Cyberharassment Awareness Course (Cybac): Influences from Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programmes for its Design and Function

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Abstract
Cyberharassment as a crime has increased significantly in recent years and is covered by legislation in the Protection from Harassment Act 1997. Cyberharassment can be targeted towards individuals or groups of people. Perpetrators can be unknown or known to their victims and the methods of harassment are diverse. The use of domestic abuse (DA) programmes for first time or low risk offenders are employed to reduce recidivism and to safeguard victims. A first step in creating a cyberharassment awareness course identified the aspects that appear to contribute to the effectiveness of these DA programmes. Various aspects contributed to the success of domestic abuse programmes and they were influential in the development of the cyberharassment awareness course. The main aspects considered and included or recommended are the need for treatment readiness, excluding some perpetrators, multi-agency working, and the location and intensity of the programme. The programmes that proved successful made use of a group contract and included individual and group work aspects, all of which were mandatory. Cognitive behaviour therapy formed the backbone of programmes and empathy awareness training was considered. The needs of individual perpetrators were to be catered to and victims included where possible.

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Introduction

This article highlights themes considered when developing a programme to change cyberharassment perpetrator behaviours with the aim of reducing recidivism. The original rationale for developing this programme was to assist the legal authorities in dealing with the increasing number and associated costs of cyberharassment and cyberstalking cases. The Cyberharassment Awareness Course (CybAC) would enable the standard risk cases from these crime categories to be diverted from the traditional prosecution pathway and be managed in the form of education workshops, like the model currently used in speed awareness training (McKenna, 2007). Due to the increase in crimes of this nature, funding was provided by the Police Innovation Fund in March 2016 to develop a programme to work with standard risk perpetrators. A programme of this nature could save the Criminal Justice System (CJS) time and money. The programme is designed to cater for participants that must attend and those that choose to attend. A scoping literature review of evaluations of domestic abuse perpetrator programmes identified themes that contributed to the perceived success of these interventions.

Srivasta and Yadav (2017) reported that cyberstalking is more prevalent than face to face stalking. However, research differs in who the perpetrators might be. Maple et al. (2011) suggested that perpetrators were more likely to be strangers or acquaintances than former intimate partners. The Great Britain Home Office (2015) confirmed that stranger stalking is on the increase due to the internet and social media. A large- scale study with 6379 users of a German social network site found that perpetrators were predominantly ex–intimate male partners and the victims, female (Dreβing, et al., 2014). Pitchford et al. (2019) interviewed victims, who shared their experiences of cyberharassment and cyberstalking, 47% reported that the perpetrator was an ex–intimate partner.

Short et al. (2015), Dreβing et al. (2014) and the Home Office (2011) state that the negative impact on victims was similar to face to face stalking. Therefore, both studies recommended that cyberstalking should be taken just as seriously as offline stalking by the legal profession and by victim support services (Short et al., 2011; Dreβing et al., 2014). In England cyberstalking, cyberharassment and the impact of these crimes has become a higher priority.

1. Relevant Legislation

The relevant legislation is the Protection from Harassment Act (PHA) 1997 (Great Britain. PHA 1997). This was amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 to include stalking behaviours (Great Britain. Protection of Freedoms Act 2012). The legislation states that a course of conduct must be proven, that incidents of unwelcome behaviour took place on a minimum of two occasions and might cause alarm, distress (section 2) or fear of violence (section 4) in any reasonable person. The consideration is that the offender knows or ought to know that it could be considered harassment (Great Britain. PHA, 1997). Harassment can also target a group of people, for example, the elderly, disabled or any other grouping. This is known as 'collective harassment'. It can include harassing the family or friends of the person who is the original target – this is called 'stalking by proxy'. If the harasser asks a further person to assist them in the harassment this will be considered part of the same course of conduct (CPS, 2018). Other legislation which could also be considered when cyberharassment is a concern include, for example, Malicious Communications Act 1988; Crime and Disorder Act 1998; Communications Act 2003; Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004.

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2. Why this Course?

