government coordinated domestic and family violence strategy (Lillyman, 2015). The strategy, entitled *For Our Sons and Daughters: Queensland Government Strategy to Reduce Domestic and Family Violence 2009-2014* (2009), focused on prevention, early identification and intervention, connected support services, perpetrator accountability, and system coordination (Queensland Government, 2009). The strategy had a particularly strong focus on strengthening system responses to domestic and family violence.

In 2012, the Newman Government came into power and abolished the *For Our Sons and Daughters* strategy before it was completed (Lillyman, 2015). Rather than replacing the Strategy, the Newman Government established the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence to investigate DFV and recommend approaches for future policy and practice. This Taskforce was chaired by Dame Quentin Bryce and had the task of examining Queensland's current DFV responses, and reporting its findings and recommendations for improvement to the Queensland Premier (Queensland Government, 2017). The Taskforce's examination involved considerable community engagement, including focus groups across the state, an online attitudes survey, invited public submissions, summits, and roundtable discussions (Queensland Government, 2017). The resulting Taskforce Report, titled *Not Now, Not Ever: Putting an End to Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland* (2015), put forward 140 recommendations to the newly-elected Palaszczuk Government (Justice and

Attorney-General, 2016; Lillyman, 2015; Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland, 2015).

In the *Queensland Government Response to the Report of the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence* (2015), the Queensland Government provided a line-by-line response to each of the 140 recommendations made by the Taskforce, and ultimately accepted them all. The following year, the Palaszczuk Government released its comprehensive policy strategy, the *Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy* (2016). The Queensland Strategy engaged the community in its development through a three-month long collaboration program. The strategy also drew heavily from the values and frameworks provided by the Taskforce's recommendations, which have been labelled as progressive for significantly refocusing government policy toward preventing domestic violence by improving attitudes and behaviours towards women (Morley & Dunstan, 2016).

3. Summary of the Literature

The Queensland Government's acknowledgement of the crucial role that gender and culture play in perpetuating DFV is a key feature of current policy. Importantly, a considerable body of research demonstrates the benefits of considering these two issues in DFV policies. The available literature suggests that understanding and engaging with the gendered nature of DFV is a critical component in developing adequate policy responses (Abraham & Tastsoglou, 2016; Burnett, Ford-Gilboe, Berman, Ward-Griffin, & Wathen, 2015; Council of Europe, 2011; Pease, 2015; World Health Organization, 2016). It also shows that DFV is deeply rooted in cultural attitudes and behaviours, as well as the social structures that influence and are influenced by culture (Dyson & Flood, 2008; Kuskoff & Parsell, 2019; Powell & Webster, 2018; World Health Organization, 2009). Policies that fail to consider these issues have been found to result in responses that are unable to support victims' needs and do little to address the actual causes of DFV.

Importantly, however, research also suggests that the language, assumptions, and types of knowledge informing policies can significantly impact on how governments respond to an issue in practice (Bacchi, 2009). As a result, policy delivery and outcomes can often end up being substantially misaligned with policy values.

Discourse, and particularly the assumptions that often underpin it, has long been considered by researchers as an important factor that we can interrogate to help us uncover such misalignment (Bacchi, 1999; Burnett et al., 2015; Girard, 2006; Kahu & Morgan, 2007). As Kahu and Morgan (2007, p. 135) argue:

Policy influences women's lives, not just materially through legislation, but ideologically through the promotion of certain discourses which enable and constrain women's choices. Rather than viewing policies as merely solutions to predefined problems we need to consider how they represent the problem and what the effects of that representation might be.

Analysing Queensland's domestic and family violence policy discourse can therefore be an effective way of understanding the potential impacts of Queensland's DFV policy, as well as the barriers that may be preventing it from achieving the level of cultural change it aspires to.

4. Research Design

Given the importance of discourse in influencing policy outcomes, I employ a critical discourse analysis framework (CDA) for this analysis. CDA provides both a methodological and conceptual framework through which to analyse social practices (Fairclough, 1992). CDA allows the analyst to investigate connections between the language use of social actors and the broader social contexts in which the language is situated. It focuses predominantly on exploring social power, and particularly how language can and is used by groups and individuals who hold that power. Such analysis allows for a deeper understanding of how language can be used for social and political purposes, as well as the potential impacts of such use (Fairclough, 1992).

CDA is as an overarching analytical approach that encompasses an extensive "toolkit" of strategies (Fairclough, 1992). To conduct my analysis, I adopted three analysis tools that fall under the CDA methodology: framing, transitivity, and intertextuality. Framing refers to the way texts utilise discourse, and allowed me to consider how the Strategy draws on facts, opinions, and language to represent the issue in a particular way (Carvalho, 2008). Transitivity relates to the way texts treat certain people and

processes. I used transitivity to interrogate how the Strategy attributes agency, responsibility, and causality for domestic violence (Fairclough, 1992). Finally, intertextuality relates to the way previous texts have shaped the policies' meanings. Analysing intertextuality allowed me to consider the influence of other texts on the Strategy, and therefore understand how the Strategy perpetuated or challenged existing discourses (Fairclough, 1992). Together, these analytic strategies were employed to examine the assumptions and ideologies embedded in the Queensland Strategy and consider how these impact on the Strategy's ability to achieve its full potential.

