



Unveiling the veil - exploring psychological violence in intimate partner violence for podcast narratives

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2024 LaRea





Laurea University of Applied Sciences

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partner violence for podcast narratives**

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Social Services Degree Programme
Thesis
May, 2024

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Year	2024	Number of pages	56
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This bachelor's thesis dives into the challenges faced by immigrant background women in Finland who endure psychological violence within intimate partner relationships. Focusing on the nuanced dynamics of psychological abuse, often overshadowed within the broader context of domestic violence, this study seeks to raise awareness, identify gaps in support services, and offer solutions.

The theoretical framework encompasses the principles of the Istanbul Convention, Finnish legislation, and existing research on domestic violence and immigrant experiences. Employing a development-based approach, the thesis aims to produce a podcast series to complement the written document, providing accessible information on mental abuse and available resources.

Through comprehensive exploration and collaboration with relevant organizations, the thesis outlines an action plan for the podcast and analyses the multifaceted nature of mental abuse. Key findings underscore the pervasive nature of psychological violence and the challenges faced by immigrant women in recognizing and addressing it.

Drawing on insights from various sources, including governmental agencies and non-profit organizations, the thesis emphasizes the need for legislative measures to criminalize psychological abuse. Recommendations include enhancing prevention efforts, standardizing services, and strengthening coordination structures to combat domestic violence effectively.

In conclusion, this thesis serves as a call to action, urging policymakers and stakeholders to prioritize the protection of vulnerable individuals and enact meaningful legislative reforms to address the insidious nature of psychological abuse within intimate partner relationships in Finland. Through collaborative efforts and sustained advocacy, we aspire to foster a more compassionate and resilient society where all individuals can thrive free from the scourge of intimate partner violence.

Keywords: Psychological violence, mental abuse, intimate partner violence, immigrant background women in Finland, podcast

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Vuosi

2024

Sivumäärä

56

Tämä opinnäytetyö pureutuu niihin haasteisiin, joita Suomessa asuvat maahanmuuttajataustaiset naiset kohtaavat, kun he joutuvat kokemaan psyykkistä väkivaltaa läheisissä parisuhteissa. Erityisesti tutkimus keskittyy henkisen väkivallan ilmiöön, joka usein jää varjoon lähisuhdeväkivallan laajemmassa kontekstissa. Tavoitteena on lisätä ymmärrystä aiheesta, tunnistaa tuen tarpeita ja tarjota ratkaisuja.

Opinnäytetyön teoreettinen viitekehys pohjautuu Istanbulin sopimuksen periaatteisiin, Suomen lainsäädäntöön ja aiempaan tutkimukseen lähisuhdeväkivallasta sekä maahanmuuttajataustaisten henkilöiden kokemuksista. Kehittämislähtöisellä lähestymistavalla pyritään tuottamaan podcast-sarja, joka täydentää kirjallista opinnäytetyötä tarjoamalla helposti saatavilla olevaa tietoa henkisestä väkivallasta ja saatavilla olevista tukiresursseista.

Hyödyntämällä laajaa selvitystyötä ja tehostamalla yhteistyötä relevanttien organisaatioiden kanssa, opinnäytetyö rakentaa toimintasuunnitelman podcastin tuottamiselle ja analysoi henkisen väkivallan monimutkaista luonnetta. Keskeiset havainnot painottavat henkisen väkivallan laajaa levinneisyyttä sekä niitä haasteita, joita maahanmuuttajataustaiset naiset kohtaavat sen tunnistamisessa ja käsittelemisessä.

Hyödyntäen tietoa eri lähteistä, kuten virastoista ja kansalaisjärjestöistä, opinnäytetyö korostaa lainsäädännöllisten toimien tarvetta henkisen väkivallan kitkemiseksi. Suositukset sisältävät ennaltaehkäisevien toimien tehostamista, palvelujen standardoinnin parantamista ja yhteistyörakenteiden vahvistamista, jotta lähisuhdeväkivaltaa voidaan tehokkaasti torjua.

Kaiken kaikkiaan tämä opinnäytetyö toimii vetoimuksena päättäjille ja sidosryhmille, jotta he asettaisivat etusijalle haavoittuvien yksilöiden suojelun ja toteuttaisivat merkityksellisiä lainsäädännöllisiä uudistuksia, joilla voidaan puuttua Suomessa tapahtuvaan henkiseen väkivaltaan ja sen erityispiirteisiin lähisuhdeväkivallan kontekstissa. Yhteistyön ja jatkuvan vaikuttamistyön avulla pyrimme edistämään myötätuntoisempaa ja kestävämpää yhteiskuntaa, jossa jokainen yksilö voi kukoistaa vapaana lähisuhdeväkivallan uhkasta.

Avainsanat: Henkinen väkivalta, henkinen hyväksikäyttö, parisuhdeväkivalta, maahanmuuttajataustaiset naiset, podcast

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1 Introduction

Our thesis embarks on understanding the challenges of immigrant background women in Finland facing psychological violence within intimate partner violence. We decided to explore inside the psychological violence area under domestic and intimate partner violence in Finland, due to its critical and sometimes overlooked nature. According to Clarke (2011) understanding the nuances of this can contribute to a broader understanding of intimate partner violence as a whole. Recognizing intimate partner violence as a phenomenon is crucial. Our interest on this topic, fuelled by information from various sources brought us to the realization on the need of this kind of information to be easily accessible in a concise format. Our goal is to increase awareness about different forms of mental abuse, identify gaps in the available services, and share information on existing solutions. By probing into the depths of intimate partner violence, with a specific focus on mental violence within the Finnish context, our thesis contemplates to bring about a more profound understanding of this complex issue.

Domestic violence is a pervasive and deeply troubling social issue that transcends borders, cultures, and socioeconomic boundaries. It shatters lives, leaving scars that endure long after the physical wounds have healed. Regardless of nationality or location, specifically women throughout the world face physical, emotional, and psychological trauma inflicted within the safety of their own homes (World Health Organization 2012). According to World Health Organization (2014) in the Global status report on violence prevention, there are lot of negative consequences of violence against women: isolation, mistrust, anxiety, low productivity, psychological and emotional problems, abusive alcohol consumption, drug abuse.

In the realm of interpersonal violence, intimate partner violence (IPV) stands as a distressing manifestation of domestic abuse. It extends its reach into the most intimate of human relationships, tainting the sanctity of homes and inflicting extreme harm on those caught within its merciless grip. There are many forms of intimate partner violence out of which mental violence is a multifaceted and complex phenomenon. It operates in the shadows of relationships in a holistic way, destroying the victim's sense of self-worth, autonomy, and agency. The scars of psychological torment may not be readily apparent, yet their impact is enduring. Victims often endure a cycle of fear, humiliation, and manipulation, which undermines their ability to seek help or break free from the abusive relationship. (Becker, Stuewig & McCloskey 2008)

Finland, known for its robust social welfare system and commitment to gender equality, offers a unique backdrop for this exploration. A nation celebrated for its progressive policies and high standards of living; domestic violence remains a shadowy menace that often escapes the public eye. Despite a strong legal framework and an array of support services, intimate partner

violence continues to afflict the lives of countless individuals, particularly women, who are disproportionately affected. It manifests in various forms, ranging from physical aggression to psychological torture. While less visible than physical violence, mental violence is equally devastating, often leaving victims grappling with deep psychological trauma. (GREVIO 2019, s. V B - 1.)

Our thesis is a development-based thesis, where along with the written document, we aim to produce a short podcast on mental abuse within intimate partner violence on women of immigrant background in Finland. Podcasts are an easy way to reach a wider audience in today's world, where the victim can try to find information on their own without getting into the fear of being in a vulnerable situation. In our thesis, we aim to look inside the available data on the actual need and the available services for the victims suffering from intimate partner violence with a focus on mental abuse in Finland. Based on that, we will create short podcast episodes outlining how to identify mental abuse and the support services accessible in Finland, particularly when concrete evidence is insufficient. Furthermore, it seeks to contribute to the broader dialogue on domestic violence prevention, intervention, and support, aiming to inform policies, practices, and public perception.

2 Background of the thesis

This chapter dives into the background of the thesis, providing a foundational understanding of its principles, aims, and key terminologies. In the subsequent chapters, we explore the principles and stages of the development-based thesis process, explore the core objectives driving our inquiry, define the target audience of the thesis, emphasize the importance of feedback mechanisms in shaping our project, introduce fundamental terminologies, and conclude with an examination of the podcast as a communication medium.

2.1 Principles and stages of a development-based thesis

It is important to recognize that a development-based thesis is built upon research, providing the fundamental groundwork on which the practical aspects and progress are built. This perspective is echoed by Tuomi, Kunnela, and Latvala (n.d.), who elaborate that a development-based thesis, in contrast to a traditional research thesis, adopts a more pragmatic and project-oriented methodology. It typically results in a tangible product, activity, discoveries, or a proposal for work-related enhancement, in our case audio materials for victims. They emphasize that a development-based thesis should manifest competencies such as a student's growth within a professional context, as well as the ability to work independently, critically, and inquisitively.

According to Vilkkä and Airaksinen (2003, 51), the possible outcomes of a development-based thesis can vary widely, encompassing options like guidebook creation, leaflet design, or the organization of seminars, among others. They further highlight that these implementations share a common characteristic, which is their responsiveness to identified needs in the range of professional practice.

The aim of a development-based thesis is to plan and implement ideas that emerged from identifying issues in an existing system. The goal is to streamline practical tasks through guidance, tailored to the client and target group's needs. It comprises of a functional component and a report documenting and evaluating the process. This method is ideal for students who thrive in project-based work and seek to create practical solutions from inception to completion. (Saastamoinen et al. 2018) This iterative process of problem-solving and solution development helps students to acquire deeper understanding from a different perspective and collaborate with clients and professionals. This also enables students to enhance their expertise in their respective fields and demonstrate their capacity to contribute effectively to the relevant domain.

Development based thesis also aims to generate new knowledge, theories, and methodologies that contribute to the advancement of a particular field (Saastamoinen et al. 2018). Since development-based thesis provides new pathways towards a positive change through various approaches touching multiple areas of the clients' lives, this aligns with the principles of sustainable development goals. (UNDP 2024.)

In a development-based thesis, the work is done through various stages starting from pre-planning to planning, implementation and evaluation along with feedback. Projects generally adhere to similar procedural steps, and breaking down a project into distinct phases enhances the learning process (Silfverberg 2007, 23, 34). The specific stages of a project are outlined in Table 1, with detailed explanations provided in chapters 4,6 and 7.

Table 1: Process of a development based thesis

STAGE	DESCRIPTION
Pre-planning	Generating a project idea - identifying organizational issues or innovation opportunities.
	Shaping the idea into a project suggestion - developing detailed project objectives and aims.

STAGE	DESCRIPTION
Planning	Development of a project plan to establish timelines, procedures, and identify potential deviations.
Monitoring	Collection of feedback to evaluate goal attainment, adherence to timelines, documentation, and communication.
Execution	Implementation of the project plan, with adjustments made to goals and objectives as needed.
Closing	Presentation of project outcomes and discussion of project journey.

The project commences with a pre-planning phase, involving a critical assessment of the project's necessity and purpose (Silfverberg 2007, 39; Virtanen 2000, 74). During this stage, the urgency and scope of the project are evaluated, along with identifying the project's audience (Virtanen 2000, 74).

Löow (2002, 22-25) subdivides the pre-planning phase into two segments: generating a project concept and refining it into a formal proposal. Initially, a project concept may emerge from the need to address an organizational issue or innovate a service or product. The subsequent project proposal provides detailed information such as project objectives and aims. Upon approval of the project proposal, planning can commence.

The purpose of a project plan is to establish a timeline, ensure correct procedures, and identify potential deviations from objectives (Virtanen 2000, 89). Thorough planning is crucial for project functionality and aids in time management. Elements of a project plan may encompass project background, objectives, action plans, timetables, and communication strategies. Clear goals strengthen a project's progression, although flexibility in modifying the plan during implementation is vital. (Virtanen 2000, 89; Löow 2002, 63.)

