



“Preventing Honour Related Violence by education and dialogue through Immigrant NGOs”

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NAME OF METHODOLOGICAL TOOL

Discussion questions to the book “At 20 it starts to rot”

NAME OF PARTNER ORGANISATION: Örebro County Administrative Board

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LANGUAGE: EN



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INTRODUCTION

The book “At 20 it starts to rot” is based on the interviews with young women who tell their stories about honour violence, forced marriages and cultural crocks. Often there is a perception that honour violence is a phenomenon that is connected only to newly arrived refugees. The interviewed girls come from the families who have been living in Sweden for up to 20 years. Most of the children have grown up, or were born, in Sweden.

Forced marriage is still a common occurrence within parts of the Romany group. Segregation within one’s group, religious or ethnic, combined with more isolation increases the problem but is not, as it is sometimes considered, the reason for it. It cannot be called an integration problem in a society where honour norms are the generally prevailing.

The book is recommended as a methodological tool for starting the discussions in focus groups on the issues of honour related violence and intercultural competence. Group dynamics is important so the number of participants should not exceed 10 persons and not be less than 4-5 persons.

DESCRIPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Main aim

The main aim of the discussions in the focus groups is to reflect on and to understand the phenomenon of honour related violence based on real stories. The discussions would urge the emotional resonance, reflection, identification, food for thought and analysis in the group of participants. It is important to understand the phenomena in order to effectively manage the complexity of the problem of violence and of abuse.

The recommended methodology for discussion, FOCUS GROUPS, is especially relevant for the following reasons:

- It can be used to assess real needs of participants and thus steer the discussion in the right direction.
- In focus groups participants with similar needs and problems can provide each other with support, new ideas and reactions. In this way participants come to the solution themselves in dialogue instead of getting “ready-made” solutions. The role of the facilitator is to lead the group in order to brainstorm issues by themselves.
- To create “I am not alone feeling” when participants feel that they are not alone and there are other people with similar problems, which create the feeling of trust.

Expected results

- ✓ Understanding of the phenomenon HRV connected to culture aspect.
- ✓ Understanding of the honour “norms”.

- ✓ The ability to share experiences through inclusive and empathetic approach of group empowerment.

Implementation steps

1. Select the facilitator to lead the discussion.
2. Let participants read the book.
3. Make a short presentation of the book to the group prior to discussion.
4. Start the focus groups:
 - *Obtain verbal consent with participants*
Read the verbal consent script. Make sure participants understand their rights, and ensure them that their identities will not be revealed in any publications/reports.
 - *Establish rapport*
Often participants do not know what to expect from focus group discussions. It is helpful for the facilitator to outline the purpose and format of the discussion at the beginning of the session and set the group at ease. Participants should be told that the discussion is informal, everyone is expected to participate, and divergent views are welcome.
 - *Follow the steps of the plan you established at the beginning regarding topics and content of each session*
The plan which the facilitator sets up in advance shall be a sort of a framework for the facilitator to explore, probe, and ask questions. Initiating each topic with a carefully crafted question will help participants share their experiences but in a focused and meaningful manner. Moreover, using a plan increases the comprehensiveness of the data. If participants give incomplete or irrelevant answers, the facilitator can probe for fuller, clearer responses. A few suggested techniques are:
 - ✓ Repeat the question – repetition gives more time to think.
 - ✓ Pause for the answer – a thoughtful nod or expectant look can convey that you want a fuller answer.
 - ✓ Repeat the reply – hearing it again sometimes stimulates conversation.
 - ✓ Ask when, what, where, which, and how questions – they provoke more detailed information.
 - ✓ Use neutral comments like “Anything else?”
 - *Revise Focus Group Questions*
You have to revise a question or two in order to enhancing the cultural sensitivity or responsiveness of the initially established Plan. It is of a help to check on the revised question with the group involved in establishing of the initial plan. Also, please be aware that certain types of questions impede group discussions. For example, yes-or-no questions are one-dimensional and do not stimulate discussion. “Why” questions put people on the defensive and cause them to take “politically correct” sides on controversial issues.

o *Other Tips for Guiding the Discussion*

In focus groups, it is not uncommon for a few individuals to dominate the discussion. Your task is to balance participation, and ensure that every participant has an opportunity to contribute to the discussion. You might need the following strategies for this:

- ✓ Address questions to individuals who are reluctant to talk.
- ✓ Give nonverbal cues (look in another direction or stop taking notes when an individual talks for an extended period).
- ✓ Intervene, politely summarize the point, and then refocus the discussion.
- ✓ Minimize Pressure to Conform to a Dominant View Point. When an idea is being adopted without any general discussion or disagreement, more than likely group pressure to conform to a dominant viewpoint has occurred. To minimize this group dynamic, the facilitator should probe for alternative views. For example, the facilitator can raise another issue, or say, “We have had an interesting discussion, but let’s explore other ideas or points of view. Has anyone had a different experience that they wish to share?”

5. After the discussion, explain the idea of the exercise and the way people reacted: such decisions are based on the values found in the submerged part of the iceberg, most of which are unconscious values.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Suggested questions for the discussion

- ✚ Does the oppressive system of values disappear if one changes the place of living?
- ✚ Is there any clear link between HRV and ethnic origin?
- ✚ How does segregation worsen the situation of potential victims?
- ✚ How does cultural relativism, racism at the authorities influence the situation?
- ✚ Why is woman’s sexuality central for HRV?
- ✚ What is the relation between an individual and a group in HRV?

Materials required

- The hand-outs of the book in paper or electronic format.
- A list of questions for the discussion.

Duration / Processing time

- It is recommended to organise 2 sessions in a row, 40 minutes per session with 10 minutes break.

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