ACTIVE SHOOTER PREPAREDNESS TRAINING

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ACTIVE SHOOTER PREPAREDNESS TRAINING

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
Clarissa Welch
Nancy Villalta
June 2019
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Approved by:

Dr. Carolyn McAllister, MSW, PhD, Faculty Supervisor, Social Work
Janet C. Chang, MSW PhD, Research Coordinator
ABSTRACT

This research study was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of an Active Shooter Incident (ASI) training implemented at Southern California University (SCU). The purpose of this study was to assess students' level of preparedness, anxiety, and knowledge about ASIs. Prior to collecting the data, an officer from the University Police Department (UPD) provided an ASI training for students where they were able to learn about safety procedures. Data was collected from a sample of Bachelor and Master level students within the SCU School of Social Work Department. Participants were given a questionnaire that consisted of questions regarding students' level of anxiety toward the idea of an ASI occurring at their campus and internship placements. The questions also evaluated students' knowledge and preparedness resulting from the ASI training. Data collection further determined whether certain aspects of the population such as ethnicity and gender contributed to their levels of anxiety.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Problem Formulation

Although there has been countless ASIs in the United States (US), many individuals continue to live their daily lives unprepared should an incident occur. In the U.S there are approximately 17.8 million students and 3.6 million staff members who could be potential victims for an active shooter event (Ergenbright & Hubbard, 2012). ASIs are occurring more often in several areas in the U.S, specifically in San Bernardino, California. Within the last decade, three ASIs have occurred in this region. In 2015, 14 individuals were killed and 22 wounded during a mass shooting that occurred at the Inland Regional Center (CNN, 2015). On April 10th, 2017 another ASI took place at North Park Elementary School in San Bernardino, CA where two adults and one child were killed (CNN, 2017). Most recently, occurring on January 10th, 2018 a shooter incident took place at the Southern California University (SCU) where several students were placed in danger, but fortunately no one was killed or injured. Therefore, it is imperative that members of the community at SCU become readily knowledgeable of appropriate safety procedures for active shooter situations.
The SCU community has a required active shooter training within the School of Social Work that should continue to be implemented annually. The implementation of these active shooter trainings on school campuses is essential in order to educate incoming students, staff, and faculty on how to protect themselves if an incident were to occur. Thompson, Mrdjenovich, & Khubchandani (2009), claim that campuses worldwide lack activities and trainings that prepare students and staff for an ASI, and that only 30 percent of staff are trained to be able to appropriately guide stressful and anxious students during such a tragic event. Individuals who are unaware of how to protect themselves are at higher risk for losing their lives and ultimately waste time trying to take immediate safety precautions in the moment (SCU Emergency Management and Business Continuity, 2015). On average, an ASI takes a duration of 12 minutes to transpire while it takes 18 minutes for local or campus police to attend to the situation (Ergenbright & Hubbard, 2012). Therefore, it is vital for campus students and staff to engage in trainings for ASIs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to measure Bachelor and Master of Social Work Students’ knowledge of safety procedures, level of anxiety, and feelings of preparedness in the event of an active shooter situation occurring on the Southern California University (SCU) campus or in their internship settings.

Due to the lack of resources about ASIs on many university campuses, including SCU, many students do not have an understanding of appropriate
safety measures and resources to use in the event of an ASI incident. Therefore, students will also be evaluated on their knowledge regarding resources provided through the University Police Department (UPD) school website should an ASI occur on campus as well as basic safety procedures. Active Shooter Trainings will be implemented and continue to prepare and educate social work students due to students’ need of additional knowledge on how to protect themselves and others in a university setting.

This research study will be conducted by using a quantitative design and survey method. This approach is most convenient for this study due to the large sample size of participants. Trainings will consist of a 10-minute training video provided by UPD, a brief debriefing following the video, and a post-test survey.

Significance of the Project for Social Work Practice

Students within the school of social work are at the core of this research study since they will be entering the field of social work upon graduation. Therefore, the acquired knowledge from the implemented training will better equip future social workers in the field should an ASI occur in their workplace. Social workers serve vulnerable populations and are in constant interaction with individuals facing traumatic and stressful life experiences. In 2007, a student from Virginia Polytechnic Institute University shot and killed 32 students who resided in campus housing. After the incident was investigated it was reported that Cho had received social services in high school (Davies, 2008). This implies
that Cho had been in contact with social workers in his past, which could have placed these social workers at risk of being involved in an ASI at any time. Incidents such as these remind social workers of their risk for encountering dangerous situations, such as an ASI, where they would be expected to act quickly to protect themselves and others.

Despite the commonality of ASIs, the literature has not captured the full extent of this issue. This paper is designed to extend the research in California regarding ASI trainings in school campuses and address the following contributions in social work practice. This study will focus on the evaluation phase of the generalist intervention process since student researchers will be evaluating the effectiveness of the ASI training. The potential findings of this study will help social workers in the SCU School of Social Work become prepared for ASIs, and will identify student’s levels of anxiety, fear, and preparedness. It will also identify contributing factors that impact students’ levels of anxiety and preparedness such as gender, ethnicity, and possible personal experiences in an ASI.

