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SAN BERNARDINO AND RIVERSIDE COUNTY FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY SOCIAL WORKERS' AWARENESS OF DOMESTIC MINOR SEX TRAFFICKING

Cristin Elizabeth Campbell

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SAN BERNARDINO AND RIVERSIDE COUNTY FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY

SOCIAL WORKERS' AWARENESS OF DOMESTIC MINOR SEX

TRAFFICKING

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

Cristin Elizabeth Campbell

June 2018

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Approved by:

Dr. Armando Barragan, Committee Chair, Social Work

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ABSTRACT

Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking is a crime happening right in our own backyards. Social Workers are seeing this vulnerable population fall through the fingers of social services and into the clutches of traffickers at alarming rates. This research project analyzed San Bernardino and Riverside County Foster Family Agency Social Workers awareness of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking. This project was a quantitative exploratory research design. A paper survey was distributed to Foster Family Agency Social Workers within San Bernardino and Riverside County, California using a snowball sampling. A bivariate analysis was conducted to evaluate the relationship that social work experience in the field and the amount of DMST trainings attended have on social work awareness of DMST. The results of this research show that high number of DMST trainings result in a lower level of DMST awareness. Data also showed no significant relationship between how participants scored on the Awareness of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking survey and years of social work experience. The results of this research can be used as a baseline to study Foster Family Agency Social Worker awareness with San Bernardino and Riverside County, California and how to best implement effective DMST trainings; as federal and state laws are predicted to make Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking training mandatory within social service fields.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Learn to do right; seek justice.

Defend the oppressed.

Take up the cause of the fatherless;

plead the case of the widow.

Isaiah 1:17

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Problem Formation

Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST) refers to the trafficking of children for the purpose of sexual exploitation within the borders of the United States (Kotrla, 2010). This vulnerable population is oftentimes hidden in our own backyards. While minors can be transported across state lines, they do not have to be physically moved out of their communities to be considered DMST victims (Hardy, Compton & McPhatter, 2013). The victims of DMST are commonly targets of rape, street prostitution, child pornography, escort and massage services, live sex shows, nude dancing, and stripping in our local neighborhoods (Hardy et al., 2013). DMST victims are 95% female and the average range is 11-14 years old, with the youngest victim on record being only five years old (Kotrla, 2010; Kotrla & Wommack, 2011).

The history of DMST first began in research with the act defining minor sex trafficking by The Victim and Voice Protection Act (V-TVPA) of 2000 (Alvarez & Alessi, 2012; Cole & Sprang, 2014; Kortla, 2010; Kortla & Wommack, 2011; Gibbs, Hardison-Walters, Lutnick, Miller & Kluckman, 2014; Hardy et al., 2013; Havlicek, Huston, Boughton & Zhang, 2016; Marcus et al., 2014; Orme & Ross-Sherrif, 2015; Varma, Gillespie, McCracken, Greenbaum, 2015). This innovative federal anti-trafficking act outlined the act of trafficking:

Trafficking is a commercial sex act induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age; or (b) the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt, or slavery. A commercial sex act is any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by a person. A human trafficker is any adult that aids, abets, or benefits from the services of an underage worker (2000, p. 106-386).

It was not until ten years later that Kotrla (2010) became one of the first social work researchers to draw attention to the previously hidden epidemic of U.S. children being trafficked within its borders and labeled it Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST). This landmark study was conducted to bring awareness to social workers who might have previously known about sex trafficking but were not yet alert to the idea of DMST (Kotrla, 2010, Kotrla & Wommack, 2011, Orme & Ross-Sheriff, 2015).

Unfortunately, there has not been consistent or agreed upon social work research regarding the actual number of DMST victims since Kortla's 2010 study. Each DMST victim is considered a product, and unlike with the sale of drugs, a victim can be repeatedly sold by their trafficker (Ellis, 2016; Hodge, 2014). Traffickers are generating an estimated \$25-\$30 billion dollars from their DMST victims making it undoubtedly one of the most profitable criminal trafficking

enterprises (Ernewein & Nieves, 2015). In San Bernardino County, California, traffickers are estimated to make an average of \$500 per night per DMST victim. A normal trafficker generally has at least five DMST victims which they force into sexual exploitation seven days a week. This results in the typical San Bernardino County California trafficker generating approximately \$912,500 a year from their DMST victims (Ellis, 2016).

DMST victims are a vulnerable group that cry out for the advocacy need and research of awareness of social workers. According to Merriam-Webster dictionary awareness is "...having or showing realization, perception, or knowledge". Social workers strictly adhere to a Code of Ethics put together by The National Association of Social Workers (NASW). The NASW Code of Ethics addresses several ethical principles and values including: challenging social justice, respecting the inherent dignity and worth of a person, and competence by enhancing levels of professional expertise (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2013). With this code taken into account, it is only natural that social workers would be knowledgeable of and researching this exploited population to also increase their professional scope of practice and awareness.

