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Commercial Sexual Exploitation: A Survey of the Knowledge, Concerns, and Training of Transit Personnel in Las Vegas, Nevada

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COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION: A SURVEY OF THE KNOWLEDGE,

CONCERNS, AND TRAINING OF TRANSIT PERSONNEL

IN LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

By

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ABSTRACT

Transportation personnel, in particular bus drivers, encounter young people who are commercially sexually exploited frequently and throughout the course of their daily jobs. Given the frequency of this interaction, bus drivers are perceived to be the eyes and ears of the transportation industry, playing a key role in the identification and prevention of trafficking. To support national efforts in combating human trafficking, between September 1st, 2020 and June 15th, 2021, the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) of Southern Nevada trained all its existing employees and new hires on human trafficking dynamics and reporting protocols. These included legal definitions, victim characteristics, recruitment locations and tactics used by sex traffickers, as well as points of intersection with the transit industry. The training lasted approximately two hours and was facilitated by a Human Resource Manager associated with the RTC. The current project sought to evaluate the effectiveness of the human trafficking training program administered by the RTC using two measures of success. By employing pre- and post-test survey measures and other data points, the goals of the current study were fourfold: 1) to determine whether transit personnel in Las Vegas were aware of trafficking dynamics prior to receiving any formal training on the topic; 2) to evaluate the degree to which transit personnel's perceived awareness, job-related skills, and confidence levels changed following the implementation of the training program; 3) to identify any perceived concerns that might prevent transit personnel from intervening if they suspect someone to be a potential trafficking victim; and 4) to consider whether any interventions were performed by RTC personnel and their community health partner after the implementation of the training program. The pre- and post-test survey questionnaire included a series of closed and open-ended questions and was administered via Qualtrics. Between September 1st, 2020 and June 15th, 2021, a total of 1,243

RTC employees completed the pre-test survey, and 837 responses were received via the post-test survey. This indicated a 90% response rate for the pre-test and a 61% for the post-test survey. Those who completed the training between September 1st, 2020 and December 8th, 2020 did not generally complete the post-test survey. Therefore, the quantitative analyses were limited to the bus operators who completed the training between December 9th, 2020 and June 15th, 2021, given that they were the vast majority of people trained. A total of 766 bus operators answered the pre-test survey during this timeframe, while 730 bus operators completed the post-test survey. The qualitative descriptive analyses were not limited to the bus operators but were reflective of the entire sample size. Results indicate that transit personnel had a high awareness and understanding of trafficking dynamics prior to receiving any formal training on the topic. They also identified a number of perceived locations for sex trafficking (e.g., West Tropicana Avenue, Downtown Las Vegas, Boulder Highway, and the Las Vegas Strip). Changes from pre-test to post-test were reported on several of the survey questions, indicating that the training program created by the RTC was indeed effective and increased participant's perceived awareness, job-related skills, and confidence levels. Most participants expressed concerns over their own personal safety. Four interventions were performed by RTC personnel following the implementation of the training program, while six interventions were provided by their community health partner. Implications for future research directions are drawn as well as policy recommendations for improving sex trafficking training curriculum for transit personnel.

TERMINOLOGY

The following terms are often used to describe commercial forms of sexual exploitation of youth and adults: sex trafficking, domestic minor sex trafficking (DMST), commercial sexual exploitation (CSE), commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC), child sex trafficking, sexual exploitation, sex slavery, sex trade, sex work, survival sex, sex tourism, child sex tourism, juvenile prostitution, prostitution and many others (Gerassi, 2015; Gerassi & Nichols, 2017; Lutnick, 2016; Snowden & Majic, 2018). Although these terms are often used interchangeably throughout human trafficking and sex trafficking literature, they have very different connotations (Gerassi & Nichols, 2017; Lutnick, 2016; Snowden & Majic, 2018).

