Transferring the Aboriginal Australian Family Wellbeing empowerment program from a Papua New Guinea university context to broader community settings: a feasibility study

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Outline of presentation

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INTRODUCTION

- Interpersonal violence imposes a significant burden of health harm on both men and women in Papua New Guinea (PNG), including increased HIV risk, hospital admission and death [1,2,3,4,5,6,7].
- Interpersonal violence is aggravated by growing unemployment and associated alcohol and drug use among young adults. (8,9,10,11).
- Health practitioners are also affected by interpersonal violence. The level of safety and security in the workplace has been shown to be a factor in health worker motivation [13].
- Despite efforts including legislative change, public awareness campaigns and training the levels of interpersonal violence in PNG are worsening [14,15].
- Previous pilot studies established acceptability feasibility of the AA (FWB) program in the context of training UPNG (UPNG) public health students in community development [16,17,18].
- Students, community and church leaders program, recommended the potential usefulness of FWB to tackle the high levels of interpersonal violence in PNG communities[16, 18].
- The present paper responds to the student recommendation and subsequent invitations by church and community leaders by testing the appropriateness of FWB as an interpersonal violence intervention in a community setting. The aim is to generate relevant baseline data to inform future FWB and other community interventions in PNG.

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Methods

a) **Study Design:** Pilot study cross-sectional descriptive mixed methods

b) **Study site:** NCD, Bereina, Kairuku- Hiri District, Central Province, (2012- 2013)

c) **Participants:** 100 community participants participated 54 men and 44 women.(2 unspecified)

d) **Variables:** Demographic profile, safety, wellbeing, attitude

e) **Ethical Clearance:** JCU Ethics Committee & UPNG SMHS Ethics Committee and verbal consent

f) **Intervention**: 7 hours of FWB.

g) **Reasons for selecting methodology-** Need to learn skills. **Data collection-** Personal journals / Surveys Open –ended questions, workshop evaluations, pre survey questionnaire

h) **Data Analysis-** a) Qualitative Data- Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

- b) Quantitative Data- Descriptive statistics, Microsoft Excel (Cohen, 1992).

RESULTS (QUANTITATIVE)

- One hundred participants consented to the study and returned completed questionnaires, of whom 54 were male and 44 female, while two participants did not specify their gender, age or employment status. The majority were unemployed (56.0%), aged 24 or younger (42.0 %) or between 25 and 54 (56.0%). High school, i.e. grades 7-10, was the most prevalent level of education (58.0%)

- Overall, nearly half (46.0%) of the participants reported being a victim of physical violence or threats in the previous12 months:34 (63.0%) males and 12 (27.3%) females. One-third (32%) reported that another person had made them fearful:18 (33.3%) males and 14 (31.8%) females. 10 participants had been a victim of an actual or attempted break-in: six (11.1%) males and four (9.1%) females. Physical violence or threats affected males more often than females ($\chi^2(1, N = 98) = 11.01$, $p < .001$), Table 2. 47.8% of the victims of physical violence or threats were aged 24 or younger, Table 1.Of all episodes of abuse, the majority of the victims (73.9%) knew the person who harmed or threatened them or made them fearful. 60.0% knew the person who broke in or attempted to do so.

- Both genders felt less secure at home when alone during the night compared to during the day. Females tend to feel safer during the day when alone, compared to males, who reported feeling more secure during the night. These differences were not statistically significant.