Given my use of intertextuality, it was important that I analyse relevant Queensland policy documents other than the Queensland Strategy. My analysis therefore included the following additional Queensland policy documents: *Not Now, Not Ever: Putting an End to Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland* (Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland, 2015) and *Queensland Government Response to the Report of the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence* (Queensland Government, 2015). These two policy documents are particularly relevant as, although my primary focus is on the first guiding principle of the Queensland Strategy, the Strategy states that "these foundational elements reflect the themes which shaped the Taskforce report" (Queensland Government, 2016, p. 15). It was therefore necessary to analyse the policy documents related to the Taskforce Report and examine their influence on the Queensland Strategy and its outcomes.

I supplemented my textual analysis with qualitative interviews with members of the policy community who were involved in developing or implementing any of the three policies I analysed. I conducted a total of 15 interviews with service employees, service CEOs, academic experts, and government employees. In line with my critical discourse analysis approach, these interviews provided insight into who contributed to the policies, the forms of knowledge the policies drew on, and how barriers within the policies directly impact on the ability of stakeholders to achieve government aims. It is important here to note that although I transcribed and analysed all interviews verbatim, I adopt Towns and Terry's (2014) approach to presenting the interview data. Specifically, the interview data presented in this paper are edited slightly to remove filler words, stutters, and repetition in order to improve readability. When making these edits, I took great care not to alter the meaning of the participants' talk.

5. Research Findings and Recommendations

5.1 The Strategy assumes a direct link between attitudes and behaviours

Given the Queensland Strategy's aim to change the culture that underpins domestic and family violence, it is unsurprising that the Strategy and related policy documents aim to change both cultural attitudes and behaviours. While the Strategy seeks to educate children about respectful relationships from a young age, there is also a strong focus on delivering community education campaigns to inform the wider community. The importance of educating the community is highlighted in the following excerpts.

Together we must stop the behaviour and attitudes that trivialise, excuse or perpetuate domestic and family violence. (Queensland Government, 2016, p. 8)

Educating and engaging Queenslanders to create a community that supports respectful relationships, practices positive attitudes and behaviours and promotes a culture of non-violence. (Queensland Government, 2015, p. 41)

Many such initiatives are targeted at individuals the Strategy refers to as bystanders. Bystanders are people who witness perpetrators enacting violence or disrespect towards women. As the policies suggest:

Community education should be centred upon the expectation that bystanders should intervene in cases of violence. (Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland, 2015, p. 95)

A major goal of the education campaigns is therefore to change bystanders' attitudes about domestic and family violence in order to change the way they respond when they witness such violence.

However, while there are numerous dedicated strategies to changing community attitudes, there is a significant lack of similar strategies targeted at changing behaviours. Indeed, there appears to be a strong assumption underpinning the Queensland Strategy that there is a direct link between changing community attitudes and changing behaviours. The below excerpts demonstrate that this assumption was

evident both in the policy documents themselves and in the interviews I conducted with policymakers.

Just starting the conversations will make significant steps toward changing attitudes and behaviours. (Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland, 2015, p. 105)

You challenge attitudes, you change behaviours. (Participant 13, Government Employee)

We work on the basis of the premise that if you raise people's awareness and knowledge about what the issue is it would then change attitudes relating to that particular issue and therefore eventually potentially lead to behaviour change. (Participant 12, Government Employee)

Importantly, there is little research to suggest that the link between attitudes and behaviours is this straightforward (Flood & Pease, 2006). On the contrary, the relationship between attitudes and behaviours in regards to gender inequality and domestic and family violence appears to be highly complex. In particular, research has shown that men may hold attitudes that support equality and respect for women, yet still act in ways that reinforce women's social subordination (Fisher, 2015; Flood, 2015a). For example, a man may respect his own partner yet fail to consider and challenge the social structures that favour men and limit women's rights and opportunities. Or, he may agree that women should have equal participation and opportunities in education and employment, yet fail to behave in ways that facilitate such gender equality. Pertinently, then, a bystander may believe that women deserve equality and respect and may understand the concept of bystander intervention, yet still fail to intervene when they witness sexist or violent behaviour (Fisher, 2015; Flood, 2015a).

One potential explanation for this disconnect between attitudes and behaviours lies in the internalisation of dominance theory (Miller, 1987; Pheterson, 1990). This theory suggests that those in dominant groups internalise prejudices against minority or subordinate groups. As such, their behaviours may unconsciously help to reinforce the oppression of minority groups, even if they consciously believe that minority groups

should not be oppressed (Pease, 2014). Further, while education campaigns often aim to raise awareness of an issue, they are less often equipped to provide community members with the level of resources and tools required for them to challenge and change their unconscious behaviour (Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan, 2003; Heise, 2011; Potter, Stapleton, & Moynihan, 2008; Powell, 2014). It is therefore perhaps not surprising that, while some education campaigns have been found to be successful in changing attitudes, there is no conclusive evidence that such changes in attitudes lead to desired changes in behaviour (Flood, 2014).