Throughout this dissertation, I use the term *commercial sexual exploitation* or *CSE* when referring to the exploitation of youth and adults unless quoting sources that are using a different naming convention. Because "most young people never use the term trafficking" (Lutnick, 2016, p. 2) or for that matter, view themselves as victims, I try to avoid this label as well. Similar to other research completed (Bejinariu, et al., 2020; Lutnick, 2016; Snowden & Majic, 2018), I also use person-centered language when referring to the young people who have been forced into CSE. Because the term *pimp* has been linked to the glorification and glamorization of the sex industry (Coy, et al., 2011), I use the term sex trafficker instead. The only exception is when quoting sources that are using a different naming convention.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In the United States (U.S.), it is believed that thousands of young people are commercially sexually exploited each year, with cases having been documented in more than 90 U.S. cities since 2010 (Hepburn & Simon, 2010). Although the exact number of young people involved in CSE is unknown, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC, 2021) suggests that 1 in 6 youth who run away are at risk of CSE, soon after leaving their homes. Other sources estimate that the number of young people involved in CSE ranges anywhere between 4,500 and 21,000 per year (Ijadi-Maghsoodi et al., 2018). Youth are oftentimes recruited at bus stops and frequently rely on local public transportation buses during their exiting attempts (Dank et al., 2014; Mills et al., 2019; Polaris Project, 2018; Roe-Sepowitz, 2019). During these moments, transit personnel, in particular bus drivers, most likely cross paths with youth involved in CSE and not only have an opportunity to intervene, but also have a moral obligation to help. Given these dynamics, the goals of this study are to understand if transportation personnel in Las Vegas, Nevada 1) are aware of trafficking, 2) have been impacted by the training program, 3) have any perceived concerns about intervening, and 4) can apply the knowledge to actual interventions.

Points of Intersection With the Transportation Industry

The transportation industry, in particular public transportation, plays a key role in every stage of the CSE process (i.e., recruitment, movement, exit; Connell et al., 2018; Dank et al., 2014; Mills et al., 2019; Polaris Project, 2018; Roe-Sepowitz, 2019; Shoop, 2019; Wilson, 2012). Sex traffickers use a range of transit hubs, including terminals, stations, trains, and buses, to recruit young people into CSE, in particular those who appear to have runaway or are homeless (Dank et al., 2014, Polaris Project, 2018; Roe-Sepowitz, 2019). Because transportation centers

frequently act "as a shelter of last resort" (Polaris Project, 2018, p. 20), especially for youth who appear to have runaway or are homeless, they are perceived to be perfect venues for recruitment by sex traffickers. Furthermore, sex traffickers regularly rely on the transit industry to transport young people across state lines due to the affordability of these services and limited security associated with these venues (Polaris Project, 2018).

For instance, Roe-Sepowitz (2019) found that in almost a third of 1,416 arrest cases that occurred in the U.S. between 2010 and 2015 sex traffickers used some form of mass transportation (i.e., bus, truck, train) to move young people across the country. An average of 2.76 U.S. states were traveled via mass transportation, with the maximum number of U.S. states traveled being 17 (Roe-Sepowitz, 2019). Even higher rates were found in a report conducted by the Polaris Project[1] (2018), with 63% out of 127 survivors surveyed reporting that some form of mass transportation, such as buses, subways, and trains were used to facilitate their exploitation. When asked to quantify their contact with the transit industry, 16% of survivors rated this interaction as *very frequent* (Polaris Project, 2018). Additionally, as many as 42% reported that local and long-distance public transportation buses were used in their exploitation (Polaris Project, 2018). Other mass transit systems used as a transportation mechanism by sex traffickers included taxis or rideshare services, rental cars, and airplanes (Polaris Project, 2018). Business vehicles, moving trucks, and cruise ships were less commonly cited as methods of transportation (Polaris Project, 2018).

Often times, sex traffickers rely on pre-established travel circuits such as the West Coast circuit (i.e., San Diego, Las Vegas, Portland) and the Minnesota pipeline circuit (i.e., Minnesota, New York) to transport youth across the country (Smith & Coloma, 2013). The U.S. Interstate

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[1] Polaris Project is a nonprofit organization that aims to combat sex and labor trafficking throughout North America.

Highway System, and in particular Interstate 20, has also been shown to facilitate the movement of young people across the nation, with a large proportion of young people being commercially sexually exploited along the "Sex Trafficking Superhighway" (Connell et al., 2018, p. 2; Makin & Bye, 2016, p. 57). This stretch of the interstate includes the area between Birmingham, Alabama, and Atlanta, Georgia (Connell et al., 2018). Two other sex trafficking areas have been identified along major transportation intersections including Interstate 35 in Texas and Interstate 85/95 in Atlanta (Makin & Bye, 2016).