Table 1: Victims' profile by the type of abuse

Variable	Total n=100†	A victim of physical or threatened violence * n=46				A victim of an actual or attempted break-in* n=10				Been made fearful by another person* n=32			
		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male	
		N	%	N	%	n	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Female/Male	44/54	12	27.3	34	63.0	4	9.1	6	11.1	14	31.8	18	33.3
Age group													
≤ 24	42	6	13.6	16	29.6	2	4.5	2	3.7	8	18.2	14	25.9
25 to 34	36	4	9.1	14	25.9	0	0.0	4	7.4	4	9.1	4	7.4
35 to 54	20	2	4.5	4	7.4	2	4.5	0	0	2	4.5	0	0.0
Employment													
Employed (FT & PT)	16	4	9.1	4	7.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.7
Unemployed	56	8	18.2	20	37.0	2	4.5	2	3.7	8	18.2	10	18.5
Student	8	0	0.0	4	7.4	2	4.5	2	3.7	2	4.5	4	7.4
Retired	6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	9.1	0	0.0
Other	12	0	0.0	6	11.1	0	0.0	2	3.7	0	0.0	2	3.7
Education													
Grades 1 to 6	22	4	9.1	10	18.5	0	0.0	4	7.4	2	4.5	4	7.4
Grades 7 to 10	58	4	9.1	20	37.0	2	4.5	2	3.7	8	18.2	12	22.2
Grades 11 to 12	2	2	4.5	0	0.0	2	4.5	0	0.0	2	4.5	0	0.0
Vocational	8	0	0.0	2	3.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.7
University	4	2	4.5	0	0.0	2	4.5	0	0.0	2	4.5	0	0.0

† - Two participants did not specify their gender, age and employment status; six participants did not specify their education; *In the last 12 months; ** The highest proportions were marked in bold for female and male independently, except for gender, FT – full time; PT- part time.

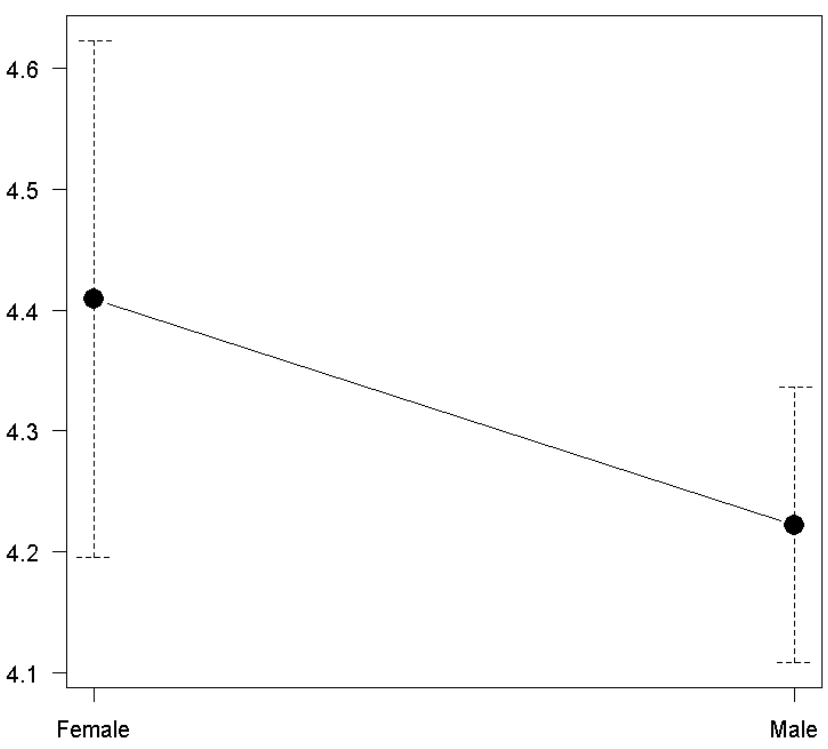
Table 2: Prevalence of abuse by gender

	Female (n = 44)		Male (n = 54)		Rate difference		
	N (%)	95% CI*	N (%)	95% CI*	%	95% CI**	p-value (χ2 male vs female)
A victim of physical or threatened violence in the last 12 months	12 (27.3)	15.4 to43.0	34 (63.0)	48.7 to 75.4	35.7	14.4 to 52.8	<0.001
A victim of an actual or attempted break-in in the last 12 months	4 (9.1)	2.9 to 22.6	6 (11.1)	4.6 to 23.3	2.1	-13.0 to 15.7	NS
Been made fearful by another person over the past 12 months	14 (31.8)	19.0 to47.7	18 (33.3)	21.5 to 47.6	1.5	-18.3 to 20.6	NS