White and Carmody's (2016) focus group study with University students found approaches that incorporate 'Prevention, Intervention and Education' to deal with cyberharassment and cyber-bullying type offences are beneficial. Numerous internet safety programmes and advice are available to support and avoid becoming victims of online bullying, harassment etc. (Miller, 2012). However, there is currently no cyberharassment awareness course that has as its focus the perpetrators of these crimes.

Miller's (2012) literature review of cyberstalking patterns, motivates and intervention strategies found victims tend not to report these crimes due to 'victim hypersensitivity'. Victims feel blamed for being oversensitive when they report these behaviours. When victims *do* report these crimes, they are advised to change *their* behaviours and computer mediated communications (including by phone) to reduce the likelihood of repeat offending. Numerous studies (Yar, 2005; Holt & Bossler, 2008; Welsh & Lavoie, 2012; Back, 2016) suggested that routine activities theory can be used to explain cybercrime. Routine Activities Theory suggests that activities that people routinely engage in might increase certain risks. This places the onus on the online user (potential victim) to consider what they share, where they share it and how frequently they do so (Miller, 2012). This is reminiscent of the victim blaming culture around rape and sexual abuse victims (Hayes & Lorenz, 2013). It also corresponds to experiences of victims of domestic abuse where 'The common practice is to put pressure on women to get violent and abusive men out of the home rather than to engage with men about their behaviour' (Scourfield, 2006, p.442 cited in O'Sullivan, p. 113, 2013). Victims consequently have concerns about reporting crimes. Programmes like this one will facilitate changing the perspective of hypersensitivity and the victim being to blame due to *their* online behaviours.

This programme will ensure that 'Prevention, Intervention and Education' does not only focus on what the victim can do to reduce victimization but on what perpetrators *must* do to prevent reoffending. When piloting the programme with several groups some of the feedback received was that this programme should not only be available for offenders, but also accessible in schools and other settings to circumvent potential offending altogether (Unpublished Evaluation of CybAC Pilot 3, 2018). The aim of this article is not to discuss the training programme but how the authors have used the learning gained from domestic abuse programmes to design the CybAC. The authors did not incorporate all the themes into the CybAC. The reasons are addressed in the discussion section of this article.

3. Method

The search focused on literature reviews undertaking evaluations of domestic abuse perpetrator programmes as well as stalking offender programmes. The aim was to identify what approaches worked to reduce recidivism and what approaches were not as effective. It is important to note that methodologically most evaluations of domestic abuse programmes are flawed and as such the authors are reporting on perceived success. This article reports on the approaches and processes that appears to contribute to success in domestic abuse offender programmes. The authors made use of these approaches to inform the design of the CybAC for perpetrators.

The identified themes are:

3.1. Treatment Readiness

Treatment readiness is important in predicting the success of treatment of violent offenders (Day et al., 2008) and offline stalkers (Mackenzie & James, 2011). Treatment readiness refers to 'the presence of characteristics (states or dispositions) within either the client or the therapeutic situation, which are likely to promote engagement in therapy and that, thereby, are likely to enhance therapeutic treatment' (Howells & Day, 2003, p. 320). This therefore means that the perpetrator must be motivated to change their behaviour and that the programme must facilitate this. The perpetrator must have the mental and emotional capacity to partake in the programme and must have the opportunity to actively participate and respond (Day et al., 2006; Day et al., 2008).

Day et al. (2006) report perpetrators are referred onto some programmes having low levels of problem recognition. They do not necessarily recognise that they have a problem themselves. Day et al. (2006) and Donovan & Griffiths (2015) suggest the need for pre-commencement preparation to increase readiness. This will raise the likelihood of problem recognition and awareness as part of the transtheoretical model of change.