Research Question

The questions this study addressed are: How do social workers feel about the possibility of an ASI occurring on their university campus with the implementation of active shooter trainings? How prepared do social work students feel they are if they encounter an ASI? Does an ASI training benefit social work students?
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Active Shooter Incidents Becoming More Common

Introduction

A decade ago, ASIs were not a common occurrence in America. However, they have become an American phenomenon and have continued to rise numerically and manifest throughout the years. ASIs have become a threat in many communities that are unprepared to undergo such a dangerous crisis. Thirty-one percent of ASIs transpire in the United States, making it the country that holds the highest incident rates (CNN, 2018). The Congressional Research Service defines a public mass shooting as an event that occurs in public places and involves incidents of four or more deaths in a single occurrence without the shooters being killed (Bagalman, Caldwell, Finklea & McCallion (2013). An ASI is likely to occur at any place and any time where individuals’ lives can be placed at risk. Being under such a threat can instill feelings of fear for many. Between the year of 2000 and 2010, there has been 84 active shooter events in the U.S. (Blair, & Martaindale, 2013). This shows that there has been at least 10 incidents each year. 20.8% of ASIs have occurred in educational settings between the years 2000-2017 (FBI, 2017). Although the incident rates continue to increase, active shooter trainings remain uncommon in areas of workplace and educational settings.
Issues Related to Active Shooter Incidents

Although ASIs are frequently taking place in educational settings, they are beginning to occur more often in a variety of settings such as movie theaters, social service agencies, or lounges and bars where, more than often, there are not any skilled individuals trained to take appropriate action. One recent ASI occurred in Las Vegas on October 1, 2017. During the shooting, 58 people were shot and killed while approximately 500 others were injured and in need of immediate medical attention (Shultz, Thoresen, & Galea, 2017). Another tragic mass shooting that happened in the U.S. wounded many people at a time. This prominent event happened on June 12, 2016 in the community of Orlando, Florida and is known as “The Orlando shootings.” The Orlando mass shootings took place at the Pulse nightclub, a popular space for the LGBT community, where 49 people were killed and 53 were severely wounded (NPR, 2016). These tragic events occurred in places where people would not expect them to occur. ASIs continue to commonly spread and many people fall into “moral panic” which occurs when a large portion of society feels threatened and questions society’s morality (Killingbeck, 2001).

Jennings, Khey, Maskaly, & Donner (2011), affirm that many perpetrators act violently toward peers on school campuses because they are driven by trauma related experiences such as bullying and teasing. Many students often experience verbal and physical abuse at their schools and do not receive any counseling or other resources to help them cope with feelings associated with the
bullying. Several of these students develop feelings of anger toward others and view them as the cause of their suffering. This can lead victimized students to social isolation and explosive behavior (Jennings, Khey, Maskaly, & Donner, 2011). This issue continues to raise concerns due to the lack of resources and attention being provided for students experiencing bullying which can potentially help prevent them from engaging in violent behaviors. However, Fox and DeLateur (2014) oppose Jennings, Khey, Maskaly, and Donner (2011) by arguing that providing mental health services to perpetrators in order to prevent them from engaging in violent behavior is a mythical contributing factor toward controlling mass shootings. Fox and DeLateur (2014), assert that perpetrators in need of mental health services would likely deny services due to often seeing themselves as victims and seeing others as a problem. Therefore, mass shootings do not have a definite preventative measures.

Active Shooter Preparedness Trainings

The Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate (ALICE) training is a unique and effective strategy aimed to help individuals become mentally prepared and alert for threatening situations. This was the first training developed that moved away from a “locked-down only” policy causing individuals to act on their feet rather than secure in place (ALICE Training Institute, 2018). The first technique that the ALICE training Institute (2018) encourages to use is alert which involves listening and being aware at all times to one’s surroundings. This can help people sense when a threat is being posed. The second technique is
remaining in a lock down state. This involves staying in a secure location and not commuting to other locations during a threatening situation. The third technique is inform. This is one of the most important steps to take since it involves alerting others for help by calling 911. The fourth technique encouraged by the ALICE training is counter which involves taking measures to protect oneself such as physically fighting the perpetrator by using surrounding objects as weapons. The last technique proposed is evacuation. In this step, people are encouraged to leave their location in search for a safer location.

Active shooter trainings should be implemented in higher education settings to better equip students with taking appropriate and immediate action during an ASI. Students, faculty, and staff need to have basic knowledge on ASI procedures in order to feel a sense of preparedness. School campuses providing higher education must abide by legal and ethical values to ensure the protection and safety of their community. However, these campuses are open and free of access to many individuals which makes it difficult to control the possibility of an act of violence to occur (Myers, 2017). Universities across the country including SCU lack active shooter preparedness trainings. Universities such as Eastern Michigan (EMU) agree with how effective ALICE has been and has implemented the training to learn and acquire an active safety role (EMU, 2016). It has demonstrated that it promotes resilience and safety on the EMU campus. It is crucial to have these trainings across the country in light of ASIs increasing. ASI
trainings should be implemented in a collaboration effort among law enforcement, staff, and faculty members to create safer organizations.

Mass murder is at the center of the public eye, and has consequently been on the rise instilling panic, fear, and anxiety within people as the problem grows worse (Baldassare, Bonner, Petek, & Shrestha, 2013). Although some school campuses have been able to implement active shooter trainings and are being conducted for students to attend in order to reduce fear and increase knowledge, many students report different levels of anxiety and preparedness (Chuol & Doughtery, 2018). A study conducted by Everett and Price (1995) showed that minority students attending schools in high crime neighborhoods are twice as likely to experience violent crimes in their schools compared to students attending schools in low crime neighborhoods. Therefore, minority students who move from living in high crime neighborhoods to low crime neighborhoods experience higher levels of anxiety. Although their new schools are located in safer environments where students are involved in less violent crimes, they continue to experience higher levels of anxiety due to prior experiences.