Following the planning phase is the execution or implementation stage, where the project plan is put into action and goals are adjusted as necessary (Löow 2002, 89). New insights during execution may prompt modifications to the project plan, ensuring project success (Löow 2002, 89).

Subsequently, the project undergoes closure, which may involve a presentation of the project's outcomes and a discussion of its journey, along with the monitoring process and gathering feedback (Löow 2002, 105-107).

In the realm of academic research, a development-based thesis concerning mental abuse within domestic violence represents a multifaceted exploration of a critical issue plaguing our society. Unlike traditional research-based thesis, a developmental thesis in this area aims not only to uncover knowledge, but also to offer tangible solutions and support mechanisms for those affected. This thesis also delves into the complex dimensions of mental abuse enacted within the context of domestic relationships.

2.2 Aims of the thesis

Our objective and the objective of the podcast is to raise awareness on the various forms of mental abuse which are usually difficult to identify. We aim to highlight loopholes and gaps within services and provide information on the existing solutions, especially for immigrant background women in Finland. In each episode we are approaching the phenomena from different angles, in order to raise awareness on identifying the red flags and the factors influencing mental violence which are not commonly available as information. Through our podcast, we aim to provide concrete information and guidance to both students and professionals in deepening their understanding of this critical issue and enhance their skills in recognizing and addressing it effectively.

2.3 Working life partner

A working life partner typically denotes an external organization or entity that engages in collaborative endeavours with researchers or students on research projects or studies with practical applications. This collaborative effort often serves as a bridge between academic theories and the real-world implementation. These partners may include corporations, governmental bodies, nonprofit entities, or any organization within the relevant professional or industrial sector that pertains to the research in question. The primary objective of such partnerships is to provide students or researchers with hands-on experience, access to real-world data, and opportunities to apply their academic knowledge in practical, real-life scenarios.

Our working-life partner is Laurea university of Applied Sciences to utilize our product as teaching and raising awareness materials.

2.4 Feedback mechanisms

Feedback is an intrinsic part of any work, as it serves as the compass to guide us toward precision and refinement. It needs to be initiated already during the planning phase of the research if possible. By actively seeking and embracing feedback, we unlock the potential for growth and improvement. It drives our research endeavours beyond the boundaries of solitary exploration, fostering collaboration, and ensuring that our contributions resonate meaningfully

with the broader academic or practical community. According to Virtanen (2000, 138-139), there is a common misconception that a project's success is determined solely by its outcome. However, a project's success begins already at the initial planning stage. In striving for excellence, feedback serves as a vital quality assurance tool, ensuring that the thesis adheres to the necessary guidelines and helps to pinpoint the shortcomings (Mattos 2023).

2.5 Istanbul convention and its implementation in Finland

The Istanbul Convention, formally known as the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, is an international treaty which came into force in 2014. It aimed at preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. It sets out comprehensive legal measures and policies for countries to address various forms of violence against women, including physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence. Countries need to take different measures to address violence against women because it is a pervasive and widespread human rights violation that affects millions of women and girls globally. Violence against women undermines their fundamental rights to life, security, and dignity, and it has serious and long-lasting consequences for individuals, families, communities, and societies. The convention emphasizes the importance of protecting and supporting victims, prosecuting perpetrators, and promoting gender equality. It also calls for the implementation of preventive measures, legal and policy reforms, awareness-raising campaigns, support services for victims, education programs and training for professionals to address the root causes of gender-based violence effectively. The Istanbul Convention represents a significant international effort to eliminate violence against women and promote gender equality across Europe and beyond. By ratifying and implementing the Convention, countries can strengthen its response to violence against women, close existing gaps in legislation, and enhance protection measures for victims. Through this, countries commit to take concrete actions to eradicate violence against women and protect the human rights of all individuals. (Council of Europe 2024.)

Overall, the Istanbul Convention provides a comprehensive and rights-based framework that empowers Finland to strengthen its response to violence against women, protect victims, and prevent future incidents. It underscores the importance of a coordinated and multi-sectoral approach involving government agencies, civil society, and international partners to eliminate gender-based violence.

The Istanbul Convention includes specific provisions addressing gender-based violence against women migrants and asylum-seekers, recognizing their heightened vulnerability. Regardless of their legal status or reasons for migration, these women face increased risks of violence and encounter similar challenges. The convention emphasizes non-discrimination based on migrant or refugee status in implementing its provisions and mandates measures to prevent violence

and support victims. Furthermore, it obligates parties to ensure that victims of violence against women are not returned to situations where their safety is compromised, including risk of torture or inhuman treatment, regardless of their residence or legal status (Council of Europe 2024).

Finland ratified The Istanbul Convention in August 2015. It has spurred increased measures to prevent intimate partner violence leading to the establishment of numerous projects and non-profit organizations that remain active to this day. In Finland, the implementation of measures to combat violence against women is supported by the National Institute for Health and Welfare. Their research and data highlight the urgency and need for comprehensive strategies to address violence against women and ensure the inclusion and support of all affected individuals. This collaboration among governmental and non-governmental organizations underscores Finland's commitment to combating violence and fostering cooperation across all sectors (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health n.d.).

2.6 Introductory terminologies as basis for the thesis topic

This section serves as a compass for navigating the thesis subject and furnishes a more detailed overview of violence in general, domestic violence, intimate partner violence, mental abuse. It provides a wider picture of the various theoretical base on terminologies to have a better understanding on this sensitive topic.

- Violence

According to World Health Organisation (n.d.), violence is defined as “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against one-self, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation.”

Violence can be described as a wide spectrum of actions, from extreme physical aggression and verbal abuse to subtle forms of harm, including emotional manipulation and systemic oppression. Violence can occur in various circumstances, such as interpersonal relationships, societal institutions, or international conflicts. It often violates human rights, disrupts social harmony, and poses a significant threat to individuals' well-being, dignity, and safety. Addressing this issue is a necessity towards peace, justice, and human rights on a global scale. (Bildjuschkin et all. 2020, 5.)

- Domestic violence(DV)

Domestic violence is a form of emotional, physical, sexual, or financial abuse with-in the family or other close relationships. Domestic violence increases inequality and causes fear. Domestic violence is a human rights violation. Violence against women and domestic violence are found in all cultures, in all social classes and in all age groups. Most of all, domestic violence causes emotional pain: fear, shame, and hopelessness. (Sosiaali ja terveystieteiden ministerio n.d..)

- Intimate partner violence (IPV)

Intimate partner violence, often abbreviated as IPV, is a definitive pattern of abusive behaviour within an intimate relationship, where one partner seeks to exert power and have control over the other. It is a pervasive issue observed across global communities. It can affect anyone, irrespective of their age, gender, or sexual orientation. This type of violence comprises a repetitive pattern of aggressive actions aimed at asserting control over an intimate partner, family member, or another close relative. The abuse can manifest in various forms, including psychological, physical, economic, or sexual abuse. Frequently, these acts of violence occur repeatedly and escalate in intensity. In the direst circumstances, they can result in severe physical harm or even fatalities. (United Nations n.d..)

- Identity

Identity refers to the unique self-concept of an individual or a group, which is formed through a complex interplay of personal experiences, societal influences, cultural connections, and self-awareness. It encompasses a range of elements, including, but not confined to, factors such as gender, ethnicity, race, nationality, sexual orientation, religion, economic standing, and personal convictions. Identity is a multifaceted concept that shapes how people view themselves and how they engage with both individuals and the broader community. It often plays a central role in an individual's self-perception and can transform over time due to life encounters and social environments. In a worldwide context, identities are diverse and varied, contributing to the intricate mosaic of human existence. (Fearon 1999)

- Multicultural identity

Multicultural identity can uphold a range of cultural, social, and sometimes linguistic bonds from their countries of origin, while simultaneously integrating into the host society. Multicultural identity refers to the complex and multifaceted sense of self that arises when individuals or groups identify with and integrate aspects of multiple cultures into their personal or collective identity. This can include elements such as values, traditions, languages, and beliefs from different cultural backgrounds. Multicultural identity recognizes and embraces diversity, acknowledging that individuals can belong to or identify with more than one culture

simultaneously. It often involves navigating and reconciling various cultural influences to form a unique and inclusive sense of identity. (Nguyen & Benet-Martinez 2010.)

- Culture



Figure 1: Definition and description of culture (Peachi Essay 2020)

Culture is a shared pattern of history, roots, values, beliefs, customs, habits, traditions, art, language, or practices that people learn through growing up in a particular society. These shared patterns identify the members of a culture group while also distinguishing those of another group. It plays a pivotal role in shaping individuals' identities and behaviours, influencing how people perceive and interact with the world around them. Culture is a big part of how people see themselves and how they act in the world (Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition 2023).

Community

A community is a group of individuals sharing common beliefs, goals, interests, religious or professional affiliations, customs, or even geographic locations. They can serve as platforms for support networks, collective actions, or social interactions. It exists throughout the world and gives a unique dynamic to the enrich the tapestry of the human society. (Martin & Mcheimech 2016.)

Trauma

Trauma can be defined as either a physical injury caused by an external force or a psychological and emotional state resulting from exposure to a stressful or harmful event. It can have long-lasting negative impacts on an individual's health, thoughts, feelings, and behaviour. Trauma can also be described as a distressing psychological experience that can result from different

forms of abuse or incidents that have a significant and lasting impact on a person's mental and physical well-being. (Ryder 2022)

2.7 Podcast as a form of communication and product

A podcast is a series of audio or video files available online. It is a form of verbal communication. Depending on the topic and the message the host(s) wants to share, it can have various forms. The aim of a podcast is to have a meaningful conversation to raise awareness on a topic or share valuable messages. It is important to be realistic about the goals and it's good to have a specific topic attracting a niched audience attention. Podcasts foster a sense of community among listeners who have faced or are going through similar experiences (Winn 2023).

The podcast series on violence prevention, produced in collaboration between Vuolle Setlementti ry and Oulun ensi- ja turvakoti ry, is intended for a wide audience including professionals who encounter phenomena of violence, as well as potential clients and their families. The episodes cover themes such as domestic violence, sexual violence, violence outside the home, as well as phenomena of spiritual and honour-related violence. Various experts in the field of violence prevention are discussing these topics in the episodes. (Vuolle Setlementti Ry n.d..)

"We hope that our podcast series will increase understanding of phenomena of violence and generate discussion on topics that may still be considered taboo in certain ways. Additionally, we hope that our series will help both professionals and individuals affected by these issues to access services," says Jarkko-Pekka Kärkkäinen, Head of Violence Prevention at Vuolle Setlementti.

These organizations leverage podcasts as a powerful medium to reach and educate their target audience, providing valuable information and support to those affected by mental abuse and intimate partner violence in Finland.

Our podcast can serve as a tool to raise awareness for students and professionals about psychological abuse in intimate partner violence (IPV) among immigrant background women in Finland. It can offer a versatile platform to gather understanding, valuable insights and practical advice from the experts featuring in our podcast. The content will provide valuable background knowledge for students at Laurea, which can help them to develop a deeper understanding of the diverse issues faced by immigrant background women, which they can apply in their professional encounters. Audio materials, such as podcasts and audio guides, are pivotal in several ways (AIContentfy 2023).

3 Domestic violence and immigrant background women in Finland

The widespread prevalence, severity, and diversity of domestic violence across different cultures necessitate further checking to enhance the identification, intervention, and prevention of domestic violence tailored to local contexts. Women are at greater risk of being sexually assaulted or exploited, either in childhood, adolescence, or as adults both within a family and community. Globally, nearly one in three women have experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, or both during their lifetime (World health Organization 2021).

Too many times, domestic violence originates from social structure, traditions, customs, and mentalities that imply the superiority of men over women.