Additionally, truck stops, rest areas, and welcome centers have also been utilized as popular venues for CSE (Connell et al., 2018; Polaris Project, 2012; Shoop, 2019; Wilson, 2012), with the price per commercial sex act at these locations ranging anywhere between $25 to $100 (Polaris Project, 2012). At truck stops, young people solicit truck drivers by using the citizen band (CB) radio, or by knocking on truck cab doors directly (Wilson, 2012). Truck drivers solicit sex by turning off and on the truck's headlights or using the CB radio (Wilson, 2012). Given the key role these transit venues play in the CSE process, the FBI has undertaken a series of trafficking efforts targeting truck stops, with the most popular being operation "Stormy Nights" that took place in 2004 (Wilson, 2012, p. 976). During this large-scale federal operation, the FBI rescued twenty-four minors who were forced to sell sex at various truck stop locations across the country, with youth's ages ranging from 12 to 17 years old.

In addition, the existence of truck stop circuits for commercial sexual purposes has been well documented in a range of criminal cases including *United States v. Robison*, *United States v. Hill, United States v. Scott* and *United States v. Brown*, to name a few (Wilson, 2012). In *United States v. Robinson*, the defendants operated a sex trafficking ring at various truck stops across the country including Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Arkansas, Virginia, Georgia,

Maryland, Tennessee, the District of Columbia, California, Florida, Nevada, Texas, and Louisiana. In *United States v. Hill*, the defendant ran a sex trafficking ring where minors and young female adults were forced to sell sex at various truck stops and highway rest areas. The defendant received a 174-month prison sentence. In *United States v. Scott*, the defendant and his female co-defendant lured a young thirteen-year-old girl in their car under false pretenses. They then transported her from Oklahoma City to Amarillo, Texas, where she was forced to sell sex at various truck stops around the area, having to meet a nightly quota of $500 to $1000. Similarly, in *United States v. Brown*, the victim was a thirteen-year-old girl who managed to escape her sex traffickers by hitching a ride home from a female truck driver.

Relatedly, bus drivers also report experiencing and seeing human trafficking incidents on their buses. For instance, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM, 2020) found that in 2019, out of 43 transit agencies surveyed across the U.S., 15% reported at least one human trafficking incident, while 6% reported two or more incidents. In responding to these human trafficking incidents, 45% of transit agencies partnered with law enforcement personnel, while 15% relied on a special task force for help in intervening. Less than a quarter (24%) of transit agencies were trained on human trafficking dynamics, while only 12% had a human trafficking awareness campaign in place, which included public service announcements (NASEM, 2020). Given the frequency of their interaction with young people involved in CSE, bus drivers have been deemed to be the "eyes and ears" of the transit industry (Department of Transportation [DOT], 2019, p. 28), and can play a key role in the identification and prevention of trafficking.

Survivors also report using public transportation, especially local and long-distance buses, to escape their sex traffickers (Mills et al., 2019; Polaris Project, 2018). For instance,

Polaris Project (2018) found that 26% out of 127 survivors surveyed relied on local public transportation buses to disentangle themselves from CSE and, ultimately, find refuge (Polaris Project, 2018). In fact, bus systems are one of the few viable options young people have during these exiting attempts, as one survivor recalled, "I took buses every time I ran" (Polaris Project, 2018, p. 32), while another one acknowledged, "Every time I got on Amtrak or a bus, I was running away" (Polaris Project, 2018, p. 33). Similarly, another survivor expressed, "I don't drive so I relied on public transportation when I left my trafficker and having access to it where I live helped economically with me leaving the situation" (Polaris Project, 2018, p. 32). Another young person' testimony demonstrates how buses oftentimes act as a lifeline in these exiting attempts, "I still don't own a car. I ran away on foot and ended up needing to take a bus to get away. Limited income can prevent girls from leaving" (Polaris Project, 2018, p. 33). Exiting CSE is a complex and lengthy process that includes multiple stages and barriers (Baker et al., 2010), with research suggesting that it can take an average of three years and as many as seven attempts to fully disentangle oneself from CSE (Bales & Lize, 2005; Tracia's Trust, 2019).