Gender is also a determinant in how one reacts during a stressful event. Matud (2004), compares the different coping styles that males and females utilize during stressful events and found that women are more emotion focused whereas men gear more towards utilizing a problem-focused approach. This indicates that men would be more likely able to develop a safety plan during a stressful situation. Women are more likely to panic and focus solely on their
emotions rather than acting quickly to protect themselves and others. Matud (2004) also asserts that men are more likely to experience higher levels of preparedness due to occupancy in social roles and societal expectations. Men and women grow up with different societal expectations which make men more dominant in protecting themselves and others.

Theories Guiding Conceptualization

Previous research indicates different theories that guide conceptualizations through the perspective of the shooter. The Sequential Model for Mass Murder at School Theory (SMMST) developed by Levin and Madfis (2009) suggests that there are many factors that lead an individual to engage in violent behavior. This theory claims there are 5 stages that the shooter experiences before committing the act. During these stages the shooter is placed in certain conditions that pressure he or she to engage in a school shooting. These stages are Chronic Strain, Uncontrolled Strain, Acute Strain, The Planning Stage, and Massacre at School.

Levin & Madfis (2009) discuss that during the Chronic Strain stage shooters experience a set of negative events at their homes, schools, work, or communities they reside in which can cause a strain on an individual for a long period of time. During the second stage, Uncontrolled Strain Stage, shooters either isolate themselves from others or try to find a way to cope with their chronic strain by developing meaningful relationships with others who encourage their negative and violent behaviors. The third stage, Acute Strain, is described
as the stage where shooters experience a major loss that is viewed as irreparable and is the cause for the shooter's attack. During the fourth stage, shooters begin to carefully plan out their attack which can occur within only a few days, weeks, or months. The Last stage is the Massacre at the School where shooters actively initiate their plan.

The SMMST is relevant to this research study in that it helps individuals understand the perspective that the shooter holds. Major factors that play a role and serve as motivation for shooters' violent actions are described and explained by this theory. This theory helps individuals understand the hardships and stressful events that shooters experience prior to the act. Being aware of the possible causes for these violent acts can help identify and develop preventative measures in order to lessen incident rates.

The Organizational Theory (OT) developed by Bolman and Deal suggests that there is a need for reframing an idea within an organization. Bolman and Deal (2017) suggest that this theory is used to guide structural, political, symbolic, and human relations in a multi-frame thinking style (p.19). Change is possible when there is a collaboration in efforts from all personnel within an organization. Brazer, Kruse, and Conley (2014) agree that leadership is necessary for educational leaders in schools and districts since these are the people in charge of making decisions. This theory aligns with the proposed SCU active shooter training because the population affected is the student body. It is
vital for collaboration among school administrators and campus partners to facilitate the safety training.

The OT functions through four frameworks including structural, political, symbolic, and human relations (Bolman & Deal, 2017, p.19). These frameworks influence the success that certain entities have such as organizations and educational institutions. The structural framework addresses the obligations within an entity and the manner in which they are distributed. The political framework addresses the moral stance that the entity has and assesses the allotment of power and interests. The symbolic framework provides power to an issue with symbolic meaning. Lastly, the human relations framework stresses that a team of individuals striving to achieve the same goal should have similarities in their thinking processes. This theory can provide insight on the need for ASI preparedness trainings within the community of SCU, not just within the School of Social Work.

Summary

ASIs are becoming a tragic phenomenon and can occur at any location and moment in time. The findings of this study and supported literature indicate that there is a continued rise in incident rates and that active shooter trainings play a crucial role in preparing individuals for these tragic events. University campuses should encourage faculty and student body to become actively engaged in learning about how to take safety measures during threatening situations.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Introduction

The research methods and procedures utilized to obtain data collection will be discussed in this chapter. The sections covered in this chapter include study design, sampling, data collection and instruments, procedures, protection of human subjects, and data analysis.

Study Design

Due to the lack of ASI trainings within educational settings, this proposed study will be implementing and evaluating the effectiveness of the ASI training at SCU. This study will also be evaluating students' level of preparedness and anxiety as well as their knowledge of safety procedures. Overall, this study will be intended to increase students' knowledge and levels of preparedness regarding ASI safety procedures.

This study proposal will be conducted using a quantitative design which is guided by a practical approach. A quantitative study requires numerical data ensuring the accuracy of data collection. This design is most suitable because it will allow researchers to collect data from a large group of participants which will allow for generalizability (Grinnell & Unrau, 2013).
The study is descriptive because it increases the precision and accuracy of the phenomenon being studied. A descriptive approach is used to describe the characteristics of a population (Grinnell & Unrau, 2013). This descriptive approach will provide easy interpretation of data and a visual comparison among participants in the sample group. The questions on the survey will allow student researchers to interpret the experiences of participants who have been involved in an ASI compared to those who have not.

Although this research method has several strengths, it also has some limitations. One of the possible limitations was the likelihood of low participant response rates on the survey. This limitation was addressed by administering the survey in-person after watching the ASI training video. Administering the survey after the training video allowed participants to be engaged, which increased their interest in completing the survey. Technology malfunctions could be another limitation for this research method since a computer device will be utilized to present the video. If participants are unable to watch the training video, then they would be able to complete the surveys. This was addressed by ensuring access to the video and presenter.

Sampling

The data source was the approximately 150 incoming Bachelor and Master level students in the Social Work Programs at SCU. The population consisted of a diverse group of students in the part-time and full-time programs.
Researchers were able to obtain data from a large and essential group of students at SCU by utilizing an availability and subjective sampling method.