It is important to understand this problem to identify what factors could lead a child to become a DMST victim and where the victim pool is coming from. An overwhelming high 40-85% of female DMST targets were shown to be involved in some area of child welfare service prior to victimization (Gibbs et al., 2014; Heat Watch, 2015)). A review of DMST victims also showed that 85% have a juvenile

arrest history showing they have had involvement in the legal system (Heat Watch, 2015). These children show high rates of sexual abuse in their own families or communities prior to becoming tangled in DMST. Neglect, emotional abuse, and parental alcohol and drug abuse are all factors that are prevalent in the life of a child prior to them becoming involved in DMST (Kortla, 2010; Gibbs et al., 2015). Other factors leading to DMST victimization are minors that run away, or those who are thrown out of their homes, due to gender identity or sexual orientation status (Gibbs et al., 2015). It is due to factors like these that children are first brought into the child protective system and placed into foster family agencies. This in turn creates the perfect storm of a vulnerable child population for DMST traffickers to then prey on and is why social work awareness is key to stopping this victimization.

Purpose of the Study

The goal of this research was to study the awareness level of Foster Family Agency (FFA) social workers. According to California Department of Developmental Services FFAs are:

...privately operated organizations licensed by the Community Care Licensing Division of the State Department of Social Services to care for children up to age 18 in certified foster family homes. FFAs are responsible for the recruitment, training and certification of families to provide alternative homes for children. Through the use of professional

staff such as social workers, FFAs provide ongoing support to certified parent(s) and the children who live with them (California Department of Developmental Services, 2015).

According to the Kidsdata, (2014) there are 62,097 foster children in California. FFAs were the focus of this research study due to the fact that a high percentage of California foster children are placed within these nonprofit agencies. FFAs concentrate on hard to place children and children whose special needs limit other foster family placement possibilities (Danielson & Lee, 2010). By its very nature children who have been victims of DMST require a specialized supportive placement. It is imperative that the placement has received focused training on DMST specific needs, which by its very definition FFAs must provide. In the last several years there have been numerous bills brought to the attention of California legislators that are requiring FFAs to specifically train their foster caregivers in the identification and prevention of DMST (California Legislative Information, 2016abc). This would necessitate that FFA social workers be versed in awareness and education of local DMST issues in order to provide said training.

This research study gathered information on the knowledge of the awareness levels of FFA social workers. This was done by using a quantitative method design that was distributed via paper survey. The survey included demographic questions along with true/false questions addressing DMST awareness. This was a purely exploratory research design. The independent

variables are years of social work experience in the field and amount of DMST trainings taken. The dependent variable is awareness.

Significance of the Problem for Social Work

The lack of knowledge on the scope of the DMST problem makes those who come into direct contact with potential victims uneducated and unprepared to prevent them from falling prey to traffickers (Hardy et al., 2013). Although an extraordinary percentage of DMST victims come from child welfare, as previously referenced, trafficking is not recognized as a preventable issue taught to that client base. Furthermore, it is not thought to be in the scope of responsibility for those working in that field to address (Gibbs et al., 2015). This calls for the research of DMST awareness levels of those in direct contact with high risk potential victims. Conducting this type of study could bring an understanding to where DMST needs to be spotlighted in order to tourniquet the bleeding of children from child welfare who are falling prey to DMST.

This study could be used as a beginning baseline for researchers and social workers who would like to study DMST awareness levels within San Bernardino and Riverside County, California social workers in the future; as federal and state laws are predicted to make DMST training mandatory in social service fields. The research question studied was: What is the awareness level of San Bernardino and Riverside County Foster Family Agency Social Workers on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking?

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The call to researchers to expand consistent quantitative research work, the massive gap in the scope of the problem and trademarks that make a victim of DMST identifiable are covered in this section. The literature review closes with psychosocial theory and ecosystems theory expounded upon and the reason why they were chosen as the theories guiding conceptualization of this study.

Research Need

Due to the highly illegal and secretive nature of DMST, accurate numerical statistics on the scope of the problem are inconsistent and nearly impossible to track (Cole & Sprang, 2014; Ernwien & Nieves, 2015; Kotrla, 2010; Kotrla & Wommack, 2011; Gibbs et al., 2014; Hardy et al., 2013; Havlicek, et al., 2016; Varma et al., 2015). Researchers interested in studying and advocating for this defenseless population report a pattern of extremely conflicting data. Depending on the study, DMST victimization numbers are speculated to range anywhere from 1,400 to 2.4 million (Gibbs et al., 2014). This is due to the majority of research on DMST being qualitative and exploratory in nature without any observable variables to examine (Cole & Sprang, 2014; Varma et al., 2015),

scientific credible estimates simply cannot exist due to varying data sources, definitions, and the differing methodologies used (Gibbs et al., 2014).

The topic of DMST in social work has not been discussed and researched as much as it warrants and social workers lack knowledge of the severity of DMST (Alvarez & Alessi, 2012; Cole & Sprang, 2015; Kotrla, 2010; Hardy et al., 2012; Havlicek et al., 2016; Hodge, 2014). As social workers who uphold to a strict code of ethics that include fighting for social justice, the profession is lacking with little devotion to any in depth DMST research and practice (Hodge, 2014). Due to the absence of research on DMST, social workers who serve as direct service providers to these victims do not have updated awareness of state or federal and current/pending legislation. This deficiency in the knowledge of DMST hinders the social workers' ability to identify potential victims and gives them no framework for developing adequate best practice programs (Hardy et al., 2013). Researchers are calling for enhanced data-collection procedures, social work trainings on DMST, community needs assessments, knowledge assessment of social workers and mapping of areas of DMST in communities (Hardy et al., 2013; Kotrla, 2010; Kotrla & Wommack, 2011).

With the majority of DMST researchers calling on their colleagues to advance exploration and examination into this population it shows how this study, and studies like this, are needed within the social work community. When researchers state 85% of female DMST victims are coming straight from social service care it is imperative that those who are the front lines, like FFA social

workers, are knowledgeable of this exploited group (Kotrla, 2010). The only way to pinpoint the full scope of FFA social workers' knowledge is to study and research it. Identifying specific gaps in knowledge needs to be done so that programs, and legislation, can be developed in order to combat and fill in the missing pieces to bring awareness to the field of social work.

Victim Identification

Most DMST never self-identify as victims of trafficking so it is imperative that social workers are equipped to recognize victims and those who are considered high-risk (Ernwein & Nieves, 2015; Hardy, 2013; Havelicek et al., 2016). Some red flags to look for when identifying potential DMST victims are: not giving accurate age, evidence of sexual trauma, tattoos or other types of branding, evidence of controlling or dominant relationships, unexplained shopping trips or possessions, use of lingo from "the life", inconsistency in their story about where they are staying, and generally poor health (Ellis, 2016 p. 15; Ernwerin & Niever, 2015 p. 798).

In order to identify and stop the misidentification of DMST victims it is critical that social workers are aware of the above warning signs and indicators. Knowledge on DMST can be obtained through social workers overseeing foster parent continuing education classes, taking part in awareness trainings, and conducting more advanced research. Knowing the history of DMST, along with landmark research studies and familiarity with both past and pending legislation,

is important for social workers in the study of this population. There are severe and concerning gaps in the literature when it comes to sufficient research. Social workers are being called to step to the forefront, fill in the gaps, research, and advocate for this oppressed group.

Theories Guiding Conceptualization

The following section will focus on ecosystem and psychosocial theory. These two theories have been chosen to frame this research study, write the survey, as well as explain the concept of DMST. Erikson's Psychosocial Theory is not often used to provide a theoretical framework for DMST however; this segment of the paper will explain why the researcher deviated from previous scholars to include it.

Erikson's Psychosocial Theory

According to Erikson's psychosocial theory, humans go through eight stages of development. This theory states each stage presents a crisis. In order to be able to cope well with future stages a person needs to be able to resolve their current stage crisis (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2013). Knowing what stage of development a DMST victim is in will help guide the researcher to apply interventions and narrow in on developing appropriate research needs. If the DMST victim is between the ages of 11-14 when they are first exploited it will put them in both stage four and stage five of development (Hardy et al., 2013; Rand, 2010; Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2013). Stage four is the time between the ages

of 6-12 when the crisis of development is industry versus inferiority. It is during this stage that a child needs to be able to be productive in their environment, generally in school or with peers, in order to develop feelings of competency (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2013). When a child enters the DMST industry during stage four they are far from being able to be productive or successful. DMST victims are removed from the scholastic setting before they have had the chance of a formal education thus preventing the formation of suitable peer relationships (Hardy et al., 2013). By its very nature a DMST victim does not receive appropriate encouragement from their traffickers or victimizers. This makes victims unable to develop any feeling of competency which is when a sense of inferiority sets in. Hodge (2014) explains that the main role of the trafficker is to “break victims psychologically so that they become subservient to their desires” (p.114). Knowing that a DMST victim is in stage four would allow the researcher to personalize surveys or highlight victim identification possibilities while being careful of any feelings of inferiority due to the oppression they had faced.

If the minor is at the adolescent age range at the time when initially targeted, or grows into that range as a DMST victim, then they are unable to develop their own identity. According to Erikson an adolescent is in stage five: identity versus role confusion (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2013). DMST victims are often referred to both by themselves and others as “criminals”, “prostitutes”, “sluts” and “sex workers” (Kotrla, 2010 p.185). These labels bring serious confusion and uncertainty of their true identity outside of the industry of DMST.

Those involved in DMST that are identified as criminal, instead of being treated as victims, can only develop increased feelings of inferiority, making it difficult to develop an identity outside of those labels. A social worker or researcher who is dealing with someone in stage five would need to be careful as to what type of language they used to describe the DMST victim. This applies when dealing with the population, offering therapeutic or educational services, and writing their research.

Ecosystems Theory

The majority of researchers have used ecological theory to address DMST (Bush-Armendariz, 2014; Cecchet & Thoburn, 2014; Christenson, 2012; Howard, 2015; McIntyre, 2014; Morse, 2014; Orme & Sherrif, 2015). Ecological theory is a way for a social worker to understand the relationship of people in their environment. This theory allows researchers and social workers to look at the DMST victim as they continuously interact with the systems around them. Some of these systems could include DMST victims, friends, family, community and school. These systems could be studied and put into theoretical practice while collaborating with law enforcement, housing, medical teams, counseling, social services and faith based institutions (Busch-Armendariz, et al., 2014; Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2013).

There are three system levels that can be used to assess and treat DMST victims: micro, meso, and macro (Orme & Ross-Sherrif, 2015 & McIntyre, 2014). The micro level includes the individual, the meso comprises the family, while

macro incorporates the community. Researchers and social workers can focus on any of these levels to guide them when working with the DMST population. When an area of interest in DMST concentrates on the bigger picture and includes a service provider's awareness and/or ability to identify a potential victim they are focusing on a meso or macro level (Christenson, 2012; Howard, 2015). When the study is looking at the individual victim and using the ecological system to analyze the experience of being in DMST, it becomes a micro level focus (Cecchet & Thoburn, 2014; Morse, 2014).