Given the many intersecting points that exist between the transit sector and CSE, a number of human trafficking programs and initiatives have been implemented at the local, state, and federal level over the past decade. To support national efforts in combating human trafficking, between September 1st, 2020 and June 15th, 2021, the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) of Southern Nevada trained all its existing employees and new hires on human trafficking dynamics and reporting protocols. Despite the existence of these human trafficking training programs, very little is known about their effectiveness at improving victim identification and/or increasing transportation personnel's knowledge of human trafficking dynamics. Accordingly, this dissertation seeks to fill in these major gaps associated with this area

of research. Specifically, the current study seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of the human trafficking training program administered by the RTC using two indicators of success: attitude change and number of interventions performed.

This is the first evaluation conducted on human trafficking training for transit personnel. By employing pre- and post-test survey measures and other data points, the goals of the current study were fourfold: 1) to determine whether transit personnel in Las Vegas were aware of trafficking dynamics prior to receiving any formal training on the topic; 2) to evaluate the degree to which transit personnel's perceived awareness, job-related skills, and confidence changed following the implementation of the training program; 3) to identify any perceived concerns that might prevent transit personnel from intervening if they suspect someone to be a potential trafficking victim; and 4) to consider whether any interventions were performed by RTC personnel and their community health partner after the implementation of the training program.

The current chapter (Chapter one) introduced the many intersecting points that exist between the transportation industry and CSE, highlighting that transit personnel, in particular bus drivers, encounter youth involved in CSE frequently and throughout the course of their daily jobs. Chapter two discusses the dynamics of CSE by providing an overview of the main risk factors and indicators of CSE as well as sex traffickers' profiles and recruitment tactics. Chapter three discusses the role front-line workers play in combating CSE, with a specific focus on the transportation industry and personnel. Chapter four introduces the two theoretical frameworks that will be used to guide this dissertation, including Knowles' adult learning theory (1980) and Latané and Darley's (1968, 1970) situational model of bystander intervention. Chapter five discusses the current study's methodology, including an in-depth description of the research site location and the pre- and post-test measures used. Chapter six describes the current study's

findings. Chapter seven includes a discussion of the findings, connections to the two theoretical frameworks, and limitations associated with this research study. Lastly, chapter eight provides a conclusion with strengths of the training program and policy recommendations.

CHAPTER 2: CSE DYNAMICS

This chapter provides an overview of the main risk factors and indicators of CSE as well as sex traffickers' profiles and recruitment techniques. To be able to effectively intervene, front-line workers must first be able to recognize who the victims are. In training front-line workers on how to effectively intervene when responding to CSE cases, it is also important that they know how sex traffickers operate, understand the trauma experienced by survivors, and are familiar with the most common recruitment techniques and locations. This information is summarized below.

Who Are the Young People Involved in CSE?

Previous research has identified several risk factors at the 1) individual (e.g., age, race, gender), 2) relational (e.g., peer pressure, involvement with delinquent peers), 3) community (e.g., areas with high rates of unemployment, homelessness, and housing instability), and 4) societal level (e.g., glamorization of prostitution) that may push youth into CSE. These risk factors are summarized below.

Individual Risk Factors

Demographic features, such as age, gender expression, and belonging to a non-White race, indicate increased vulnerability to CSE (Showden & Majic, 2018). For instance, African American, LatinX, and Mixed-race youth tend to make up most people involved in CSE (Fedina et al., 2019; Franchino-Olsen, 2021; Showden & Majic, 2018). Youth living in poverty are also at an increased risk for CSE (Cole & Sprang, 2015; Franchino-Olsen, 2021). Several studies on CSE also document higher rates of victimization among those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) when compared to their heterosexual, cisgender counterparts (Choi, 2015; Greenbaum et al., 2018; Tyler et al., 2004;

Varma et al., 2015). Age is also commonly cited as an individual risk factor, with youth being

forced into CSE at a very young age, often between the ages of 12 and 14 (Fong & Cardoso,

2010; Greenbaum, 2014; Holger-Ambrose et al., 2013; Jordan et al., 2013).

Other individual risk factors that exacerbate youth's trajectories into CSE include

growing up in a dysfunctional family dynamic where abuse, violence, and parent/ child conflict

were commonplace (Cobbina & Oselin, 2011; Cole & Sprang, 2015; Fedina et al., 2019; Fong &

Cardoso, 2010; Hickle & Roe-Sepowitz, 2018; Kotrla, 2010; Mir, 2013). Examples include

experiencing childhood physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, maltreatment, including neglect, as

well as witnessing domestic violence taking place within the household. Additionally, having a

substance or alcohol abuse problem and reaching sexual maturation at an early age were also

documented as common risk factors for CSE (Franchino-Olsen, 2021). Involvement with the

juvenile justice system, child protective services (CPS), and welfare system has also been linked

to an increased risk of CSE (Fedina et el., 2019; Gerassi, 2015)

A significant proportion of youth who appear to have runaway or are homeless, are also

considered to be at increased risk for CSE and engaging in survival sex, particularly soon after

leaving their household (Carlson et al., 2006; Cronley et al., 2016, Fedina et al., 2019;

Franchino-Olsen, 2021; Greene et al., 1999; Halcon & Lifson, 2004; NCMEC, 2021). For

instance, Greene and colleagues (1999) found that out of the 528 youth surveyed who were

homeless, 27.5% had a history of engaging in survival sex. For youth living in shelters these

rates were much lower, where only 9.5% out of 631 sheltered youth surveyed had engaged in

survival sex (Greene et al., 1999). Research conducted almost a decade later by Halcon and

Lifson (2004) found that as many as 1 in 5 youth, in their sample of 203 youth who were

homeless, had traded sex in exchange for food, clothing, drugs, or a place to stay. Similar rates

were found by Carlson and colleagues (2006), who reported that out of the 185 youth surveyed, 20% had engaged in survival sex. Engaging in survival sex has also been linked to an increased risk of CSE (Fedina et al., 2019; Franchino-Olsen, 2021). Taken together, those considered most at-risk for CSE exhibit a wide range of vulnerabilities, many of which are deep-rooted in race, class, and gender inequalities.

Relationship Risk Factors

Relationship risk factors for being pulled into CSE include being affiliated with criminal or delinquent peers or family members who are involved in CSE and/or engage in other forms of illegal activity (i.e., selling drugs, theft, prostitution; Fedina et al., 2019; National Research Council, 2013). Through their interactions with criminal or delinquent peers and family members, youth learn about the prostitution culture at a very young age and may begin modeling that behavior in exchange for material items (National Research Council, 2013). In some situations, being associated with others who engage in CSE not only normalizes the behavior but also results in youth perceiving it as a glamorous and exciting way to make a living (Cobbina & Oselin, 2011). Enamored by the promise of financial gain, many young people enter CSE to escape poverty and flee their abusive families, with some viewing it as a way to regain control over their bodies/lives and thus giving them a sense of empowerment (Cobbina & Oselin, 2011).

Peer pressure has also been noted as a risk factor, with youth entering CSE at the urging of friends, who themselves are selling sex (National Research Council, 2013). Being involved with delinquent or criminal peers not only appears to accelerate youth's trajectories into CSE, but it also has more lasting effects. In fact, the relationship between youth and delinquent peers appears to strengthen with time, especially if they are lacking prosocial family support system and friends (Chase & Statham, 2004). Peer pressure plays a powerful role in youth's lives and

has also been shown to contribute to a host of other negative behaviors that go against society's rules for how youth are expected to behave (Chassin et al., 2004; Flowers, 2001; Monahan et al., 2009). These negative behaviors include running away from home, dropping out of school, truancy, developing a substance or alcohol abuse addiction, and in some cases, even leading to more serious offending (Chassin et al., 2004; Flowers, 2001; Monahan et al., 2009).

Community and Societal Risk Factors

Community-level risk factors for being exploited include living in a chronically impoverished neighborhood where violence is common (i.e., gang culture, organized crime) and/ or in a sexualized environment characterized by high rates of prostitution, sexual harassment, and the availability of adult sex industries (Greenbaum, 2014; Popkin et al., 2019). Additionally, areas with high rates of unemployment, homelessness, and housing instability have been shown to promote risks for CSE (Mletzko et al., 2018). Similarly, environments that have large transient male populations, are near airports, major highways, military bases, convention centers, sporting, or cultural events, and are high tourist destinations have also been shown to promote risks for CSE (Greenbaum, 2014; McClain & Garrity, 2011; Mletzko et al., 2018; Williamson & Prior, 2009). Those living in coercive sexual environments (e.g., high levels of poverty, low levels of collective efficacy) face enormous pressures to enter CSE to make a living, especially if they are lacking legitimate employment opportunities, education, or other community resources to help them meet basic needs (Popkin et al., 2019).

Risk factors at the societal (macro) level include the oversexualization of girls and women, the glamorization of prostitution (i.e., "pimp and ho" culture; Coy et al., 2011, p. 441), and living in a society that condones gender discrimination and violence (Coy et al., 2011; Greenbaum, 2014). In fact, patriarchal societies are more likely to perpetuate gender-based

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violence and foster an ideology where women are perceived to be socially and culturally inferior to men. Additionally, societies that perpetuate harmful gender stereotypes and trivialize violence against women in the media can also promote risks for CSE. For instance, the media has been shown to play a key role in the objectification and sexualization of girls and women by promoting a large volume of sexual content in movies, music videos, song lyrics, video games, and advertising (Lamb & Koven, 2019; Merskin, 2004; National Research Council, 2013). In fact, close to 75% of today's TV programming includes some form of sexual content, while sexually objectifying content is depicted 50% of the time (Lamb & Koven, 2019). These rates are even higher amongst the music industry, with 84% of the videos broadcasting some form sexual content (Lamb & Koven, 2019).

Relatedly, Merskin (2004) suggests that some of the societal messages and images depicted in the media have an underlying meaning that children, particularly young girls, should be sexually active at an early age, be willing to be treated as sexual objects, and in some situations, be the recipients of sexual aggression. Digital technologies (e.g., online classified ads, dating websites, social media platforms, chatrooms) have played a crucial role in the development of CSE, as they have enabled sex traffickers to recruit, groom, and exploit young people more easily (National Research Council, 2013). The lack of regulation and security surrounding some of these digital platforms has also facilitated CSE (Popkin et al., 2019). Other risk factors, at the societal level, include lack of awareness and training programs surrounding CSE, as well as lack of resources for youth and families struggling financially (Greenbaum, 2014; National Research Council, 2013). Systemic failures associated with CPS, law enforcement, the criminal justice system, the healthcare system, and the education system contribute to further risk of exploitation (National Research Council, 2013). Systemic classism,

racism, and sexism, deeply embedded in the American society, help produce and perpetuate CSE.

Who Are the Sex Traffickers?

Previous research has associated young people's exploitation with a wide a range of individuals, including family members, intimate partners, friends, and strangers (summarized below). Front-line workers need to understand these dynamics to be able to identify victims and effectively intervene.

Sex Traffickers' Profiles and Characteristics

Research suggests that sex traffickers typically target and recruit individuals that they know and have close ties to (Showden & Majic, 2018). In fact, youth are generally trafficked at the hands of a family member or legal guardians/caregivers, including parent, aunt, sibling, and cousin (Cole & Anderson, 2013; Cole & Sprang, 2015; Kennedy et al., 2007; Sprang & Cole, 2018). This type of typology is also referred to as familial trafficking. For instance, Cole and Anderson (2013) found that 62% of trafficker-victim relationships involved a family member. Family members, legal guardian/caregivers, or relatives typically gain "control over the youth by exploiting the familial bond and capitalizing on the child's dependency on them for food, shelter, and survival" (Cole & Sprang, 2015, p. 119).

Other studies suggest that youth involved in CSE are primarily trafficked by nonrelatives, including boyfriends, girlfriends, friends, or via peer networks (Curtis et al., 2008; Reid, 2016; Williams, 2010). For instance, Curtis and colleagues (2008) found that, out of the 329-youth interviewed, 46% of cis girls, 44% of cis boys and 68% of transgender youth were recruited into CSE by so-called friends, many of whom were in fact serving as surrogate recruiters for sex traffickers. Similarly, Reid (2016) found that, out of her sample of 79 female youth, over a third

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became involved with CSE at the urging of a boyfriend or girlfriend (28% and 10% respectively). After dating for some time, the boyfriend-girlfriend dynamic would transition to one of CSE, where the youth would be persuaded or coerced to sell sex. Most sex traffickers were males, comprising 79% of the sample size, and had an average age of 25 (Reid, 2016).

Additionally, in analyzing a sample of 138 police records from 2005, Mitchell and colleagues (2010) identified three main CSE typologies. These include third-party exploiters (i.e., pimp, madam, business owner), solo juveniles (i.e., where the youth acted alone), and child sexual abuse, which were facilitated by a family member, acquaintance, or legal guardian/ caretaker (Mitchell et al., 2020). Those cases in which the youth acted independently, without the assistance or encouragement of a third party, typically involved the selling of sex to meet basic needs (i.e., food, clothing, shelter, money; Mitchell et al., 2010). Prior research has well documented how youth, in particular youth who are homeless, engage in survival sex to meet basic needs (Greene et al., 1999; Halcon & Lifson, 2004; Tyler et al., 2004; Walls & Bell, 2011).

Sex Traffickers' Techniques and Tactics Used

Previous research has well documented the wide range of tactics and grooming techniques sex traffickers use to recruit and exploit young people into CSE (Anderson et al., 2014; Dank et el., 2014; Kennedy et al., 2007; Polaris Project, 2018; Reid, 2016; TAT, 2021; Williamson & Cluse-Tolar, 2002; Williamson & Prior, 2009). For instance, sex traffickers typically target locations where they know youth will be unsupervised, including bus stops, bus terminals, and Greyhound stations (Boxill & Richardson, 2007; Cardenas, 2017; Dank et al., 2014, Polaris Project, 2018; Roe-Sepowitz, 2019). In fact, it is common practice for sex traffickers to follow youth while they purchase their bus tickets and wait for their bus to arrive.

During this time, they gain the youth's trust by offering them a place to stay or a warm meal and convince them to leave together (ABC News, 2015).

This description is similar to Annika Huff's story, who was recruited at a local bus stop in Las Vegas, Nevada (TAT, 2021). On March 9th, 2014, Annika was waiting to take the 201A bus to her aunt and uncle's house when a car pulled over and convinced her to ride with them instead. Annika thought she would be safe because, in the car, there was another younger looking girl along with the male driver. However, Annika never made it to her aunt and uncle's house. Instead, she was forced to sell sex[2]. Annika, like so many other young people, was lured into CSE under false pretenses.

Similarly, Boxill and Richardson (2007) recount the story of 12-year-old Monica, who was recruited at a bus stop after running away from her abusive parents. While waiting for the bus, Monica was approached by a car, lured inside under false pretenses, and then raped at gunpoint, as part of her initiation into CSE. She was then taken to a hotel room and forced to have sex with several other people. After which she was sold to a series of sex traffickers. Additionally, Fogel and colleagues (2017) also convey how one of their female participants was approached at a bus stop and offered money in exchange for sex. Before approaching her, the man first made sure that she was there unaccompanied and asked whether her boyfriend was around. Holger-Ambrose and colleagues (2011) tell the story of a young girl who was approached at a school bus stop by a man and was offered money in exchange for sex.

Oftentimes sex traffickers pose as empathetic, caring boyfriends to gain the youth's trust and, ultimately, manipulate them into CSE (Dank et al., 2014; Kennedy et al., 2007; Mones, 2011; Williamson & Cluse-Tolas, 2002; Williamson & Prior, 2009). This is typically referred to

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[2] Story portrayed in TAT's training video, which is available at https://truckersagainsttrafficking.org/bus-training/

as the boyfriend typology and is by far one of the most common forms of recruitment (Mones, 2011). Believing that the relationship is authentic, many young people develop an emotional connection and loyalty towards their sex traffickers, making it especially difficult to disentangle themselves from CSE. Williamson and Cluse-Tolar (2002) describe this process as "turning a woman out" (p. 1080), where sex traffickers exploit and use people's vulnerabilities to their benefit. Other recruitment techniques involve the use of physical violence, threats, fear and/or intimidation (Dank et al., 2014; Kennedy et al., 2007; Mones, 2011; Wiliamson & Prior, 2009). This is commonly referred to as the guerilla typology and is far less common than the boyfriend typology (Dank et al., 2014; Mones, 2011; Reid, 2016). For instance, Dank and colleagues (2014) found that only 15% of the sex traffickers in their sample, out of 73, used physical violence or intimidation as a recruitment technique.