This suggests that to more effectively shift community attitudes and behaviour, more must be done to support the community to change their behaviours specifically. One way to do this is by providing – or offering incentives and support for community organisations to provide – more face-to-face education and training opportunities to empower community members to translate their attitudinal change into behavioural change (Flood, 2011). While there are a number of organisations across the country that offer such education and training (e.g. MATE Bystander Program; No to Violence; Polykala), this predominantly occurs in a professional context whereby schools and workplace managers hire the organisation to deliver the training for their students and staff. This has three important implications: (1) training in this area is often only available to community members who participate in formal academic or professional institutions; (2) training is often only available to institutions that can afford it, and; (3) training is often only organised by institutions that are headed by someone who is already passionate about the issue. Improving access to free education and training opportunities for all community members has the potential to provide more individuals with the information and tools necessary to begin acting in ways that align with their attitudes. Further, in-person community education workshops targeted at interested groups would provide a means of connecting like-minded community members and mobilising them as active and knowledgeable leaders in their communities.

5.2 The Strategy focuses disproportionately on bystanders

Current communication campaigns aimed at changing attitudes and behaviours place a strong emphasis on bystanders and the role they can play in denouncing and, in turn, preventing DFV. In particular, there is a strong focus on community members'

responsibility to model and reinforce positive cultural values through their responses to violence. For example:

Everyone in our community must make it clear that we will not tolerate the behaviour of anyone who hurts another person within a relationship of intimacy and trust. (Queensland Government, 2016, p. i)

Importantly, culture and attitudes inform and influence the decisions of bystanders to either intervene or ignore incidents of domestic and family violence. (Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland, 2015, p. 50)

The actions the Strategy puts forward to improve bystander responses largely revolve around designing and implementing community education campaigns. These campaigns aim to teach potential bystanders how to recognise when a person is acting violently or disrespectfully towards their partner, and encourage them to intervene in the situation. This is evident in the following excerpts:

... it was such a huge focus of let's try and change the current attitudes, increase awareness of what a bystander is and then try and give individuals some tools or tips as to what do you do if you're in this situation. (Participant 2, Government Employee)

The focus group research provides a useful basis for designing a communication strategy to target bystanders and increase the likelihood of intervention by individuals who are witnesses to domestic and family violence. Bystanders need to be able to recognise domestic violence and understand they have a moral and ethical obligation to act and how to take action. (Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland, 2015, p. 156)

Even if such campaigns improved their provision of education and training to more effectively influence behaviour (as discussed in the previous section), there are several reasons why changing bystander behaviour is unlikely to create the level of cultural change necessary to end domestic violence without an equally strong

supporting strategy to change perpetrators' perceptions of and reactions to their own violent behaviour.

First, domestic violence is overwhelmingly a hidden problem, perpetrated by men against women in the privacy of their own homes (Mitchell, 2011). While there is a dearth of Australian research on this topic, a study in the US found that bystanders are only present in about one-third of intimate partner violence incidents (Klein, 2012). Without a robust strategy targeting the men who are not witnessed using violence, this behaviour will remain unchecked almost two-thirds of the time. Further, while bystanders may be able to recognise verbal or physical forms of DFV, there are countless subtle ways a person can be violent towards their partner without drawing attention from onlookers. Indeed, psychological violence, financial violence, the threat of physical violence, coercion, and enforced social isolation are but a few ways in which perpetrators are able to maintain control despite community surveillance (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2019). The very nature of these forms of control means they can be difficult for people outside of the relationship to recognise, even if potential bystanders are adequately educated.

Second, a number of potential problems arise when we encourage community members to intervene in others' violent relationships without professional training. While doing so may help to diffuse the situation and prevent further violence in the moment (assuming the bystander intervenes safely and effectively), it also poses significant risks to the immediate safety of the bystander as well as the future safety of the victim (Banyard, 2011; Frasier Chabot, Gray, Makande, & Hoyt, 2018). This is because there are highly complex and unpredictable dynamics involved in individual violent relationships, and despite the tools provided through the community education campaigns, an average community member is unlikely to understand or be appropriately equipped to deal with these (Johnson & Hotton, 2003; Walby & Towers, 2018). Indeed, the aforementioned US-based study found that, where bystanders did intervene in domestic violence situations, in 12% of incidents this intervention worsened the situation, in 44% of incidents it had no effect, and in only 35% of situations it improved immediate outcomes for the victims (Klein, 2012). What remains unknown is the extent to which bystander intervention impacts on future instances of domestic violence. There is the distinct possibility that being confronted may lead the perpetrator to use different, less obvious tactics of abuse in future or increase the

social isolation of his partner; thereby compromising her future safety. This suggests that, even if the community education campaigns are successful in changing bystander attitudes and behaviours, this may not translate to an overall increase in women's safety.

Together, these findings highlight the need for additional measures to influence cultural change; namely, ones that focus on changing the attitudes and behaviours of perpetrators, potential perpetrators, and people with violence-supportive attitudes. One way to do this is by creating an education campaign aimed specifically at this group. Rather than relying predominantly on community bystanders to communicate the message to individuals who use violence that this is unacceptable, a well-designed education campaign could be harnessed to: (1) provide accurate information about what is and is not acceptable behaviour; (2) ensure this information is delivered in an authoritative, safe, and non-judgemental manner, and; (3) provoke self-reflection and help-seeking behaviour among men who need it.

Implementing a perpetrator-focused campaign would add several advantages to the current community education campaigns, including the ability to reach men whose violence is not visible or obvious to bystanders, and the ability to improve victims' safety in the long-term. It also has the potential to prevent men from using violence against their future partners. Cismaru and Lavack (2011) highlight the importance of communication campaigns targeted at perpetrators and potential perpetrators, and demonstrate that such campaigns can be effective when they emphasise the benefits that the perpetrator will receive from changing their behaviour, and when they imbue confidence that perpetrators have the ability to change their behaviour. Cismaru and Lavack (2011) therefore provide strong evidence-based suggestions that can be drawn on when designing the campaign.

Using the campaign to promote help-seeking behaviour will be particularly important. As I discussed earlier, research demonstrates that changing attitudes does not necessarily lead to changes in behaviour, particularly when people are not provided with the tools necessary to make the desired changes. It is therefore crucial for such a campaign to be implemented alongside a well-developed support system for men who do wish to seek help. Men require access to education and behaviour-change programs, counselling, rehabilitation, and other forms of support to help address any

underlying issues or trauma that contributes to their use of violence. Importantly, supports must also be in place for men's partners both during and after men's engagement with the system to ensure they remain safe and supported throughout the process.

5.3 The Strategy overlooks perpetrators

Failing to engage perpetrators in education campaigns is just one of several ways the Queensland Strategy and related policy documents overlook perpetrators. Another way is by using predominantly passive language to portray domestic and family violence as something that victims experience, rather than a deliberate action that perpetrators enact. The following two excerpts are examples of this:

In addition to the types of violence and abuse experienced within relationships ... (Queensland Government, 2016, p. 3)

The majority of people who experience domestic and family violence in Queensland are women. (Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland, 2015, p. 7)

A significant body of literature demonstrates that obscuring perpetrator agency in this way is highly problematic and has notable implications for how people perceive and respond to violent acts (Coates & Wade, 2004; Henley, Miller, & Beazley, 1995; Lamb, 1991). For example, Coates and Wade (2004) argue that in sexual assault cases, judges tend to unconsciously use passive constructions to conceal both the seriousness of the assault and the agency of the perpetrator. This reduces the personal responsibility that judges attribute to the perpetrator, which is reflected in the final judgements. Further, Henley and colleagues (1995) find that when the media use passive voice to describe violent crimes, the public – and particularly men – attribute less harm to the victim, harbour more negative views of the victim, and view the perpetrator as having less responsibility for their actions. The Queensland Strategy's use of passive language is therefore particularly problematic given the Strategy's focus on changing attitudes towards violence against women and encouraging bystanders to hold perpetrators to account.

The policy documents also overlook perpetrators by failing to prioritise the research and implementation of men's behaviour change programs. As the below excerpts from the Queensland Strategy's supporting outcomes suggest, there is strong government recognition of the need to better support men to change their behaviour:

Systems are in place to ensure perpetrators receive appropriate sanctions and access to assistance to stop using violence. (Queensland Government, 2016, p. 17)

Perpetrators are provided the education and tools for dealing with problems without resorting to violence. (Queensland Government, 2016, p. 18)

However, there is a strong feeling among the policy community that the government has not prioritised either the delivery of behaviour change programs or research on how such programs could be implemented more effectively. This was evident in a number of my interviews with members of the policy community:

Still now there's not enough work being done with perpetrators of domestic violence across Queensland at all, not even close. (Participant 4, Service CEO)

Funding [for] perpetrator programs has just been ridiculously awful for many years. So it's an area of policy and funding growth that absolutely needs our attention if we're gonna actually make a difference ... they've all run for many years on a shoestring so we haven't been able to do any actual research on the impact that these have. (Participant 15, Academic)

Prevention strategies have not been evaluated as yet. (Participant 5, Service CEO)

The lack of support for perpetrators to change their behaviour and lack of understanding of how best to go about this are significant barriers preventing the Strategy from achieving the behaviour change necessary to end domestic and family violence.

Current Australian literature supports the need for increased investment in designing and delivering effective perpetrator programs (Day et al., 2010; Flood, 2014; Mitchell, 2011). Day and colleagues (2010), for example, find that while perpetrator programs can influence positive change, little is known about the extent to which this change impacts on the perpetrators' future behaviour. Flood (2014), too, critiques the lack of long-term follow up on perpetrator intervention programs, and argues that where evaluations do occur, they are often made shortly after the program and focus on changes in attitudes rather than behaviours. As such, they do not assess the actual impact of the program on perpetration of violence. So, despite the strong potential that behaviour change programs have to directly improve women's safety, Queensland's current approach to the design and delivery of such programs is not conducive to ensuring their effectiveness and efficiency.

Together, these aspects of the Queensland Strategy stand in direct opposition to the Strategy's sixth supporting outcome: "perpetrators stop using violence and are held to account" (Queensland Government, 2016, p. 17). While it is clearly not feasible to re-write the Strategy using more active language, the Strategy's explicit commitment to hold perpetrators to account and stop them from using violence provides a strong starting point to begin affecting change. First, the Queensland Government can begin making a conscious effort to highlight the responsibility that perpetrators have for their own actions, and encourage others to do the same. This could be a key aspect of the perpetrator communication campaign suggested in the previous section. It could also be adopted in current community education campaigns to reinforce that the victim is never responsible for the violence committed against them, and to encourage people working in the justice system to challenge their own preconceptions of where responsibility for violence lies. As well as doing more to hold perpetrators to account, this may: (1) help to reduce victim blaming and make victims more comfortable to seek help; (2) reinforce to perpetrators that they alone are responsible for their actions, and that they alone have the power to change those actions, and; (3) improve justice outcomes for both victims and perpetrators.