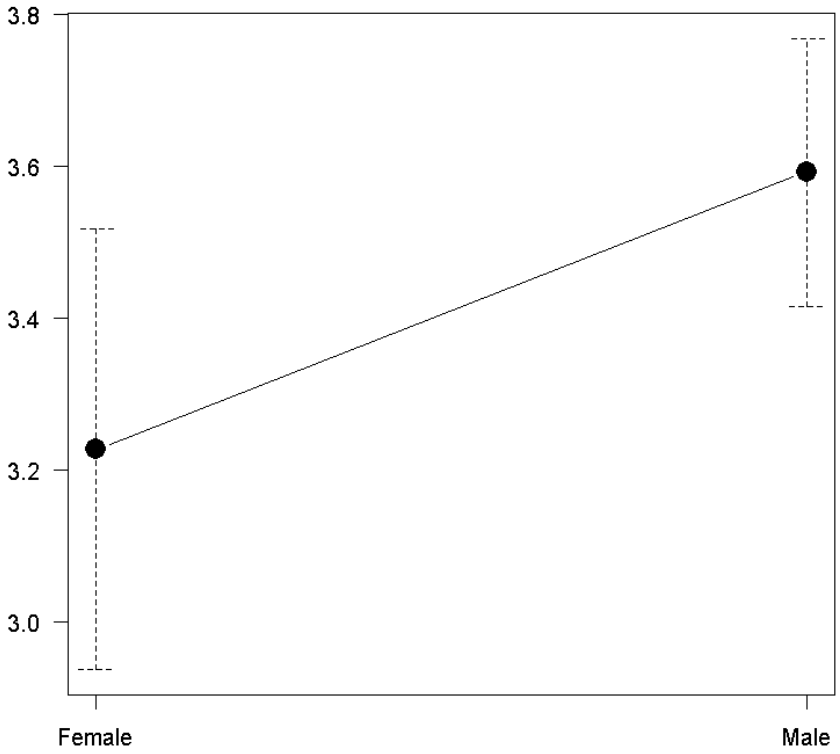
NS - Not statistically significant
95% confidence interval of a proportion including continuity correction; **95% confidence interval for the difference between two independent proportions including continuity correction.

Figure 1: Average Response Safety at Home

How safe do you feel at home when you are alone during the day?
Response range: min 0 (very unsafe) to max 5 (very safe)
Mean response (overall): 4.32
Stand.Deviation (SD): 1.13



How safe do you feel at home when you are alone during the night?
Response range: min 0 (very unsafe) to max 5 (very safe)
Mean response (overall): 3.46
Stand.Deviation (SD): 1.61



*Error bars represent standard errors (SE). When SE bars overlap, the difference between the two mean scores is not statistically significant (p>0.05): Y-axis represents average score ranging from 0 (very unsafe) to 5 (very safe); SD: standard deviation.