Data Collection and Instruments

The independent variable of this study was the active shooter training and various demographic characteristics while the dependent variables were the level of preparedness, level of anxiety and the amount of knowledge that participants have about an ASI. Dependent variables were measured by utilizing a self-administered survey containing scaling questions, multiple choice questions, and open-ended questions. Participants were asked about topics regarding personal experiences and knowledge about ASIs.

The initial part of the survey contained scaling questions measuring several aspects such as how anxious do participants feel about an ASI occurring at their internship, how prepared do they feel should an ASI occur, and how likely do they feel an ASI will occur on campus. In order to measure the aforementioned dimensions of ASIs, a scale developed by Choul & Dougherty (2018) was adapted for this study. This 9-question instrument utilized a likert scale ranging from 0 (not anxious) to 10 (very anxious), 0 (not likely) to 10 (very likely), 0 (not useful) to 10 (very useful), 0 (not prepared) to 10 (very prepared), and 0 (very different) to 10 (very similar). This likert scale was developed to distinguish the participants’ opinions and level of agreement about their level of preparedness, knowledge, and feelings of anxiety about ASIs. Additionally, this
likert scale measured participants opinions on how useful the ASI training was and how similar or different this training has been compared to previous training they have experienced.

Mattel and Jacoby (1971) state that lower scales such as the 10-point scale utilized in this study, allow researchers to achieve higher reliability. However, the Choul and Dougherty likert scale did not allow participants to be specific with their answers due to having to provide a numerical response on the scale. Therefore, the scale was not as valid as other utilized instruments. Demographic information such as age, cohort, gender, ethnicity, and level of education was also obtained from participants by using multiple choice questions. For example, the multiple-choice options listed for gender included a) female, b) male c) male to female transgender, d) female to male transgender, and e) other. Lastly, a free response question was included to ask participants to provide any additional feedback regarding the ASI training.

A limitation of this instrument is that it does not allow participants to provide more detailed and accurate responses regarding their feelings about a specific topic. However, one of the strengths of the data collection method being utilized is that it is organized in a way that participants can easily understand. Another strength of this instrument is that responses are direct and concrete, which allows researchers to code the data.
Procedures

Before proceeding with data collection, student researchers received approval from the Director of the School of Social Work, Dr. Smith, to conduct the study. This was completed by providing Dr. Smith with a letter describing the proposed research study. Upon approval, student researchers were able to complete the Institutional Review Board application for consent to conduct research on human subjects.

Researchers began the presentation by introducing an officer from UPD at SCU. The officer gave a presentation on Active Shooter Preparedness and showed a short video about how people should respond during such an event. After the video was shown, time was allotted for questions, comments, and discussion. UPD and student researchers gave a 45-minute time frame to present the video, facilitate a debrief discussion, and provide participants with the survey. Participants also received an informed consent which they were asked to sign and date, a debriefing form with resources, and a survey questionnaire following the video presentation. They were given an allotted time of 10-12 minutes to complete the documents. After the surveys were collected, data was analyzed through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences.

Participants were selected based on the large availability of students within the School of Social Work. Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they would not be penalized for non-participation. Before distributing the surveys, the purpose of the study was
explained, and student researchers provided verbal instructions on how to complete the informed consent and the survey. Participants were asked to mark an “X” to confirm their participation in the study. Participants were also given a debriefing statement which contained resource information. Data was gathered collaboratively with Dr. McAllister and two MSW students, Nancy Villalta and Clarissa Welch, on September 11th, 2018 and September 17th, 2018. The location of data collection was in the Social and Behavioral Building in lecture hall 128.

Protection of Human Subjects

The rights and confidentiality of participants was protected throughout this study by taking measures such as maintaining complete anonymity. Participants were instructed not to provide any personal identification such as their names, student identification numbers, or any other related information about their identity. Therefore, they were instructed to place an “X” on the informed consent in replacement of their names. Before providing participants with an informed consent, research students gave an explanation about the research project as well as informed participants they are not obligated to complete the survey. The informed consent explained that the participants have the right to withdraw participation without any repercussions as well as the right to leave questions blank.
Moreover, the debriefing statement was provided after participants have completed the survey. The debriefing statement contained a list of mental health resources available should any participants undergo distress during the study. This debriefing statement also contained the faculty advisor’s contact information and the release date of the study and its findings. The surveys and data were maintained and protected on a computer with a password code. The data collected were only available to faculty advisor, Dr. McAllister, and research students Clarissa Welch and Nancy Villalta to ensure confidentiality. Student researchers presented the findings of the study anonymously. Remaining surveys were shredded and disposed of once the research study was concluded.

Data Analysis

The data from this study was analyzed by utilizing a quantitative approach. The independent variables identified in this study were the ACT Fast training video and students’ prior experiences with an active shooter/attacker incidents, along with demographic characteristics of the students. The dependent variables were students’ level of preparedness, level of anxiety, and knowledge regarding ASIs. Frequency distributions were indicated in the data to represent quantitative values. Measures of central tendency and variability were also utilized to measure the relationships between the variables in the study.

In addition, inferential statistics such as ANOVA, Pearson’s correlation coefficient, Chi-squared and t-test were conducted. These tests were used to
evaluate the relationship between students’ level of preparedness, level of anxiety, and knowledge based on prior experiences and ASI training. Other variables included in this study are demographics such as assigned cohort, age, ethnicity, and gender. Demographic data was collected and analyzed using descriptive statistics. A univariate analysis was also used to identify patterns in the data by using charts and histograms.