The transtheoretical model of change could be used to indicate where in the process of change a perpetrator find themselves (Day et al., 2006; de los Galanes, 2013). This model has been used extensively in offender rehabilitation programmes. The model has several different stages: pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance and termination. This model is useful when contemplating treatment readiness but also for sequencing the different elements of a treatment programme. The pre-contemplation stage is when an offender has no recognition that their behaviour is a problem and therefore has no wish to change. Contemplation is when the offender has an intention to change their problem behaviour sometime in the next six months. The preparation stage is when the person has the intention to undertake immediate action and this is perceived to take place within the month. Action is defined as specific and explicit modifications within the past six months. Maintenance is needed to avoid a relapse into problematic behaviours and termination is when the change process is complete and there is no further need for maintenance (Velicer et al., 1998 cited in Day et al., 2006). This model suggests that change is possible when the offender is aware of the problem, wants to do something about it and can formulate strategies to change their behaviour and implement these. Treatment readiness can make the difference between the programme succeeding or failing. Therefore, programmes need to be responsive to the offenders' positioning on this model of change.

3.2. Exclusion of some perpetrators

Successful interventions are targeted towards known domestic abuse perpetrators signed up as part of a conditional caution. The Hampshire experiment evaluation, Project CARA, tested the hypothesis that 'Offenders subject to additional conditions in the form of workshops will be less likely to reoffend compared with those without this condition' (Marshall et al., 2012). Project CARA evaluators, Marshall et al. (2012) found that perpetrator training programmes linked to conditional cautions of first-time or low severity domestic abuse perpetrators are successful in anticipated change of behaviour from the perspective of the offender. Offenders are more aware of their triggers and with cognitive behaviour therapy can respond to these appropriately. Because of findings like

these the government rolled out domestic abuse perpetrator training programmes which are known as Building Better Relationships (see Bates et al., 2017).

Building Better Relationships excludes certain perpetrators, for example those that are unlikely to meet the learning outcomes due to, for example, drug or alcohol dependency, mental health issues, etc. This is because the training programme is unable to deal with the additional needs that these participants might have, and they may cause potential disruption for other participants. Mullen et al. (2001) confirmed that substance abuse in offline stalkers makes the treatment ineffective and it can also exacerbate the situation. Building Better Relationships is also only for male offenders within heterosexual relationships only, as most of domestic abuse perpetrators are male.

However, an evaluation of 134 European perpetrator programmes of which 16 were from the UK and a further review of perpetrator programmes in England found voluntary participation is necessary (Williamson & Hester, 2009; Geldschläger et al., 2015). Mixed results are therefore found with regards to whether a conditional caution or voluntary engagement is more effective. If a programme forms part of a conditional caution this excludes those who would voluntarily engage, but it does ensure that those who would benefit the most from the programme attend.

3.3. Multi-agency working and practitioners

Of domestic abuse intervention programmes in Europe 75% work in 'institutional alliance' teams. Research suggests that a main criterion needed for quality in domestic abuse programmes is to work with other services and organisations. This includes a wide variety of services ranging from the police, social services, women's counselling, youth support services and any other relevant services (Williamson & Hester, 2009; Geldschläger et al., 2015). Building Better Relationships is delivered within a Multi-Agency Partnership Agreement (MAPPA). The Home Office (2004) has long since advocated working in multi-agency teams to address domestic abuse.

A main reason for failure of voluntary programmes is the facilitators of the programmes. Several domestic abuse services that have a whole family responsibility view their remit as working with women and children (Donovan & Griffiths, 2015). They found that female practitioners felt unsafe when working with perpetrators, especially in a domestic setting. Most practitioners who delivered these programmes would rather work with the victims and this is where their loyalties lie. Some did not want to support the perpetrator in this way and did not know how to do this. They viewed perpetrators from a criminal justice perspective and therefore felt that this system should deal with them: 'What I'm worried about with perpetrator programmes is that we downgrade offending. ... I wouldn't like [perpetrator programmes] to be seen as ... an alternative for prosecution' (Urban Project, senior manager in CPS, December 2004 cited in Donovan & Griffiths, 2015, p.1165). Munro's (1998 cited in O'Sullivan, 2013) review of social work with families in cases of child abuse and domestic abuse found that social workers often disregard the male partner and focus on the mother. Stanley et al. (2010) found that in 44 out of 46 cases where domestic abuse necessitated involvement of Children's Services the social work that took place was with the mother not the father. In fact, research found that the perpetrator can intimidate and manipulate workers to distract practitioners from their role and investigations (Littlechild, 2000, 2002b cited in Littlechild & Bourke, 2006). Mackenzie and James (2011) found that protection for those who work with stalkers is necessary as the

