

Institution: Newman University
Unit of Assessment: 25 – Education
Title of case study: Improving Safeguarding Outcomes for Children and Young People: Raising Awareness and Understanding through Participatory Methodologies
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>National and international research findings were utilised to raise professional, political and faith-based awareness of the impact of abuse and exploitation on the educational, social and emotional development of children and young people considered to be ‘at risk’. The impact of the case study lies in its ability to portray, through the use of participatory research methodologies, the experiences of young people who have been the victims of abuse, neglect and human trafficking. Evidence collated indicates that the work has significantly increased national and local awareness and understanding, and led to specific organisational changes in policy and practice.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The research projects, out of which the impact evidence is generated, were developed in response to a series of critical government inquiries and research reports (for example, Laming, 2003, Dept. Education and Skills, 2004) into child abuse and neglect, and legislative and policy responses including ‘<i>Every Child Matters</i>’ (2003) and the 2004 Children Act.</p> <p>The underpinning research captures the voices of young people who have been victims of abuse and their perspectives on: why many young people aren’t believed when reporting abuse and neglect to professionals – particularly teachers, teaching assistants and youth workers; the educational and social support systems and strategies required to meet the needs of abused young people; and the value of educational mentorship and counselling.</p> <p>The published research by Tucker (2010, 2013) presents an exposition of the methodological implications of working with young people as co-inquirers in abuse and neglect research. It examines how ‘voice-focused’ research can provide insights into the life worlds of highly vulnerable young people. Principles for co-inquiry are advanced based on: ‘advocacy’, ‘empowerment’ and ‘critical voice’; young people’s ability to act as ‘reliable witnesses’; and the importance of exploring ‘individual and collective reflections’. A group of eight young people were recruited to work as co-inquirers; all had suffered abuse and neglect. A total of 102 abused young people offered interview-based accounts. The research draws attention to problems faced by young people in disclosing abuse because of professional disbelief based on ‘background and baggage’, ‘family matters’, ‘reluctance and refusal’ and ‘personal relationships’. It is asserted that participation in safeguarding research by young people is likely to increase if they believe it will make a difference to professional responses.</p> <p>The second element of the case study is based on research undertaken by Tucker et al (2011) and funded by the European Commission’s Daphne III programme (2007-2013). Carried out in Germany, Romania and the United Kingdom, it explored the views of ‘at risk’ and marginalised groups of young people – victims of abuse, those involved in street gangs, young women who had been ‘groomed’ and trafficked, those who had spent significant periods of their life in public care and unaccompanied asylum seeking young people. All of the young people involved (43 provided personal accounts via interview) were being supported through social education, youth counselling, mentoring and child protection services. The findings from the research point to the need to understand, and respond to, the complex needs of vulnerable young people through the development of multi-professional and multi-agency responses. This point was consistently reinforced by national and local policy makers, service managers and professionals interviewed as part of the project.</p> <p>The case study raises important issues about the involvement of children and young people as co-</p>

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inquirers and participants in research. A strong ethical framework must be in place that promotes children's rights, based on fostering participation governed by personal choice and the protection of young people from experiences that are likely to increase vulnerability, distress and trauma. Direct involvement as a co-inquirer also requires the creation of opportunities for individual and collective debriefing.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

Tucker, S. (2010) 'Listening and Believing: An examination of young people's perceptions of why they are not believed when they report abuse and neglect' *Children and Society* Volume 25 No.6, pp. 458-469, DOI:10.1111/j.1099-0860.2010.00291

Tucker, S. (2013) 'Considerations on the involvement of young people as co-inquirers in abuse and neglect research', *Journal of Youth Studies*, Volume 16, number 2, pp. 272-285, DOI:10.1080/1367.6261.2012.704988

Tucker, S., Martyn, M., Bejenaru, A., Brotherton, B., Gahleitner, S., Gunderson, C., and Rusu H. (2011) 'Violence, Exploitation and Trafficking: Service User Perspectives: A comparative analysis of community focused initiatives aimed at supporting Women, Children and Young People who have been the focus of violence, exploitation or trafficking in 3 regions of the UK, Germany and Romania.', Children, Young People and Families Research Centre, Newman University College, Funded by the European Commission's Daphne III Programme (2007-2013), ISBN: 978-0-9568268-0-0

Grant awarded to: Newman University College

Grant Title: A comparative analysis of community focused initiatives aimed at supporting Women, Children and Young People who have been the focus of violence, exploitation or trafficking in 3 regions of the UK, Germany and Romania. Ref. Number JLS/2007/DAP-1/058 30-CE-0227730/00-44

Sponsor: the European Commission's Daphne III Programme (2007-2013)

Period of Grant: March 2009 – February 2011

Value of Grant: £192,000

External Evaluator for project: Dr Simon Bradford, Education Dept. Brunel University, Kingston Lane, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB13 3PH

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The primary intention was to significantly raise awareness of the impact of abuse and exploitation on the educational, social and emotional development of vulnerable children and young people. The researchers set out to make a material difference in terms of extending both professional and policy-maker knowledge and understanding of the needs of abused young people.