Summary

This study used a survey approach and a quantitative design to administer an in-person survey questionnaire to participants. The participants consisted of approximately 150 male and female students in the Bachelor and Master of Social Work Programs at SCU. Participant demographics included, age, gender, ethnicity, and level of education. After data collection, data was analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter will highlight the results of the research study conducted. Participants in the study were comprised of 126 survey respondents. Respondents included Bachelor and Master Social Work students from Southern California University. In September 2018, participants were provided with an active shooter training. Following the training, they were given a survey that consisted of questions related to their feelings and knowledge regarding an ASI. The results of this study included descriptive demographics of participants, a brief overview, and findings of the study.

Demographics

A total of 126 participants were involved in this study. The demographic characteristics of participants are demonstrated in Table 1. There were a total of 103 female participants, 18 male participants, 1 participant who identified as other, and 4 participants who did not report their gender. Ages ranged from 20-65 years old. Out of the 126 participants, 35.2% ranged from 20-24 years of age, 34.4% ranged from 25-29 years of age, 9.8% ranged from 30-34 years of age, 6.6% ranged from 35-39 years of age, 3.3% ranged from 40-44 years of age, 8.2% ranged from 45-49 years of age, .8% ranged from 50-54 years of age, .8%
ranged from 55-59 years of age, and .8% ranged from 60 years of age and older.

As shown in table 1, 10.7% identified as African American/ Black, 18.9% identified as Caucasian/ White, 54.6% identified as Latino/a, 4.1% identified as Asian/ Pacific Islander, .8% identified as other, and 9.0% identified as Multiracial.

When asked about which cohort participants belonged in, 18.9% responded MSW Monday/ Wednesday, 23.8% responded MSW Tuesday/ Thursday daytime, 23% responded MSW Tuesday/ Thursday evening, and 34.4% responded BASW student.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency (N)</th>
<th>Percentage(%)</th>
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<td>Gender</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
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<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not identified</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
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<td>African American/ Black</td>
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<td>Caucasian/ White</td>
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<td>18.9%</td>
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<td>4.1%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Multiracial</td>
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<td>MSW Monday/ Wednesday</td>
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<td>BASW student</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Active Shooter Trainings and Experiences

Participants in the study were asked about their involvement with ASI trainings and their experiences with an ASI. Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of active shooter trainings and experiences with an ASI. 55.2% of participants reported having previous training on active shooter preparedness. When asked about prior experience with an ASI, 54.8% of participants reported having prior experience in an ASI. More than half of the participants, 57.1%, reported being aware of the shots fired/ campus lockdown incident that occurred at SCU in January 2018. 32.5% of participants reported being a student at SCU during the shots fired/ campus lockdown incident. When asked about their location during the incident, 18.5% of participants reported being on campus, 60.5% reported being off campus, and 21% responded other. 38.3% of participants reported that their feelings have changed based on the SCU shots fired/ campus lockdown incident. On the other hand, 34.2% reported that their feelings have not changed.
and 27.5% responded N/A. A majority of participants, 86.7%, reported feeling more prepared being on campus should an ASI occur after participating in the training.

Respondents were also asked open ended questions on the survey tool regarding feedback on this training. Most participants responded that having more hands-on training during the presentation would be more beneficial. Participants also stated that being provided with self-defense demonstrations would help them to be more prepared during an ASI.

Table 2. Active Shooter Trainings and Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable (%)</th>
<th>Frequency (N)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you have previous training on active shooter preparedness?</td>
<td>Yes- 69</td>
<td>55.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Answer- Yes, No)</td>
<td>No- 56</td>
<td>44.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have prior experience with an active shooter incident or a situation</td>
<td>Yes- 69</td>
<td>54.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>where you have been in fear of an attacker?</td>
<td>No- 56</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Answer- Yes, No, No response)</td>
<td>No response-1</td>
<td>.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were you aware of the shots fired/ campus lockdown incident that occurred</td>
<td>Yes- 72</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at SCU, in January 2018, prior to this training?</td>
<td>No- 54</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Answer- Yes, No)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were you a student at SCU during the shots fired/ campus lockdown incident</td>
<td>Yes- 41</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that occurred in January 2018?</td>
<td>No- 85</td>
<td>67.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Answer- Yes, No)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where were you located during the shots fired/campus lockdown incident in</td>
<td>On campus-22</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2018?</td>
<td>Off campus-72</td>
<td>60.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Answer- On campus, Off campus, Other)</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Have your feelings about active shooter incidents changed during this experience? (Answer- Yes, No, N/A)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>46</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After receiving this training, do you feel more prepared being at your internship should an active shooter incident occur? (Answer- Yes, No)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>104</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

86.7% 13.3%

Scaling Questions: Anxiety and Preparedness

Participants were asked 9 questions that were scaled from 1-10 with 1 indicating feeling less anxious, prepared, or likely that an ASI will occur and 10 indicating feeling more anxious, prepared, and likely that an ASI will occur. The scaling question with the highest mean, (9.59), was how useful participants find this training to be. On the other hand, the scaling question with the lowest mean score (3.31), was the likelihood of an attack occurring at an internship location. Participants reported higher scores for feeling more prepared should an ASI occur on campus versus at their internship sites. Participants reported the training to be useful and important with consistently high means of 9.33 and 9.59.

