

UNDERGRADUATE DISSERTATION RESEARCH PROPOSAL FORM

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DRAFT RESEARCH TITLE QUESTION:

An epidemic in the midst of a pandemic? Why did domestic abuse cases cross England and Wales rise so significantly during the Covid-19 pandemic and how did the police react to such change?

Why this topic? Why is it worthy of consideration for an undergraduate dissertation?

Domestic violence and abuse is such a prevalent issue in everyday life for millions of people globally and it is a subject that I am passionate about, more specifically, the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on domestic abuse cases. The pandemic saw the introduction of such strict laws and regulations, forcing people to stay at home, where in some instances, that is the most dangerous place for them. It is a known fact that cases of domestic abuse climbed massively during the course of the pandemic but it would be interesting to look at how these cases were handled by the police and any challenges they faced along the way. It will also be fascinating to take a look at the public's views and opinions on how cases as such are dealt with, not only during the pandemic but before and after and evaluate any changes that occurred and why. I will also try to look at how the restrictions effected the detection of domestic violence cases.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH AIM & OBJECTIVES:

The assessment specification has broken down the structure of the dissertation or placement-based project. Here, you are required to clarify the information you want to collect on your research topic in the form of two, three or four key objectives:

Identify the biggest impacts that the Covid-19 pandemic had on domestic abuse cases across England and Wales and evaluate whether any changes were caused solely by Covid-19 restrictions.

Examine the police response to domestic abuse cases during the Covid-19 pandemic, any challenges they faced, what they did or did not do well, and did the public agree?

Formulate an idea of changes that need to be made in regards to police response to domestic abuse cases based off of statistics and the public's view on how cases as such were dealt with at the time of the pandemic and how they are dealt with now.

THEORETICAL CONTEXT:

Please clarify some of the key literature to be utilised as part of your research. Consider textbooks, journals, articles, government reports, organisational strategic plans, and list a short bibliography of these key sources. This need not be extensive but will give your supervisor a good point to start from.

Government reports will be used throughout this research, especially when it comes to the statistics of domestic abuse cases from before, during and after the pandemic. They can also be used to gain an insight into how the public perceive the police. The office for national statistics will form a big help.

Information from women's charities and other domestic violence charities will also be looked at with caution for the purpose of statistics and specialist views. These may also give an insight into how many people reached out for help during the pandemic compared with before and after.

Interviews and statements from victims and survivors of domestic abuse will also be looked at cautiously in order to gain an understanding on how they feel and their views on the subject and how well they deem the police at dealing with the matter.

Police force specific websites and articles may be looked at in order to search for any specific schemes or operations they carried out in order to tackle domestic abuse cases. For example the Dyfed Powys Police Website.

Reports written by the government or other agencies that are involved with domestic abuse cases such as MARAC may be used to highlight the true scale of the matter and if any challenges are faced when trying to deal with such complex and sensitive cases.

News articles will be looked at with caution, simply to gauge an understanding of the media perception on domestic abuse and how the police deal with it as well as the public's views.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH –SURVEY METHOD:

Summary of qualitative or quantitative methods, and survey techniques being considered.

Qualitative data may be hard to collect for this particular topic due to its sensitive nature and it not being ethical to expect people to talk about their personal experiences despite how informative it would be. Quantitative data may be the easier option for such topic, however would not provide such telling and satisfactory results.

With these considerations, quantitative data will play a role in the research conducted. The technique being considered at the moment is a short survey with answers such as 'yes' or 'no' or asking participants to give a rating on thing such as how they thought the police dealt with domestic abuse during the pandemic.

SUMMARY OF SAMPLING FRAMEWORK:

Provide details of target sample. For example, who are you intending to ask to participate in your research, will you be seeking perspectives from experts who work in a given field, or will you be using a general questionnaire to gauge perspectives from members of the public?

I am considering using a general questionnaire that I will ask members of the public to complete online. No one will be forced to take part, it will be their choice and it will allow me to gauge an understanding on how the public view the matter and how well they understand the term "domestic abuse".

INITIAL REFERENCE LIST:

Please follow the Harvard referencing system

Dawsey-Hewitt, S. and Jnagel, T. (2021). *SHADOW PANDEMIC -SHINING A LIGHT ON DOMESTIC ABUSE DURING COVID RESEARCHERS AND REPORT AUTHORS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FROM THE AUTHORS*. [online] Available at: https://www.women-said.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Shadow_Pandemic_Report_FINAL.pdf [Accessed 16 Oct. 2023].

Domestic Violence and Abuse during the COVID-19 Pandemic. (2021). [online] *Violence Prevention Wales*. Public Health Wales NHS Trust. Available at: <https://www.violencepreventionwales.co.uk/cms-assets/research/Bystander-Experiences-of-Domestic-Violence-and-Abuse-during-the-COVID-19-Pandemic.pdf> [Accessed 16 Oct. 2023].

Havard, T. (2021). Domestic abuse and Covid-19: A year into the pandemic. *House of Commons Library*. [online] Available at: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/domestic-abuse-and-covid-19-a-year-into-the-pandemic/> [Accessed 16 Oct. 2023].

UN Women (2020). *The Shadow Pandemic: Violence against women during COVID-19*. [online] UN Women. Available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/in-focus-gender-equality-in-covid-19-response/violence-against-women-during-covid-19> [Accessed 16 Oct. 2023].