Changing the behaviour of perpetrators is crucial if we are to prevent domestic and family violence and ensure the safety of women now and in the long-term. The provision of dedicated support for perpetrators is therefore imperative, particularly as culture is not the only factor at play in motivating violent behaviour; past trauma,

mental health issues, substance abuse, and financial stress are but a few factors that can also play important roles (Broady & Gray, 2017). While these by no means excuse the perpetrator's behaviour, they must nonetheless be seriously considered and addressed if we are to create the conditions necessary for perpetrators to change. There is therefore a strong need for government to lead by example and place greater value on delivering, evaluating, and improving perpetrator programs. Appropriate resources and support should be provided to services and researchers to undertake this work. By placing greater value on such programs and making this value publicly known, it will send a strong message that the Strategy is following through on its commitment to create lasting change and end perpetrators' use of violence. Further, evaluating perpetrator programs is crucial if we are to understand what does and does not work and ensure that resources are being effectively and efficiently targeted. It is crucial for this suggestion to work in conjunction with the perpetrator communication campaign suggested in the previous section. Encouraging perpetrators to seek help will achieve little if we do not have appropriate, effective, and voluntary support available to help them change.

5.4 The Strategy exploits the gender hierarchy

Despite the lack of focus on providing support for men to change, the Queensland Strategy and related policy documents do highlight the importance of recognising and addressing domestic and family violence as a highly gendered issue. For example, the Queensland Strategy explicitly states that:

*Understanding the gendered nature of domestic and family violence and the factors that contribute to increased vulnerability is vital in designing and delivering effective responses and reforms.
(Queensland Government, 2016, p. 2)*

This is an important acknowledgment and is underpinned by a significant body of feminist scholarship (Abraham & Tastsoglou, 2016; Burnett et al., 2015; Council of Europe, 2011; Pease, 2015; World Health Organization, 2016). This scholarship suggests that in order to address the underlying causes of domestic and family violence, government policies must target attitudes and behaviours towards women, as well as broader gender inequities. The Queensland Strategy can be commended

for specifically recognising this. However, throughout Queensland's domestic and family violence policies and their implementation, there is a tendency to implicitly reinforce gendered assumptions and, in turn, support the current gender hierarchy.

This tendency can be seen in the way men are positioned as having control over certain social spaces. Indeed, there are multiple instances in which the policies implicitly privilege the role of men. In the quote below, the Taskforce Report suggests that it is important to target traditionally masculine environments:

*Training and games provide opportunities to engage boys and men in conversations and actions around understanding domestic and family violence, **without the involvement of women** and in a **traditional or stereotyped 'masculine' environment**. (Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland, 2015, pp. 105, emphasis added)*

Research does suggest that there are strong links between sport, masculinity, and violence, and many theorists argue that we must indeed actively engage men in violence prevention efforts (Flood, 2015b; Jewkes et al., 2015; Messner, 1990; Pease, 2015). However, research also shows that women have faced historic exclusion from many traditionally masculine social domains and, when they are able to participate, they are often subjected to extreme sexism (Fink, 2016; McDonagh & Pappano, 2008; Roach, 2016). Rather than challenge the juxtaposition of women and traditionally male spaces, this policy position naturalises the gendered nature of these spaces and their subsequent exclusions.

Queensland's policies and practices further privilege the role of men through the way they encourage male champions of change. This can be seen in the following excerpts:

Men play an important role in leading and supporting the community in the prevention of domestic and family violence. (Queensland Government, 2016, p. 8)

The heart of The Male Champions of Change strategy involves men of power and influence forming a high profile coalition to achieve

change on gender equality issues in organisations and communities.
(Queensland Government, 2016, p. 18)

Again, while it is crucial to engage men in efforts to improve gender equality and prevent violence, it is equally important that we do so in a way that considers the significant social power that men often hold compared to women (Abraham & Tastsoglou, 2016; Flood, 2003, 2015b; Yates, 2018). We must also consider the implications of this power differential for the potential outcomes of the Strategy. For example, the strong focus that the Queensland Strategy places on men – particularly men in positions of power – acting as leaders reinforces the social value of men’s voices at the expense of women’s. Further, not only does it reinforce the structural inequalities that afford men such social power; it offers men even more power to speak and be heard. The Strategy does not appear to provide similar social platforms for women to speak and be heard. This helps to perpetuate gender inequalities and, in turn, contribute to a social environment in which men’s use of domestic violence against women can prosper.

The tendency to unconsciously reinforce the gender hierarchy is a significant and pervasive issue throughout society (Acker, 2006; Gaucher, Friesen, & Kay, 2011). Moving forward, then, it is imperative that strategies aiming to prevent domestic and family violence take greater care to encourage men to *challenge* the gender hierarchy, rather than to exploit the power that the hierarchy affords them; even if this exploitation is perceived as being for a good cause. It is also important to implement strategies for promoting the voices of women (or, indeed, people who are not men), and addressing the social barriers preventing them from speaking, being heard, and being taken seriously. One way to do this could be to promote coalitions for change that not only *include* powerful women, but that are *led by* powerful women. If done well, this could have three crucial benefits: (1) it would create a social platform for women to speak and be recognised as valuable members of society; (2) it would send a strong message that women are deserving of social power and their voices must be heard and respected, and; (3) it would allow women to have a greater influence over decisions and issues that strongly impact them. This would be a small first step in acknowledging and reducing some of the structural barriers preventing women from achieving positions of social power equal to those of men. Crucially, such work must go beyond domestic and family violence policies and be embedded as a value

throughout all social policy areas. If we do not begin to systematically challenge and change the social structures and processes that support the gender hierarchy, our efforts to improve gender equality and prevent domestic and family violence may see little reward (Kuskoff & Parsell, 2019).

