Evaluation of victim's awareness program for juveniles

Donna Law Bleakley

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd-project

Part of the Social Work Commons

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd-project/675

This Project is brought to you for free and open access by the John M. Pfau Library at CSUSB ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses Digitization Project by an authorized administrator of CSUSB ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@csusb.edu.
EVALUATION OF VICTIM'S AWARENESS
PROGRAM FOR JUVENILES

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Social Work

by
Donna Law Bleakley
Stella Louise Scheffer
Irene Joy Caplan
May 1993
EVALUATION OF VICTIM'S AWARENESS PROGRAM FOR JUVENILES

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

by
Donna Bleakley
Stella Schaffer
Irene Caplan
May 19, 1993

Approved by:

Dr. Teresa Morris
Chair of Research Sequence
Social Work Department

Dr. Morley Glickman
Project Advisor, Social Work

Michelle Scray
Probation Department
ABSTRACT

Juvenile crime has reached alarming rates in America. Offenses committed by juveniles represent one-half of the property crimes and one forth of crimes against persons in the United States. Traditional methods of handling juvenile offenders has been ineffective. Therefore, a need for valid program evaluation in the treatment of juvenile offenders is evident. This study is an attempt to meet this need and to present a follow-up program evaluation to a previous graduate research study. Evaluation of the current VAP centers on the program's ability to increase empathy among juvenile offenders towards victims of crime, thus deterring them from committing future crimes. The research question is, "What impact does the VAP have on juvenile offender's ability to empathize with victims of crime?" Results of this study demonstrated a very slight effect of the VAP on members of the experimental group. Additionally, there was positive change in the comparison group, whose members did not participate in the VAP.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Focus</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Study</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions and/or Hypotheses</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sampling</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection and Instruments</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of Human Subjects</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A: Bleakley, Scheffer &amp; Caplan Inventory (BSCI)</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B: Qualitative Interviews</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C: BSCI Question Categories</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix D: Consent Form</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix E: Follow-up Interviews</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix F: Victim Awareness Schedule</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix G: Debriefing Statement</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix H: Institutional Review Board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix I: Request for Approval for MSW Students to Conduct Program Evaluation

References
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 — Experimental Group — Questions ..................23
Table 2 — Control Group — Questions ..........................24
Table 3 — Experimental Group — Subjects ......................25
Table 4 — Control Group — Subjects ............................26
INTRODUCTION

Crime has reached an alarming rate in America. The U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation found during 1990 there were 23,400 murders, 102,600 rapes, 6,390 robberies, and 105,500 assaults (Dept. of Justice, 1990). If one has any doubts as to the rising rates of criminal activity, they need only to pick up a daily newspaper or watch the evening news. In the time it would have taken you to read this report in 1990, there would have been approximately 100 violent crimes, 10 forcible rapes, 5 murders, and 600 property crimes according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Report (Dept of Justice, 1990). Bartollas (1985) found that offenses committed by juveniles (under the age of 18) represent one-half of the property crimes and one-fourth of crimes against persons in America. These statistics indicate a major social problem facing Americans today: juvenile delinquency.

While no single cause of juvenile delinquency has been identified, Jenkins et al. (1985) believes that juvenile delinquency "...is the result of either of two processes at work in society" (p. 18): 1) inadequate socialization in early life and consequent failure to develop empathy with others and the capacity for sharing and compassion; and 2) a second process which develops later in the child's life and is due to "environmental stress and pressure, poverty, over crowding, lack of parental supervision, exposure to
delinquent companions and the lack of a satisfactory father figure" (p. 18). Professionals in the field have also suggested that the current budgetary crisis has contributed to the problem through decreased funding for education, social service support for families in crisis, and programs for youngsters who are at risk. As a result of this process, juvenile crime has increased (Bartollas, 1985). Traditional methods of handling these juvenile offenders has been ineffective (Jenkins, 1985). One reason for their ineffectiveness may very well be a lack of an empathy skills training component in interventions with juvenile offenders (Brusten, 1986). Empathy training may be defined as the acquisition of insight and self-awareness (Brandt & Zlotnic, 1986). Sorrells (1980) found that typical programs which focused on impulse control, preservation of order, and respect for authority fail utterly because juveniles have not learned empathy. Because these traditional methods have not been completely effective, a need for valid program evaluation in the treatment of juvenile offenders is evident, as is insight into the acquisition of empathy skills.

According to Goldstein & Michaels (1989) adolescence may be an important period for the development of communicative empathy skills. It is during those years that the individual first begins to take responsibility for developing significant interpersonal relationships.
Feshback (1982) suggests that empathy in boys is more closely linked to the development of a variety of cognitive skills than it is to effectively oriented socialization experiences. Feshback (1982) writes, "It is as though empathy in girls develops through identification, normative role adaptations and positive child rearing experiences..." (pg. 57). She suggests that the combination of social understanding and empathetic arousal that generally occurs when the boy comprehends another person in distress leads to helping and altruism.

Duggan (1978) describes the Childcare Apprenticeship Program which focused on developing empathy in economically deprived and troubled youth by placing them in the caretaker role with a needy child. The behavior of these adolescents had brought them in contact with the police, the courts and social service agencies. Upon completion of the three year course, a majority of the adolescents developed a stronger sense of empathy and a reduced rate of crime.

Selman (1974) believes that new forms of empathy continue to develop through childhood, adolescence and adulthood; are related to levels of social perspective-taking; and that each level of social perspective-taking enables the child to conceptualize a new form of empathy. This would tend to support the value of programs such as the VAP designed to increase empathy.

According to Jenkins et al. (1985), a lack of empathy
is the result of inadequate socialization, and it was found by Chalmers & Townsend (1990); Feshback (1982); and Kalliopuska (1991) that empathy could be effectively elevated by participation in a program designed specifically to increase interpersonal skills and empathy. Therrien (1979) evaluated empathy skill training for parents and found that parents were able to acquire and increase their levels of empathy and these skills were maintained over time.

A program to encourage the development of empathy among felons at Rikers Island, N. Y. was developed and facilitated by Catherine Abate (Larson, 1993). The program consisted of a group of inmates who met twice a week for thirteen weeks. During each session victims and/or family survivors discussed the emotional, psychological, and physical after-effects of the crime along with the financial toll. According to Abate, this program was effective in increasing empathy among these felons for victims of crime.

Divac (1989) found that an educational focus on the impact of juvenile crime on victims was beneficial in that increased sensitivity and empathy developed among juveniles. The social costs of delinquency may be found in the faces and voices of our citizens who live in fear; personal injury; emotional problems of victims; vandalism and attendant price increases for goods and services; increased taxes; unemployment compensation and welfare; and increased
use of an already overburdened court system (Bartollas, 1985). A program which includes empathy training is worth pursuing since it is inexpensive and can be incorporated into existing programs.

These and similar research findings offer support for the rationale and existence of the Rancho Cucamonga Victim Awareness Program (VAP). Hence, evaluation of the current VAP will center on the program's ability to increase empathy among juvenile offenders toward victims of crime, thus deterring them from committing future crimes. Although all research has not demonstrated a firm correlation between elevation of empathy and a corresponding decrease in criminal activity, the implication is that empathy training is one means of dissuading juvenile offenders from future criminal activity. Additionally, the current study is a follow up program evaluation to a 1992 graduate research project by Casier, Garcia & McNitt who evaluated the same VAP for juvenile offenders through the San Bernardino County Probation Department.

Specifically, the research question of interest is: what impact does the VAP have on a juvenile offender's ability to empathize with victims of crime? The VAP being evaluated consists of a ten week course in lecture and discussion format, directed by probation offers focusing on educating the offenders in the following areas: property offenses, drunk driving, domestic violence, animal cruelty,
rape, burglary, child abuse and auto theft. Guest speakers and video tapes are also utilized. Educational material will be presented to VAP members in a manner which is sensitive to the experiences of crime victims in order to facilitate the acquisition of insight and self-awareness.

A juvenile delinquent is defined as an underaged youth who commits a crime that, if committed by an adult, would be considered a misdemeanor or felony (Jenkins, Heidemann & Caputo, 1985). Kaplan & Sadock (1991) define empathy as "Intellectual and emotional awareness and understanding of another person's state of mind, involving the projection of oneself into another person's frame of reference" (pg. 65). It is hypothesized that juveniles who participate in the VAP will demonstrate an increased ability to empathize with victims of crime. Potential benefits of VAP's are: more positive social behavior; lowered aggression levels; decreased violence; and increased understanding of self and behavior. These benefits should increase the juvenile's ability to take more deliberately conscious and positive actions in their lives and to rescue tendencies to commit crime in the future.

PROBLEM FOCUS

This study is a positivist explanatory study using a two group design. The major social work role being evaluated is that of direct practice since the study evaluates a group intervention. There are other
implications for the administrative and policy planning areas of practice as well, since the program is also evaluated for efficacy. The explicit client problem and need identified and addressed in this study was lack of empathy among juvenile offenders for crime victims. Acquisition of empathy for the suffering of victims of crime may help juvenile offenders to appreciate the nature of the harm they inflict on others (Brusten, Graham, Herringer, & Malinowoki, 1986). If empathy can be increased among these juvenile offenders in the VAP group as a result of the VAP, then the program's effectiveness will have been demonstrated.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the San Bernardino County Probation Department VAP. This is a follow up program evaluation to a previous study done by Casier, Garcia & McNitt (1992).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND/OR HYPOTHESES

This is a positivist explanatory study using a two group comparison design. A positivist study is the paradigm of choice since causality is addressed. The research question is: what impact does a VAP have on a juvenile offender's ability to empathize with victims of crime? It was hypothesized that juveniles who participated in the VAP would demonstrate an increased ability to empathize.
SAMPLING

A conventional sample was drawn from juvenile offenders in the San Bernardino County Probation Department who are on probation. Members of the VAP and comparison groups were selected by probation officers and matched as closely as possible on age and sex. There was a total of thirteen juveniles participating in the VAP, and ten in the comparison group. These juveniles were males and females, aged 12 to 19, who had been referred by their probation officer or court ordered to attend the VAP.

DATA COLLECTION AND INSTRUMENTS

Data was collected by pre- and post-testing all VAP subjects as well as the comparison group with the Bleakley, Scheffer and Caplan Inventory (BSCI, 1992, Appendix A). The BSCI was adapted from the assessment instrument utilized by Casier, et. al (1992, p. 56). Test statements which address components of the VAP were read aloud by evaluators to both groups in order to improve comprehension and compliance with instructions. Each participant was asked to respond to each statement with a brief explanation.

The BSCI was created especially for this study to assess the acquisition of empathy. Course curriculum was developed by the San Bernardino County Probation Department.

The BSCI measures empathy using twenty-five statements read to each juvenile who then shared the first response that came to mind with the interviewer. It was administered
to both the comparison group and the VAP group. Before the BSCI was administered, it was pre-tested using a group of adolescent high school students in order to determine readability, comprehension and test taking ease.

A major strength of the BSCI is its specificity, although it is not a standardized instrument and has no established reliability or validity. That is, it was designed specifically for the San Bernardino VAP. A possible limitation to the study design concerned issues of attrition and absenteeism. These issues were controlled for by the use of qualitative interviews. Qualitative interviews were face-to-face, with all participants in the VAP during the fifth session to establish a data base in the event of absenteeism. This data base provided a profile of each subject for the purpose of obtaining additional information (i.e. family, personal history, type of offense, etc.), to enhance the pre- and post-test date, and lend insight into participant's attitudes towards the program in the event of attrition and absenteeism (see Appendix B). Data analysis included open coding procedures which allow for comparisons of questionnaire responses and general observations. It was anticipated the attrition rate would be low since the juvenile offenders in the study were mandated to attend the VAP.

In addition to addressing the issue of absenteeism and attrition, qualitative interviews were conducted with VAP
participants in order to clarify and assess generalized statements concerning the data collected from the BSCI, a procedure used in the replicated study (Casier, et. al, 1992). A strength of these interviews is that they were less restrictive than the quantitative data, and would allow for those interviewed to clarify any of the participant's questions (see Appendix B). Interviews were read aloud by evaluators to support the quantitative findings of the study. Questions were grouped into concepts consisting of expectations, history, empathy, and program effectiveness (see Appendix C).

PROCEDURE

The proposed research is an explanatory study in which both the comparison group and VAP group were pre-tested with the BSCI. At the end of the course (ten weeks), both groups were again post-tested with the BSCI to assess development of empathy. Qualitative interviews were conducted by the research team with all members from the VAP group during the fifth session to support and enhance the quantitative data collected.

PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS

The San Bernardino Probation Department assigned each subject a numerical code. These codes were kept confidential within the probation department. Evaluators only had access to the participants numerical code. Thus, limited access would eliminate the possibility of anyone
outside of the San Bernardino County Probation Department from discovering the identity of participating offenders. Letters of permission for the inclusion and participation of minors in both the comparison group and the VAP group were obtained from the San Bernardino County Probation Department.

All subjects were required to read and sign a consent form stating they had been informed of safeguards which would maintain confidentiality, anonymity, and freedom from injury or harm resulting from their participation (see Appendix D).

DATA ANALYSIS

After the data were collected from the pre-tests and post-tests of both groups using the BSCI, an analysis of data was performed. All three researchers reached consensus regarding the level of empathy for each respondent according to the following criteria: Level 1: extremely unempathetic response as defined by the complete lack of ability to project oneself into the other person's frame of reference; Level 2: unempathetic response defined as a minimal ability of the respondent to project their responsibility into the other persons's frame of reference; Level 3: neutral response defined as having neutral investment in projecting oneself into the other persons's frame of reference; Level 4: empathetic response defined as having awareness and understanding of another person's state of mind; and Level
5: extremely empathetic response defined as having profound awareness and sensitivity to the state of mind and frame of reference of others. Dates were entered for each of the four categories: 1) VAP group pre-test; 2) comparison group pre-test; 3) VAP group post-test; and 4) comparison group post-test (see Table 2).

Informal data analysis was performed in order to determine any significant changes in either individual or group scores. The chi-square test for significance was performed on those questions which appeared to show significant changes (see Table 1). A T-test was performed in order to determine any significance between pre- and post-test means. The mean scores between the VAP group pre-test and the comparison group pre-test were compared. Since neither the VAP group pre-test or the comparison group pre-test participants had experienced the VAP at this point it was anticipated that the mean scores would be similar (i.e., reflect the same levels of empathy). Next, the VAP group post-test mean and the comparison group post-test mean were compared. It is in this comparison that we anticipated a significant difference. Finally, the means of the VAP pre- and post-test were compared to the means of the comparisons group pre- and post-test. We anticipated the VAP post-test mean would be greater than the VAP pre-test mean and the comparison group means.

The VAP was the independent variable and empathy among
juvenile offenders for crime victims was the dependent variable. "Empathy" as previously defined, is the intellectual and emotional awareness and understanding of another person's state of mind, involving the projection of oneself into another person's frame of reference. The BSCI consisted of twenty-five statements designed to measure this construct.

It was anticipated that a positive relationship would be found between participation in the VAP and an increase in the level of empathy that VAP members had towards victims of crime. Thus, those who participated in the VAP should have acquired more empathy than those who did not participate in the program.

In addition to quantitative data in this research project, qualitative information was collected from personal interviews with all participating in the VAP. Analysis of qualitative data was performed though the use of open coding procedures based upon questionnaire responses and general observations. Questions were asked about the data acquired, i.e., information regarding process issues was obtained; comparisons for similarities and differences were made; and similar responses were labeled and grouped to form categories (see Appendix B).

**RESULTS**

The experimental group consisted of thirteen juvenile offenders who ranged in age from fourteen to nineteen with
the mean age being 14.7 years. The ethnic makeup of the VAP group was four Caucasians, three Hispanics, three African-Americans, two Native Americans, and one Korean.

Demographic questions (Appendix B) were posed to the experimental group and revealed information about prior history of convictions and current commitment offense. In the experimental group, six people (62%) reported a prior history of convictions. The highest number of arrests reported by an individual was fifteen. The mean number of arrests for this group was 3.8 times.

Members of the experimental group reported that they had been arrested for a variety of crimes, and some reported being arrested for more than one crime. Six members reported being arrested for robbery, four for assault, one for rape, one for driving while intoxicated, and one for possession of drugs.

The pre-test (see Appendix A) given to both groups on the same date also produced similar test score results. The overall pre-test mean score for the thirteen member experimental group was 83.9. The overall pre-test mean score for the ten member comparison group was 83.3.

The post-test (see Appendix A) administered to both groups demonstrated surprising results. The overall post-test mean for the thirteen member experimental group was 84.2. The overall post-test mean for the ten member comparison group was 85.2. These results demonstrate an
increase in the experimental group post-test mean score of .3. The post-test mean score of the comparison group increased 1.9. Gains were insufficient to warrant further analysis for significance (t=-.167 < .05).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean Score Pre-test</th>
<th>Mean Score Post-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>84.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>85.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two major conclusions were reached: 1) there was a very slight effect of the VAP on members of the experimental group; and 2) there was greater positive change in the comparison group, whose members did not participate in the VAP.

The chi square test was performed on those questions of the BSCI which demonstrated the greatest gain in scores between the pre- and post-test for the experimental group. Chi squares were deemed significant for questions eight (> .005) and twenty-four (> .001) [see Appendix A] suggesting these two questions alone would help differentiate gain or loss of empathy in future research.

In evaluating the qualitative data obtained on the experimental group members, it became evident that experiences of the students who were able to progress to the fifth class seemed to exceed their initial expectations. At this time, all the group members felt the VAP might be beneficial to others. Most group members expressed some
sense of empathy for crime victims. A constant theme throughout the interviews was that of family values which influenced each group member's attitude and level of sensitivity.

The most popular topics of interest varied among group members. The majority of juveniles found some interest in some topics. Of the two guest speakers who appeared, some were able to capture the interest of all group members.

Five out of twelve members felt the VAP was not effective in increasing their empathy towards crime victims. Seven out of twelve VAP members felt the program would not help prevent them from committing future crimes. All of the subjects expressed a commitment to completing the classes, possibly because the program was mandated, and cost each group member $30.00 (non-refundable). All thirteen VAP members interviewed successfully completed the program.

Interviews with the program facilitator and two VAP group members were conducted following the final session of the ten week course in order to assess impressions of the course delivery system (see Appendix E). The facilitator felt that VAP members responded very well to guest speakers and videos, and poorly to handouts. She further stated that a major flaw in the VAP was the failure of guest speakers to attend as scheduled, resulting in impromptu instruction in seven out of ten classes. The two VAP group members interviewed also felt strengths of the program were guest
speakers (victims) and videos. The major weakness was identified as centering on lecture format (described as boring). A change to small group discussion was recommended by these VAP group members to increase participation.

DISCUSSION

The quantitative findings of this study do not positively favor the VAP. The data indicate that after ten weeks in the VAP, the experimental group demonstrated little increase (.3 points) in their level of sensitivity to victims of crime or their awareness of the impact of their crimes. In contrast, comparison group members, who had no exposure to the VAP, showed a positive increase in the same areas (1.9 points). In sum, the data demonstrate that a greater increase in empathy occurred among comparison group members than experimental group members.

In the previous study, Casier, et. al found the "...testing instrument played a significant role in hindering the quantitative results" (p. 25) due to random and inappropriate responses. The BSCI addressed former deficits by changing from a five point Likert scale format used in the previous study to one in which each juvenile responded to statements read aloud by interviews with the first thought that came to mind.

Questions eight and twenty-four on the BSCI demonstrated the greatest development of empathy. These questions focused on AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases.
Possible explanations are: 1) AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases are covered topics in sex education (i.e., fifth through twelfth grade); 2) AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases are subjects of importance and interest to VAP members ages twelve to nineteen; and 3) the media has increased awareness, provided information and encouraged protection regarding AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases.

Casier et. al (1992) also addressed faking to demonstrate either socially acceptable or antisocial responses due to peer pressure among subjects. VAP members in the current study appeared to be responding to the same phenomena, with the majority offering antisocial responses.

An additional issue in the previous study concerned subject selection. It was the belief of Casier et. al (1992) that the convenience sampling method utilized by the probation department was not equitable. That is, "...many differences between the two groups, including the race of the perpetrators and the crimes they committed" (p. 25) remained. In the current study, the probation department selected participants to account for age and sex, but were unable to select for type of crime due to budgetary and manpower limitations.

Casier et. al (1992) in the replicated study found the attendance policy too rigid (i.e., juveniles were only allowed to miss one class or be dropped from the program). Recommendations were made that members be allowed to miss
two classes or be dropped from the program. This recommendation was adopted for the current VAP cycle under evaluation.

Another issue of concern of the Casier et. al (1992) study concerned class structure and teaching style. In the previous study, the following areas were found to be deficient: last minute change of group facilitator, prolonged program length, rigid attendance policy, and ineffective lesson format. In the current VAP cycle, the program was stabilized with the continued presence of the original group facilitator, the program length was shortened by two weeks, the attendance policy was relaxed, and the lesson format was redesigned to be more engaging.

Four possible explanations which address the unexpected results obtained in this study are: 1) the comparison and experimental groups were dissimilar due to a flawed selection process; 2) something aversive occurred in the experimental group to make them less empathetic; 3) the level of probationary intervention was greater for the comparison group members than the experimental group members; and 4) test responses may have been negatively skewed by respondents due to resistance on their part towards any interventions; random and inappropriate responses; and/or peer pressure.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The validity of empathy training has been supported by
research literature. Although research findings from this study demonstrate minimal gains in empathy among VAP members, it is still important to continue to develop empathy training programs due to their cost effectiveness and ease of administration.

We recommend a multi-modal approach consisting of two major components. First, use of a speaker/lecture format in which all group members are present. Presented material should consist of visual aids, music, art and drama when appropriate. Second, following the speaker or lecturer, the class should be broken down into small groups facilitated by a professional in order to process the content and identify its relevance to the individual juvenile.

The rationale supporting a multi-modal approach is a belief that such an approach will decrease intellectualization and increase affective awareness among group members. The goal of a multi-modal approach would be to actively involve participants.

We also recommend the use of a more valid and reliable assessment instrument. Use of such an instrument will go a long way towards strengthening results of future program evaluations.

The selection process could be strengthened by using more variables in matching subjects (i.e., race, type of crime, family income, etc.). An improved selection process will strengthen results of future program evaluations.
In order to encourage group speakers to attend as scheduled, confirmation of dates as well as renumeration are recommended. It is hoped that a stable group of speakers will be developed and maintained for future programs.

SUMMARY

Because traditional methods have not been completely effective, a need for valid program evaluation in the treatment of juvenile offenders is evident. This study was an attempt to meet this need and also present a follow up program evaluation to a previous study. It was found that crime has reached alarming rates in America. The literature reviewed indicated that it is possible to develop and or increase empathy.

Specifically, the research question of interest is: what impact does the Victim Awareness Program (VAP) administered through the San Bernardino County Probation Department have on a juvenile offender's ability to empathize with victims of crime? It was hypothesized that juveniles who participated in the VAP would demonstrate an increased ability to empathize with victims of crime. Results of this study demonstrated a very slight effect of the VAP on members of the experimental group. Additionally, there was a greater positive change in the comparison group, whose members did not participate in the VAP. Data obtained support these findings.

Results of the present study were compared and
contrasted with results of the previous study by Casier et al, and possible explanations which address the unexpected results obtained in this study were presented. Finally four recommendations were set forth for consideration in future VAP cycles in order to increase efficacy.
Table 1

Experimental Group – Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>+.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>+.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>+.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>+.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>+.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>-.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>-.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>+.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>+.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>-.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>-.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>-.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>-.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>-.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>-.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>-.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>-.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>+.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>+.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>+.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>+.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>+.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td><strong>3.92</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.54</strong></td>
<td><strong>+.62</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

84.59     | 85.31     | +.61      |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>+0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>+1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>+0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>-3.60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>+0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>+0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>-0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>+0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>+0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>+0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>+0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>+0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>+0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>+0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>+0.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2
### Table 3

**Experimental Group — Subjects**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>+43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1091</td>
<td>994</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4

Control Group - Subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>+6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>+12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>+11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>-6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

833       | 852        | +19        |
Appendix A
BLEAKLEY, SCHEFFER AND CAPLAN INVENTORY (BSCI)

1. Being the victim of a crime does not change a person's life.
2. It's okay to steal small things.
3. If someone's car is stolen it their fault it wasn't locked.
4. If a woman is raped she should just forget about it.
5. I would hate to see old people get mugged.
6. I feel sorry for animals that I see being treated badly.
7. If I saw an abused animal in the street, I would want to find it a good home.
8. I feel that a person who gets AIDS deserves it.
9. It is not my fault if my girlfriend gets pregnant; I told her to use birth control.
10. I feel bad for people who can't control their drug use.
11. I get upset with people who hurt little children.
12. I feel sorry for people who get killed by drunk drivers.
13. If my sister were being beaten by her husband, I would mind my own business.
14. I am sad to see women who are beaten by their husbands or boyfriends.
15. It makes me unhappy when I hear about my friends who get ripped off.
16. I would be angry if someone hit my sister.
17. It bothers me to know that girls get molested by their fathers.
18. I feel sorry for people who have their car stolen.
19. I would be angry if someone I know were raped.
20. I feel sorry for women who are abused.

21. If I see a crime being committed, I should mind my own business.

22. If I take a girl out and spend money on her, I'm entitled to sex.

23. It is better to steal from older people because they can afford it.

24. It's okay to have sex with your girlfriend if you both have venereal disease.

25. Little children who are molested will forget as they get older.
Appendix B

QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

1. Age:  
   Sex:  
   Ethnicity;

2. Family income:

3. Drug/alcohol history:

4. Education:

5. Current living arrangements:

6. Prior history of convictions:

7. Current commitment offense:

8. Family member's history of convictions:

9. Support network:

29
10. How often do you attend:


11. What were your feelings about the class before you participated?


12. What are your feelings about the class now?


13. Do you think others could benefit from this class? If so, how?


14. How do you feel about crime victims?


15. Do you participate actively?


16. Do you think this class will help prevent you from committing another crime?


Appendix C

BSCI QUESTION CATEGORIES

CONCEPT: Expectations
Categories: Questions 10 and 11

CONCEPT: History
Categories: Questions 1-9

CONCEPT: Empathy
Categories: Questions 14 and 15

CONCEPT: Program Effectiveness
Categories: Questions 12, 13 and 16
Appendix D

CONSENT FORM

I consent to serve as a subject in the research investigation entitled An Evaluation of a Victim's Awareness Program. The nature and general purpose of the study has been explained and read to me by Bryan Casier, John Garcia and Steve McNitt from the Social Work Department of California State University at San Bernardino (SCUSB).

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE (READ TO PARTICIPANTS)

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the Victim's Awareness Program. The research procedures involve participation in the Victim's Awareness Class provided by the San Bernardino Probation Department. The research team will administer a pretest and post-test to all participants. In addition, five randomly picked subjects will participate in face-to-face interviews. The purpose of the pre-test, post-test and interviews is to assess subjects attitudes toward the course material.

The content of the class will include a variety of subjects related to several types of crisis. There will also be issues having to deal with your awareness of how crimes impact people and to assess your own possible past victimization.

Participation in the research aspect of this class is voluntary and you are free to withdraw consent at any time. (The withdrawal from the research project will not exempt you from taking the Victim's Awareness class.) None of the information you give will be connected to your name since all tests and questionnaires will be identified by a four digit number code of your choice. All information you give will be confidential and your identity will not be revealed. Please answer all the questions. Be as honest as possible. Thank you for your participation.

Any questions that you have about this project will be answered by the research team or by an authorized representative of CSUSB. The research team have responsibility for insuring that participants in research projects conducted under university auspices are safeguarded from injury or harm resulting from such participation. Participation in this class is governed by the requirements of the San Bernardino County Probation Department. On the basis of these statements, I voluntarily agree to participate in this project.
Appendix E

FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS

Purpose:
To assess the facilitator's impression of the course delivery system.

1. What were your expectations of the class?
"My expectations were to educate the class members regarding victimization and to help them develop empathy."

2. Was the class what you expected?
"It was what I expected in terms of people completing the class."

3. What were some of the strengths of the program?
"The guest speakers on domestic violence were excellent, the kids responded well to them."

4. What were some of the weaknesses of the program?
"Five of the speakers didn't come as scheduled. We were forced to rely on lecture and handouts at the last minute." (Missed: car theft, drunk driving, socially transmitted diseases, addicted children and sexual abuse).

5. Why do you think you had a high rate of attendance?
"Each participant was required to pay a non-refundable fee of $30 and they were mandated to appear to get off probation."

6. How could you improve the program?
"Make sure the guest speakers show up and increase the number of speakers."
Appendix F

VICTIM AWARENESS SCHEDULE

WEST VALLEY SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAYS – 3:30-5:30 p.m.
INSTRUCTORS: MRS. SCRAY – MRS. SCHIELKE

1. January 6  Orientation and Introduction to Victimization Pre-test, video, and class discussion

TIME AND PUNISHMENT

2. January 13  Burglary and Petty Theft
Guest speakers and class discussion

3. January 20  Vehicular Manslaughter
Guest speaker, video, and class discussion
AMERICAN UNDER COVER, DRUNK AND DEADLY
Daryl – victim

4. January 27  Animal Abuse
Guest speaker and class discussion
Renee Stark, Pomona Valley Humane Society

5. February 3  Domestic Violence
Guest speakers and class discussion
Veletata Scott, Director Option House Domestic Violence Shelter and guest – victim

6. February 10  Domestic Violence
Guest speakers and class discussion
Beverly Von Oetingen, Domestic Violence Clinic and Outreach
Pat Tyler, Cita Jones – victims

7. February 17  Child Abuse – Sexual
Handout, video, and class discussion
A CHILD'S CRY (match signs on handout to movie)

8. February 24  Child Abuse – Physical, emotional
Handouts, video, and class discussion
THE EQUALIZER (match signs on handout to movie)

9. March 3  Rape and Date Rape
Guest speakers and class discussion
Jan Simpson, Rape Crisis Counselor
Laura Sisk, victim, author

10. March 10  Parenting
   Guest speaker and class discussion
   Fernellyn Brown, Riverside Public Health Nurse
   Post-test and prepare for graduation

Work Weekend March 6, 1993 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Graduation March 10, 1993  6:00 p.m.
Appendix G
DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

The research team would like to thank you for voluntarily participating in our research project. We would like to emphasize that all information collected is strictly confidential and at no time will your identities be revealed. We encourage participants to contact the research team if you have any questions regarding this project. For written results of this study, you may contact the following individuals:

Michelle Scray
San Bernardino County Probation Department

Dr. Morley Glicken
California State University, San Bernardino
Social Work Department
Appendix H

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY SAN BERNARDINO

To: Donna Bleakley, Stella Scheffer & Irene Caplan
Department of Social Work

From: Dr. Teresa Morris (Department of Social Work)

Project Title: An Evaluation of a Victim Awareness Program
Project ID: I091F-13
Date: March 3, 1993

Exempt review recommended based on category ___
Expedited review recommended based on category 9
Full board review recommended

Your proposal is approved.

Please notify the IRB if any substantive changes are made in your research prospectus and/or any unanticipated risks to subjects arise.

Your proposal cannot be approved at this time. Please modify and submit your proposal to IRB.
Your proposal can be approved if you clarify the following points and/or submit the following missing materials:

Good luck with your research!
SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL FOR MSW STUDENTS TO CONDUCT PROGRAM EVALUATION

On January 6, 1993, the Victim Awareness program will begin in the West Valley area (Rancho Cucamonga). Three students in the Masters of Social Work Program at California State University, San Bernardino, are interested in conducting a program evaluation. This evaluation will consist of pre and post testing and individual interviews with the minors. At no time will minors names be released. Each minor will be assigned a number and the MSW students will have access to only these numbers. This type of evaluation will be very beneficial to the Victim Awareness program. The three students who will be involved in the evaluation will be Donna Bleskay, Stella Schaffer and Irene Caplin. The minors who will be attending the class will be both wards of the court and informal cases handled through quickdraw.

Your approval for this evaluation is requested at this time.

Approved:  

JAMES A. EDWARDS  
Presiding Judge of Juvenile Court
REFERENCES