Figure 2: Wellbeing survey results

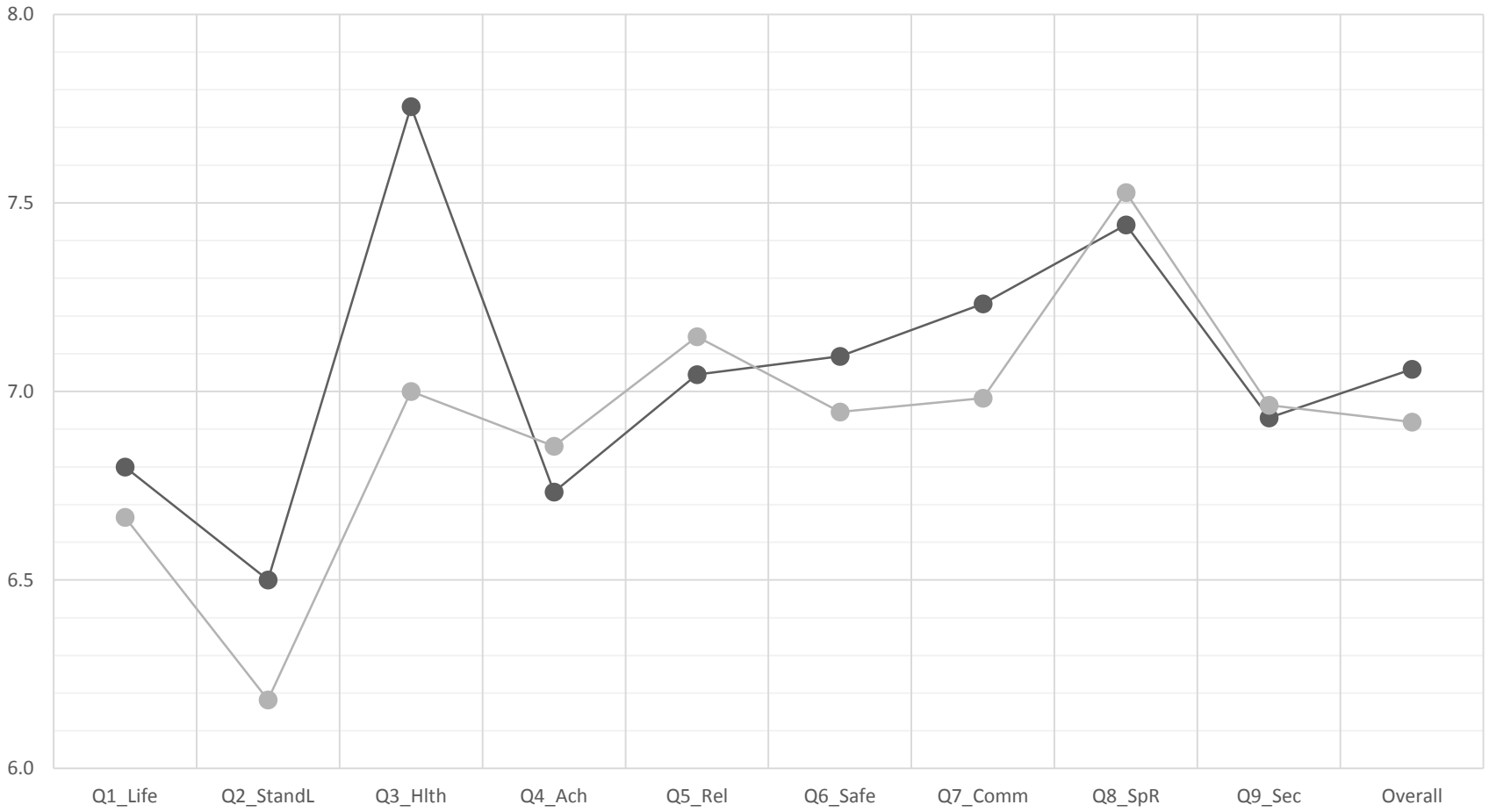
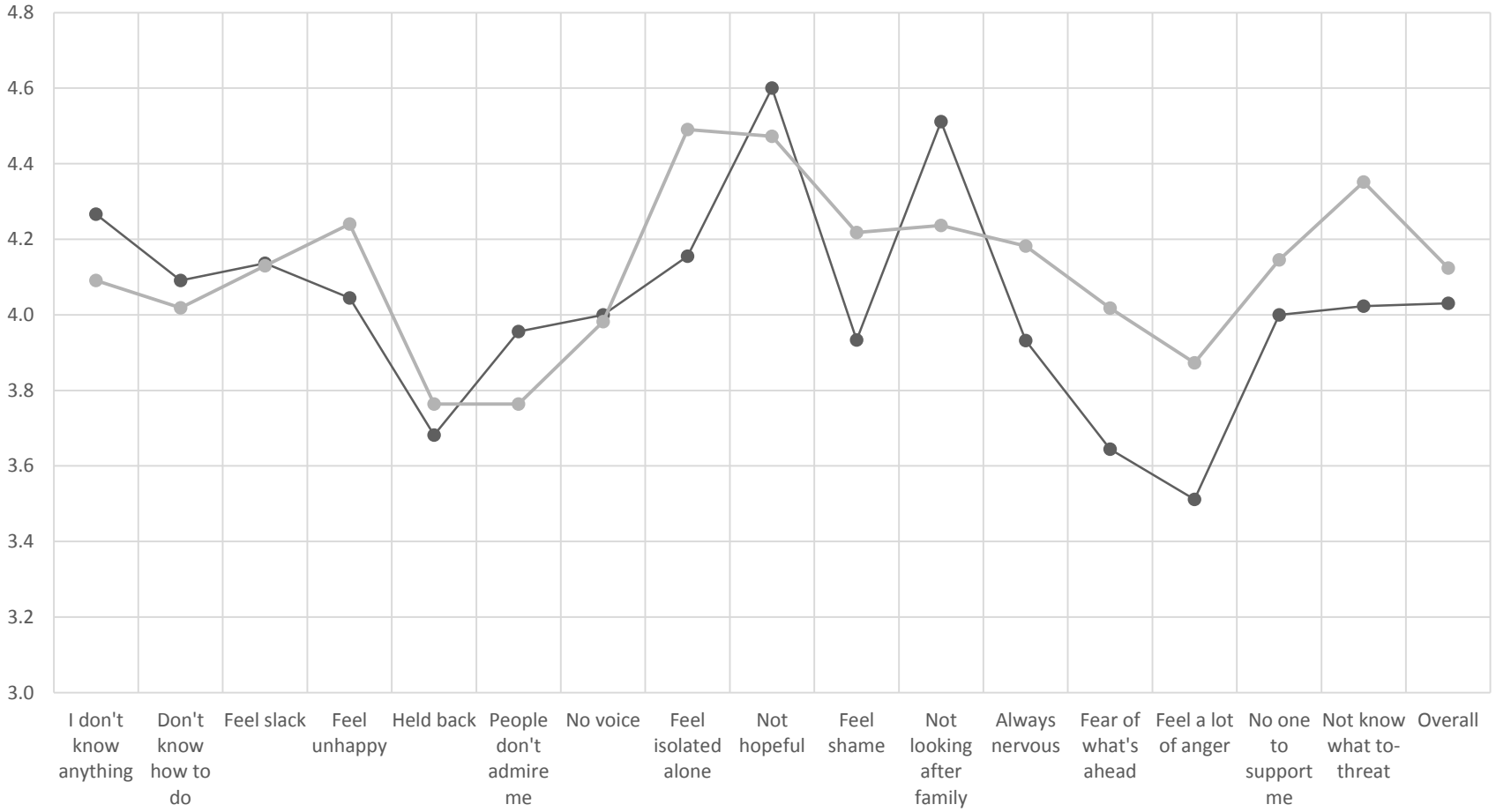