6. Broader Implications

Given that the Queensland Government's *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy* explicitly aims to change cultural attitudes and behaviours as a means of violence prevention, it provides an important example of a new generation of policy that understands DFV as a highly gendered and cultural issue. Despite this important conceptual basis for the Queensland Strategy, the findings of this research suggest that the Strategy not only fails to implement initiatives that are conducive to changing attitudes and behaviours in the necessary ways, several of its initiatives also reinforce the gender inequality that facilitates DFV. These findings have important implications for policymakers in the domestic violence sphere, not just in Queensland, but in all Australian states and territories.

First, DFV policymakers should be conscious of their own assumptions and how these influence the policies they are developing. In particular, it is crucial for policymakers to engage with research, evidence, and the lived experience of victims and service providers to ensure they are designing and implementing their policies in the most effective way possible. Second, DFV policies should take care to target different types of cultural change among different groups of the community. This includes bystanders, victims, *and* perpetrators. Further, policies must do more to support perpetrators to change. While on the surface this may seem antithetical to foregrounding the needs of victims, stopping perpetrator behaviour in the long-term is the best way we can ensure the future safety of women. For example, focusing on perpetrators can be a means for men to take responsibility for their actions and to understand that their violence sits within patriarchal society. Of course, this is not to suggest that such support for perpetrators should occur at the expense of support for victims. Indeed, it is crucial for both forms of support to co-occur to allow victims to remain safe regardless of perpetrators' participation or success in support programs.

Third, DFV policymakers must be strategic in their use of language. In particular, they should avoid using passive language and language that undermines the responsibility of the perpetrator. This will help us better hold perpetrators to account by shifting perceptions of DFV from something that experienced (predominantly by women) to something that is purposely enacted (predominantly by men). Finally, policymakers must do more to challenge their own gendered assumptions and understand how their proposed policies operate within, and reinforce, society's highly patriarchal structure. Indeed, governments and policymakers have a responsibility to lead by example in recognising, challenging, and changing the social structures that intertwine with culture to entrench women's disadvantage and reinforce men's social power.

7. Conclusion

This research presented in this paper reminds us of the perils involved when we assume that good policy intentions will translate into positive policy results. It demonstrates that policies can have strong, evidence-informed intentions, but still falter in their wording, design, and implementation. It is therefore imperative that policymakers, governments, and researchers alike continuously evaluate domestic and family violence policies and their implementation, and refine approaches in accordance with emerging evidence and feedback. Together, these actions will help ensure that government resources are being used more effectively and efficiently to keep victims safe, hold perpetrators to account, and move purposefully towards the long-term prevention of domestic and family violence.

References

- Abraham, M., & Tastsoglou, E. (2016). Addressing domestic violence in Canada and the United States: The uneasy co-habitation of women and the state. *Current Sociology*, 64(4), 568-585.
- Acker, J. (2006). Gender and organizations. In J. Saltzman Chafetz (Ed.), *Handbook of the sociology of gender* (pp. 177-194). Boston: Springer.
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2019). *Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: Continuing the national story*. Canberra: AIHW.
- Bacchi, C. (1999). *Women, policy and politics: The construction of policy problems*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Bacchi, C. (2009). *Analysing policy: What's the problem represented to be?* New South Wales: Pearson Australia.
- Banyard, V. (2011). Who will help prevent sexual violence: Creating an ecological model of bystander intervention. *Psychology of Violence*, 1(3), 216-229.
- Banyard, V., Plante, E. G., & Moynihan, M. M. (2003). Bystander education: Bringing a broader community perspective to sexual violence prevention. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 32(1), 61-79.
- Berns, N. (2001). Degendering the problem and gendering the blame: Political discourse on women and violence. *Gender and Society*, 15(2), 262-281.
- Broadly, T. R., & Gray, R. M. (2017). Taking responsibility: Psychological and attitudinal change through a domestic violence intervention program in New South Wales, Australia. *International Journal of Social Science Studies*, 5(6), 68-78.
- Burnett, C., Ford-Gilboe, M., Berman, H., Ward-Griffin, C., & Wathen, N. (2015). A critical discourse analysis of provincial policies impacting shelter service delivery to women exposed to violence. *Policy, Politics, & Nursing Practice*, 16(1-2), 5-16.
- Carvalho, A. (2008). Media(ted) discourse and society: Rethinking the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis. *Journalism Studies*, 9(2), 161-177.
- Choudhry, S. (2016). Towards a transformative conceptualisation of violence against women: A critical frame analysis of Council of Europe discourse on violence against women. *Modern Law Review*, 79(3), 406-441.
- Cismaru, M., & Lavack, A. M. (2011). Campaigns targeting perpetrators of intimate partner violence. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 12(4), 183-197.
- Coates, L., & Wade, A. (2004). Telling it like it isn't: Obscuring perpetrator responsibility for violent crime. *Discourse & Society*, 15(5), 499-526.
- Council of Europe. (2011). *Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. Retrieved from <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/090000168008482e>
- Day, A., Chung, D., O'Leary, P., Justo, D., Moore, S., Carson, E., & Gerace, A. (2010). Integrated responses to domestic violence: Legally mandated intervention programs for male perpetrators. *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, 404, 1-8.

