Roundtable Discussion
269478 A force field analysis: Front line workers as critical actors in family violence prevention programming

Presenter:

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Abstract:
Social problem: Family violence is a pervasive social problem, which negatively affects individuals, families, and communities across all ages and stages of life. This problem is complicated by difficulty in reaching individuals experiencing violence. Thus, prevention is critical for reducing mortality and morbidity rates related to family violence. Method: This study applied a force field analysis to uncover the factors that influenced the application of research to practice among a sample front-line violence prevention workers. Participates completed a two-stage, qualitative interview process. Factors were identified and then coded using a categorical analysis, predictive analytic software analysis, and affinity process to determine which factors had the most influence. Next, participants rated factors for feasibility of change. Impact/Feasibility charts were developed to create action steps for future change. Outcomes: Final action steps for this research are important to developing future programs; however, one action step is important for future research. **Specifically, participants almost unanimously requested the involvement of prevention practitioners during the beginning stages of future research.** Implications for Researchers and Health Workers: **This unique study design employed principals of community action research,** assuming that the community of health workers was a critical voice in improving prevention programming. This assumption was supported in the outcome of this research and has important implications for future evaluation and research development. Implementing this type of research design in evaluation studies might dramatically transform the outcome of evaluation research and increase buy-in of prevention workers.
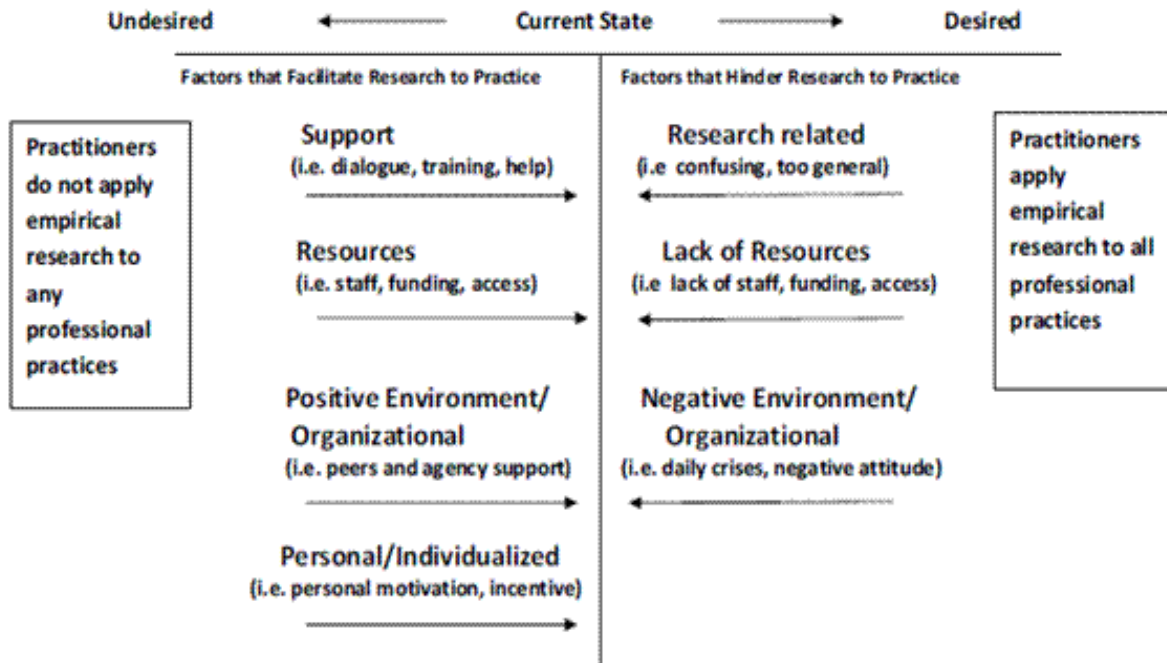
Learning Objectives:

1. Describe the use of a force field analysis as a research design that employs community action research principals.
2. Identify factors that influence the application of research to practice among a sample of family violence prevention workers.
3. Demonstrate implications for including front-line workers in applied research studies.
4. Formulate an action plan for change in future violence prevention programming and research.

