
Role Of Mediation And Intervention In Domestic Violence

1. Introduction

Domestic violence is described as a crucial social and public health issue which happens in all the countries around the universe, it includes physical and sexual violence, controlling behavior and emotional abuse, (Matud, 2007: 298). The following essay is going to explore the nature of the problem identified in the case study which required intervention. The social arrangements that are causing the social problem found in the case study will be identified and discussed. The essay will also look into the definition of the client and the client system, thereafter it will identify them in the case study and get into detail on them. The intervention will be explained and a brief description of the proposed intervention will be explored and also the levels and the modes of intervention will be identified and explained. The terminology of evaluation will be given and the types of evaluation which are present in the study will be pointed out. Recommendations on how the negative outcomes identified in the study can be avoided in the future will be discussed. The definition of ethics will be explored and the essay will discuss the ethical issues that clinical sociologist should consider when implementing an intervention and also which ethical principles were used and which ones should be used in the future, lastly the essay will give a summary of important points this essay discussed.

2. Nature Of The Problem

The problem that is visible in the case study is domestic violence. It is the major problem that woman come across worldwide. In the case study we can see that there are social arrangements which are causing the social problem which is domestic violence. According to Bollen, Artz, Vetten and Louw (1999) the fact that woman are being abused is not acknowledged in South African criminal law and this may lead to some woman to be afraid to report the abuse they are facing , thinking that they are going to be judged and not taken seriously. In the case study, it is seen that some of the offenders consume alcohol and drugs then abuse the victims, reason being what they consume is controlling them. It is seen that domestic violence is not taken as a crime but it is considered as an assault. Also behavioral problems are an issue in most relationships because some man tend to abuse their partners and hurting them. The social arrangements that led to social problems was protection order. Some woman felt safe when they issued the protection order to their partners but others felt that it did not limit the assaults and threats that their partners made. Mediation also did not help other woman because when the case was dropped, the woman did not feel safe because they thought their partners were going to hurt them in future. According to Hooper and Busch (1996), the domestic violence relationships are based on power imbalances and the victims of the violence were not able to stand for themselves against the abusers. The victim offender conferencing (VOC) model was designed to help the victims of domestic violence and they were hoping for positive results. In most of the cases, the courts referred the matter to the VOC and most of the victims got help.

3. The Client And Client System

A client is a person or that receives a service from a professional or an organization then pay them in return, (Collins: ND). According to Reference (ND) a client system is a group of people that the sociologist or a practitioner is responsible for helping. In the case study, the client is the woman who was in a 45 minutes telephonic interview which was held between 6 months and 18 months after the completion of mediation process. The woman who was afraid that maybe her husband infected her with HIV/AIDS due to his infidelity is also considered as the client. The woman who was concerned about her safety, who her husband hit her with an iron on her head and reported him to the police is also the client because she was referred to VOC. The client system in the case study is the Victim Offender Conferencing (VOC). Also the Restorative Justice Initiative (RJI) is the client system, it provided the VOC in criminal cases refereed by the magistrate courts as well by the communities. Another client system is the Domestic Violence Act (DVA) which is aimed at woman protection from domestic violence by creating obligations on law enforcement bodies to protect woman which are the victims.

4. The Intervention

Intervention is a combination of program elements or strategies designed to change or improve health status among individuals or an entire population. In the case study, there are characteristics of intervention. The Domestic Violence Act is one of the characteristic. It protects woman from domestic violence and allows the complainants to apply for protection order from the court. The victim offender mediation is the second characteristic. The mediation presented an opportunity to look beyond the case. The interview is another characteristic, the victims were interviewed to get the information on how they were violated. In the intervention there are different levels that apply. The first one is macro. In this level you will find a large social unit which shares customs, laws, cultural values and beliefs. In the study there is were 384 conferences were held and 116 were held between intimate partners and the 7 were divorced or separated. The second level is meso. This level is amongst the schools, work, neighborhood and home. It contains the intergroup conflict and community organizations. In the study that is visible when the VOC received a case from the court and mediators would meet with the victim and the offender to establish willingness to participate in the mediation. The last level is micro. It is amongst the immediate family, school and neighborhood. The is behavior change and conflict resolution. In the study this is seen where the five cases resulted in the parties agreeing to separate. The mediation helped the parties to negotiate the terms of the separation. There are also modes of intervention. The first one is direct, dealing with the problem right away. In the study this is seen when one woman reported the case to the police and had been referred to court. The second mode is indirect, the problem is avoided and the client system is being used. This is seen when families are often dependent on the offender's income, so they are most likely not to report the problem. The last mode is cooperation, when the victim participate in the change process. This is seen when a woman went into the VOC process being referred by her friend wishing to participate to help her marriage.

5. Evaluation Of The Intervention

According to Scriven (1991:53) "evaluation is the process of determining merit, worth, or significance, a product of that process". Experts say that we evaluate to improve program design and implementation. It helps to identify areas for improvement and ultimately help you realize your goals more effectively another reason why we evaluate is to demonstrate program impact. The information collected allows you to better communicate your program's impact to

others which is critical for public relations, retaining support from current and potential funders, there are different types of evaluation in this study. There is formative evaluation. According to Guyot (1978) “formative evaluation is primarily a building process which accumulates a series of components of new material, skills and problems into an ultimate meaningful whole. In the study this evaluation is seen when a 45 minutes telephonic interview was held with the woman between 6 months and 18 months after the completion of the process. Another evaluation is summative evaluation. According to Scrive (1967) “summative evaluation is a method of judging the worth of the program at the end of the activities. In the study this is seen when the five cases resulted in the parties agreeing to separate. The process of mediation helped them to reach this agreement. The things that people want to achieve when they evaluate is to understand the concept they are evaluating. They want to gain knowledge and skills to deal with what they are evaluating. In the study there are positive outcomes which are seen at the end of the mediation, one woman reported that her husband got a job and on the other case the woman reported that her husband is contributing to the household tasks such as cleaning and cooking. More strategies to deal with domestic violence can be made besides mediation.

6. Ethical Issues

According to Epidemiology (2001) “ethics are the discipline of dealing with what is good and bad, with moral duty and obligation. There are ethical issues that the clinical sociologist should consider when implementing an intervention. The first one is informed consent. The consent process aims to ensure that research participants understand that their decision to participate is voluntarily. The other one is confidentiality, the participants have a right to have control over the extent, timing and circumstances of revealing personal aspects. The ethical principles were used in the study. The social responsibility, in the study the mediators explained the process of mediation to the participants and it helped them. The other principle is competence. The mediators in the study recognized their boundaries. They did not force every victim to participate in the mediation process. In the study it is seen that before cases were referred to mediation, victims were allowed to take their decision voluntarily. The other principle is respect for others. The professionals should not force participants to agree on what they don't want. In the study it is seen that other couples decided to separate and others decided to fix their problems but the mediators did not influence their decision. The ethical principles that should be used in future are integrity and professional and scientific responsibility. The mediators did not use integrity. On some of the cases they were not fair with the mediation process. And on the professional and scientific responsibility, the mediators did not make the communities and some of the victims to trust the mediation process.

7. Conclusion

This essay discussed the matter of domestic violence as the nature of the problem. The social arrangements that were causing domestic violence were identified in the case study and explained. The definition of the client system was explained and also the definition of the client system was explained. The client and the client system were identified in the case study. The intervention terminology was explained and a brief description of the intervention proposed was explored. The levels and modes of intervention were discussed. The definition of evaluation was given and the types of evaluation were discussed. The meaning of ethics was explored and the ethical issues that the clinical sociologist should consider when implementing an intervention were explained. The ethical principles that were used in the study were pointed out and the

ones which should be used in future were explored.

8. Reference List

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