Summary

Domestic minor sex trafficking is a social injustice of United States minors on a major scale. This study dissected the awareness level of FFA social workers on DMST. There needs to be more research and long term statistical analysis on DMST victims and survivors so that the true nature of the crisis can be addressed. Researchers and social workers have their hands tied as to how to intervene and create effective prevention strategies when inconsistent statistical data is flooding the field. This is especially true when potential high risk victims cannot be properly identified within the child welfare system before they become lost into the world of DMST. Erikson's Psychosocial and Ecosystems Theory are two theories that can help social workers when researching DMST in the field. Studying the awareness level of social workers on DMST is vital in order to stop the loss of child welfare dependent children into this illegal and oppressed world.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Introduction

This research study focused on the awareness levels of San Bernardino and Riverside County Foster Family Agencies on Social Workers regarding Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking. This chapter dissects in depth the study design, how sampling and data collection took place, along with the instruments that were used, and the procedures that were followed. An outline of the data analysis will be presented and the statistical test to be used will be established. The chapter will end with an explanation of how the researcher protected the human subjects participating.

Study Design

This research study was conducted to find the awareness of local San Bernardino and Riverside County Agency Foster Family Agency (FFA) Social Workers of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST) victims. This research design was purely exploratory in nature. The researcher used a quantitative research method in order to focus in on, and give statistical data to, the level of awareness of FFA social workers. This was done with a paper survey given to San Bernardino and Riverside County FFA social workers.

As earlier expounded upon in depth DMST is a hidden population that makes any type of qualitative data hard, if not impossible, to collect (Kortla,

2010). Social work researchers are being called by others in the field to bring quantitative data to the table (Alvarez & Alessi, 2012). By researching social work awareness in a quantitative way it could help those who are interested in training and educating social workers. This could be accomplished by focusing on what needs to be done in order to develop programs and fill in the missing gaps. The only limitation of using a quantitative survey was getting enough FFAs and Social Workers throughout San Bernardino and Riverside County willing to participate.

This quantitative survey sought to aid in answering the question: What is the awareness level of San Bernardino and Riverside County Foster Family Agency Social Workers on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking?

Sampling

Research and data for this study was collected using a snowball sampling of convenience. Focus and criteria for the sample size was any FFA social worker within San Bernardino and Riverside County, California. The focus was on San Bernardino and Riverside County, California due to the extremely high DMST rates within the neighboring counties (Ellis, 2016). Once an agency was identified as meeting the above qualifications the Social Work Director of the agency was called and asked if they would be interested in participating in the survey. A letter of agency approval was then written by said Social Work Director and submitted to the researcher.

In order to ensure a wide array of FFA agency's were willing to participate, a systematic random sampling method and snowball sampling was utilized. The FFAs that showed a willingness to join the study were asked to give the names of other San Bernardino and Riverside County FFAs they thought might be willing to participate.

The goal was to have at least 60 completed surveys, although 120 surveys were distributed, in six agencies throughout San Bernardino and Riverside County. An unbiased picture of county wide FFA social workers was desired so only the first 20 from each agency were used in the final survey. There were a total of 40 surveys completed during said research.

Data Collection and Instruments

The survey was a quantitative self-administered paper survey questionnaire of FFA social workers within San Bernardino and Riverside County California. The variable measured was awareness. The survey began by collecting demographic information. The researcher then put together a new instrument titled, *The Awareness of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking* survey, to gather FFA social worker awareness levels (Appendix A). This survey was written based on information obtained when researching the literature review. In order to guarantee face validity of the new instrument the researcher had seven of their MSW colleagues review the study to verify its understandability. With the support

of the research advisor modifications were made to increase validity and reliability as needed.

The two independent variables (IV) for the study were years of social work experience in the field and amount of DMST trainings attended. The dependent variable (DV) was awareness. The first IV, experience in the field, was measured by the numbers of years the participant had been working in social work. The second IV, amount of DMST trainings, was measured by the number of trainings that the social worker had attended specifically relating to DMST. The level of measurement for both IVs was interval/ratio. For the DV of awareness the researcher defined and measured it by identifying the number of correct responses in regards to the issue of DMST. This level of measurement was also interval/ratio.

Procedures

Quantitative paper surveys were dropped off at the six agreed upon participating FFA's in the Summer of 2017. Each FFA location was also given a roll of raffle tickets, a collection box for both the tickets and the completed surveys, along with a picture of the raffle basket prize. The raffle prize consisted of items related to the education and awareness of DMST, donations obtained from partnering with The Coalition Against Sexual Exploitation (CASE) Team and Center Against Sexual Assault (CASA) Team. The CASE Team is a multi-disciplinary team that was formed in San Bernardino County, California to

address social issues such as DMST that impacts at-risk youth. CASA deals with Sex Trafficking victims in Riverside County, California. The basket items included: brochures and literature on DMST, CASE coffee mugs and containers, pens, magnets, notepads, a flashlight, stress ball, notepad, and an ipod stand. The researcher included an assortment of candy and a \$5 gift card to Starbucks . The value of the basket was under \$20.

The raffle took place at the agency when the completed surveys were picked up in the Summer of 2017.

Protection of Human Subjects

The identity of those who participated in this study were completely anonymous to the other individuals who completed the survey. The results of the survey will be reported in group form only.

