

Batterer treatment programs

[Law](#), [Crime](#)



Domestic violence and especially battering has been identified as a form of aggression in the society for decades now. Even though, battering has been categorized as a criminal by the criminal justice system, its treatment has been handled differently from other forms of aggression. Over the past two decades, efforts have been applied to address the problem of wife battering.

The development of treatment programs has been rapid which has subsequently increased batterer's right to programming. Battering is inevitably associated with family violence and the general societal violence.

This means that the existence of battering will continue unless the structures of power within the society is changed and thereby forbidding it. The change of the society alone is not enough to address the problem of battering. In addition to this change, individual involved in battering practices must also change (Mederos, 1999). The purpose of this paper is therefore to examine how the batterers can be changed. In particular, it aims at providing effective treatment programs that can be applied to address the problem of battering.

The paper examines the roles that have been played by criminal justice in addressing battering problem and the existing treatment approaches that have been effectively applied to remedy this behavior. Criminal justice system intervention to battering There exist a number of criminal justice responses to battering. However, battering has continued for years due to the reluctance of the victims to report such cases to law enforcement agencies. There are a number of responses with regards to battering in the criminal justice realm which are triggered following reports of abuse.

Arrest In the circumstance that it is proved beyond any reasonable doubt that an assault has been committed, then an arrest becomes mandatory. These mandatory arrests have significantly increased as reports of assault by victims of battering increase. However, many people have raised concerns about the effectiveness of arrests in reducing recidivism. It has been reported by certain research studies that arrests can only downgrade recidivism partly. This study has however been contracted arguing that effects of arrests on recidivism is limited.

The debate over the effectiveness of arrests on recidivism will continue due to the lack of consensus on its impacts. In particular, the ineffectiveness of this approach has been witnessed in the slow prosecutions of batterers, and thereby suggesting that these arrests are not adequately accompanied by convictions. Arrests without an efficient conviction do not deter future incidences of battering (Rusen, 1992). Prosecution The process of arrests should be followed subsequently with immediate prosecution after charges have been preferred against the batterer.

In some cases, batterers may not be prosecuted but instead issued with restraining instructions. However, the effectiveness of arrests and prosecutions in deterring the future occurrence of battering has been questioned by several researchers. Sufficient evidence has not been found to prove that prosecution of the offenders of battering reduces recidivism (Davis et al. , 1998). Sentencing Convicted batterers are usually subjected to probations where they may be required to undergo treatment programs.

It has been argued that it is impossible to distinguish the chances of recidivism with regards to cases which results to null prosecution, probation

and incarceration. On the other hand, subjective battering to probation where they are subjected to treatment programs has been found to reduce recidivism. The criminal justice system has therefore been identified to be deficient in dealing with recidivism. There has been no significant relationship between recidivism and the prospect of arrests and punishment.

This means that batterers are not deterred from engaging in future battering by the possibility of being subjected to arrests and prosecution (Davis et al. , 1998). Approaches to batterers treatment programs There are several treatment programs available for batterers ranging from theoretical methods to forms of treatment. These programs include the Duluth approach and a program commonly referred to as New Leaf. Against this introduction, several theoretical approaches are examined together with fundamental models necessary for the treatment of batterers.

These programs have not been proven to decisively reduce recidivism. However, they form a strong basis for examining the appropriate treatment mechanisms. The Duluth Model This was a community based response that was developed in Minnesota and comprised of several batterer detection and prevention groups within the society. This approach performed a coordinative role to the law enforcement agencies responsible for arrests, prosecution and batterer treatment programs. The batterers were subjected to either imprisonment or probation under stringent guidelines.

The activities of the batterer during this probation period were closely monitored. Such activities included attending to treatment programs. In addition, a close contact between the spouse of the batterer was maintained. In order to effectively respond to the problem of battering, prosecutorial

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agencies and the mental health institutions within the community closed worked as a unit. Thorough training was given to all the participants involved in the treatment process on batterers under this model in order to equip them with adequate knowledge to understand what was involved in their work (Mederos, 1999).

Under the Duluth model, the work of the male team leaders is not confined to interaction with the offenders of battering and their spouses. Part of their duty includes accounting for physical abuse by passing information to the relevant agencies. According to this model, abusive men usually use several obscure arguments to justify and legitimize their behavior. Treatment programs involve a number of video clips and team dialogue with the intention of guiding the batterer in understanding the fundamental mythical beliefs regarding battering and thereby aid them in envisioning and defining non-abusive behaviors.

The process of envisioning was accompanied with clear guidelines involving negotiations illustrating the basis of behavior in open relationships (Mederos, 1999). New Leaf program This program was developed to address the concerns of shelter women in Nova Scotia. The basis of this approach was that the shelter women needed assistance but the participation of shelter workers in this assistance was discouraged. As a result of this concern, males in the community intervened with the offenders of battering. This program involved and open group discussions which were organized weekly.

The viewpoint of this program was that violence is feministic and a way of control. A thorough intake interview program was undertaken where the batterer was encouraged to change. The group leaders were in full control of <https://assignbuster.com/batterer-treatment-programs/>

the interview sessions and had an influential role in the lives of the batterers. The team leaders were constantly accessible to address the concerns of men and their spouses. Interventions included providing on-spot crisis resolution, visitation of offenders in prison, and unplanned visits to homes upon suspecting that there was danger of violence.

However, these unannounced visits are not viewed as strange especially in the rural setting where it is the norm. This program had the advantage of intervening in high risk situations (Hanson & Whitman, 1995). Theoretical approaches The general approach to the treatment of batterer can be classified into psychological, feminist and socio-cultural. The traditional intervention mechanisms for batterers focused mainly on the influence of psychological factors on violence. The problem of battering has a psychological dimension as abusive men usually blame their partners for the problems they are experiencing such as depression.

The depression can therefore lead them into substance abuse. Batterer treatment should therefore involve psychotherapeutic models. The socio-cultural method assumes that the battering is influenced by learned behavior. According to this approach, battering is learned within the society as there are inequalities in wealth control as well as societal structures which are biased in defining gender roles and therefore encourages leniency to battering. Treatment should therefore emphasize on unlearning where the batterers are encouraged to view violence as an unacceptable behavior within the society.

In addition, the involvement of men in battering has been found to be as a result of attitude towards women. Intervention mechanisms should therefore

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include efforts in assisting batterers to change their attitudes. Feminist oriented batterer treatment strategies view battering as a social and political. According to this theory, battering is a consistent pattern of economic and sexual abuse. This approach therefore suggests that interventions to battering should address to root causes of battering. The feminist strategy in addition focuses on addressing the gender imbalances which are responsible for violent behavior (Dutton, 1998).

Conclusion Developing batterer treatment programs within the society is quite challenging. However, there are fundamental factors that have effectively and efficiently contributed the treatment of batterers. Any approach to batterer treatment should be developed with adequate knowledge which is capable of achieving high standards of integrity.

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