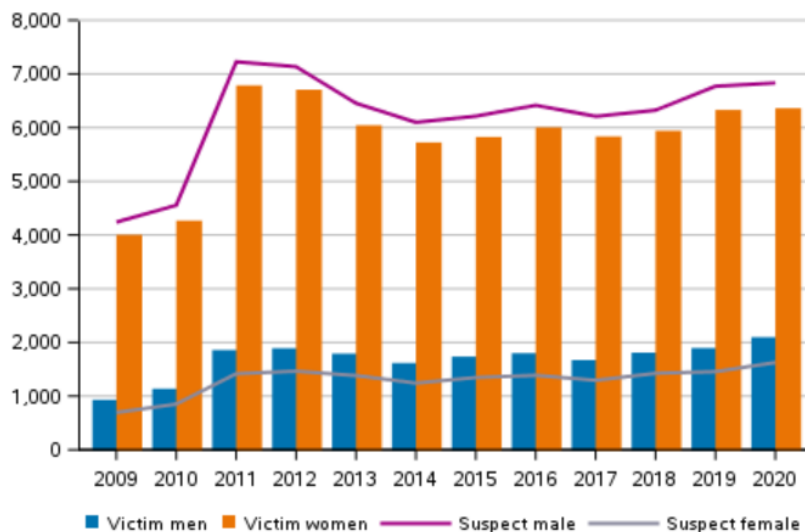


Figure 2: Adult victims of domestic & intimate partner violence by sex from 2009 to 2020 (Statistics Finland 2021)

Women constituted the majority of adult victims, making up 75.2% of reported cases. In terms of suspects, men comprised the majority, accounting for 78.1% of all reported cases. It's important to note that these statistics only reflect incidents reported to the authorities, and many cases of domestic and intimate partner violence may go unreported. In total, 39.5% of the domestic violence and intimate partner violence incidents documented in 2020 involved violence occurring within marriages or cohabiting relationships, marking a 2.9 percentage point increase compared to 2019. (Statistics Finland 2021.)

There are several aggravating factors of violent manifestations in the family, such as changes in intrafamily relationships, the emergence of powerful factors deteriorating relationships between partners - stress, increased alcohol consumption, infidelity, jealousy. A factor

increasingly encountered in recent times is the proliferation of violence through mass media, as well as the indifferent attitude of public opinion towards the commission of acts of violence in the family. In general, we human beings can be so harsh, aggressive, impatient in situations that are so simple, unimportant, situations where we can behave differently. Most of us behave as if we are deaf and blind, we admit and do not react in situations when we are subjected to violence or even when we are assaulted. The problem is that we are not even aware that we are often victims of different forms of violence. The reason might be that we are not informed, we do not know, and as a result, the situation is what it is. In other words, there is life with violent acts, we accept violence, and unconsciously, we promote it. There can be observed a series of negative effects on society in general because the well-being of each individual depends on the well-being of society: increased crime, perpetuation of violence from generation to generation, broken families, numerous divorces.

3.1 Women with immigrant background as victims of intimate partner violence in Finland

Migration is not just a change of address; it is a profound emotional journey and in many cases is a disruption from our inherent expectation balance. It is the excitement of new discoveries and the stress of leaving behind the familiar. Whether it is the excitement of new beginnings or the daunting challenges of adapting to the unknown, migration reshapes the narrative of our existence. It is a journey that beckons us into uncharted territories, both geographically and emotionally. In times of crisis, such as fleeing conflict, the emotional rollercoaster intensifies. The psychosocial processes become a storm we must weather, and the resilience we find within ourselves become the anchor that keeps us grounded. It's the act of navigating the storm with resilience, knowing that the sun will eventually break through the clouds (Siegel 2024).

Immigrant background women refer to women who have migrated from one country to another, typically settling in a new country or community. They might face unique challenges and needs due to factors such as language barriers, cultural differences, legal status, and social isolation. As clients, immigrant women may seek support and services related to various aspects of their lives, including but not limited to health care, education, employment, housing, legal assistance, social integration, and protection from violence or abuse. It is important for service providers to understand the diverse backgrounds and experiences of immigrant women in order to effectively address their specific needs and promote their well-being. (Kyllönen-Saarnio & Nurmi 2005, 13)

The impact and consequences of psychological abuse are significant, varying greatly depending on individuals and influenced by numerous underlying factors. Immigrant women in Finland encounter heightened challenges when facing psychological abuse due to factors such as language barriers, cultural differences, societal norms, expectations, and limited access to information. These factors profoundly influence how individuals may respond to and cope with

instances of psychological abuse within intimate partnerships. (Finnish Institute on Health and Welfare. 2023.)

International agreements stipulate that assistance and support should be provided to women and girls who have encountered violence. Apart from intimate partner violence, violence against immigrant women and girls encompasses honour-related violence, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, discrimination, and racial violence. Prior to arriving in Finland, women and girls may have experienced violence in wars or conflicts, or they may have become victims of trafficking. However, practical experience suggests that violence against immigrant women often goes unnoticed, with only the most severe cases being brought to light. Immigrant women face barriers when seeking help, often stemming from language and civic skill deficiencies. Coordinated efforts against violence and support provided in the victim's native language facilitate the survival of immigrant victims. Victims have the right to receive information about their legal status and options, and incidents of violence against them must be documented to ensure legal protection. Additionally, an interpreter must always be present in matters concerning violence. Breaking the cycle of violence necessitates the expertise and collaboration of various professionals. Network resources can be optimally utilized by developing cooperative practices among organizations and authorities. Immigrant clients may require concrete assistance, which organizations can often provide more flexibly through special services than the municipal service system. The Non-Discrimination Act aims to ensure ethnic equality, thus requiring that minorities be considered when designing local operation models for combating violence. (Kyllönen-Saarnio & Nurmi 2005, s. 2.)

3.2 Types and dynamics of domestic violence

A pivotal milestone in advancing women's rights was the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, aka CEDAW, in 1979. This convention marked a forward-thinking initiative, shining a spotlight on female rights. Finland ratified this convention in 1986, subsequently leading to the development of various conventions, campaigns, and studies focused on achieving equal rights and equitable treatment for women (Allinen-Calderon, Kanervo & Nurmi 2011). There are various forms of domestic violence, some of which are invisible and more difficult to understand (Bildjuschkin et al. 2020, s. 2.2).

Types of domestic violence can be categorized under few patterns (Liimatainen & Rantaeskola 2022, s 1.3):

Table 2: Types of violence

Type of violence	Definition
Social violence	It is also known as social abuse and is a violent behaviour that aims to cut the victim off from family, friends, or community. It can also involve a person or people trying to damage your relationships with others. Those engaging in social abuse may also endeavour to tarnish the victim's reputation or destroy their standing in the community. Social abuse can include things done in the home, in public, over the phone, or on the internet and social media.
Sexual violence	It includes rape, attempted rape, coercion into various forms of sexual activity or sexual intercourse, threatening sexual violence, sexual debasement, forcing into pornography, prohibiting use of contraception, forcing an abortion, restricting sexual self-determination.
Religious violence	It is forcing compliance with a religious conviction, threat of violence or use of violence with references to religion to culture as justification, e.g., honour violence, threats rooted in religion.
Psychological violence	Also known as mental or emotional abuse, involving verbal and non-verbal communication to try to control someone or harm them emotionally. It manifests in the form of subjugation, criticism, name-calling, disdain, control, restriction of social interaction, morbid jealousy, isolation, breaking things, harming pets, or threatening any of the above or suicide. Since this form of violence occur under the careful and subtle nuances of manipulation and control, it is usually very difficult to substantiate its evidence due to absence of visible scars. It is a silent assailant that thrives in an intimate relationship, where the victim gasps for evidence and techniques for survival with hardly any support from anyone. Also, in many cases of psychological violence, the perpetrator uses close family members and community people to manipulate their minds leading to degradation and isolation from others.

Type of violence	Definition
Physical violence	It is the most common form of domestic violence. It can be in the form of shoving, punching, kicking, pulling the hair, hitting the head, scratching, tearing, shaking, using a firearm or edged weapon, threatening physical violence.
Economic violence	It can include preventing independent use of money, preventing participation in financial decision-making or forcing the handing over of own money to another person, threatening financial violence or blackmail.
Digital violence	Digital violence encompasses acts or expressions that cause harm through the misuse of digital tools and technologies. It is done to harass, control, monitor, or stalk individuals. It can be manifested through for example, the use of emails, messages, or different social media platforms.
Chemical violence	It is the intentional harming of a person's physical or psychological wellbeing using medicines, psycho active substances, chemicals, solvents, or other similar substances. It is the deliberate use of toxic substances, liquid or solid to poison a victim and the environment.
Honour-related violence	It refers to forms of violence that are justified by the preservation or restoration of the family, clan, or community's common perceived honour. It is deeply entrenched in beliefs and can have devastating consequences for the victims, including psychological trauma, social isolation, and death in extreme cases.

All the above forms of violence are interconnected with psychological violence. In any form of violence experienced by women; whether it's physical, sexual, chemical, digital, religious, social, or economical, there's always an underlying connection to psychological violence. The impact of these various forms of violence extends beyond the physical realm, deeply affecting the mental well-being of the individual. The consequences of such psychological violence are diverse and can manifest differently from one person to another. This interconnectedness underscores the importance of addressing psychological violence as a central aspect of any comprehensive approach to combating violence against women. The psychological impact of

any form of violence can have a lasting impact leading to anxiety, trauma, a sense of powerlessness. Psychological violence manifests in various ways. These include ridicule, intimidation, and mockery of the victim's cultural or religious beliefs. Additionally, psychological violence may involve blackmail and threats. Threats can range from taking away children to institutionalizing or even killing them. Other forms of psychological violence include the destruction of family property and exhibiting possessive behavior. Furthermore, perpetrators may exert excessive control over the victim's time, words, and actions. In today's digital age, the increase of digital platforms has introduced new avenues for abuse and harassment. The constant monitoring, invasive scrutiny, and targeted attacks experienced online can have profound psychological effects. It leaves the victim feeling isolated, anxious, and traumatized. They may deny the victim's right to have friends or social contacts, and subject them to constant interrogation. (Peabody 2024.)

- Cycle of abuse

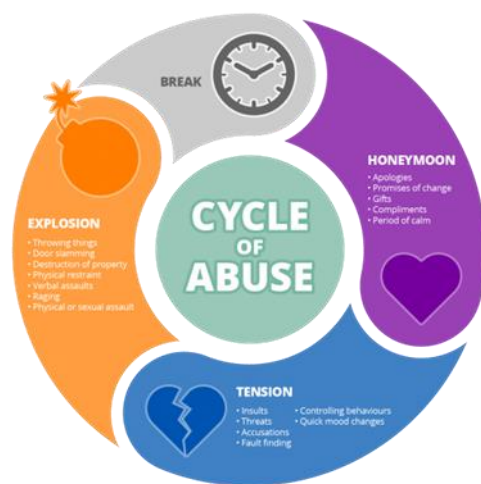


Figure 3: Cycle of abuse (Concussion awareness Training Tool n.d.)

The figure above (Figure 3) illustrates a cyclical pattern of violence and its eventual eruption, emphasizing the importance of recognizing potential signs of abuse, such as concussion, to increase awareness. A comprehensive understanding of domestic violence necessitates an examination of power dynamics, often characterized by one partner exerting control over the other through physical, emotional, psychological, or financial means. Referred to as intimate partner violence due to its occurrence within relationships, gender dynamics play a significant role, with men typically occupying the role of perpetrators and women as victims. However, domestic violence can also manifest in same-sex relationships or involve other forms of power imbalances, including economic or social disparities. Abusers employ various tactics, such as isolation, resource restriction, threats, violence, or emotional manipulation, to maintain dominance and control. It is crucial to acknowledge that domestic violence is a severe and

potentially life-threatening issue, and victims may face significant obstacles when attempting to leave an abusive relationship. Various resources, such as hotlines, shelters, and advocacy organizations, are available to support those affected by domestic violence (National Domestic Violence Hotline n.d..)

- Leaving an abusive relationship



Figure 4:Challenges in leaving an abusive relationship

As shown in Figure 4, victims of intimate partner violence often face numerous challenges and barriers when considering leaving an abusive relationship. The question of why people stay in such relationships should not blame the survivor, but rather focus on understanding the dynamics that keep them trapped. Factors such as fear for their safety, concern for their children, isolation, the cycle of violence, lack of resources, institutional and social responses all contribute to the complexity of leaving. Institutional responses, such as clergy and secular counsellors prioritize marriage preservation over addressing violence issues. They also limit the support from law enforcement which worsen the difficulty of seeking help. Additionally, social barriers, cultural norms, disabilities, sexual orientation, and immigration status further complicate the situation for survivors. Leaving is a process that may involve multiple attempts before permanent separation, highlighting the importance of providing comprehensive support and resources to survivors. (Women against abuse n.d..)

