Protection orders and their perceived effectiveness – A domestic violence and sexual assault crisis center program evaluation

Shelby Connett
Grace Abbott School of Social Work

Community Partner: The Spouse Abuse Sexual Assault Crisis Center (SASA), Hastings, NE

Methodology

- **Quantitative:** The research design utilized was a post-test only design. The sampling design was a nonprobability convenience sample. The sampling frame was 01/31/2017 to 03/20/2018. Data was collected through the analysis of protection order affidavits of SASA’s legal advocacy program’s clients.
- **Qualitative:** Qualitative data was collected and analyzed utilizing grounded theory. Two interviews occurred via Skype and one via telephone. Guided by questions presented by the researcher, participants were invited to speak about their experiences. Data was analyzed using open coding and deriving categories and overall themes from these codes in a Microsoft Excel document.

Results/Outcomes

- Overall, protection order affidavits were awarded at a rate of 80%. Petitioners were most represented in both the quantitative and qualitative sections as English-speaking females between the ages of 18-38 years old.
- Participants experienced emotional and psychological abuse more frequently than physical or sexual abuse, including things such as playing games, name-calling, lying, and stalking, among others.
- Participants were in somewhat disagreement on whether they felt their petition was awarded or not. Overall, participants felt a strong connection to SASA, its employees, and the services and support they have provided them through these difficult times. Participants in the interviews were repeatedly grateful for SASA.

Program Recommendations

- **Overall,** participants felt a strong connection to SASA, its employees, and the services and support they have provided them through these difficult times. Participants in the interviews were repeatedly grateful for SASA.
- A focus on older individuals (38+ years old).
- A focus on petitioners with respondents who are of African American or White ethnicities.
- Outreach to Spanish-Speaking individuals is recommended.
- Proactive approaches, such as assessments and trauma-informed trainings, should be adopted to focus on individuals contemplating getting a protection order and supporting them in the best possible ways.
- Trainings for staff on understanding client experiences, therefore creating affidavits with clients that are as explicit as possible.

Limitations

- Limitations for the quantitative piece included a small sample size (n=64). Lack generalizability is another limitation. Qualitative data was limited by the questions asked of the participants and what they chose to disclose. Researcher bias may be another limitation.

Petitioners more likely to have their protection order affidavit awarded than denied.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Abuse</th>
<th>Awarded</th>
<th>Denied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Abuse</th>
<th>Awarded</th>
<th>Denied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sexual</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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