practitioner could become a target for the stalker. This highlights the need to ensure that facilitators are trained to work with perpetrators. However, it is also critical that they *want* to work with perpetrators. The role of the facilitator of the programme therefore should not be over-looked. Walker et al. (2018) found that impetus to change is impacted on by the role and quality of the facilitators.

Mackenzie and James (2011) advocate that due to the likelihood of psychiatric and psychological issues in stalkers who weren't intimate partners, a multi-agency approach to the clinical involvement with the perpetrator is needed. Different stalker types have different needs in their treatment, and thus different skill sets are required. Literature identifies four different types of stalkers: the rejected stalker, the intimacy stalker, the resentful stalker and the predatory stalker (Mullen et al., 2009). As the motivations for these stalkers are different the treatment therefore should be different as well. For example, with the rejected stalker the therapeutic focus of their treatment should be on 'falling out of love' and to release the anger of the past and move on to the sadness of loss. For some stalkers legal action might be enough but for most treatment is necessary to address the causes of the stalking behaviours.

For intimacy stalkers judicial consequences are 'badges of honour'. These will not make them reconsider their behaviour. Mandatory psychiatric treatment is needed. Resentful stalkers' motivation is the need to frighten and cause distress to victims. They are aware of this distress and are difficult to treat. Predatory stalkers should be treated within a sex-offenders programme. Mullen et al. (2001) continues to suggest that stalkers share with sex offenders the ability to rationalise, downplay and make excuses for their own behaviour. For this reason, it is necessary for the person delivering the treatment to have access to the victim impact statement. Consequently, a variety of practitioners should be involved in the treatment of offenders and they should be trained to respond to the different needs of stalkers.

3.4. Location and Intensity

The literature suggests that training locations needs to be easily accessible and within a reasonable distance, additionally urban locations are better attended than rural locations (Donovan & Griffiths, 2015). The successful programmes tend to be intensive and spread over several weeks. The length and intensity of the programmes were important indicators of success. The average length of programmes was between 14–26 weeks. Sessions tended to be around 2.5 hours in duration. Day et al. (2006) suggest that the most successful offender programmes tend to be intensive and involve around 50 hours of treatment. Arias et al. (2013) found that programmes needed to be intense and long as gender violence is internally and societally entrenched. They suggest that the number of sessions, the length of sessions as well as the intervals between sessions are important. Westmarland and Kelly (2013) found that when focusing on community-based domestic abuse programmes intensive work with perpetrators of more than 60 hours tended to be the norm.

4. The Programme

4.1. Group Contract/ agreement

Successful programmes agreed a clear group contract with participants at the start of the programme. If participants break this agreement, for example by fighting or breaking any of the rules, they are excluded from the programme (Geldschläger et al., 2015).

4.2. One to one and group work

Group work sessions are the norm in the USA and Europe (Geldschläger et al., 2015). The most successful programmes combined one to one and group work sessions (Arias et al., 2013). The studies suggest that individual sessions focus on cognition and that group work sessions focus on behavioural issues. Building Better Relationships include one to one work sessions and group work sessions.

4.3. Attendance

With the Building Better Relationships programmes offenders must attend all the sessions. Non-attendance might result in perpetrators going back to court or prison if the absences are unacceptable.

4.4. Cognitive Behaviour Therapy

Marshall et al. (2012) and Wilson et al. (2005) reviews found that programmes that make use of cognitive behaviour therapy are successful in changing behaviour. The focus in the programmes needs to be on treatment rather than training (Wilson et al., 2005). Cognitive behaviour therapy can change cognitive distortions through working on cognitive skills and restructuring of responses. Moral reasoning and other associated methods appear to be important in programme success (Wilson et al., 2005).