Basis of the data presented today can be retrieved from dissertation source:

Graf., L. (2011). *Factors Affecting Utilization of Research by Family Violence Prevention Workers* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses. Retrieved on November 11, 2011 at http://gradworks.umi.com/34/69/3469900.html.

Please Provide with Comments:

Type of Position	Type of Violence	State	Years in Position	Years in Field	Age Group	Gender	Race	Ethnicity	Education Level	Degree Field

Undesired ◄———————— Current State ————————► Desired

Factors that Facilitate Research to Practice	Factors that Hinder Research to Practice

Practitioners do not apply empirical research to any professional practices

Support
(i.e. dialogue, training, help)
——————————►

Research related
(i.e confusing, too general)
◄——————————

Resources
(i.e. staff, funding, access)
——————————►

Lack of Resources
(i.e lack of staff, funding, access)
◄——————————

Practitioners apply empirical research to all professional practices

Positive Environment/ Organizational
(i.e. peers and agency support)
——————————►

Negative Environment/ Organizational
(i.e. daily crises, negative attitude)
◄——————————

Personal/Individualized
(i.e. personal motivation, incentive)
——————————►

A representation of a force field analysis, as designed by the primary researcher, representing the process of applying research to practice among a sample of family violence prevention workers. Modeled from principals of force field analysis (Lewin, 1951, 1958). Reprinted from (Graf, 2011).

Force Field Analysis

Four Stages of Change

Identification of opposing factors that influence behavior or process **from the perspective of the critical action**

- Rank identified factors by level of importance or influence
- Determine which factors are amenable to change
- Develop and Implement an Action Plan for change
- (Evaluate and repeat as necessary).

"From the Perspective of Critical Actors"….so who are the critical actors?

- Critical actors are those who have the ability to adopt or reject change, in this case the application of empirical resources to violence prevention practices. Those working at the primary level of prevention
- Front line workers in the area of Family Violence Prevention are those "engaged in prevention activities, such as direct services for victims or community members, educating the population, and increasing awareness of violence as a public health problem" through services, campaigns, education materials, workshops, or trainings.
- This method follows the methods of community action research by allowing the population of interest to drive and impact the research development and outcomes.

Discussion Section:

Explore Action Items Suggested By Participants during Study that are related to Participant Involvement or Value of the Research

"I think it needs to focus on action steps. In other words, how can this research translate into interactions with the specific population I am working with on issues of violence?

"I see so many programs that are measuring outcomes but I question the significance of the outcomes that are being measured. Change in many situations is hard to document. I find many programs listing 'successes' that I quite frankly want to say 'so what.'"

Having the leadership of the organization support the use of research, actively encouraging it with staff and incorporating it into their daily work (including case reviews, individual supervision, and in policies and procedures)."

" Dialogue about research."

"There is a critical need to include ground workers and clients in program development rather than inserting programs without first understanding the client needs and the ground workers abilities, training needs."

"Participatory research would go a long way to improving program implementation of evidence based data."

"I think that researchers should utilize front-line practitioners more in their research when designing research studies and collecting data in order to produce research that is appropriate and applicable to those of us who are working directly with prevention education programs"

"Less quantitative research and more 'action' research with applicable outcomes."

"My work requires constant 'documentation of outcomes', but who decides what that means? How do we place value in self report of numbers and ensure that is actually useful? There isn't enough qualitative research, and there isn't a good way to easily judge whether an article is worth reading before wasting time on it."

"Results can easily be skewed. I want more detail in a research article so I can decide for myself if it is trustworthy. Results can easily be skewed and fact sheets are nice, but how can I assure myself the numbers and information is accurate"

"My boss often disseminates information to use, maybe a chain of research could be created where researchers work harder to get results in the hands of the practitioner through the state Coalitions and directors of agencies."

"There seems to be little out there really directly related to family violence prevention itself. It seems there are so many General articles about it, or articles about violence but that are a stretch to apply. I want to see more research directly related to FVP."

"I want more action research that is specific to my population, that understands and targets my clients needs in a real and tangible way… if that happens I will become more obsessed with research than now."