Leaving an abusive relationship is a challenging process that involves acknowledging the abuse, finding support, and processing the experience. Survivors can re-build their self-esteem through a non-judgmental support system, self-care, and professional help. Barriers to leaving an abusive relationship can include financial stress, fear of violence, lack of support, and social expectations (women's aid 2023).

3.3 Research and exploration of psychological violence in Finland

Finland, known for its commitment to human rights and social equality, maintains a progressive stance on addressing violence, including intimate partner violence (IPV). The Finnish legal framework and approach to violence reflect a society that prioritizes the well-being and safety of its residents, acknowledging the importance of gender equality and protection against domestic abuse. (Ruuskanen 2020.)

Finland adopts a holistic, multi-agency approach to combat violence. Law enforcement, social services, health professionals, and NGOs collaborate to provide comprehensive support to victims. Shelter services for victims of domestic violence are available nationwide. These shelters offer a haven, counselling, and support to those fleeing abusive relationships. Support services extend to legal assistance, employment guidance, and therapeutic interventions. (Police of Finland n.d.)

Research conducted through national population-based studies in 1997, 2005, and 2010 reveals the widespread issue of domestic violence in Finland. These studies demonstrate that Finnish men and women generally encounter similar levels of physical violence. However, men tend to face violence and threats from strangers more often than women, while women are disproportionately affected by sexual and domestic violence. The repercussions of domestic violence are notably more severe and enduring for women compared to men. This gender disparity is also evident in homicide data, with a significant majority of female victims being killed by their spouse or former spouse between 2013 and 2018. Additionally, according to a previous EU-wide population study, about one in three Finnish women have experienced physical or sexual domestic violence in their lifetime, ranking Finland third highest in the EU. Factors such as marital status, sexual orientation, nationality, and perceptions of domestic violence prevalence contribute to this figure. Half of Finnish women have encountered psychological abuse from a current or former partner, with 24% experiencing stalking and 42% facing sexual harassment. (Siltata et al 2023, 23.)

In Finland, it is often challenging to fully comprehend the seriousness of threats. Prosecutors and law enforcement officers require comprehensive training to effectively intervene in cases of domestic violence. Currently, there is a lack of systematic training for these professionals, with voluntary and limited training opportunities focusing solely on domestic violence and sexual offenses. This training fails to address other critical forms of violence against women, such as stalking, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, and honour-related violence. All of those can lead to psychological trauma and the consequences are huge. This lack of training concerns to the application of Criminal Code offenses, such as assault, coercion, and intimidation. (GREVIO 2019, 41-42.)

Various sources provide data on the prevalence of such violence. Monitoring and assessing the extent of violence against women, including domestic violence, involve examining reported incidents and conducting crime victim surveys. These surveys aim to estimate the magnitude of unreported incidents that escape the attention of authorities. Additionally, crime victim surveys delve into the specific forms of violence experienced by victims. A substantial portion of violence against women is believed to be underreported, remaining concealed from authorities. (GREVIO 2019, s. II - E.)

Based on practical observations, instances of violence against immigrant women often go unnoticed, with only the more severe cases being brought to light. Various obstacles prevent immigrant women from seeking assistance, primarily linked to language barriers and a lack of familiarity with Finnish laws and services. When encountering violence in client interactions, it is crucial for employees to evaluate the level of danger in the situation and assess the needs of the client and her children for support and services. (Kyllönen-Saarnio & Nurmi 2005.)

Intimate partner violence, particularly mental abuse, is a pervasive issue affecting women globally. Immigrant women, facing unique challenges in a new country, often encounter barriers in identifying and seeking help for mental abuse. While ample resources exist on available support mechanisms and organizations, there is a conspicuous gap in aiding women in recognizing and understanding mental abuse due to its often-invisible nature. The absence of visible scars or tangible proof can make it more challenging for victims to identify their experiences as abuse, hindering their ability to seek help. (GREVIO 2019, 42.)

Victims have the right to be informed about their legal status and options. To safeguard the client's legal rights, documentation of the violence against her is imperative. Additionally, an interpreter must be present whenever addressing matters related to violence. (Kyllönen-Saarnio & Nurmi 2005.)

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health in Finland has on their website has a dedicated section to domestic violence covering also intimate partner violence in Finland. This ministry is responsible for planning and overseeing domestic violence against women and intimate partners violence prevention. Based on Istanbul Convention, a special committee was established in 2017 to combat violence against women and domestic violence which will continue till 2025. In their webpage, various information is available in Finnish related to violence against women and intimate partner violence. (Sosiaali ja terveystieteiden ministerio n.d.)

While Finland's approach is commendable, challenges persist, particularly concerning the underreporting of IPV. Despite the efforts, gender-based violence against women poses a significant challenge to human rights and gender equality in Finland. Each professional group has its own perspective on domestic violence, influenced by their understanding, roles, tasks, and organizational structures. Organizational differences and divergent goals can hinder well-

meaning efforts. Numerous findings highlight the need for organizations and professionals involved in domestic violence intervention to reassess their training, practices, and organizational structures. (Notko et al. 2019.)

Organizations like Monika Naiset, Naistenlinja, Nollalinja, RIKU, Turvakoti, Vantaa Kerava Hyvinvointialue, etc. provide excellent guidance and services to the victims. We reached out to few organizations to understand how each of these organizations tackle psychological violence in intimate partner violence, based on the organization's vision, mission, approach, capability and limitations.

Based on the interview findings with key actors providing support for victims of intimate partner violence (IPV) with immigrant backgrounds in Finland, several important insights have emerged.

Table 3: Summary of findings based on the interviews

Topic	Summary of the received answers
Available services	Various support services are accessible for DV/IPV victims, including shelters, support centres, hotlines, and multiprofessional meetings (Marak). These services offer a range of assistance, from safe housing to psycho-social support.
Guidance and support process	When victims seek help, workers inform them about available services and guide them accordingly. This may include referrals to shelters, counselling, legal advice, and assistance with integration into Finnish society.
Identification and engagement	Recognizing signs of DV/IPV and engaging with victims depend on the victim's disclosure or observation of symptoms. Workers are trained to recognize these signs and offer assistance sensitively.
Specific needs	Victims may require emotional, psychological, legal, or practical support, depending on their circumstances. This includes mental health services, legal advice, shelter, and assistance with children if applicable.
Cultural and linguistic barriers	Language barriers and cultural attitudes can hinder access to services. Additionally, systemic racism, societal attitudes, and family pressures may complicate matters for immigrant victims.

Topic	Summary of the received answers
Challenges faced by immigrant background victims	Immigrant background victims may face unique challenges, such as lack of familiarity with Finnish laws, fear of deportation, and cultural norms that normalize abuse or discourage seeking help.
Gaps in services	Challenges include high turnover rates among workers, limited shelter availability, inadequate mental health services, factors influencing psychological abuse, and gaps in comprehensive support for victims with multiple needs.
Trauma-Informed approach	Solutions are oriented towards offering trauma-informed care, recognizing cultural distinctions, and enabling victims to make autonomous decisions.
Upcoming changes	Efforts such as the Prevent Program seek to improve responses to cases of domestic violence and intimate partner violence. Ongoing education and training play a vital role in enhancing the quality of services and promoting cultural sensitivity.
Outcome measurement	Outcomes are evaluated through surveys and assessments, focusing on the effectiveness of the services provided and the well-being of victims.
Trends and changes	Awareness of domestic violence and/or intimate partner violence is increasing, and victims are more willing to seek help. New challenges, such as digital violence and economic abuse, have emerged in recent years.
Rights of victims	Victims with resident permits have rights to social benefits and legal protections. Separation from an abusive partner should not affect their residency status.
Support for undocumented migrants	Services are available for undocumented migrants, although their situations may vary. Efforts are made to provide support and find suitable housing options.

Overall, addressing domestic violence and/or intimate partner violence among immigrant population requires a multifaceted approach, including culturally sensitive services, legal protections, and ongoing support for victims to break free from abusive situations. One of the

key challenges in Finland regarding psychological abuse is the absence of the penal code to criminalize it (Tolvanen & Silvennoinen 2023).

Based on our discussions with these organizations and victims as well, we have recognized some gaps within the services:

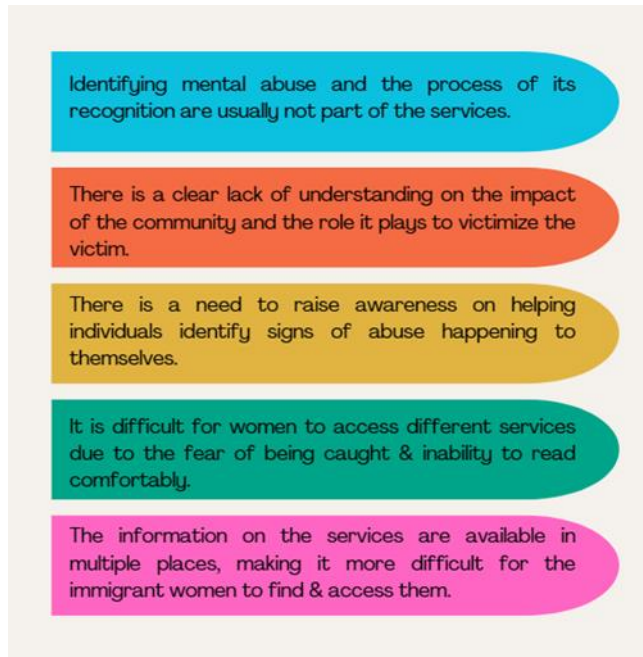


Figure 5: Common gaps in the services based on the interview responses

In our podcast, we addressed the identified gaps in the above figure (Figure 5) to provide concrete information to the listeners. Our dedication stemmed from a desire to make a meaningful impact, driven by the urgency to address the gaps and challenges faced by individuals affected by intimate partner violence. The podcast offers a dynamic and evolving educational experience, allowing students to get latest information, policy developments, and advocacy efforts related to mental abuse and intimate partner violence. We believe that our podcast will encourage active engagement and reflection. Prompting students to think critically about social justice issues, power dynamics, and systemic barriers that perpetuate intimate partner violence and hinder victims' access to support services.

4 Implementation

Our target group is mainly Laurea university of Applied Sciences students and professionals. To gather necessary information on the available services, we reached out to various organizations in Finland who work with intimate partner violence and abuse. We gathered the already

available data from different organizations who are working with women, immigrant women, violence, abuse, and mental health to identify their needs and challenges.

4.1 Action plan

Utilizing diverse sources such as online databases, webpages, governmental directories, and community networks, we meticulously identified a comprehensive list of organizations providing services related to intimate partner violence. We participated in Honour-related violence seminar and panel discussions from Loisto Settlementti, Lähisuhdeväkivalta seminar organized by Laurea, Tyttöihin ja naisiin kohdistuvan väkivallan eri muodot seminar organized by NiceHearts and subsequently, we scheduled individual meetings with each organization that felt relevant to us for our thesis development. Based on the information collected from the various mentioned sources, we started to plan the podcast episodes.

These organizations are working on the complex issues of immigrant women, domestic violence, intimate partner violence and different forms of abuse. Subsequently, we embarked on the process of reaching out to each organization through various means; including emails, phone calls, messages, in-person visits, to establish contact and initiate the discussion. Simultaneously, we were considering the prospect of finding a suitable working-life partner for our thesis. Through collaboration with these organizations, we collected a credible amount of information. This helped us to plan our podcast discussions accordingly. We focused on the education needs of future professionals and also the needs of immigrant background women facing psychological violence in Finland. It was apparent from various responses that the factors contributing to psychological abuse amongst immigrant background women are not clear or known. Additionally, there is a need for increased awareness amongst victims themselves regarding the recognition of abusive behaviours. Therefore, we decided to create podcast episodes on how to recognize psychological violence, various factors influencing it in intimate partner violence (IPV) and the available support services available in Finland.