A range of dissemination strategies were employed to maximise the impact of the research findings. These included: sharing the outcomes of the research with key national and local government departments and agencies, charities and voluntary organisations in the UK, the European Commission's Directorate-General Justice and the Children's Commissioners' for England and Wales; correspondence with the Archbishop of Canterbury's office and the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. An international dissemination event was held in Birmingham on 22 February, 2011 and simultaneously streamed to the European Commission, Germany and Romania. A total of 94 delegates attended the conference including: a representative of the Children's Commissioner for England, Birmingham City Council Children and Young People Directorate, British Red Cross, Children's Society, Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Trust, ECPAT, 'Just Whistle' Child Exploitation, NHS West Midlands and the UK Border Agency. The findings were also communicated to all Director of Children's Services for Birmingham and the Black Country, England.

The impact in terms of awareness-raising at a national political and policy level is reflected through communications with local members of parliament and government departments. Following the

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publication of the European Commission Daphne report, Gisela Stuart, Labour MP for Birmingham Edgbaston, wrote ‘your findings are very powerful and I wanted to make sure that the Home Secretary is aware of them’ (correspondence dated 09/02/2011). In response Lynne Featherstone MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, replied that she had ‘sent it [the report] across to the relevant policy leaders to inform future policy development’ (correspondence dated 03/03/2011).

Circulation of the research to the Children’s Commissioners for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland had a positive impact in terms of endorsing its potential for awareness raising – a view supported by the Children’s Commissioner for England (correspondence dated 13/03/2011). In addition, the Children’s Commissioner for Wales acknowledged the value of the case study material generated through the research and said, ‘I particularly wish to acknowledge the work you have done in obtaining the perspectives of victims of violence, exploitation and trafficking and the case studies will be of considerable value’ (correspondence dated 15/03/2011).

The dissemination of the research has had a positive impact on faith-based organisations. For example, following receipt of the European Commission Daphne research report, the Senior Policy Adviser for the Catholic Bishop’s Conference of England and Wales endorsed the importance of the multi-agency and multi professional strategy advocated and wrote, ‘this report will help us draw on the evidence based research...to support the development of a proactive multi-agency approach within the church’ (correspondence dated 11/03/2011). While the Archbishop of Canterbury wrote, through the office of the Deputy Secretary for Public Affairs, of his intention to bring all research reported through the case study to the attention of ‘colleagues who specialise in some of the areas addressed’ (correspondence dated 24/10/2012). Correspondence from the European Commission acknowledged the value ‘of your work in combating violence, exploitation and trafficking and your contribution to the Daphne Programme.’ (29/04/2011).

It is at a local level where we have been able to more easily gauge the long term impact of the published research on policy and practice. For example, the Vice Principal of Shenley Academy and Sixth Form, Birmingham, recorded in recent correspondence (letter dated 17/06/2013) that the work has ‘been discussed at Governors meetings’ and has helped in ‘shaping and ‘confirming’ policy and practice’. He reported that ‘on the evidence of this paper [Tucker, 2010] we have expanded our reporting systems, to include a remote, confidential electronic system, with a link to the Academy Website’. He also points to how the development of a ‘clear ethos of reporting issues, appropriate confidentiality, and rigorous responses to information shared has significantly increased the students’ confidence and trust in the academy’. While at Holte School, Lozells Birmingham, the Deputy Headteacher reports that consideration of the research has ‘caused me to consider the content of future training and also how my staff support young people when referrals to external professionals, who don’t know them, have been made... we can always do better and research assists this on-going development’ (letter dated 07/06/2013.)

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

1. Archbishop of Birmingham, Archdiocese of Birmingham
2. Head of Unit – Programme Management, European Commission
3. Senior Vice Principal, Shenley Academy and Sixth Form, Birmingham
4. Deputy Secretary for Public Affairs, Lambeth Palace, London
5. Senior Policy Adviser, Office for Migration Policy, International Affairs Department, Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales