

Faith Harper Case Study Analysis

Name

Course

Lecturer

Date

Introduction

Domestic violence is quite prevalent in many communities. It can be described as a case where one spouse turns on the other and causes them distress physically, mentally or emotionally. In some cases, domestic violence is accompanied by cases of sexual domination, abuse or even rape (Cefrey, 2009). In some escalated cases, the violence is extended to the children in that relationship. Victims of these cases are referred to safe shelters where they are kept away from their abusive spouses. In the shelter, they are accorded psychological help to cope and move on from such abusive relationships. Additionally, they receive legal help in seeking justice against their abusive spouses, custody of their children and other services. Victims in the shelters are given a push to get back to life where they are assisted to get jobs and subsidized housing among others (Cefrey, 2009).

Social services are put in place by the government to help victims of such relationships. The most common is child protective services. This agency helps children that are caught in between the violence between the spouses (Chui & Wilson, 2006).

This case study looks into the life of a victim of domestic violence and sexual abuse. It critically looks at the key players in the entire journey of the victim. It looks at the key facts that the players in the case are involved in. Moreover, there is the look into the challenges, themes and issues and possible solution to such cases in the future.

Identifying the Critical Facts

The key players in the case

Victims

Faith Harper

Faith is the main player in this case study. From the script it is quite evidence that she was a victim in both a personal and communal way (Weiss, 2004). Faith was married to Bob Harper. Her husband, after she relocated to the United States started dominating over her. The abuse on Faith started light but later escalated to other levels of abuse. Faith Harper is a mother of two very young children from her marriage with Bob.

Faith's major role in the case study is that she is the victim. She is sexually abused by her husband. Her husband had fantasies that led him to continually dominate Faith in bed. Additionally, he occasionally rapes her and forces her in his sexual fantasies without her consent. Faith also faces physical abuses from her husband. She reported that she was constantly being beaten by her husband at least weekly. Moreover, Faith reported that Bob twice choked her and forcefully took her toddler from her.

Faith Harper reported that she experienced her husband sexually abusing her children. As such, she suffers as a mother seeing her husband abusing her first born son. Additionally, she suffers for her children after Bob took over their custody and neglected them. Faith was evidently distraught as she witnessed the deterioration of her children's health and their general wellbeing during one of their visitations. She is also a victim of the system. Generally, most people that are responsible in ensuring her wellbeing and that of her family neglect her or turn a blind eye on her tribulations as a mother and a wife. Child protection services do not hear her out

on the complaints she has on her abusive marriage. More so, they also turn a blind eye when she complains on the state of her kids. The Social worker responsible assumes her as a mental case and therefore, dismisses her complains.

Although she temporarily got temporary custody of her children, got a divorce and had a personal protection order (PPO) approved, the legal department did not do Faith any favor. Her custody was overrun days later on some unsound reasons. Additionally, in the end she was denied overall custody over her sickly child. Moreover, she had to sack her appointed legal representative for negligence. She claimed that he once slept during a proceeding in court that had been filed on her behalf.

Due to the numerous abuses by her husband on her, Faith suffered a lot of physical and psychological strains. She was labeled a mad woman by her husband, their neighbors, the police, social workers and the children protective services. Such discriminatory remarks were unproved and based on what Bob told people. Evidently, she was a victim of racial discrimination based on her skin color and origin.

During her legal battles, she was forced into a psychological analysis. From her assigned case manager, it was evident that the tests were biases. The tests did not take into consideration her different cultural background. Additionally, most of the services to her were given with the perception that she was of unsound mind. Her medical career came to an end once she arrived in the United States. Here, her medical career was not recognized forcing her to do odd jobs. Consequently, she was subjected to some kind of personal ego problems since in Kenya she was a highly respected member of the society. Additionally, she has trouble adapting to the life in the US and the laws. She had to be taught on her rights to discover that she was being domestically abused by her husband.

In the end, Faith was diagnosed with HIV. She was observed to have become withdrawn and desperate. She is said to have had no idea on how she was infected with the virus with her husband having tested negative. Nonetheless, both her children were diagnosed to have been infected. Her youngest daughter, like herself, showed full blown symptoms of HIV. Being HIV positive was one among many reasons as to why the Shelter had to let her go. Additionally, it made her custody legal battles more difficult.

From the above, Faith is the major victim in the case. Some of the key facts are that she suffers from manipulation, domestic violence, and sexual abuse, racial and social discrimination. She is a victim of negligence and discrimination from government services and agencies. She is also a victim of HIV/AIDS.

Children

From the case, the children are also victims (MacGee, 2000). Key facts about them are that they suffer from negligence, sexual and physical abuse and HIV/AIDS.

Faith's children are in the center of all the violence in the Harper family. Faith reported that her eldest child was sexually assaulted by his father. Additionally, they are present when their mother is being beaten by Bob. From these experiences, they face some trauma that would most likely affect them in the future.

They are also the worst victims of the custody battles. At first they are forced to live with their grandmother, Bob's mother. The youngest is caught in a battle where Bob snatched her from her mother. They are forced to their grandmother's house after this. Later, for three days they stay with their mother. They are forced to move back with their father after a custody ruling is overturned. On one instance, they are forced to sleep in a chapel with their mother after she flees her home fearing for her life. They sleep under blankets offered in the chapel.

The children undergo a lot of suffering when they are left with their father. Evidently, Bob failed to take good care of them. They end up being dirty and unhealthy. They occasionally visit their mother on visitation days when they are dirty and smelling of urine. The eldest son is seen to have a dental problem is unable to eat properly. It is evident from this that Bb did not accord to them the necessary medical care they deserve.

They children are deprived of motherly care when they are separated from their mother in a custody ruling. They crave this love as is evident when the eldest child cringes onto his mother, Faith, on one of the visitations arranged by the CPS. The CPS further pushes this deprivation when they ask Faith not to parent and care for them. She was not to feed, wipe their noses or even change the children's diapers. They would mostly stay with dirty diapers that were hazardous for the children.

The children suffered nutritionally and health wise. The youngest child was not allowed to be breastfed as she was separated from her mother. The eldest son was not taken to a dentist despite having obvious dental problems. Additionally, after their diagnosis with HIV, they were not allowed to have motherly care.

Key factors and roles

Abusers

Bob Harper

The role of Bob in the case is that he is the main abuser. Key facts about him are that he is sexually and physically abusive to his wife and children. He is racist as he paints his wife as mentally unstable by playing with the fact that she does not know the legal and service systems in the US. Additionally, he is the master of deceit by lying about his wife's condition.

Bob Harper was Faith's abusive husband. He was also the father to her two children. After he married Faith and moved back to the United States, Bob started his successive abuses on his African wife. He would beat her senseless almost weekly. More so, he restricted her from working, meeting and talking to people. Bob also restricted the number of times Faith left the house if she ever did leave. Bob labeled his wife a "crazy" woman to people around them. Due to her differences in culture his story was easily believable. Additionally, he even had the police and other government agencies believe him. Bob was obviously the kingpin in the discrimination against his wife by all the people she interacted with.

Bob would occasionally force his wife in sexual acts of bondage and sadomasochism. Cases of rape were also very predominant in the Harper home. Even though he stopped the sexual fanaticism when their children were born, the physical beatings did not cease. It is reported that Bob also sexually abused his son making Faith watch as he showed her how a father should love their child.

In the case study, Bob is portrayed as a manipulative person. He was able to turn his mother against his wife. His mother took in the children after he had physically snatched them from his wife. Bob had, moreover, spread false rumors labeling his wife crazy to his neighbors and friends. The rumor was so profound that even the police and a nurse at a local hospital were convinced they were true.

Faith's husband was also able to overturn a custody case that had ruled against him. He filed a petition that Faith would most likely flee the country with the kids. This was despite the fact that she had no money for the tickets and their children had no passports. He finally got his wish when he was granted full custody of the children that served as the last straw for his wife.