To give a precise idea about our thesis and what exactly we were aiming to achieve as a product, we shared our initial thesis plan with the organizations. Based on that, most of the organizations expressed willingness to engage in detailed discussions regarding the topic and potential collaboration opportunities.

We developed a questionnaire for the organizations to collect extensive data regarding victims of domestic violence (DV) and intimate partner violence (IPV), specifically focusing on psychological abuse within these contexts. At the same time, our focus of getting information was limited to immigrant background women in Finland. Monika-Naiset, Nollalinja, NiceHearts (Vahva nainen), Vantaa Kerava Hyvinvointialue and Police answered our questions. We modified some of the questions accordingly based on each organization's goals and approach.

Table 4: Common interview question topic

Number	Common interview questions topic
	Types of services or support currently available for DV/IPV victims.
	Generic process to provide guidance and support to the victims.
	Cultural and linguistic barriers.
	Most common challenges from clients while seeking guidance and support.
	Any specific traits & need for women victims of immigrant background.
	Ensuring cultural sensitivity and inclusivity.
	Providing guidance and support to victims who do not have any visible evidence of the abuse.
	Resident permit based on family ties and undocumented migrants' rights.
	Support available for undocumented migrant victims.
	Assessing the safety and security of DV/IPV victims in their interactions.
	Statistics or trends related to reported cases of domestic violence within immigrant communities with a focus on mental abuse in recent years.
	Gaps or areas of improvement in the currently available services.
	Any trends or changes in the characteristics and need victims that came under observation in recent years?
	Trainings provided to professionals on handling and identifying mental abuse victims.

We also had open discussions beyond the questionnaire to collect as much information as possible. Tailoring the questions to align with each organization's services enabled us to gather relevant data. We analysed all the gathered information to validate our thesis framework that psychological or mental abuse is typically overlooked in the existing support systems and services in Finland. Our analysis revealed lack of specific trainings or discourse within these services regarding the role of communities in such abuse, the challenge of balancing collective community ties with individual identity, how these communities can turn as barriers to prevent

immigrant background women from seeking help or speaking out about their experiences of psychological abuse in Finland, as well as prevalent misconceptions surrounding the topic.

4.2 General aim and process of our podcast

One of the key outcomes of this development-based thesis is the creation of audio materials tailored to raise awareness & provide insights to students, professionals and interested individuals. Our aim is that through discussions and reflective exercises inspired by the podcast episodes, students can explore their own biases, assumptions, and ethical responsibilities as future professionals.



Figure 6: Benefits of utilizing podcast as a learning method

A podcast focusing on mental abuse within intimate partner violence (IPV) serves as an excellent educational tool for students for several reasons. Firstly, as illustrated in Figure 6, podcasts offer a convenient and accessible medium for learning, allowing students to engage with the material at their own pace and schedule. They can listen to episodes while commuting, exercising, or completing other tasks, maximizing their time and flexibility. Additionally, podcasts provide a platform for in-depth exploration and analysis of complex topics like mental abuse, offering detailed insights, expert interviews, and real-life case studies that enrich students' understanding. (Gray 2022.)

Moreover, podcasts facilitate experiential learning by incorporating narratives and personal accounts, giving students a firsthand glimpse into the realities and its impacts. This immersive

approach helps students develop empathy, critical thinking skills, and a deeper appreciation for the complexities of the discussion topics. Overall, a podcast focusing on mental abuse within intimate partner violence serves as a valuable educational tool for students by providing accessible, immersive, and interdisciplinary learning experiences that deepen their understanding of this critical social issue and prepare them to be empathetic, informed, and effective advocates for survivors. (Moore 2022.)

Podcasts foster interdisciplinary learning by drawing information from various fields (Moore 2022). Therefore, we decided to bring experts from different fields such as psychology, sociology, law and law enforcements to provide a comprehensive understanding of mental abuse within the context of intimate partner violence. Throughout our engagement in various seminars and workshops, we encountered several professionals who had extensive expertise and experience in this field. We took the opportunity to introduce ourselves and our topic to each of them, to gather further information and understanding surrounding the complexities of the issue. Based on our need and their interest, we invited Johanna Aapakallio and Pia Puu Oksanen to join us as our esteemed guests for the podcast episodes.

Producing a co-hosted podcast involves several key steps to ensure smooth execution and delivery of quality content. Here's a practical plan for producing podcast episodes:



Figure 7:Podcast production

The podcast production process, as illustrated in Figure 7, involved several key stages, beginning with planning and research to define the topic and target audience. Once the topic

was established, scripting and outlining episodes took place, ensuring a cohesive structure and engaging content. Recording sessions followed, during which audio materials were captured, featuring guest interviews or expert insights and our own discussions. Post-production involved editing and mixing the raw audio recordings to remove mistakes, enhance quality, and add intros, outros, and branding elements. Quality assurance checks were conducted to ensure consistency and accuracy before episodes were published on chosen platforms and promoted through various channels. Throughout the process, collaboration and attention to detail were paramount, aiming to deliver informative and engaging content to the audience. (Brooke 2024.)

Pre-Production Phase:

From the beginning, our goal was to create a valuable addition to the existing resources on this important subject. We identified some gaps in the coverage of psychological violence within domestic violence services. Realizing the increasing popularity of podcasts as a means of sharing information, we believed this format can be an ideal platform for reaching and supporting victims. We discussed about our end product idea with many people to understand the viability of this and received very positive encouragement to proceed with it.

We reached out to various organizations involved in addressing issues related to intimate partner violence (IPV) to understand their interest in our initiative. Based on the positive feedback we continued with the action plan.

Each host will take on specific roles and responsibilities within the podcast. One will serve as the primary host, leading the conversation and providing commentary on the topics discussed. The other will serve as the co-host, contributing insights, asking questions, and facilitating interviews with guests.

Each episode will have a flexible duration ranging from 30 minutes to an hour, depending on the complexity of the topic and the depth of discussion.

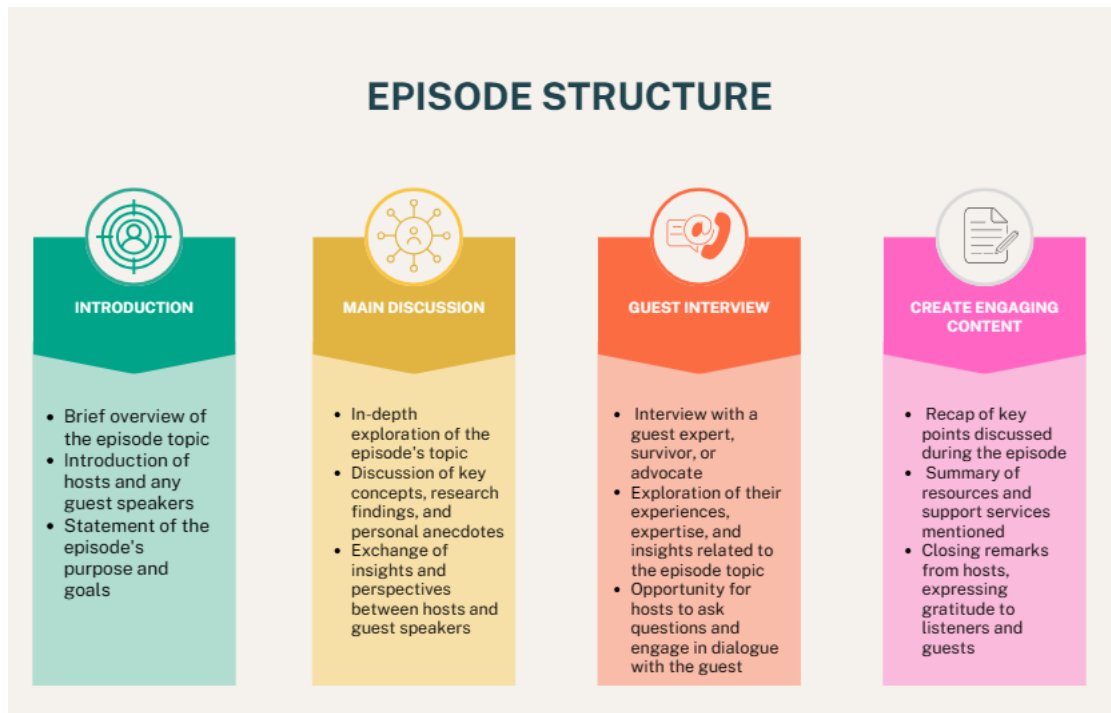


Figure 8: Episode structure

The podcast episodes follow a structured format as illustrated in Figure 8, beginning with an overview of the topic followed by introductions of hosts and any guest speakers. The purpose and goals of each episode are clearly stated before diving into an in-depth exploration of the topic, including key concepts, research findings, and personal anecdotes. Insights and perspectives are exchanged between hosts and guest speakers. The episodes conclude with a recap of key points, mention of resources and support services, and closing remarks expressing gratitude to listeners and guests.

- Logistics and Equipment

We reached out to Laurea podcast room technical support for the podcast room accessibility and support. After effective communication with Laurea's technical administrator Juha Takanen, we obtained the necessary assistance to utilize the podcast room and its equipment. At Laurea, RÖDE Connect is used as the podcasting and streaming software, and there is a separate podcasting room with the needed equipment for conducting the activity. The room provides a professional location with minimal background noise and good acoustics. We have conducted test recordings to ensure the audio quality and equipment functionality.

Production Phase:

During the production phase of our podcast, we focused on bringing our episode outline and script to life while allowing for natural conversation and improvisation. This phase is where we transformed our ideas into engaging content that resonates with our audience.

First, we started by reviewing our episode outline, which served as a roadmap for the discussion. It outlined the key points we wanted to cover, the flow of the conversation, and any important information or research we wanted to share. However, we didn't stick too rigidly to the outline; instead, we used it as a guide to keep us on track while allowing room for spontaneity.

Next, we dived into scripting the episode. While we had a general script outlining the main topics and questions we wanted to address, we left plenty of room for natural conversation and improvisation.

During recording, we engaged with each other and the guest by maintaining a conversational tone. We spoke naturally, using everyday language and tone that feels relatable to our listeners. We also encouraged each other to share personal anecdotes or insights, adding depth and authenticity to the conversation. The production phase was where we brought our podcast to life, infusing it with energy, authenticity, and engaging content.

Together, we developed key questions for the podcast essential for achieving our thesis objectives. After getting confirmation of the recording dates, we arranged pre-interviews with our guests to thoroughly discuss the interview expectations. During these sessions, we collaborated closely with the guests, making necessary adjustments to the questions to ensure that the messages would be effectively conveyed in alignment with our goals and covered all relevant aspects.

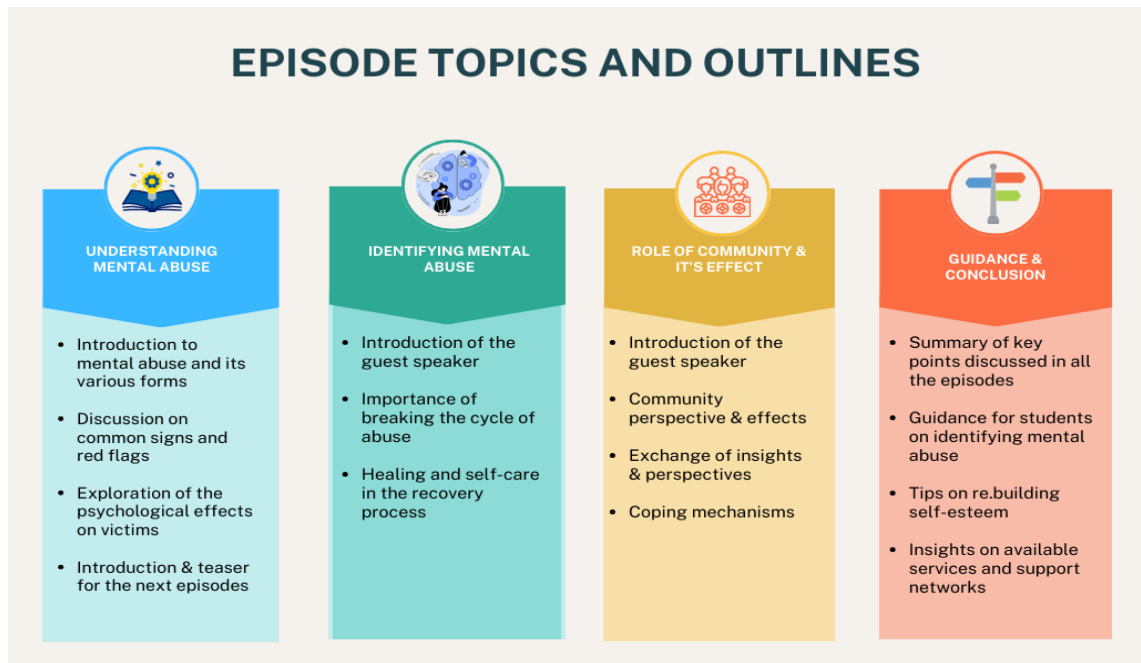


Figure 9: Episode topics

Episode 1 - Introduction

In the first episode we shared our personal and professional experiences as well as some discussion on the cultural differences related to the topic: trauma and normalization of domestic violence passed. We also touched upon available research or studies concerning Finland's situation and approach, along with few definitions to give clear idea about the various terminologies that will be used in the next episodes.

Episode 2 - Identifying mental abuse

In our second episode on domestic violence, we dived deeper into the topic of emotional and psychological abuse with psychologist and human rights advisor Pia Puu Oksanen. We explored how to recognize mental abuse both as professionals and victims, the common misconceptions surrounding this issue and how to address it.

Episode 3 - Role of a community

In this episode, we dived deeper into the societal and community dynamics that affect individuals' experiences of emotional and mental abuse. Our guest is Johanna Aapakallio from Loisto Settlementti, providing insights into the strategies for community and organizational intervention, how they can affect an individual and practical advice for aspiring professionals entering this field.

Episode 4 - Guidance and conclusions

This final episode served as a conclusion, during which we recapped and synthesized the key discussions from our previous episodes. We aimed to provide a concise summary of the most valuable insights shared by our esteemed guests, highlighting the key takeaways in a clear and brief format. Finally, we shared information on available services, how to access them, organization names and contacts, ongoing projects on support for victims of IPV with a focus on mental abuse.

Post-Production Phase:

We have shared the un-edited podcast recording with few peers, well-wishers and our thesis supervisors for feedback. In the postproduction phase of our co-hosted podcast, we are focusing on editing and mixing, adding intros & outros, quality assurance, publishing, and promotion to ensure that our episodes are polished and ready for our audience.

First, we are tackling the editing and mixing. After each recording session, we downloaded the raw audio recordings to our laptops for editing. We remove any long pauses, mistakes, or irrelevant content that we feel detracts from the overall flow of the episode. Additionally, we adjust audio levels to ensure consistency and enhance the quality of the sound. If desired, we may also add music or sound effects to enhance the listening experience. Our goal is to seamlessly blend co-hosted segments and guest interviews for a smooth and engaging listening experience.

Next, we focus on adding intros and outros to our episodes. We either record or select pre-recorded intros and outros that align with the theme and tone of each episode. We incorporate music, branding elements, and calls to action to create a cohesive and professional opening and closing for each episode.

Once our editing and mixing are complete, we move on to quality assurance. We listen to the edited episodes in their entirety to ensure that the audio is clear, the content flows smoothly, and there are no errors or inconsistencies. If necessary, we make any revisions or corrections to maintain the quality and consistency of our podcast.

5 Ethical framework

When undertaking the development of a thesis, particularly one addressing the sensitive topic of mental abuse within intimate partner violence, it is essential to adhere to a set of ethical guidelines to safeguard the integrity of the research and ensure the well-being and rights of the participants involved.

Firstly, every researcher bears the responsibility of implementing good scientific practice, characterized by honesty, care, and accuracy throughout the research process. This entails sincere implementation, responsible publication of results, and respectful referencing of the work of other researchers. Additionally, adherence to the requirements for handling scientific information, including obtaining necessary research permits and undergoing ethics evaluations, is crucial. Prior agreement on the rights, responsibilities, and principles of all parties involved in the research is imperative. (Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity, 2023.)

Ethical considerations also extend to the treatment of participants in research involving and prioritizing the well-being and safety of participants are crucial ethical imperatives. Obtaining informed consent from all participants, respecting their autonomy, and ensuring confidentiality are paramount. Additionally, steps must be taken to minimize harm to participants, including providing support resources and being culturally sensitive in research approaches. Maintaining reflexivity throughout the research process the integrity of the research outcomes (Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity, 2023). By adhering to these ethical guidelines, we could conduct our development-based thesis on mental abuse within intimate partner violence in a manner that upholds ethical standards, respecting the rights of participants and the sensitivity of the gathered information.

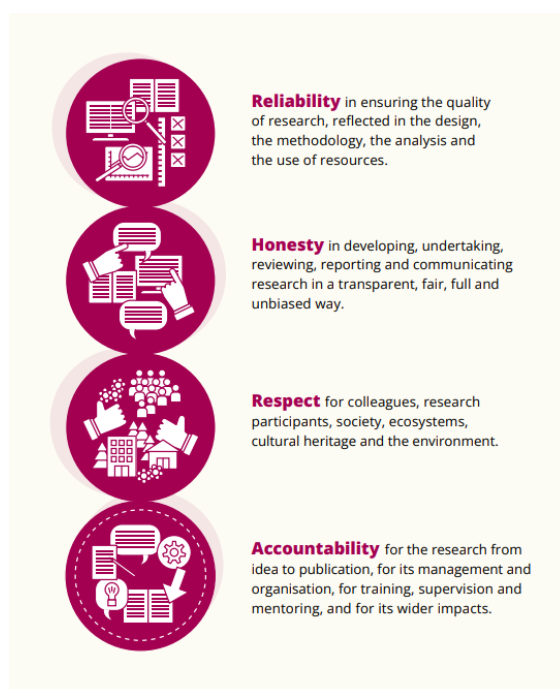


Figure 10: The basic principles of research integrity according to ECCRI* (Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity. 2023)

*ECCRI - European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

Throughout the thesis project, we followed good scientific practice meticulously. We gathered information on the use of interpreters, diverse nature of clients, maintaining cultural sensitivity while assessing the clients' situations, availability of trainings on the topic and methodologies used, gaps in the services and specific traits of immigrant women accessing the services. This was done in a consistent and transparent manner with each service provider & victim to ensure the reliability and comparability of the data. Employing coherent procedures enhanced the credibility of the thesis. We maintained openness and honesty regarding the purpose and objectives of the thesis in all interactions; explaining the reasons for collecting information on their services, where the collected data will be stored and transparency about utilization of the collected information. We ensured that the information obtained from each of the organizations were kept confidential from each other. We were also careful about the accessibility and reliability of the webpages that we used in our basis research. We ensured that the webpages and online sources are reputable, reliable, credible, and accessible to all. We were mindful of potential biases or agendas present in the content, and critically evaluated all the sources for objectivity. Since this a collaborative thesis work, we maintained accountability and respect for each other throughout the tenure of the process.

6 Feedback and evaluation

Feedback and evaluation are crucial for ensuring the success and effectiveness of a thesis project. The feedback helps in identifying areas of success, challenges faced during implementation, and suggested measures for improvement. (The Writing Center 2024)

6.1 Self-evaluation

As we reflect on our journey in producing our thesis and the podcast, we recognize the importance of evaluation of our own work. Overall, our self-evaluation process involves a critical reflection on the effectiveness of the methods used, the challenges faced, and the lessons learned throughout the thesis project. Initially, we were focusing only on women with immigrant background as our clients'. From that angle, later we shifted our focus towards Laurea students and professionals, as our end product will be used by them. With this shift of client's perspective, we had to make changes in our thesis to ensure that throughout the document the target group remains the same. Throughout the process, we have thoroughly gathered information from various sources to ensure a comprehensive understanding on the topic. This information gathering part was instrumental in broadening our understanding of how mental abuse cases are generally handled in Finland, which enriched our thesis work with diverse perspectives.

Working on the topic of intimate partner violence, especially focusing on mental abuse, has been deeply emotional for us. We've had to constantly remind ourselves to separate our personal emotions and experiences from the work. We believed that it is crucial to stick to facts and seek validation from authoritative sources. We found ourselves revisiting our documents multiple times, ensuring a professional approach to identifying gaps in the system and offer solutions. Our decision to focus on psychological or mental abuse within the context of domestic violence arose from an understanding of its underexplored nature and profound impact on victims and survivors. By prioritizing this aspect, we aimed to flash a spotlight on a crucial yet often overlooked dimension of intimate partner violence.

A key highlight of our work was the emphasis placed on uncovering the unseen factors that contribute to mental abuse. We sought to provide a deeper understanding of the influencing factors of mental abuse within domestic violence with a holistic approach.

Our decision to present our findings in the form of a podcast reflects our commitment to accessibility and outreach, aiming to engage a wider audience in discussions surrounding this critical issue. For both of us, venturing into podcast production was unfamiliar territory, as we lacked prior knowledge or experience in this area. Nonetheless, grasping the process proved manageable, and we initiated the work smoothly with the help of Laurea podcast tools and instructions. The aspect that demanded additional time and attention was editing, as we aimed to deliver a polished end product to the best of our capabilities. Also, we needed to do few retakes for our introduction episode to ensure that we have covered all the necessary points within the planned time.

We contacted each of the guests with the detailed explanation of our thesis and what we want to achieve through our podcasts. We also requested for few probable dates for availability. We had to adjust our own schedule; and especially since we are doing it together, it needed more adjustments.

On the reflection of our collaborative journey in producing our bachelor's thesis, we are deeply satisfied with our collective efforts and the synergy we achieved as a team. Since this is not individual work, from the beginning we knew that a collaborative mindset, flexibility, and open communication will be the key factors to success. All along, we continued to keep separate notes on our evaluation of the activities, especially if something did not go according to the plan. In general, we did not encounter any issues that stopped us from moving forward. Throughout the process, our partnership was characterized by a spirit of mutual respect, and a shared commitment to our common goal. We valued each other's perspectives and contributions. Despite the demands of our personal schedules, we demonstrated commendable time management skills to meet our targets. We had to pause our thesis work for a few months to fulfil our academic obligations. This interruption altered our workflow for a while, causing a

rupture in the smooth progression of our thoughts and necessitating adjustments to our timeline. The disruption affected both of us, as the realization of not being able to finish the thesis by our own given deadline brought some frustration. It led to further slowdown, and it took longer time to get into the needed working approach towards the target. During that time, we both tried to push each other to stay focused which helped us to get back.

Central to our collaborative process was a culture of respectful discussion, where we felt comfortable expressing differing and strong opinions to engage in constructive dialogue. We fostered an environment where dissent was welcomed as an opportunity for individual growth. Despite the inevitable challenges and obstacles that we encountered along the journey, we remained steadfast in our shared vision for the thesis. Our strong commitment towards uncovering the complexities of mental abuse within intimate partnerships drove our passion and determination.

We have never used podcast earlier in our studies or work. It was a first-time experience for us to learn and implement the process. Initially, we had some concerns about the recording process and its outcome. However, we embraced the opportunity with enthusiasm, eager to explore this innovative medium for learning and communication. Recording the audio materials went smoothly without encountering any issues. As we dived into the complexities of the topic, we remained steadfast in our commitment to raise awareness and advocate for change. Despite the emotional toll, we persisted, driven by passion.

6.2 Feedback from peers and well-wishers on the podcast episodes

We shared our podcast episodes with our peers & well-wishers to receive constructive feedback. Here is some feedback that we received via email and phone conversations:

Table 5: Feedback received on podcast episodes

Feedback received on podcast episodes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The experts we interviewed were very good. They were clear and knew what they were talking about.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The initial introduction part in the episode 2 by the hosts could have been a bit slower. That would have helped to understand and follow the conversation more clearly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very though provoking and needed conversation.