In order to keep the raffle results confidential several measures were put into place. Once a survey was completed the agency social worker filled out a raffle ticket and placed half in the collection box. The raffle tickets were kept separate from the surveys. This ensured the completed surveys were anonymous from the raffle ticket number. At each agency, when a ticket was chosen for the participation prize, the researcher awarded the basket to the winner. The remaining tickets were destroyed by the researcher at the agency immediately following the award of the basket.

The survey began with an informed consent to be signed by each participant with an X (Appendix B). After the survey was conducted a debriefing statement was attached for each participant that included local resources for them regarding sex trafficking (Appendix C).

Data Analysis

All data from the paper survey was analyzed with quantitative techniques. Descriptive statistics were conducted on the demographics portion to provide information on the sample. A bivariate analysis was conducted to evaluate the relationship that social work experience in the field and the amount of DMST trainings attended have on social work awareness of DMST. Based on the aforementioned level of measurements for the variables the statistical test that was ran to measure this study was the Pearson Correlation test.

Summary

This quantitative study explored the awareness levels of San Bernardino and Riverside County Foster Family Agency Social Workers. A paper survey distributed by systematic random sampling and snowball sampling was utilized to find available FFAs. In order to motivate FFA social workers to take the survey a raffle basket was awarded as an incentive. Great detail was put into making sure that everyone who participates was kept anonymous.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Presentation of the Demographics

The following sample consisted of 40 social workers in the participating FFA agencies throughout San Bernardino and Riverside County. Participants ranged in age from 25 to 72 with the average age being 43 ($n=39$, $M=43$, $SD=11.0224$). There was a high proportion of female social workers in the sample ($n=40$, 72.5%). The majority of those sampled identified as Caucasian ($n=13$, 32.5%) or Hispanic ($n=11$, 27.5%). The remainder of the participants were distributed between identifying as African American ($n=7$, 17.5%), Bi-Racial ($n=4$, 10%), Asian ($n=3$, 7.5%) while two participants claimed “Other” to equal 5%. The sampled participants had a wide range of experience from just beginning their career of 1 year to 36 years ($M=12.15$, $SD=8.716$). The vast majority of those sampled held Master Degrees (92.5%). The amount of DMST trainings that participants in the sample attended ranged from 0-11 with 2 trainings being the average amount ($n=39$, $M=2.692$).

Table 1

Demographics

| | N | Percentage | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|-----------------------|----|------------|-------|-----------------------|
| Age | | | | |
| | | | 43.07 | 11.022 |
| Gender | | | | |
| Female | 29 | 72.5 | | |
| Male | 11 | 27.5 | | |
| Ethnicity | | | | |
| African-American | 7 | 17.5 | | |
| Asian | 3 | 7.5 | | |
| Bi-Racial | 4 | 10.0 | | |
| Caucasian | 13 | 32.5 | | |
| Hispanic | 11 | 27.5 | | |
| Other | 2 | 5.0 | | |
| Years | | | 12.15 | 8.716 |
| Experience | | | | |
| Education | | | | |
| Bachelors | 2 | 5.0 | | |
| Masters | 37 | 92.5 | | |
| DMST Trainings | | | 2.69 | 1.88 |

Presentation of the Findings

Every participant believed that sex trafficking of children in the United States is a problem when surveyed, and answered false to the statement, the sex trafficking of children is not a problem in the United States. A high amount of those surveyed (95%) were correct when they responded that it was true that children that are victims of sex trafficking can present red flags or signs of victimization. (70%) correctly answered false to force, fraud, or coercion must be proven if a child is to be considered a victim of sex trafficking and that a very low percentage of children who have been sex trafficked were victims of sexual abuse prior to being trafficked. A little more than half (55%) answered correctly that it was false to state a child victim of sexual trafficking generally comes from a low socio-economic background. The false statement that the average age of a domestic minor sex trafficking victim being 15 was correctly identified by (52.5%) of those surveyed. Exactly half (50%) of participants correctly identified that the statement is false explaining there is a wide variety of programs and shelters in San Bernardino County specifically focused on providing services for child victims of sex trafficking. For the exact frequency and percentage data from *The Awareness of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking* survey please see Appendix D.

Appendix D shows the frequency and percent to the 18-question survey distributed to the participants on the awareness of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking. Each table states the question asked and the number of incorrect and correct responses.

A Pearson correlation coefficient found no relationship between how participants scored on the Awareness of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking survey and years of social work experience, $r = .005$, $n=39$, $p=.975$.

A Pearson correlation coefficient indicated an insignificant relationship between how participants scored on the Awareness of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking survey and number of trainings received, $r = -.044$, $n= 39$, $p= .790$, with high levels of number of trainings and a lower level of awareness.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Introduction

The final chapter of this research project addresses the results from the 40 social workers who took part in analyzing the awareness level of foster family agency social workers within the Inland Empire on DMST. The limitations that this research faced was expanded upon. Due to the results of the survey recommendations for social work practice, policy, and research have been explained in depth.

Discussion

The analysis of this research project suggests that there is no conclusive evidence that FFA experience or participation in trainings are correlated with the level of DMST awareness. When the results of the survey were analyzed, there was no significant relationship between the years of experience and FFA social work awareness. Even more surprising was the lack of correlation between the amount of the trainings an FFA social worker has with DMST awareness. *The Awareness of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking* survey illustrates that the *more* trainings a FFA social worker has the *less* DMST awareness is indicated.