Despite the spirited custody battles for his children, Bob did not take good care of the children. It was reported that on visitation days, the children appeared in dirty and urine ridden clothes. Additionally, he did not offer the children the medical attention they needed. The eldest child was noted to have had dental problems that affected how he chewed food.

Government Agencies and Assistance Programs and Shelters

Neighbors, the community and the Church

Faith neighbors and surrounding too had to role to play in the case study. They are portrayed to have been easily manipulated by Bob in believing that she was mentally unstable. Additionally, due to her origin, culture and skin color, they did not try to investigate on the truth of the matter. They also could not report any damage they thought was happening to Faith. They had made their conclusion, based on racial basis that Faith was crazy. They would have been of great help had they reported cases of alleged abuse on faith to the authorities. Moreover, they also failed to notice the bad state that Bob kept his children in while Faith lost custody and was at the shelter.

The church also had a role to play in this case study. It was Faith's church minister who was called and was helpful in helping Faiths case. Also, the night she fled from her house at night, she spent the night at chapel. At the chapel, she could access some basic requirements for her and her children to take them through the night. The chapel had blankets and was safe for them to spend the night there.

Police

The police, in addition, played a major role in the life of the Harpers. They are the ones who would respond to distress call from Faith once her husband became overly abusive to her and her children. However, the police also fell to the false stories told by Bob about Faith's

mental condition. Consequently, they stopped responding to her calls. They also advised Bob to keep her in check and prevent her from making such calls to them. On one occasion it was a police officer who came to issue Faith with impatient psychiatric committal. The police officer drove her to the local hospital and left her there for assessment and admittance.

Author, Case Officers and the Shelter

The case manager assigned to Faith on her arrival at the shelter plays a key role in how the case developed. The officer who is a social worker was from the beginning very helpful to Faith. She sympathizes and empathized with her. The worker goes to great lengths to ensure that Faith understood that domestic violence was legally not acceptable in the United States. Additionally, she took her case personally and gave her the required advice on matters that arose during her stay at the shelter.

The case manager went to great lengths to ensure that justice was served for Faith. She was always petitioning the child protective services to return the children to Faith citing the incompetence and negligence of their father, Bob. The author was also among the team that went to fetch the children from Bob after the first custody victory in court. Moreover, Faith's case manager contacted different legal agencies for them to look at Faith's case and offer their legal services to her. She was reprimanded by her manager for going too far in helping Faith's case.

The shelter offered Faith a safe haven after she fled her abusive marriage. They offered to assist her seek legal action against her husband. The shelter staff also helped her fight the legal battle to get custody of her two children. They succeeded once and took her there personally to pick her children. The shelter offered Faith psychological help so that she could cope with the traumas of domestic and sexual abuse.

Child Protective Services

Faith frequently called CPS when she witnessed her husband abusing her two-year-old son. However, the agency took little interest in her case. They seemed to have some kind of discrimination against her. When she left home for the shelter and her children taken from her, the agency also did not want to hear her out. The social worker assigned to her case seemed to have shut her out and ignored anything she said against her abusive husband. CPS also cut short the visitation tie between Faith and her children from six to two weeks weekly. When she proved in court that her husband was abusive to her, the only move to her aid was to increase the visitation time back to six hours between her and her children. They did not take any action to return the children to her despite the PPO issued by the court.

Additionally, CPS acted inhumanly by failing to take the elder child to a dentist despite faith noticing he had a decayed tooth and had difficulties chewing. The responded to her protest by directing her not to change the children's diaper, wipe their notice or even feed them. She was not to change diaper even when one child has a case of diarrhea. More so, child protective services officers seemed not to care that Bob had neglected the children. This was despite evidence that the children were dirty and their health not good.

Analysis

From the case study, the key players in the case study are the victims (Faith and her children). The abuser is Faith's husband, Bob. Other key players are the case manager in charge of Faiths case, the staff and officials of the shelter she fled to.