Table 3. Scaling Questions: Anxiety and Preparedness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How anxious are you about the possibility of an active shooter/attacker being on campus?</td>
<td>5.37</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How prepared do you feel you are if there were an active shooter/attacker situation on campus?</td>
<td>7.31</td>
<td>8.62</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Median</td>
<td>Maximum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How likely do you feel there would be an active shooter/attacker situation on campus?</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How anxious are you about the possibility of an active shooter/attacker being at your internship?</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How prepared do you feel you if there were an active shooter/attacker at your internship?</td>
<td>5.84</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How likely do you feel there would be an active shooter/attacker situation at your internship?</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How important do you think it is to receive active shooter/attacker trainings?</td>
<td>9.59</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How useful did you find this training to be?</td>
<td>9.33</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How similar was the information in this training to what you previously knew about how to deal with an active shooter/attacker situation?</td>
<td>7.25</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Presentation of the Findings

Chi-square, t-test, ANOVA, and correlation analyses were performed on the data. The following will indicate which findings were significant from the data that was collected. A chi-square was performed to determine if there was a relationship between where participants were located during the shots fired/campus lockdown incident at SCU and feelings about ASIs. The test showed that there was no significance between variables. Another chi-square was tested to examine the relationship between feelings about ASIs and being aware of the shots fired/campus lockdown incident at SCU. The results showed that there was a significance between variables, $X^2 = 13.78, P=.001$. This shows that
participants who were aware of the incident did feel differently about ASIs, although their location did not lead to a difference.

T-tests were used to determine if there were differences in mean scores on questions of anxiety, preparedness, and likelihood of an ASI on campus and at internship. The independent variables examined included gender (male/female), level in program (BASW/MSW) and awareness of shots fired on campus. Of these tests, several were found significant. In terms of gender, females (mean=5.76), were significantly more anxious than males (mean=3.55) about the possibility of an ASI on campus (t=3.12, p=.002). In terms of level of schooling, BASW students felt less prepared for a potential ASI at their internship (mean=6.45) than MSW students (mean=5.44) (t=-2.26, p=.025). In terms of the location of the students during the active shooting event on campus and their knowledge of this event, the only difference in t-tests was the respondent’s perspective on the importance of ASI training. In both cases, participants that were on campus (t=2.13, p=.035) or were aware (t=3.74, p<.0005) felt receiving training was more important. All other t-tests were not significant.

Pearson’s correlation coefficient tests were performed to look at potential relationships between individual questions about anxiety, preparedness, and likelihood of an ASI. There were no significant relationships between these variables.

In addition, a one-way ANOVA test was also used to determine whether there was a statistical significant difference between the means of multiple
groups. There was a significant difference ($p=.048$) between ethnicities including African American/Black, White/Caucasian, Latino/a, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Multiracial and anxiety levels about the possibility of an active shooter/attacker being on campus. Post-hoc tests revealed no splitting into groups, however there was a spread of levels of anxiety from a mean of 4.26 for persons identifying as White/ Caucasian to a mean score of 6.08 for persons identifying as Latino/a. There was also a significant difference ($p=.020$) between the ethnicities listed above and anxiety levels about the possibility of an active shooter/attacker being at their internships. Post-hoc tests again demonstrated no splits of groups, but scores ranged from a low mean score of 2.91 for persons identifying as White/Caucasian to a high mean of 4.75 for persons identifying as Latino/a. On the other hand, there was no significant difference ($p=.841$) between ethnicities and how prepared participants feel if an ASI were to occur at their internships.

Conclusion

The previous chapter discussed the results as well as inferential statistics of this study. The findings and data show students’ feelings of anxiety, preparedness, and knowledge about ASIs at SCU. Lastly, the survey tool was discussed to report findings in the research.
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter will discuss the study’s findings that resulted from the survey tool and data collection. Strengths and limitations will be discussed to identify shortcomings and any restrictions that influence the results. Additionally, the implications for social work practice will be discussed to further identify areas for improvement. Lastly, researchers will discuss recommendations regarding ASI trainings.

Discussion

The literature on ASIs conveys that these incidents have become a phenomenon in many areas within the United States. Several communities within these areas have experienced an increase in ASI occurrences in the past years and have continued to lack a sense of preparedness. Between the years 2000-2017, 250 ASIs have occurred in the US and 14.8% of these incidents have taken place in PreK-12 schools while 6% of these incidents have taken place in higher educational institutional settings (FBI, 2017). According to the data, participants reported ASI trainings being highly important and useful. When asked how important participants believe ASI trainings were, 86.5% of participants responded very important. This can be a result of the increase in
incidents occurring in the U.S., as well as the lack of active shooter preparedness trainings in higher educational settings.

In addition, the literature suggests that minority students who attend schools in high crime neighborhoods are more likely to experience violent crimes in schools. Therefore, students who transfer from schools located in high crime neighborhoods to schools located in low crime neighborhoods experience higher levels of anxiety due to prior exposure to violent crimes (Everett & Price, 1995). The data collected shows that White/Caucasians feel less anxious than Latino/a participants about an active shooter/attacker being on campus and at their internship sites. This shows that ethnicity has an effect on the levels of anxiety that participants experience regardless of current neighborhood status or safety of institution. Literature further suggests that students who transfer from schools located in high crime neighborhoods to schools in safe neighborhoods will continue to experience the same levels of anxiety (Everett & Price, 1995). On the other hand, the data collected shows that there was no significant difference between ethnicities and participants’ level of preparedness at their internship sites. Moreover, BASW students felt less prepared for an ASI to occur at their internship compared to MSW students.