Limitations

There are a couple of limitations that need to be noted. One of the restrictions of this project is in the *Awareness of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking* survey written and developed by the researcher. When this project originally commenced, it was to only concentrate on San Bernardino County FFA social workers. Once the researcher began to contact San Bernardino County FFAs it was apparent that due to the limited amount of FFAs within the county, and the fact that most FFAs were considered multi-county, the project focus would need to be expanded to include the neighboring Riverside County. With the approval of the academic advisor the project was then changed to include both San Bernardino and Riverside County. The survey however was not updated, and two of the questions were specific only to San Bernardino County FFA social workers. This oversight needs to be noted as it gives an unfair representation of the answers to questions 2 and 17 of said survey.

Another limitation with the *Awareness of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking* survey, written and developed by the writer, is that it was not subjected to a more comprehensive and rigorous evaluation of its validity and reliability. The writer had seven graduate students and a faculty advisor test and give feedback on the survey however, more in-depth evaluation could have been completed. This lack of thorough evaluation potentially yields inconclusive results.

The other limitations were found in the amount of FFA social work participants. 120 surveys were delivered to 6 different agencies throughout 2

separate counties, resulting in only 40 participants. The lack of agencies that agreed to be involved limited the contribution of FFA social workers and in turn the results of the project. Some of the lack of participation was found due to agency legal restrictions that did not allow their social workers to be included in any type of out of agency research.

Recommendations for Social Work

Practice, Policy and Research

In reviewing the results of this research project and conducting extensive peer reviewed research, some recommendations arise on how to address the negative relationship of the high level of FFA social worker trainings to low levels of DMST awareness. When an educational training session is conducted one of the key ingredients to having participants successfully remember presented material is to effectively personalize the information to the audience (Hafler, 2011; Hawker, 2013; Rexi Media, 2013). The first question that needs to be addressed should be, is the training that social workers receive on DMST specifically personalized for the field of social work? This is a vital question because due to extensive peer reviewed research a cookie cutter, one size fits all, approach to training is not best practice. In light of this data social workers should be in charge of writing and presenting training that specifically relates to their scope of practice.

Another issue needing research could be that social workers are inundated with a plethora of information about DMST. According to Dr. Carmen

Simon the co-founder of Rexi Media (2013), human memory is most reliable when individuals are able to remember four key pieces of information. Simon's research shows that a person's memory has specific limitations during trainings, even when the information is deemed important (Rexi Media, 2013). When a social worker attends a training or workshop the amount of information given on DMST might be too excessive, causing the social worker to become overwhelmed and forget the bulk of the presentation. An in-depth training may present a person with too much content, in turn limiting the amount of relevant information that is able to be retained.

Dr. Carmen Simon's research, coupled with the data earlier presented regarding effective presentation technique, indicates that the recall ability of social workers on DMST would be greatly increased if: the information was personalized to the field of social work, and joined with the data being specifically formulated to include four key concepts related to DMST. This researcher believes that a four-letter word acronym could be created for social workers to include the majority of principal DMST information which could be presented, gone over in depth throughout a training, and be easily recalled for use within the field.

This researcher put together a bookmark for awareness distribution, that follows what Simon found to be effective in presenting information (See Appendix D). The bookmark has four key facts regarding DMST. The design is bright red and laid out as an acronym using the word and sign- STOP. Each letter

represents a key DMST fact as followed: S- Sex trafficking is a domestic problem that is likely happening in your own backyard, children can be trafficked within their own city limits. T- Tweens and Teens (11-14) make up the average age of a DMST victim, O- Oppose traffickers, report DMST and get involved. Call 911, The National Human Trafficking Resource Center 1-888-3737-888, or text “help” or “info” to “BeFree”, P- Percentages don’t lie! 40-85% of DMST victims were involved in some are of the child welfare system. These four facts were highlighted and incorporated into an easy visual and useable product as a result of the research from *The Awareness of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking* survey. By utilizing the areas of DMST awareness that research has shown needs to be focused on, along with Simon’s data results on the effectiveness of focusing on four major areas, this tool could help increase the recall level of social workers and help STOP Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking!

Conclusion

In conclusion, although the information obtained within the survey was not what was expected it could be used to help the field of social work. By addressing the limitations of the study and updating any found errors in the survey this project could be replicated. The key to reproducing an FFA social workers DMST awareness study would be to make training material personalized only to the field of social work while having information scaled back to include no more than those four magic numbers of material. Being able to have this high level of awareness would enable a FFA social worker to become versed in DMST

with the ability to teach their clients or fellow staff the major key components of the domestic sex trafficking industry.

APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE

DEMOGRAPHICS

Please write in your response for the following six questions

1. What is your current age? _____
2. What is your gender? _____
3. What is your race/ethnicity? _____
4. How much experience in social work do you have? _____
5. What is your current degree level? _____
6. How many, if any, trainings have you attended specifically centered on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking? _____

AWARENESS OF DOMESTIC MINOR SEX TRAFFICKING

Please circle True or False for each of the following questions

- | | | |
|----|---------------|--|
| 1. | True False | A child can choose to be a prostitute. |
| 2. | True False | There is a wide variety of programs and shelters in San Bernardino County specifically focused on providing services for child victims of sex trafficking. |
| 3. | True False | Children that are victims of sex trafficking can present red flags or signs of victimization. |
| 4. | True False | Children victims of sex trafficking are generally brought to the United States from other countries. |
| 5. | True False | If a child is a victim of sex trafficking they will tell their social worker if asked. |
| 6. | True False | There is currently no legislation in California regarding children victims of sex trafficking. |