The critical facts of each player have been discussed and described in detail against each player. From the above breakdown, critical facts have been noted to be the existence of domestic and sexual abuse and discrimination (racial and cultural) against Faith for her African roots.

More so, there are cases of negligence both by the CPS and Bob, who is the father to the children.

Identifying the Underlying Themes and Issues

Domestic Violence

On a personal level, Faith Harper is a victim of domestic violence. She was constantly being beaten by her husband. She reported that her husband choked or beat her at least once weekly. Her husband, Bob, is the abuser. He started light and once he had gained control over her he started beating her. He controlled her way of life. He decided who she befriended, where and when she went and what she did. As a family, the Harpers are all affected. Bob is the abuser and Faith is the primary victim. The children suffer indirectly when their mother eventually flees from their abusive father.

In the communal context, the society knows that Bob beats his wife. However, they do nothing since Bob had told them that Faith was a crazy woman. The community sympathizes with Bob for having married a mad woman.

The child protective services, the police and the department of justice are the organizations in the case study. The police at first responded to Faith's calls of distress but stopped after learning that she was 'crazy'. The court system establishes that Bob is abusive after evidence of choking is produced by Faith. The judge offers Faith a personal protection order restraining Bob from ever beating her. CPS has evidence of abuse by Bob but still grants custody of the children to him (Weiss, 2004).

Sexual abuse

Faith is sexually abused by Bob who has sexual fantasies on rape. He dominates her sexually and forces her into bondage and sadomasochism. Bob also sexually abuses his two-year old son. He did this claiming to show him how to love like a father does.

At a family level, both Faith and her son are sexually abused by Bob. This makes this family very unstable and in need of psychological help.

Faith complains to the child protective services on the sexual abuse on her son by her husband. She claimed to have physical evidence to prove the same. However, her complains were not heard. Instead, CPS was aiming to fight her from getting custody of the children (Kenney, 2012).

Racism, Cultural differences and discrimination

Faith is a victim of racial and cultural discrimination. She moved from Kenya and married a white American man. He knows that Faith is from a different culture. However, instead of helping her settle, he utilizes this aspect to dominate and spread false information about her. He tells the neighbors that she is crazy as they believe him

The family is heavily affected by these types of discrimination. When the community, organizations and the system discriminates against Faith, her children also suffer. They suffer once she is fighting for custody against all odds and they lack her motherly care.

The community agrees with Bob that Faith is crazy. They make this conclusion due to the cultural differences between them and her. They see her behaviors as insane whereas to her she is acting totally normal.

Organizations like the CPS are in the middle of discrimination against Faith. They do not listen to her petitions. They cut the visitation hours between her and the children by more than

half. . CPS social worker does not listen to her complains about the abuse she and her children have been facing in the hands of Bob. Besides social worker, Faith's lawyer sleeps in their meeting due to his discrimination against her origins and race. A judge cancels a temporary custody order and grants Bob custody. This ruling is done without proper and fair consideration of the factors on the ground. The judge also does not give her custody of her children in the end despite evidence showing that the children need her care and that her husband was abusive.

Faith's naivety of the US systems proves another source of discrimination against her. All systems seem to be operating contrary to her beliefs. Additionally, the system frustrates her legal efforts to seek justice. She also undergoes a biased test that unfairly proves that she suffers from obsessive compulsive disorder

HIV/AIDS

Faith was diagnosed with HIV later while at the shelter. Her children too tested positive for the virus. Bob however, was not infected. The entire family besides Bob was HIV positive. Both Faith and the youngest child showed full blown symptoms. The community would be tasked at caring for those infected with HIV like in the home Faith later went to. Organizations like the courts would and CPS would not grant her custody due to her condition. The system proved to work against Faith on her custody battle once the news of her illness was known.