Figure 3 presented the mean scores for GEM survey.



Qualitative measures

- Four main themes emerged from the analysis of the data:
- Community participants could see that the **program content** was relevant to the day-to-day issues they faced and clearly **appreciated the process** through which FWB was delivered.
- Liked opportunity to participate within a safe environment that encouraged openness.
- Other criticisms of the delivery related to lack of time and program resources.
- Participation in FWB led to **change** in a number of ways; a sense of hope that life could be better in the future.
- Next challenge is how to **develop and sustain the program**.
- More opportunities to participate in the program and to continue learning.
- Integrating FWB into existing community programs spiritual development activities run by the church.
- Training might sustain their learning and distract themselves from problems such as drug abuse.
- Several people suggested starting small farming projects,
- Leadership support was seen as critical to program sustainability, village elders /chiefs to participate in course by training more program facilitators.
- Public health lecturer's reflections on his follow up activities designed to support the community implement priority issues arising from the workshops.

DISCUSSION 1

- The need for feasibility of transferring the FWB program from a PNG university setting to broader community contexts to address the problem of endemic interpersonal violence and to generate pilot data to inform future community wellbeing interventions in PNG.
- Findings highlight the very real social challenges confronting - experience their social environment as stressful and unsafe
- As many as 1 in 4 females and more than 1 in 2 males reported being a victim of physical or threatened violence in the last 12 months. Nearly half of the victims were aged 24 or younger, and knew their abusers.
- Both men and women were least satisfied with their standards of living and the most satisfied with spirituality.

DISCUSSION 2

- The extent to which spiritual beliefs and attitudes serve as internal resources for individuals and communities to cope with the day-to-day stresses of life requires further investigation.
- Outcomes included providing a process for identifying basic community needs and offering skills for young people to better address needs.
- Engaging young people in meaningful activity will in the long run improve community safety and wellbeing
- Opportunities for ongoing university support and mentoring, refresher training courses and the utilization of local or online communities of practice could also be explored (although internet infrastructure is very variable in PNG).
- Integrating practical interventions such as FWB in routinely available community education, health and other development programs and services provide a potentially valuable way forward.

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Tanikiu bada- herea.

- Any questions?
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