- | | | | |
|-----|------|-------|---|
| 7. | True | False | Children have to be transported out of city or state lines to be victims of sex trafficking. |
| 8. | True | False | Social workers have done extensive research in the field of domestic minor sex trafficking. |
| 9. | True | False | A high percentage of children who are victims of sex trafficking have at some point been involved in the child welfare system. |
| 10. | True | False | The sex trafficking of children is not a problem in the United States. |
| 11. | True | False | Force, fraud, or coercion must be proven if a child is to be considered a victim of sex trafficking. |
| 12. | True | False | The average age of a domestic minor sex trafficking victim is 15. |
| 13. | True | False | A very low percentage of children who have been sex trafficked were victims of sexual abuse prior to be trafficked. |
| 14. | True | False | Boys are not as vulnerable as girls to becoming victims of child sex trafficking. |
| 15. | True | False | Children victims of sex trafficking can develop a trauma bond to their trafficker and return to them following rescue or removal. |
| 16. | True | False | Child victims of sexual trafficking generally come from a low socio-economic background. |
| 17. | True | False | Child sex trafficking has decreased in San Bernardino County over the last five years. |
| 18. | True | False | A child can be a victim of sex trafficking by a member of their family. |

Developed by: Cristin Elizabeth Campbell

APPENDIX B
INFORMED CONSENT



California State University, San Bernardino
Social Work Institutional Review Board Sub-Committee
APPROVED 5/12/18 VOID AFTER 5/23/18
IRB# SW1752 CHAIR [Signature]

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
School of Social Work

INFORMED CONSENT

The study in which you are asked to participate is designed to examine the awareness level of San Bernardino County California Foster Family Agency Social Workers on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking. The study is being conducted by Cristin Campbell, a graduate student, under the supervision of Dr. Armando Barragan, Assistant Professor in the School of Social Work at California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB). The study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board Social Work Sub-committee at CSUSB.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the study is to examine the awareness level of San Bernardino County California Foster Family Agency Social Workers on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking.

DESCRIPTION: Participants will be asked a few questions on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking.

PARTICIPATION: Your participation in the study is totally voluntary. You can refuse to participate in the study or discontinue participation at any time without consequence.

CONFIDENTIALITY OR ANONYMITY: Your responses will remain anonymous and data will be reported in a group form only.

DURATION: It will take approximately 5 to 10 minutes to complete this survey.

RISKS: Questions asked from this study may pose a potential risk to participants. The questions may be considered distressing or uncomfortable. If any of the questions, or this study in general, causes the participant unease questions can either be skipped or the study can be discontinued at any time.

BENEFITS: The questions in this survey could serve as a learning tool for participants expanding their knowledge about Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking.

CONTACT: If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact Dr. Barragan at (909) 537-3501.

RESULTS: Results of the study can be obtained from the Pfau Library ScholarWorks database (<http://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/>) at California State University, San Bernardino after July 2018.

This is to certify that I read the above and I am 18 years or older.

Place an X mark here

Date

909.537.5501

5500 UNIVERSITY PARKWAY, SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92407-2393

The California State University • Bakersfield • Channel Islands • Chico • Dominguez Hills • East Bay • Fresno • Fullerton • Humboldt • Long Beach • Los Angeles
Maritime Academy • Monterey Bay • Northridge • Pomona • Sacramento • San Bernardino • San Diego • San Francisco • San Jose • San Luis Obispo • San Marcos • Sonoma • Stanislaus

APPENDIX C
DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

**Foster Family Agency Social Workers on
Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking
Debriefing Statement**

This study you have just completed was designed to investigate the levels of awareness of Inland Empire Foster Family Agency Social Workers on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking. Information gathered from this study could be used in order to guide social worker research and areas of education and training.

The following several resources are for further information on sex trafficking.

Anti-Human Trafficking Hotline – 909-333-7476

C.A.S.E. Coalition Against Sexual Exploitation – [facebook.com/sanbernardinoCASE](https://www.facebook.com/sanbernardinoCASE)

FAST Families Against Sex Trafficking – <http://families4fast.org>

National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline – 888-373-7888

Polaris Project – www.Polarisproject.org 1-888-373-7888

Shared Hope International – www.sharedhope.org -866-437-5433

SERT – www.sertministries.com – 707-583-9577

The Open Door – www.familyassist.org – 909-333-7476

C.A.S.A. – Center Against Sexual Assault – 951-652-8300

Thank you for your participation in this study. If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact Cristin Campbell or Dr. Barragan at (909) 537-3501. If you would like to obtain a copy of the group results of this study, please contact Dr. Barragan at (909)537-3501 at the end of Spring Quarter 2018.