Identify the Challenges

Inadequate knowledge of US laws by immigrants

This challenge is evidenced by Faith's naivety on US laws and systems. She falls victim to sexual and domestic abuse because her husband knows that she has no knowledge of the laws and systems in the US. She does not realize that domestic violence is illegal in the US unlike Kenya where it is quite normal. Bob also capitalizes on her naivety to turn the community and

other agencies against her terming her as crazy. Faith is left to be taught these laws by her case officer in the shelter she flees to. Most people take advantage of her lack of knowledge on US laws to her detriment. She also files a case without legal counsel to the surprise of the presiding judge.

Inadequate knowledge of immigrant citizens' culture by various agencies

Faith's case manager was surprised when she refused to wear bright clothes. The case manager was of the notion that most African women preferred to wear brightly colored clothes. This, as she explains, was told to her in school where she learnt the art of being a social officer.

Racial discrimination by government workers

Faith received a lot of racial and cultural discrimination in the various agencies that she interacted with before, during and after being at the shelter. While in her home, the police stopped responding to her distress call when Bob abused her. This was based on the communal knowledge that she was crazy. The police concluded this without proper analysis. They dismissed her pleas all together because she was black. A legal representative appointed in her legal cases once slept during their meeting. This can be explained as laxity due to the fact that Faith was a black client. Additionally, the cps officer handling her visitation did not pay attention to Faith's observations on her children's wellbeing.

Identify Potential Solutions plan of Action

Widespread awareness on basic US laws to all immigrants

The US government should start a program where all immigrants into the US are made aware of the different laws and policies that may affect them. From previous experiences a list of some of the issues affecting immigrants is made. From the list, a module of learning is developed

for the immigrants with the necessary laws and system interventions. Additionally, they are assigned officers to help them in the transition. Immigrants into the US will avoid a case like that of the Harpers as the new citizen will have a general overview of the US laws layout (Austin, 2002).

Practical case studies in social work

Potential social workers should be exposed to real time case studies of possible cases they are likely to encounter in the field. From these cases they are able to solve cases from different groups of people in the society. As such they will be ready to adequately handle numerous cases once they graduate. Workers will be able to identify with the victims unlike in Faith's case where the case officer learnt by actual interaction with the victim (Hall, 2003).

Awareness in agencies on the disadvantages of racial and minority discrimination

Where real-time case studies are administered to potential social workers and other government employees, they should incorporate cases affected minority groups in the society. As such, the agents will have encountered similar cases before they actually handle a case that involves the minority in a community. Therefore, discriminatory cases like Faith's will be avoided or reduced (Chui & Wilson, 2006).

Use of references

A case officer should learn from the mistakes in the case study that were made by the involved parties. A proper plan of action would have challenges and appropriate solutions to the challenges. A case officer should have adequate background information on the case. They should research other similar cases and learn from them. They should utilize the recommendations made on the other cases. Consequently, the case officer would be adequately equipped when handling new cases (Chui & Wilson, 2006).

Learning from previous mistakes is also a possible solution to many challenges that emerge in new cases. A case manager will use lessons learned previously to solve a certain problem that emerges while handling a case. The author of the case study was new to the field and thus had to tackle challenges first-hand and in an inexperienced way (Goldmeier, 1982).

Identifying Knowledge and Skills

Background education

A social worker ought to have passed through school where they are taught essential social work skills. They should know how to comfortably handle a client without upsetting them. They should possess psycho-evaluative skills to assess the psychological condition of the victim and act accordingly. In school they are also taught on the various channels they can use to assist a victim of any case. They should also be able to identify a victim without asking them (Chui & Wilson, 2006).

Critical Thinking and open-mindedness

A worker ought to know how to react to emerging challenges. They should be able to come up with solutions fast. They also have to possess an open mind. This way the worker will have the ability to think outside the box when handling a complex case or scenario in the field (Chenoweth & McAuliffe, 2005).

Resourceful

A worker has to have solutions to almost all challenges that may emerge in their course of duty. They have to know where and how to acquire certain information on a case. They should be good readers getting solutions from previous cases. They should also know who and when to

consult in case they encounter a tough challenge they cannot adequately handle by themselves
Hall, C. (2003).

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