Feedback received on podcast episodes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were some examples in the podcast that sets the foundation for over the generation trauma formation, which are very important to understand.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The part where it was discussed “open your mind to the opportunity of change” stayed in the mind most.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical editing needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better construction of the questions, simpler way to ask complicated questions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host’s comments or input should come as foundation of the question since, at times, when they come after the guest answered it sounds like the host is lecturing the guest.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to listen, the conversation had good flow.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was difficult to point out the main outcome of the discussion in one episode.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent podcast and issue that has been discussed.

Overall, the podcast was praised for its excellence and the importance of the issues it addressed. However, there are opportunities to refine its structure and content for an even better listener experience. All the feedback gave us valuable insights into areas for improvement in the podcast. The point regarding importance of constructing questions in a simpler manner to address complex topics effectively gave us further ideas that we could adjust for our next interview session.

7 Conclusions & discussions

The idea of the thesis topic came from our individual experiences and understanding of complex multicultural societies. The aim of the thesis was to explore intimate partner violence issue, particularly focusing on psychological abuse experienced by immigrant background women in Finland. Through our thesis work, we wanted to provide concrete information on the severe complexity surrounding mental abuse, how to recognize the signs, provide necessary guidance on the same and give the information on the current available services in a concise format.

Through our thorough study, discussion with various organizations and finally the podcast series, we've highlighted the multiple factors that contribute to psychological abuse and the difficulties of identifying it.

While working on the thesis, we went through numerous websites and organizations in Finland to understand what kind of information is already available, how to access them and the level of ease with which they can be accessed. We also checked various articles and websites from all over the world to gather different perspectives on this topic. We initiated contact with various organizations to gather invaluable insights into the available services and the procedural aspects of handling such cases in Finland. Throughout our thesis work, we have dived into the multifaced nature of mental abuse, recognizing its complex interplay with psychological, emotional and social dynamics. By combining all the gathered information, we aimed to construct a holistic view of the challenges faced by the victims of mental abuse, and the systematic barriers hindering effective interventions. We came to the conclusion that podcast can be an easily accessible and interesting way to get information on this sensitive topic for students, professionals and anyone interested in this topic.

We reflect on our journey of exploration, highlighting the lessons learned and the professional growth experienced throughout the thesis development process. This includes reconfirmation of our understanding on the need of actively listening to marginalized voices, need of advocacy & activism to bring any change forward, and the importance of raising awareness on challenging the unconscious biases. This exploration also revealed the presence of various reports underscoring the gaps in Finland on this subject, as well as the imperative for change.

This is a topic very close to our heart. We knew that there is a need to bring few changes that can help victims, survivors and professionals to get deeper understanding on this complex topic. To bring any change, it is important first to raise awareness on it.

Our primary objective through our thesis and podcast episodes was to raise awareness on the complexity of the issue and equip individuals with the knowledge & tools essential for identifying and addressing instances of mental abuse effectively. By equipping our audience with insights into the subtle tactics used by abusers and the damaging effects of prolonged psychological manipulation, we attempt to foster a culture of vigilance and solidarity against all forms of IPV. Through collaborative efforts and sustained advocacy, we aim to create safer and more inclusive communities where every individual can thrive free from the shackles of fear and abuse.

Our initial focus was on immigrant background women experiencing psychological abuse. However, as we delved deeper into the available information from various resources and discussed with various professionals, we realized that addressing psychological abuse is a huge significant challenge already for Finnish women in Finland, let alone be it for immigrant

background women. One week prior to our thesis presentation, we received confirmation from the police to participate as a guest on our podcast. Through that last minute interview-addition, our understanding was reinforced on the importance of raising awareness, advocating for training initiatives, and advocating for legal reforms concerning psychological abuse, aligning closely with our pre-existing insights and perspectives.

Without legal measures in place, addressing this issue will remain exceptionally challenging. By criminalizing psychological abuse, especially considering its diverse impacts on women of different backgrounds, Finland can take crucial steps towards providing comprehensive support and protection to all individuals affected by intimate partner violence. This conclusion underscores the importance of legislative action to address psychological abuse and its profound implications on vulnerable populations.

The topic of coercive control & psychological violence is being actively discussed and scrutinized by various authorities and organizations in Finland. Organizations and advocates have long called for specific criminalization of coercive control to enhance prevention efforts and provide better protection to victims. Last year, the Ministry of Justice investigated the criminality of psychological violence in Finland. The commitment in the Government programme to explore the need for criminalizing coercive control signals a critical step forward. Moving forward, it is imperative to prioritize the enactment of legal measures to recognize and combat this pervasive form of violence, thereby safeguarding individuals' human rights and well-being. (Tolvanen & Silvennoinen 2023)

Finnish Institute of Health and Welfare (THL) has released recommendations to strengthen the prevention of domestic violence in wellbeing services across counties and municipalities. The recommendations emphasize the need for legislative regulation to ensure consistent efforts against domestic violence, as the current situation varies greatly across regions. Key points include the necessity for permanent domestic violence coordinators, cross-administrative cooperation, equal services for all affected parties, and legal provisions for coordination structures. Amnesty International has highlighted the disparities in violence reporting and welfare planning, indicating a lack of commitment to combat violence. THL advocates for legislation to standardize services and clarify responsibilities, stressing the importance of strong coordination and adequate resources. Successful models, like the key person approach in South Savo, demonstrate effective integration of domestic violence prevention into service structures. Domestic violence not only causes human suffering but also imposes significant costs on society. By implementing well-functioning prevention structures, society can reduce costs and provide better support for victims. Thus, legislative regulation is essential to ensure consistent and effective efforts against domestic violence. (THL 2024)

The clear need to criminalize psychological violence have been echoed in a recent article in Helsingin Sanomat. It emphasizes the urgent necessity to address psychological abuse as a criminal offense to protect individuals from enduring emotional and mental harm within intimate partnerships. By criminalizing coercive control, authorities can more effectively prevent and address instances of intimate partner violence, ensuring that victims receive the support and justice they deserve (Latvala, Oksanen & Gerbert 2024). This pressing call for action is underscored by the broader societal recognition of psychological abuse as a grave violation of human rights, prompting calls for legislative changes to better protect vulnerable individuals from such harmful behaviours.

The recent discussions and potential future changes in Finland align closely with our thesis discussions. Our thesis and podcast series serve as a call to action; urging organizations, institutions to prioritize the complex situation of immigrant background women in Finland, to contribute towards building a more compassionate and resilient society. It is our hope that our work sparks deeper understanding, facilitates ongoing dialogue, encourages further knowledge acquisition, and promotes necessary training for service providers. Furthermore, we believe that translation of our podcast materials into few essential languages, that are used in Finland by immigrant background women could bring wider visibility and understanding to this complicated topic.

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Chat GPT 3.5 has been used to edit the language of the text and make the text smoother.

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Appendix 1: De&Di Talks Episode1 - Breaking the silence on psychological violence!

Host 1: Hello all! A warm welcome to those eager to uncover some of the hidden and unsettling realities of psychological violence within intimate partner violence. I am (Host 1) and along with my colleague (name, Host 2)) will be exploring through this troubling phenomenon that is so prevalent in our society.

Host 2: Hello everyone, it feels great to be here to talk about a topic so close to my/our heart. Intimate partner violence, especially the psychological aspect, is something that affects far too many individuals, yet it's often swept under the rug. We are students of social services bachelor's degree program at Laurea university of Applied Sciences. This podcast is the end product of our development-based thesis on Intimate partnership violence with a focus on psychological or mental abuse. Our personal interest on this topic, fuelled by information from various sources brought us to the realization on the need of such information to be easily accessible in a concise format.

Host 1: Today, marks the beginning of our podcast series dedicated to peeling layers on the topic of domestic violence, particularly its often-overlooked aspect of psychological violence. Throughout this series, we'll be exploring various aspects of mental abuse within intimate partner violence, sharing expert insights and practical advice. Whether you're a student, a professional, a victim, potential victim or someone who simply wants to know more; grab your headphones and buckle up to join us in this journey of exploration and understanding towards it.

Host 2: Whether we have experienced Domestic violence or not, someone we know has: our family circle, friends or acquaintances. Shockingly, on a global scale 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men are facing some form of domestic violence at some point in their life. Intimate partner violence it's not just about physical harm; it's about the deep unseen scars that can deeply affect a person's mental and emotional well-being.

Host 1: Absolutely! Physical abuse is only one of the many forms of Domestic violence. It can also be in the form of verbal, emotional, spiritual, sexual, financial or digital abuse and much more. Domestic Violence or intimate partnership violence does not discriminate! Violence can happen to anyone; it exists in all cultures. Unfortunately, there are more discussions regarding violence in certain cultures or countries, while there's not much open discussion about some other countries. It is a major public health problem that affects everyone, regardless of social class, economic status, culture, age and gender.

Host 2: Yes, it can leave you traumatized and devastated; mentally emotionally financially. You can find yourself homeless, jobless, hopeless and feeling you are alone even when you are not. It's a combination of emotions bursting together like firecrackers inside the mind. So, before we dive into the depths of this issue, let's take a moment to look at some recent news from Finland.

Host 1: You remember? We were checking on a Yle news discussion on this topic in March this year, "Domestic violence experienced by women is still a major problem in Finland. How does violence manifest itself and what could be done to improve the problem?" "It's a really big number and as we know, not all [cases] are even reported to official statistics or authorities. It shows that it is still a very serious problem in Finland," "We still somehow downplay that problem in this society," says Riina Karjalainen, violence work expert at the Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters, in an interview with Huomenta Suomi.

Host 2: Let's discuss about the different type of violences which are known and accepted worldwide:

Types of violence

Type of violence	Definition
Physical violence	It is the most common form of domestic violence. It can be in the form of shoving, punching, kicking, pulling the hair, hitting the head, scratching, tearing, shaking, using a firearm or edged weapon, threatening physical violence.
Psychological violence	Also known as mental or emotional abuse, involving verbal and non-verbal communication to try to control someone or harm them emotionally. It manifests in the form of subjugation, criticism, name-calling, disdain, control, restriction of social interaction, morbid jealousy, isolation, breaking things, harming pets, or threatening any of the above or suicide. Since this form of violence occur under the careful and subtle nuances of manipulation and control, it is usually very difficult to substantiate its evidence due to absence of visible scars. It is a silent assailant that thrives in an intimate relationship, where the victim gasps for evidence and techniques for survival with hardly any support from anyone. Also, in many cases of psychological violence, the perpetrator uses close family members and community people to manipulate their minds leading to degradation and isolation from others.
Sexual violence	It includes rape, attempted rape, coercion into various forms of sexual activity or sexual intercourse, threatening sexual violence, sexual debasement, forcing into pornography, prohibiting use of contraception, forcing an abortion, restricting sexual self-determination.
Economic violence	It can include preventing independent use of money, preventing participation in financial decision-making or forcing the handing over of own money to another person, threatening financial violence or blackmail.
Social violence	It is also known as social abuse and is a violent behaviour that aims to cut the victim off from family, friends, or community. It can also involve a person or people trying to damage your relationships with others. Those engaging in social abuse may also endeavour to tarnish the victim's reputation or destroy their standing in the community. Social abuse can include things done in the home, in public, over the phone, or on the internet and social media.
Chemical violence	It is the intentional harming of a person's physical or psychological wellbeing using medicines, psycho active substances, chemicals, solvents, or other similar substances. It is the deliberate use of toxic substances, liquid or solid to poison a victim and the environment.

Type of violence	Definition
Religious violence	It is forcing compliance with a religious conviction, threat of violence or use of violence with references to religion to culture as justification, e.g., honour violence, threats rooted in religion.
Digital violence	Digital violence encompasses acts or expressions that cause harm through the misuse of digital tools and technologies. It is done to harass, control, monitor, or stalk individuals. It can be manifested through for example, the use of emails, messages, or different social media platforms.

Host 1: Hope this will give you some idea on different kind of violence that can happen to an individual. The difficult part is that some of them are just invisible to outsiders which makes it really difficult for the victims to prove it.

Host 2: True... Too many times we tend to look for proof, when psychological abuse or violence is all about the consequences of that abuse on the victims and the underlying factors that contribute to it. In the next 2 episodes, we will be diving deep into the underlying factors and how to recognize the signs of abuse with our 2 esteemed guests. Stay tuned and talk to you soon.

Appendix 2: De&Di Talks Episode 2 - Identifying mental abuse - Pia Puu Oksanen interview script

Host1: Hello everyone and welcome back to De & Di Talks, our episodes on Intimate partner violence with a focus on mental abuse. I am your host (Host 1) joined by my colleague (H2), along with a special guest. Today we will try to understand the concept of mental abuse in a deeper way, and the effects of it on the overall life of those experiencing it, keeping in mind especially the immigrant background women in Finland.

Host 2: To be able to understand more about this plague that is affecting our society so deeply, today we have with us Pia Puu Oksanen to share her knowledge and insights both as a psychologist and human rights advisor. Pia works as an advisor at Amnesty Finland on issues regarding gender and sexuality-based discrimination, including violence against women and girls. She also works as a psychotherapist, and steers peer groups for women who've experienced intimate partner violence.

Host 1: Based on your background and experience, how would you define mental/psychological abuse?

Host 2: Based on your experience, what are some common misconceptions or stereotypes surrounding mental abuse, and how can we address them effectively?

Host 1: There are a lot of social stigmas surrounding mental violence that impacts the willingness of women victims to seek support. Subconscious assumptions, lack of understanding, cultural traditions, fear of exclusion or isolation contribute a lot towards it, especially within immigrant communities. How much of that stigma affects the victims' in bringing up those experiences?

Host 2: Do you encounter these challenges frequently when assisting individuals from immigrant backgrounds, and if so, how do you address these challenges?

Host 1: Now coming to the various cultural and social aspects, are there any cultural or societal factors unique to Finland that may influence how mental abuse/violence is perceived and addressed within immigrant communities, particularly in the context of differences in addressing this topic for women victims of immigrant background?

Host 2: As we understand, cultural norms or societal expectations may discourage individuals from openly discussing their experiences of abuse, leading them to downplay or dismiss seemingly minor incidents. However, these subtle indicators can serve as early warning signs of underlying abuse. Could you please explain from a psychologist's perspective, why is it important to pay attention to seemingly minor issues or complaints raised by individuals, especially when it comes to mental abuse? For both professionals and victims - how to identify early stages of the abuse?

Host 1: Now coming to the victims, what advice would you give to individuals who are unsure about whether they are experiencing mental abuse, and what steps can they take to protect themselves and seek assistance?

Host 2: As we are drawing near the end of our insightful discussion, could you give some final advice and tips for students who are planning to work with clients who may have faced or are facing mental abuse?

Host 1: As we wrap up today's episode, we want to give a big thanks to Pia for sharing her valuable knowledge and expertise with us. We hope that her in depth explanations about mental violence have helped you understand this complex topic better and have given you useful insights.

Host 2: Thank you, Pia, once more. We are truly grateful for your time and commitment to this important conversation. That's all from us today. Tune in to our next exciting discussion with another special guest, Johanna Aapakallio from Loisto Settlementti on role of a community and its effects on women with immigrant background. Till then, goodbye.

We had a free flow discussion keeping the base questions intact.

Appendix 3: De&Di Talks Episode 3 - Role of a community, interview script with Johanna Aapakallio.

Host 1: Hello everyone, and welcome back to De&Di Talks, our episodes on IPV with a focus on mental abuse or mental violence. I am (Host 1) along with my colleague (H2) will address a crucial aspect of mental abuse, where subconscious assumptions, judgments, traditions, lack of knowledge or understanding, and sometimes ignorance can greatly contribute to victimizing individuals.

Host 2: To know more about community roles and it's effect on women, to find a balance between individual identity and the longing for own community we have with us today Johanna Aapakallio who is the Lead Specialist at Loisto settlement's unit Sopusu-työ.

Sopusu-työ is a unit for preventing and tackling honor-related violence. Johanna has a MA degree in Applied Linguistics and Intercultural communication. She is also a sex therapist and counsellor. Johanna has been working with topics such as migration, violence, and mental health for more than 20 years.

Host 1: Welcome Johanna and thank you so much for joining us today to enlighten us on a very important and complicated topic related to mental violence - Role of community in mental/psychological violence towards women - how it can affect a victim and how to recognize it to provide the needed support.

Host 2: So, lets dive right into the subject Johanna, as we know that in many cases one of the key challenges, we all are facing lies in finding the delicate balance between being one's true self while still being able to be part of the community. Could you open up to understanding this dilemma of being an individual while still being part of a society or community.

Host 1: What are the common misconceptions about mental abuse when it comes to society or community?

Host 2: We already mentioned that this conscious or unconscious act of psychological abuse can happen with any individual from any society. How does the communities, both within the Finnish and immigrant ones typically respond to cases of mental or psychological abuse? Is there

Host 1: In Finland, everyone regardless of their legal status has the right to seek help from the various available services. From your experience, what kind of cultural factors or barriers may prevent someone from seeking help or speaking out about their experiences of psychological abuse in Finland?

Host 2: Listening to all the blockers...What role can community leaders, organizations, and social networks play in providing support and resources for the victims?

Host 1: How can we promote cultural sensitivity & inclusivity within the support services available in Finland to ensure they are accessible and relevant to immigrant background women experiencing psychological abuse?

Host 2: Based on your experience, what strategies have been successful in recognizing mental abuse done by the victims' communities?

Host 1: You have been working very closely on issues where communities do play a huge role both in positive and negative ways. could you share some success stories or examples of initiatives that have effectively addressed mental abuse and supported victims, particularly within immigrant communities?

Host 2: Finally, one last question before we wrap up: What advice would you have for students who are aspiring to become more involved in supporting victims of mental abuse within immigrant communities in their future careers?

Host 1: With that, we will say goodbye from this episode, and don't forget to tune in for our next interesting episode. To deepen our understanding on how the authorities deal with such cases, our guest of honour will be Marjo Hautaviita from police department. See you all next time.

We had a free flow discussion keeping the base questions intact. During the interview, we reshuffled the questions where we felt was necessary if the points were already covered in the previous answers.

Appendix 4: De&Di Talks Episode 4 - From awareness to actions!

Host 1: Hello everyone. Welcome back to our De & Di Talks last episode on Intimate partner violence with a focus on mental or psychological violence. Today we are going to wrap up our podcast where we will be summarizing the key takeaways from the previous discussions and also share information on the available organizations providing services on this.

Host 2: In our first episode, we briefly discussed various forms of violence and emphasized the importance of recognizing that violence transcends national and cultural boundaries. It is very important to acknowledge this crucial fact, challenge our own biases, and approach each individual's experiences with an open mind. Women globally encounter higher rates of violence compared to men, and this reality holds true in Finland as well. Responding to violence is challenging enough for Finnish women, and individuals with immigrant backgrounds face additional obstacles in addressing these issues.

Host 1: Yes.. and it's very important to remember that while we are all part of some culture or society, we are also individuals in the first place. Many times, the dilemma that a person has to go through being an individual with own opinions and still being part of a society or community is huge. Without having a good understanding of this dilemma, it is very difficult to understand why a certain person reacts in certain ways to a violent act.

Host 2: Now let's move to our discussion with Pia Puu Oksanen on how to identify mental or psychological abuse. I could find so many takeaways from that discussion. And I think it's one of the most difficult parts as a professional, especially if we are not aware of the various factors that can affect an individual's reaction to violence.

- Misconceptions or stereotypes.
- Social stigmas surrounding mental violence that impacts the willingness of women victims to seek support.
- How to address such challenges.
- Why it is important to pay attention to minor issues.
- How to identify the stages of abuse.
- Tips and advice for students and professionals.
- It is very clear based on the current activities by the ministries and human rights organizations that psychological violence needs to be criminalized in Finland.

Host 1: Now, let's go back to our discussion with Johanna Aapakallio on the role of a community, and the takeaways from there. And the list seems to be huge here as well.

1. Delicate balance between being one's true self while still being able to be part of the community.
2. Who is an immigrant background person?
3. Why community can be important for immigrant background people.
4. What role community can play in victimizing the victim.
5. Cultural factors or barriers (Preserving abuse is not an abuse to many, it's a way of preserving tradition).
6. Recognizing abuse done to myself (negative act can be taken as positive feeling).

7. How to promote cultural sensitivity & inclusivity within the support services available in Finland.
8. Let's be careful on what we suggest as a professional.
9. Community leaders can lead by example. Advice from community leaders or friends can be good. However, it is better to refer to a professional.

Host 2: It's clear that there are quite a few gaps in understanding, identifying and providing necessary support for mental or psychological violence. At the same time, there are many organizations who are providing different services for the victims. However, it is quite difficult to access the information as they are not available in a single place. That's why, we thought to give the information of those organizations here in a compact manner, so that it is easier for students, professionals, victims, or anyone looking for services can find them from one place.

Host 1: Here, we have a list of the organization names, how to reach them and what services are covered under their umbrella along with their webpage information.

1. Monikanaiset: <https://monikanaiset.fi/en/>

The Crisis Center Monika offers low-threshold crisis support, guidance, and counselling services for immigrant women who have encountered violence. Crisis Center Monika helpline (free-of-charge)

0800 05058, Mon 9 am-7 pm, Tue-Fri 9 am-4 pm

Shelter Mona offers secure accommodation and crisis support for women and their children who have been victims of domestic violence. You can seek shelter from anywhere in Finland. Shelter Mona - +358 45 639 6274 is always open (24h)

2. Nollalinja: <https://nollalinja.fi/en/>

They help women who have experienced psychological, physical or sexual violence or threat of violence. Call at 080005005 free of charge.

3. Victim Support Finland (RIKU): <https://www.riku.fi/en/services/>

The aim of RIKU is to improve the position of victims of crime, their close ones and witnesses in criminal cases e.g. by producing low threshold support and guidance services. Helpline - 116 006 is open Mon - Thur 9 am - 6 pm and Fri 9 am - 4 pm in Finnish language and Mon - Fri 12 noon - 2 pm in Swedish language. It offers victims of crime the possibility to talk to someone, who understands what it can mean to become a victim of crime. It is possible to call the helpline anonymously.

For services in English, it is recommend to use the contact request form - <https://link.webpolsurveys.com/S/690DD43BB61DF887>

4. Loisto Settlementti/SOPU-työ: <https://soputila.fi/>

In Loisto Settlementti's SOPU work, they are expert in dealing particularly with honour-related violence, which can be both physical and psychological. Contact a Sopus-worker at +358 50 470 0490 or via email at sopu@loistosetlementti.fi.

5. The Federation of Mother and child homes and Shelters: <https://ensijaturvakotienliitto.fi/tukea-ammattilaiselle/perhe-ja-lahisuhdevakivalta/>

It's a nationwide child welfare organization dedicated to aiding children and families facing challenging and unstable circumstances, while also working to prevent violence against women and domestic abuse.

6. Intimate partner violence support in Espoo:

<https://www.luvn.fi/en/services/social-services/work-people-experiencing-domestic-and-intimate-partner-violence>

At Omatila, they assist in identifying signs of domestic violence, managing your experiences, and breaking free from abusive situations. They offer supportive conversations, counselling, and peer support groups led by professionals. If needed, they arrange secure accommodation or refuge to help end the cycle of abuse. They also support women who perpetrate domestic violence.

7. Seri Support Center For Victims of Sexual Assault: [Seri Support Center for Victims of Sexual Assault | HUS](#)

They offer assistance to individuals aged 16 and above, irrespective of their gender or sexual orientation. The incident should have occurred within the past month when reaching out to us. Prior to visiting the center, please contact Seri midwives at 040 701 8446.

8. Police Finland: [Violence in close relationships - Police \(poliisi.fi\)](#)

There is information in the Police Finland webpage on where to find services if one faces violence.

9. AinoAid: <https://ainoaid.fi/en-fi>

AinoAid™ is an interactive chatbot and knowledge repository designed to assist individuals seeking guidance on relationship challenges or seeking information about domestic violence. It also serves as a resource for professionals to enhance customer interactions and service delivery.

Host 2: We trust that the episodes have been beneficial for you, sparking motivation and leading to additional questions. These discussions will contribute to addressing this critical societal issue and fostering further improvement.

Host 1: Thank you from both of us, bye!