There was also a significance between participants awareness about the shots fired incident that occurred at SCU, in January 2018, and participants’ feelings about ASIs overall. Participants who were aware of the incident and located on campus during the incident felt that ASI trainings are more important
whereas participants who were not aware of the incident and off campus felt that the trainings were less important. Participants who were not aware of the incident may have felt less anxious about ASIs and believed trainings were less important due to their lack of experience with ASIs and exposure to violent crimes. Participants who were aware of the incident and who were located on campus may have felt more anxious and believed trainings were more important due to their recent experiences with ASIs and prior exposure to violent crimes. However, the data indicated that the status of locations during the on campus incident did not lead to a difference in participants’ feelings of anxiety regarding ASIs.

Gender was another significant variable among participants in this study. The data collected shows that females were more anxious than males about the possibility of an ASI on campus. Literature suggests that women tend to utilize an emotion focused approach during stressful events as opposed to men who utilize a problem-focused approach (Matud, 2004). Therefore, women are more likely to panic and stay in an emotional state whereas men are more reactive and instinctively develop an action plan to ensure safety among individuals involved in a dangerous situation. Another reason why men reported lower levels of anxiety is because they have a higher sense of preparedness due to societal expectations as being more dominant and naturally protective over others (Matud, 2004).
Limitations and Strengths

Although the study conducted is a replicated study, researchers encountered limitations. Since there was limited research regarding ASI training implementation in educational settings, researchers were led to develop their own survey tool. The survey tool was selective and could have addressed other important open-ended questions to obtain more detailed responses. This would allow researchers to develop a better understanding of participants’ feelings about ASIs.

Another limitation was that the study conducted was limited to only one social work program, SCU, and excluded students in neighboring universities and other disciplines. The sampling methods that were utilized to gather data were an availability and convenience sample therefore, participants involved were not representative of the general student population. Outcomes and findings could have also varied if this study was conducted on additional departments with students who have different beliefs and perspectives. In addition, due to lack of representation, a majority of participants were females which could have skewed reported levels of anxiety and preparedness.

Nevertheless, this study also contained strengths. Participant sample size and level of schooling was a good turnout, considering there were 126 combined BASW and MSW students. This created a diverse population among participant reported demographics. Furthermore, the survey tool was distributed in-person to students who were mandated to attend the orientations. Since the students were
mandated to attend the orientations, this created security among participant sample size. The survey tool was a hard copy, which made it easier for researchers to access data collection. Lastly, researchers had support and resources were made available by the school of social work staff and UPD.

Implications for Social Work Practice

The results from this study imply that more social work students need to be trained so that the profession can increase their awareness of ASIs and appropriate safety procedures. As ASIs continue to increase in variety of settings, more individuals need to be trained on how to safely handle stressful and dangerous situations that can occur on campus and at internship settings. Since social workers work with vulnerable populations, they can be exposed to dangerous situations and need to be trained on how to act quickly to protect themselves as well as others. The results also indicate that ASI training implementations within educational settings can increase students’ knowledge about safety procedures and increase their level of preparedness. This can increase and ensure the safety of many individuals during an ASI, alleviate anxiety levels, and reduce the chaos that can develop during such stressful events.
Recommendations

Recommendations for future research regarding ASIs should include extended requirements for the trainings to continue to take place in educational and internship settings. Trainings should be implemented in other school of social work programs and integrated into their orientations across various internship sites. SCU should permanently provide the ASI training as part of the mandatory BASW and MSW student orientations. Social work students could assist UPD with facilitating the training and collaborate with a more elaborate process. For instance, participants can be provided with self-defense tools such as pepper spray or safety whistles during the training. A pepper spray training can also be included into the facilitation by UPD. Lastly, participants should be provided with self-defense demonstrations and more hands-on training.

Conclusion

This study was conducted to evaluate students’ level of preparedness, feelings of anxiety, and knowledge about ASIs. In this study, researchers discuss how the implemented ASI training impacts students’ feelings and level of preparedness. Significant findings of this study were that participants did feel more prepared having an ASI training and reported that the training was important. It was also found that ethnicity and gender affected students’ level of anxiety. White students felt less anxious when compared to other ethnicities such as Latino/a students and men felt less anxious when compared to women.
Additionally, it was shown that participants’ awareness about the shots fired incident that occurred on campus in January 2018 did affect their feelings about ASIs while being on or off campus during the incident did not affect their feelings. The researchers suggest that the ASI training continue to be implemented by the school of social work so that students continue to develop knowledge about proper safety procedures.
APPENDIX A

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT
**ACT FAST Training Evaluation**

*Directions:* Please answer these questions to the best of your ability after completing the ACT FAST Training. You are welcome to skip any question you would like, however your feedback is important to helping us learn how to improve active shooter/attacker training. Please circle/check your answers. Thank you for your participation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How anxious are you about the possibility of an active shooter/attacker being on campus?</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Not anxious Very anxious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How prepared do you feel you are if there were an active shooter/attacker situation on campus?</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Not prepared Very prepared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How likely do you feel there would be an active shooter/attacker situation on campus?</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Not likely Very likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How anxious are you about the possibility of an active shooter/attacker being at your internship?</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Not anxious Very anxious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How prepared do you feel you if there were an active shooter/attacker at your internship?</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Not prepared Very prepared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. How likely do you feel there would be an active shooter/attacker situation at your internship?</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Not likely Very likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. How important do you think it is to receive active shooter/attacker trainings?</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Not important Very important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. How useful did you find this training to be?</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Not useful Very useful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. How similar was the information in this training to what you previously knew about how to deal with an active shooter/attacker situation?</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very different Very similar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Do you have previous training on active shooter preparedness?
   - □ Yes
   - □ No
   - If Yes, where/when did you receive training?