- Deloitte. (2019). *Review of the Second Action Plan*. Brisbane: Deloitte Access Economics.
- Dyson, S., & Flood, M. (2008). *Building cultures of respect and non-violence*. Melbourne: VicHealth
- Fairclough, N. (1992). *Discourse and social change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Fink, J. S. (2016). Hiding in plain sight: The embedded nature of sexism in sport. *Journal of Sport Management*, 30(1), 1-7.
- Fisher, S. (2015). Involving men in gender equality: Charting dangerous waters. In M. Flood & R. Howson (Eds.), *Engaging men in building gender equality* (pp. 86-104). Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Flood, M. (2003). Engaging men: Strategies and dilemmas in violence prevention education among men. *Women Against Violence: An Australian Feminist Journal*, 13, 25-32.
- Flood, M. (2011). Involving men in efforts to end violence against women. *Men and Masculinities*, 14(3), 358-377.
- Flood, M. (2014). Men's anti-violence activism and the construction of gender-equitable masculinities. In A. Carabi & J. Armengol (Eds.), *Moving ahead: Alternative masculinities for a changing world* (pp. 35-50). United States: Palgrave.
- Flood, M. (2015a). Men and gender equality. In M. Flood & R. Howson (Eds.), *Engaging men in building gender equality* (pp. 1-33). Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Flood, M. (2015b). Work with men to end violence against women: a critical stocktake. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 17(2), 159-176.
- Flood, M., & Pease, B. (2006). *The factors influencing community attitudes in relation to violence against women: A critical review of the literature*. Carlton South: VicHealth.
- Frasier Chabot, H., Gray, M., Makande, T., & Hoyt, R. (2018). Beyond sex: Likelihood and predictors of effective and ineffective intervention in intimate partner violence in bystanders perceiving an emergency. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 33(12), 1909-1930.
- Gaucher, D., Friesen, J., & Kay, A. C. (2011). Evidence that gendered wording in job advertisements exists and sustains gender inequality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 101(1), 109-128.
- Girard, A. (2006). *Ontario Domestic Violence Protection Act: An analysis of discourse*. (Master of Arts), University of Windsor, Ontario.
- Heise, L. (2011). What works to prevent partner violence? An evidence overview. In *STRIVE Research Consortium*. London: London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.
- Henley, N., Miller, M., & Beazley, J. (1995). Syntax, semantics, and sexual violence: Agency and the passive voice. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 14(1), 60-84.

Jewkes, R., Flood, M., & Lang, J. (2015). From work with men and boys to changes of social norms and reduction of inequities in gender relations: A conceptual shift in prevention of violence against women and girls. *The Lancet*, 385(9977), 1580-1589.

Johnson, H., & Hotton, T. (2003). Losing control: Homicide risk in estranged and intact intimate relationships. *Homicide Studies*, 7(1), 58-84.

Justice and Attorney-General. (2016). Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence: recommendations 118 and 120. Retrieved from <http://www.justice.qld.gov.au/corporate/community-consultation/community-consultation-activities/past-activities/special-taskforce-on-domestic-and-family-violence-recommendations-118-and-120>

Kahu, E., & Morgan, M. (2007). A critical discourse analysis of New Zealand government policy: Women as mothers and workers. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 30, 134-146.

Klein, R. (2012). *Responding to intimate violence against women: The role of informal networks*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kuskoff, E., & Parsell, C. (2019). Preventing domestic violence by changing Australian gender relations: Issues and considerations. *Australian Social Work*. doi:10.1080/0312407X.2019.1641529

Lamb, S. (1991). Acts without agents: An analysis of linguistic avoidance in journal articles on men who batter women. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 61(2), 250-257.

Lillyman, T. (2015). Domestic violence policy in QLD: Is some policy better than no policy at all? *Open Forum*. Retrieved from <https://www.openforum.com.au/domestic-violence-policy-in-qld-is-some-policy-better-than-no-policy-at-all/>

MATE Bystander Program. (2019). Cultural change workshops. Retrieved from <https://www.griffith.edu.au/arts-education-law/mate-bystander-program/workshops>

McDonagh, E., & Pappano, L. (2008). *Playing with the boys: Why separate is not equal in sports*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Messner, M. (1990). When bodies are weapons: Masculinity and violence in sport. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 25(3), 203-220.

Miller, A. (1987). *For your own good: Hidden cruelty in child-rearing and the roots of violence*. London: Virago.

Mitchell, L. (2011). *Domestic violence in Australia: An overview of the issues*. Parliament of Australia.

Morley, C., & Dunstan, J. (2016). Putting gender back on the agenda in domestic and family violence policy and service responses: Using critical reflection to create cultural change. *Social Alternatives*, 35(4), 43-48.

Morley, C., & MacFarlane, S. (2008). The continued importance of a feminist analysis: Making gendered inequalities visible through a critique of Howard government policy on domestic violence. *Just Policy: A Journal of Australian Social Policy*, 47, 31-38.

Morrison, A. (2006). Changing the domestic violence (dis)course: Moving from white victim to multi-cultural survivor. *UC Davis Law Review*, 39, 1061-1120.