Arias et al. (2013) found that the most successful domestic abuse programmes use either cognitive behaviour therapy or the Duluth approach. This is confirmed by the review of 60 European studies as part of the 'IMPACT: Evaluation of European Perpetrator Programmes' project funded by the European Commission (Daphne III Programme), by Walker et al. (2018). Cognitive behaviour therapy focuses on the offending behaviour as a learned behaviour which can be un-learned by introducing and focusing on alternative behaviours that are socially acceptable. For offenders of a wide variety of crimes, where anger is a factor, cognitive behaviour therapy is successful to aid perspective taking (Day & Howells, 2008).

Where domestic abuse programme for offenders do not use cognitive behaviour therapy, they use the Duluth approach. This approach takes the responsibility away from the victim and makes the perpetrator accountable for their actions. The whole community is involved in supporting the victim and giving the perpetrator a chance to change through the programme. A great number of domestic abuse perpetrator programmes use feminist approaches combined with cognitive behaviour therapy. This is to address faulty views on gender roles and to challenge stereotypes (Eckhardt et al., 2013). However, Eckhardt et al., (2013) found mixed results and some inconclusivity with regards to the success rate of cognitive behaviour therapy and recidivism.

Day et al. (2006) suggest that cognitive behaviour therapy as treatment is not as successful for referred participants. This is due to low problem recognition. They suggest that programmes focusing on recidivism will be more efficient for these offenders. However, for offenders aware of their problems, cognitive behaviour therapy

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is successful. They suggest that successful programmes work on the personal characteristics that are related to the offence that was committed (Day et al., 2006). Skills focused and problem-solving approaches to offender behaviour change are found to be successful.

4.5. Empathy awareness training

Mixed results were found with regards to empathy training. Jolliffe & Farrington (2004) found that low cognitive empathy was linked to offending behaviour. However, their review of programmes focusing on empathy awareness training had lower success rates in changing offending behaviours. They suggest further longitudinal research to find out why this is the case. Landenberger and Lipsey (2005) also found that cognitive behaviour training that focuses on anger control and interpersonal problem solving as part of cognitive behaviour therapy for violent offenders (not DA) is more successful that empathy awareness training. Day et al. (2010) found that with violent offenders, the effectiveness of empathy awareness training is difficult to measure, however from a theoretical perspective there is strong evidence to include it. Day et al. (2008) found that empathy awareness training as part of forgiveness forms part of violent offender training programmes in Australia. Mullen et al. (2001) found that programmes enabling perpetrators to feel (even a bit of) empathy for victims should be part of the clinical management of stalking behaviour. In the review of 134 domestic abuse perpetrator programmes in Europe more than 40% of the programmes included a focus on empathy and communication and social skills (Geldschläger et al., 2015).

Research indicates that perpetrators downplay what they have done. They use excuses and justifications for their behaviour (Wojnicka et al., 2016). This links with a lack of empathy awareness and necessitates the need to evaluate programmes from the victim's perspective as well. Domestic abuse literature suggests that perpetrators struggle to see their behaviour and the impact of it from the other person's perspective/viewpoint. However, with regards to resentful stalkers, this awareness and empathic nature is apparent. In fact, it is the fear and distress that they cause that they are seeking, and this reinforces their behaviour (Mullen et al., 2001). This supports the findings of McGuire (2002) in Australia that sentencing someone to prison does not change persistent offender behaviour per se. Training and interventions are needed to change their behaviour. Mackenzie & James's (2011) findings support this through showing that legal sanctions alone do not prevent recidivism. This is because the reasons for their behaviour have not been addressed. They also suggest that perpetrators of stalking, no matter which category of offline stalking, have a sense of entitlement when it comes to the victim. They feel they have a right to fulfil their own desires and they deserve 'the victim's time and attention'. Therefore, developing perspective taking techniques and empathy awareness are considered important parts of programmes of this type. A method to find out if the programme is successful is to ask the victim (as a current or ex-intimate partner). A way to ensure this is to involve the victim in the programme.

4.6. Make the victim part of the training

Working with perpetrators only means that not all relevant information is known to police and the courts (Wojnicka et al., 2016). Mullen et al. (2001) suggest that stalkers share with sex offenders the ability to rationalise, downplay and make excuses for their

own behaviour. Therefore, it is necessary for the person delivering the treatment to have access to the victim impact statement. Stalkers might have delusional beliefs about their actions and they can be persuasive in trying to influence others of their interpretation of their actions. Geldschläger et al. (2015) suggest that without this element the victim could be at greater risk. This is because the perpetrator could lie and suggest that his behaviour has changed or improved.

Out of the 134 domestic abuse programmes the majority have contact with the victim's partner or ex-partner as well. The Respect programme in the UK was part of this review and advocates that every perpetrator programme should have a victim programme as well (Geldschläger et al., 2015). Westmarland and Kelly (2013) found that this acted as a 'safety net' for victims of domestic abuse. Knoll and Resnick (2007) found that intervention with both the perpetrator and victim of stalking is needed. This intervention should consist of treating the perpetrator to avoid violence and further offending and treating the victim's symptoms and providing them with strategies to keep themselves safe.

4.7. Meeting the needs of all participants

MacKenzie and James (2011) in their stalking programmes review and Wojnicka et al. (2016) in their review of domestic abuse programmes advocate a variety of techniques and treatment methods to meet differing needs of offenders. Wojnicka et al. (2016) suggest that even though it might be a 'one size fits most' approach differentiations are needed. Knoll & Resnick (2007) found that there is no single best intervention approach that would suit all perpetrators. Day et al. (2006) suggest that different programmes should be available to cater for the different levels of problem awareness and for accommodation of perpetrators. Arias et al. (2013) found that programmes that are designed to meet the specific needs of each participant are more likely to be successful. They also found that programmes that are not specifically developed to meet the needs of each perpetrator lack's worth and can be counter-productive.

5. Discussion

The authors took this learning from domestic abuse perpetrator programmes and where possible used these themes or approaches in developing the CybAC. When considering what would work and what would not it was imperative to consider facilitating factors that enable cyberharassment. According to van Royen et al. (2017) these are self-control, impulsivity and online disinhibition. This is similar to previous findings in terms of the online disinhibition effect (Suler, 2004). This states that due to the anonymity and ability to hide online, people are more likely to engage in unacceptable and illegal behaviours online than face to face. The programme addresses developing self-control, avoiding impulsivity and the prevalence of online disinhibition through the various blocks.

5.1. Treatment readiness

This programme has been designed to be part of a conditional caution extended by the Criminal Justice System. It is intended that this course would offer an alternative to current practises. The authors of the course accept that treatment readiness of perpetrators however, is not guaranteed with a conditional caution. The research suggests voluntary engagement might ensure higher levels of treatment readiness (Day et al., 2006; de los Galanes, 2013). Signing up voluntarily also signals contemplation

through realising that they have a problem and taking the first step to address it. An initial letter to perpetrators provides the participant with information about the programme and the consequences of cyberharassment for themselves. This prepares the perpetrator to act on their behaviour and its impact. The letter prepares the participant for action when attending the programme.

If the programme were to be part of a conditional caution the perpetrator might still be in pre-contemplation. The conditional caution combined with the letter to participants are developed to move perpetrators towards contemplation. Perpetrators might use the time between receiving the introductory programme letter and the programme start as preparation time, but if not the programme on Day One starts with an introduction that develops contemplation and preparation further.

5.2. Exclusion of some perpetrators

The authors of the programme recommend that certain perpetrators are excluded from the programme. These include participants with diagnosed mental health issues and substance misusers. Only participants who are perceived as standard (low) risk are to be included in the programme. The aim of exclusion is to ensure that participants can reach the learning outcomes and to minimise increasing the risk for victims and the risk of future collusion. To manage this the suggested group size is a maximum of 8 perpetrators with 2 facilitators running the sessions. This will also permit intervention if an undiagnosed mental health condition, outbursts of anger or resentment or other disruptions occur that need to be dealt with by removing someone from a session (either for a short period of time or permanently).

5.3. Multi-agency working (or at least respectful awareness)

The literature review, primary research with victims and designing the programme magnified the need for multi-agency engagement and co-operation. Entry routes into this programme are still undefined. However, it could be through the Criminal Justice System, referrals through relevant charities and other organisations and voluntary engagement (self-referral). It is imperative for those involved, however remotely, to be supportive of the remit and aims of the programme. It is crucial for the success of the programme to identify the most appropriate organisations as well as employees within these organisations to deliver the training. Facilitators of the programme need to be trained to deliver the programme but must also *want* to work with perpetrators rather than victims. The quality of the facilitators is a key factor in whether behaviour change will take place or not (Walker et al., 2018). CybAC providers and victim support services providers should not be the same people. The suggestion with this programme is that facilitators are specifically employed and trained to work with this client group.

5.4. Location and intensity

The authors recommend an urban location that is easily accessible for participants. This is especially pertinent if the programme relies on voluntary engagement rather than on a conditional caution.

Research suggests that the more intensive a programme the more likely it is to facilitate change. However, if the programme is too lengthy participants will not want to engage voluntarily and the cost to the provider will increase. However, Mackenzie and James (2011) suggest that the benefit will outweigh the disadvantages. The authors

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therefore designed intensity into the programme timeframe- from registering onto the programme until after completion.

The programme is designed to run over 2 days and is divided into 6 blocks. Attendance of all blocks is mandatory to complete the programme as they build on each other. To increase the intensity of the programme there is a two-week gap between Day One and Two of the programme. During this time participants engage in tasks to monitor and evaluate their moods, thinking and behaviours. Workbooks, including all the programme materials, activities, and contact information for support services, remain the participants' property on completion. The authors anticipate this will add to the intensity and maintenance of the behaviours by having access to all materials including contact information for support services.

5.5. Group contract

At the start of Day One clear ground rules and expectations are discussed with participants. The rules of engagement mostly revolve around how to behave with other participants and the facilitators. A fundamental rule is that participants are forbidden from using any technology whilst at the programme days. This includes the break and lunch times.   This is to provide participants with the best opportunity to concentrate on the programme, provide time to reflect and interact with others and not engage in further cyberharassment. This forms a crucial part of the psychosocial treatment in the programme design and delivery in terms of cognitive behaviour therapy, empathy awareness, working on self-awareness and impulse control.

A concern with programmes of this nature is that participants could learn from each other and from the programme how not to be caught breaking the law. However, the programme is purposefully designed to minimise the risk of this. Small group sizes, the presence of two facilitators who also engage with participants during break and lunch times might prevent this from occurring. If participants fight, become disruptive or use technology during the day they will be removed from the programme.

5.6. One to one and group work

Successful programmes tend to combine one to one and group work. Within the course design the authors included individual tasks, pair work, work in fours and whole group tasks. Due to time and cost implications of individual work, participants are given individual activities to complete between the two session days. This allows for individual engagement and learning, but feedback on this is taken within the group sessions. Receiving the pre-commencement letter is also made to feel like an individual engagement to reinforce the responsibility that the perpetrator must take.

5.7. Attendance

For programmes to be successful attendance at all sessions are necessary. The authors also suggest consideration of sanctions if participants do not complete the mandatory tasks between the two scheduled days. If this programme were to run as part of a conditional caution this would be easier to enforce than with voluntary engagement. However, if participants are ready for treatment and moving from contemplation to action, they would be more likely to engage meaningfully in all aspects of the programme.

The authors considered various methods for participants to capture and record their engagement in the tasks between sessions. As recognised in the literature review 'meeting the needs of all participants' was a key consideration for success. This informed the authors' decision to enable participants to capture their individual engagement however they wanted to. The authors did provide several suggestions of how this could be done in the workbook and the verbal delivery of the programme pilots.