11. Were you aware of the shots fired/campus lockdown incident that occurred at CSUSB, in January 2018, prior to this training?
   - □ Yes
   - □ No

12. Were you a student at CSUSB during the shots fired/campus lockdown incident that occurred in January 2018?
   - □ Yes
   - □ No

37
13. Where were you located during the shots fired/campus lockdown incident in January 2018?
   □ On campus  □ Off campus  □ Other__________________

14. Have your feelings about active shooter incidents changed based on this experience?
   □ Yes  □ No  □ N/A

15. Do you have prior experience with an active shooter incident or a situation where you have been in fear of
    an attacker?
   □ Yes  □ No

16. After receiving this training, do you feel more prepared being at your internship should an active shooter
    incident occur?
   □ Yes  □ No

17. Do you have any feedback or other topics related to active shooter incidents that you would like to see
    covered in future trainings?

18. Which cohort are you in?
   □ MSW Monday/ Wednesday
   □ MSW Tuesday/ Thursday Daytime
   □ MSW Tuesday/ Thursday Evening
   □ BASW Student

19. What is your age?
   □ 20-24  □ 45-49
   □ 25-29  □ 50-54
   □ 30-34  □ 55-59
   □ 35-39  □ 60 and older
   □ 40-44

20. What gender do you identify with?
   □ Female
   □ Male
   □ Male to female transgender
   □ Female to male transgender
   □ Other__________________

21. What best describes your ethnicity (check all that apply)?
   □ African American/ Black
   □ White/ Caucasian
   □ Native American/ Alaska Native
   □ Latino/a
   □ Asian/ Pacific Islander

Survey tool adapted by: Nyemal Chuol & Bernice Dougherty (2018)
APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT
ACT FAST Evaluation
Informed Consent

The study in which you are being asked to participate is designed to examine students' knowledge before and after participating in an active shooting incident training. This study is being conducted by Clarissa Welch and Nancy Villalta, MSW students, under the supervision of Carolyn McAllister, MSW, PhD, Associate Professor of Social Work, California State University, San Bernardino. This study has been approved by the School of Social Work Sub-Committee, Institutional Review Board, California State University, San Bernardino.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this study is to measure students' knowledge of safety procedures, level of anxiety, and feelings of preparedness in the event of an active shooter situation occurring on the CSUSB campus.

DESCRIPTION: You have been chosen to participate in this study because you are a current student within the School of Social Work. You will be shown a training video and receive additional information on how to respond to an active shooter situation on campus. Following the training, you will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire.

PARTICIPATION: Your participation is completely voluntary and you do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer. You may skip or choose to answer parts of the survey, and can freely withdraw from participation in this study at any time without any consequences.

ANONYMOUS: Your responses will remain anonymous and your responses will be coded in numerical format using aggregate form. No identifying information will be asked.

DURATION: The survey will take approximately 10-12 minutes to complete.

RISKS: Some of the material shown in the video may elicit an emotional reaction. We will provide a list of resources for you to use if you feel it would benefit you.

BENEFITS: You will gain knowledge and awareness of what to do in the case of an active shooter situation.

CONTACT: If you have any questions regarding this study or your rights, you may contact Carolyn McAllister, Associate Professor of Social Work at cemcallis@csusb.edu.

RESULTS: The results of this study will be available after June, 2019 at the John M. Pfau Library ScholarWorks database at California State University, San Bernardino.

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

Please place an "X" here

Today's Date

California State University, San Bernardino
Social Work Institutional Review Board Sub-Committee
APPROVED 7/16/2019 CONVISED AFTER 7/15/2019
IRB# 2016-105 CHAIR
APPENDIX C

DEBRIEFING FORM
Debriefing Form

This study was designed to understand students’ knowledge of and feelings of preparation for a unlikely but possible active shooter event on a university campus. There was no deception involved in this study.

If you feel you need counseling after this training, please contact the following:

CSUSB Counseling and Psychological Services (909) 537-5040

County of San Bernardino Department of Behavioral Health
http://sanbernardino.networkofcare.org/mh/emergency.cfm

For Emergency Walk-In Mental Health Services After Hours, visit the:
Extended Hours Triage (for Adults 18 and older only)
Behavioral Health Resources Center (BHRC)
850 E. Foothill Boulevard
Rialto, CA 92376
Phone: (909) 421-9342
Walk-In Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday 5:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. Open Holidays 2:00 pm – 10:00 p.m.
APPENDIX D

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FORM
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN BERNARDINO
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
Institutional Review Board Sub-Committee

Researcher(s): Carolyn McAllister
Proposal Title: Active Shooter Preparedness Training Evaluation for Social Work Students

# _SW1884

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:

X 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:

____ Investigators' signature missing
____ missing informed consent ____ debriefing statement
____ revisions needed in informed consent ____ debriefing
____ data collection instruments revision
____ agency approval letter missing
____ CITI missing
____ revisions in design needed (specified below)

Committee Chair Signature: ___________________________ Date: 9/6/2018

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


ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITIES

The researchers contributed equally to all facets of this project. Researchers collaborated together to obtain data collection and analyze data. Several weekly meetings were scheduled in which both researchers made mutual decisions toward fulfilling requirements. There was equal effort in developing this research project and researchers utilized each other's strengths to achieve goals.