- No to Violence. (2018). Bystander Intervention Training. Retrieved from <https://www.ntv.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Infosheet-BIT.pdf>
- Pease, B. (2014). Reconstructing masculinity or ending manhood? The potential and limitations of transforming masculine subjectivities for gender equality. In A. Carabi & J. M. Armengol (Eds.), *Alternative masculinities for a changing world* (pp. 17-34). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Pease, B. (2015). Disengaging men from patriarchy: Rethinking the man question in masculinity studies. In M. Flood & R. Howson (Eds.), *Engaging men in building gender equality* (pp. 55-70). Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Pheterson, G. (1990). Alliances between women: Overcoming internalized oppression and internalized domination. In L. Albrecht & R. Brewer (Eds.), *Bridges of power: Women's multicultural alliances* (pp. 34-48). Philadelphia: New Society Publishers.
- Polykala. (2018). Active Bystander Training. Retrieved from <http://polykala.com/portfolio-item/active-bystander-training/>
- Potter, S., Stapleton, J. G., & Moynihan, M. M. (2008). Designing, implementing, and evaluating a media campaign illustrating the bystander role. *Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community*, 36(1), 39-55.
- Powell, A. (2014). Bystander approaches: Responding to and preventing men's sexual violence against women. *ACSSA Issues*, 17, 1-20.
- Powell, A., & Webster, K. (2018). Cultures of gendered violence: An integrative review of measures of attitudinal support for violence against women. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, 51(1), 40-57.
- Queensland Government. (2009). *For our sons and daughters: Queensland Government strategy to reduce domestic and family violence: Program of Action 2009-2010*. Brisbane: The State of Queensland.
- Queensland Government. (2015). *Queensland Government response to the report of the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence, Not Now, Not Ever: Putting an End to Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland*. Brisbane: Queensland Government.
- Queensland Government. (2016). *Domestic and family violence prevention strategy 2016-2026*. Brisbane: Queensland Government
- Queensland Government. (2017). Special Taskforce. Retrieved from <https://www.communities.qld.gov.au/gateway/end-domestic-family-violence/about/special-taskforce>
- Roach, J. (2016). Gender discrimination in sport: The irrelevance of the strength, stamina and physique exception. *Australian and New Zealand Sports Law Association*, 96, 20-33.
- Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland. (2015). *Not now, not ever: Putting an end to domestic and family violence in Queensland*. Brisbane: Queensland Government.
- Towns, A. J., & Terry, G. (2014). "You're in that realm of unpredictability": Mateship, loyalty, and men challenging men who use domestic violence against women. *Violence Against Women*, 20(8), 1012-1036.

Walby, S., & Towers, J. (2018). Untangling the concept of coercive control: Theorizing domestic violent crime. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 18(1), 7-28.

World Health Organization. (2009). *Changing cultural and social norms that support violence*. Geneva: World Health Organization.

World Health Organization. (2016). *Global plan of action to strengthen the role of the health system within a national multisectoral response to address interpersonal violence, in particular against women and girls, and against children* Geneva: World Health Organization.

Yates, S. (2018). Power, process, plumbing: Big G and small g gender in Victoria's family violence policy subsystem. *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 77(4), 568-582.

Appendix

Appendix 1. Findings, Implications, and Actions: A Quick-Reference Summary

BARRIERS TO SUCCESS	EXPLANATION OF BARRIERS	POTENTIAL REPARATIVE ACTIONS
The Strategy assumes a direct link between attitudes and behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is little evidence to suggest that attitude change will lead to behaviour change • The community is often not provided with the training necessary to translate their attitude change into behaviour change • When such training is provided, it is usually within well-resourced institutions with strong leadership; many 'ordinary' community members therefore miss out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access to in-person education and training for general community members • Provide the tools necessary for people to change their behaviours to better align with their attitudes • Offer incentives and support for training organisations to run free or subsidised education and training sessions within the community
The Strategy focuses disproportionately on bystanders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic and family violence takes many subtle forms and is often not visible to outsiders • Intervening in violence poses a number of risks to bystanders and victims • Bystander intervention may curb violence in the immediate situation but little is known about its long-term impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design an education campaign targeted at changing attitudes of perpetrators and people with violence-supportive attitudes • Promote help-seeking behaviour among men and implement support systems to help them address underlying issues • Draw on evidence from Cismaru and Lavack (2011) and Our Watch to inform this campaign
The Strategy overlooks perpetrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Strategy uses passive language, which does not make perpetrators visible; this minimises perpetrator responsibility and does not hold perpetrators accountable • Changing perpetrator behaviour is the most direct way to improve safety, but the Strategy does not prioritise perpetrator programs • The Strategy fails to recognise the need for strong investment in research and evaluation of perpetrator programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use active language in future policy and communications to highlight perpetrator responsibility • Place greater value on (and provide greater resources for) programs that support perpetrators to deal with a range of issues and make sustainable changes to their behaviour • Place greater value on (and provide greater resources for) the evaluation of such programs
The Strategy exploits the gender hierarchy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Strategy validates women's exclusion from certain social spaces and fails to foreground their voices • Men are encouraged to exploit their positions of power and privilege rather than challenge them • This reinforces structural gender inequalities, which intertwine with cultural attitudes and behaviours to compound women's disadvantage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage men to challenge the gender hierarchy, rather than to exploit the power that the hierarchy affords them • Create 'coalitions for change' that are non-gender specific and led by powerful women • Embed the value of structural change into future social policies throughout Queensland to facilitate gender equality