5.8. Cognitive behaviour therapy

For cognitive behaviour therapy to work participants need to be willing to change and move towards action on the transtheoretical change model. The programme is designed to make participants willing to change, contemplate change and to move them on to action. This ensures that regardless of whether participants are expected to attend, referred or self-refer the treatment methods have the potential to facilitate change.

Problem recognition is the key learning outcome of Day One. Being able to identity behaviour as problematic and the far-reaching implications of the problem behaviour enables participants to move to willingness and contemplation of change and to start taking actions towards change. The programme supports participants to identify the triggers or causes that drive their behaviour responses. Triggers can then be avoided or responses to these triggers altered. Therefore, an awareness of cognitive distortion and reasoning allows for cognitive restructuring to take place.

5.9. Empathy awareness training

Mixed results were found with regards to empathy awareness. In stalking literature, the negative impact on the victim is a motivating factor for some types of perpetrator. Regardless of the mixed results 40% of domestic abuse programmes in Europe makes use of some form of empathy awareness training. The authors of the programme decided to integrate this as part of addressing the cognitive distortion that perpetrators experience. Pitchford et al. (2019) found that many cyber harassers were ex-intimate partners and their aim was often to rekindle a relationship with their former partner. They do not anticipate that their actions have the opposite impact. However, other research found that cyber-harassers are diverse in their relationship to the victim and in their motivations (Short et al., 2015; Heinrich, 2015). For this reason, the programme ensures to meet the diverse needs of all the potential participants and therefore this is included.

5.10. Meeting the needs of all participants

A variety of techniques and treatment methods are incorporated within the programme design. Careful consideration was given to the various motivations and methods of cyberharassment to be encountered and how to ensure that the content and approach works for all participants. Content, activities and styles of delivery and engagement are designed to meet the personality and delivery needs of all participants.

5.11. Make the victim part of the training

The rationale for victims being part of the training in domestic abuse programmes is strong. However, due to the wide nature of cyberharassment crimes and the fact that

the victim might not know the perpetrator and that the perpetrator might have numerous victims at a time, this is impractical for cyberharassment awareness training. However, where the police or other organisations have contact with a victim and the perpetrator is attending the programme, they can follow up with the victim to gauge whether the behaviour has stopped or not.

Conclusion

Treatment programmes for domestic abuse perpetrators are perceived to be successful in reducing recidivism. The methodology used to measure success or not is deemed to be flawed or inconsistent across programmes. However, numerous factors are responsible for the perceived success. This cyberharassment awareness course designed for perpetrators of these crimes has used some of the successful principles identified through a review of literature reviews of domestic abuse programmes across the world. Indicators of success relate to the circumstances leading up to the programme and the programme itself. Treatment readiness of perpetrators is a key consideration; this needs to be achieved whether the participant self-refers onto a programme or are referred or if treatment is part of a conditional caution. Where they do not engage voluntarily with a programme more preparation needs to be done with them to ensure that they are ready for the demands of a programme of this type. To facilitate success of the programme it is necessary to have individual and group work aspects. Some perpetrators may be excluded from the programme if they are not able to complete the learning outcomes, for example because of drug or alcohol dependence. Ensuring that programme facilitators want to work with perpetrators in this capacity is necessary. The programme is designed to be intensive and the whole process from enrolment to completion runs over several weeks. Group contracts are important in all group work to ensure that participants are enabled to attain the maximum input and insight from the programme.

Attendance and engagement in all parts of the programme is necessary as the treatment aspects build on each other. Cognitive behaviour therapy facilitates the move from contemplation to action to change. This process allows for empathy awareness and an increase in self-awareness and impulse control. Perpetrators have different motivations and ways of harassing; therefore, treatment must be diverse and meet the needs of the participants. Victim participation is not always possible with this programme as the victim might not be known to the perpetrator. However, where a programme is part of a conditional caution ensuring that the harassment has stopped and does not escalate is important. This highlights the importance of a multi-agency approach as communication between the facilitators of the programme and victim support or the police will be needed in these cases.

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