APPENDIX D

AWARENESS OF DOMESTIC MINOR SEX TRAFFICKING DATA

Awareness of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking

| | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| A child can choose to be a prostitute | | |
| Incorrect | 11 | 27.5 |
| Correct | 29 | 72.5 |
| There is a wide variety of programs and shelter in San Bernardino County Specifically focused on providing services for child victims of sex trafficking | | |
| Incorrect | 20 | 50.0 |
| Correct | 20 | 50.0 |
| Children that are victims of sex trafficking can present red flags or signs of victimization | | |
| Incorrect | 2 | 5.0 |
| Correct | 38 | 95.0 |
| Children victims of sex trafficking are generally brought to the United States from other countries | | |
| Incorrect | 11 | 27.5 |
| Correct | 29 | 72.5 |
| If a child is a victim of sex trafficking they will tell their social worker if asked | | |
| Incorrect | 8 | 20.0 |

| | | |
|---------|----|------|
| Correct | 32 | 80.0 |
|---------|----|------|

There is currently no legislation in California regarding victims of sex trafficking

| | | |
|-----------|---|------|
| Incorrect | 8 | 20.0 |
|-----------|---|------|

| | | |
|---------|----|------|
| Correct | 32 | 80.0 |
|---------|----|------|

Children have to be transported out of city or state lines to be victims of sex trafficking

| | | |
|-----------|---|-----|
| Incorrect | 2 | 5.0 |
|-----------|---|-----|

| | | |
|---------|----|------|
| Correct | 38 | 95.0 |
|---------|----|------|

Social workers have done extensive research in the field of domestic minor sex trafficking

| | | |
|-----------|---|------|
| Incorrect | 8 | 20.0 |
|-----------|---|------|

| | | |
|---------|----|------|
| Correct | 32 | 80.0 |
|---------|----|------|

A high percentage of children who are victims of sex trafficking have at some point been involved in the child welfare system

| | | |
|-----------|---|------|
| Incorrect | 9 | 22.5 |
|-----------|---|------|

| | | |
|---------|----|------|
| Correct | 31 | 77.5 |
|---------|----|------|

The sex trafficking of children is not a problem in the United States

| | | |
|-----------|---|---|
| Incorrect | 0 | 0 |
|-----------|---|---|

| | | |
|---------|----|-------|
| Correct | 40 | 100.0 |
|---------|----|-------|

Force, fraud, or coercion must be proven if a child is to be considered a victim of sex trafficking

| | | |
|-----------|----|------|
| Incorrect | 12 | 30.0 |
|-----------|----|------|

| | | |
|---------|----|------|
| Correct | 28 | 70.0 |
|---------|----|------|

The average age of a domestic minor sex trafficking victim is 15

| | | |
|-----------|----|------|
| Incorrect | 19 | 47.5 |
|-----------|----|------|

| | | |
|---------|----|------|
| Correct | 21 | 52.5 |
|---------|----|------|

A very low percentage of children who have been sex trafficked were

victims of abuse prior to being trafficked

| | | |
|-----------|----|------|
| Incorrect | 12 | 30.0 |
|-----------|----|------|

| | | |
|---------|----|------|
| Correct | 28 | 70.0 |
|---------|----|------|

Boys are not as vulnerable as girls to becoming victims of child sex

trafficking

| | | |
|-----------|---|------|
| Incorrect | 4 | 10.0 |
|-----------|---|------|

| | | |
|---------|----|------|
| Correct | 36 | 90.0 |
|---------|----|------|

Children victims of sex trafficking can develop a trauma bond to their

trafficker and return to them following rescue or removal

| | | |
|-----------|----|------|
| Incorrect | 11 | 27.5 |
|-----------|----|------|

| | | |
|---------|----|------|
| Correct | 29 | 72.5 |
|---------|----|------|

Child victims of sexual trafficking generally come from a low socio-

economic background

| | | |
|-----------|----|------|
| Incorrect | 18 | 45.0 |
|-----------|----|------|

| | | |
|---------|----|------|
| Correct | 22 | 55.0 |
|---------|----|------|

Child sex trafficking has decreased in San Bernardino County over the

last five years

| | | |
|-----------|---|------|
| Incorrect | 7 | 17.5 |
|-----------|---|------|

| | | |
|---------|----|------|
| Correct | 33 | 82.5 |
|---------|----|------|

A child can be a victim of sex trafficking by a member of their own family

| | | |
|-----------|---|-----|
| Incorrect | 1 | 2.5 |
|-----------|---|-----|

| | | |
|---------|----|------|
| Correct | 39 | 97.5 |
|---------|----|------|

APPENDIX E
MARKETING TOOL



STOP Domestic Minor Sex
Trafficking (DMST) by
remembering these 4 facts!

S: Sex Trafficking is a
domestic problem that is
likely happening in your
neighborhood, and children
can be trafficked within their
own city limits.

T: Tween & Teens (11-14)
make up the average age of a
DMST victim.

O: Oppose Traffickers-
report DMST and get
involved. Call 911, National
Human Trafficking Resource
Center 1-888-3737-888, or
text “help” or “info” to
“BeFree”.

P: Percentages don’t lie!
40-85% of DMST victims
were involved in some area
of the child welfare system.

Developed by:
CristinCampbell7@yahoo.com

APPENDIX F
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN BERNARDINO
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
Institutional Review Board Sub-Committee

Researcher(s) Cristin Campbell

Proposal Title San Bernardino County Foster Agency Social Workers' Awareness of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking

501752

Your proposal has been reviewed by the School of Social Work Sub-Committee of the Institutional Review Board. The decisions and advice of those faculty are given below.

Proposal is:

- ☒ approved
☐ to be resubmitted with revisions listed below
☐ to be forwarded to the campus IRB for review

Revisions that must be made before proposal can be approved:

- ☐ faculty signature missing
☐ missing informed consent ☐ debriefing statement
☐ revisions needed in informed consent ☐ debriefing
☐ data collection instruments missing
☐ agency approval letter missing
☐ CITI missing
☐ revisions in design needed (specified below)

Committee Chair Signature

Date

5/24/2017

Distribution: White-Coordinator; Yellow-Supervisor; Pink-Student

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