Once recruited into CSE, youth typically must abide by a series of rules and regulations their sex traffickers create and are required to meet a nightly quota. The amount of money required to earn per night varied based on each individual sex trafficker; however, research suggests that this dollar amount can range anywhere between $500 and $1000 (Greenbaum, 2014). Relatedly, Dank and colleagues (2014) found that 61% out of 73 sex traffickers in their study had a set of rules and regulations in place for youth to follow. Rules against alcohol and drug use were the most common (27%), followed by restrictions regarding clientele (21%; Dank et al., 2014). Specifically, youth were prohibited from approaching either younger-looking men or Black males, due to fear that they could be sex traffickers themselves. The remaining set of rules restricted youth's communication with other sex traffickers (19%) and enforced nightly quotas (18%). Some sex traffickers also offered an "incentive program" (e.g., receiving more spending money and being awarded more alone time with the sex trafficker) to increase

performance and ensure that nightly quotas were in fact met (Dank et al., 2014, p. 151). Failure

to meet any of these rules would result in a series of punishments, ranging from violence,

isolation, and removal of personal belongings (Dank et al, 2014). Branding via tattoos (e.g.,

barcode, dollar sign, crown, trafficker's name accompanied by the word property of) was also

commonly used to show ownership and control (Greenbaum, 2014).

Recruitment Locations and CSE Patterns

In addition to buses and transit hubs (as described in Chapter 1), a range of other urban

places have been identified as areas of high CSE activity (Dank et al., 2014; Kotrla, 2010;

Mletzko et al., 2018; Roe-Sepowitz, 2019; Williamson & Prior, 2009). For instance, Mletzko and

colleagues (2018) found that CSE incidents were more likely to occur in areas that were near

major interstate highways, had many inexpensive motels/hotels and sexually oriented businesses

(i.e., strip clubs, gentlemen's clubs, massage parlors), as well as higher rates of concentrated

disadvantage (i.e., poverty, unemployment, racial composition). Thus, these authors argue that

both situational and structural factors attributed to the spatial/geographical distribution of CSE

(Mletzko et al., 2018). Relatedly, some of the recruitment venues described by Dank and

colleagues (2014) include social circles, neighborhood affiliations, nightclubs or bars, the

internet, or "on the track", which these authors defined as "an area or street known for

prostitution within a particular city" (p. 165).

Additionally, several scholars have argued that the Internet and several digital platforms

act as safe havens for CSE, allowing it to go unnoticed and escape legal scrutiny (Farrell et al.,

2012; Feehs & Richmond, 2018; National Research Council, 2013; Polaris Project, 2018; Popkin

et al., 2019; Roe-Sepowitz, 2019). Sex traffickers utilize a range of social media platforms, such

as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and WhatsApp amongst others to connect with and recruit

young people into CSE (Polaris Project, 2018). Dating websites, including Plenty of Fish, OKCupid, Tinder, Grindr, and Adult Friend Finder as well as commercialized websites (i.e., Craigslist, Backpage.com) have also been used as tools to facilitate and promote CSE (Polaris Project, 2018).

According to a report compiled by the Human Trafficking Institute (2018), the most used venues to advertise and trade sex include: the Internet (84%), street (8%), illegal brothels (3%), erotic services (2%), massage parlors (1%), bartering (1%), and bars/clubs (1%; Feehs & Richmond, 2018). When the Internet was used to advertise CSE, it often involved the use of Backpage.com, where 72.3% out of 543 youth involved in CSE were advertised this way (Feehs & Richmond, 2018). Similarly, Roe-Sepowitz, (2019) found that technology played a key role in the recruitment and exploitation of youth involved in CSE, with 64% of young people out of 1,416 being advertised via online websites. Of these, 42% were advertised using Backpage.com, while approximately 10% were advertised via Craigslist (Roe-Sepowitz, 2019).

Backpage.com was identified as the top online website for CSE, operating in 97 countries and 934 cities around the world, out of which 437 were in the U.S. (U.S. Senate, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, 2017). Protected under the Communications Decency Act (CDA), which regulates the circulation of obscene and indecent content on the Internet, Backpage.com was able to escape legal scrutiny for nearly two decades, profiting half a billion dollars from sex trafficking (U.S. Senate, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, 2017). In fact, it wasn't until 2017 that an investigation into Backpage.com's business model revealed that the website had "knowingly concealed evidence of criminality by systematically editing its adult ads" (U.S. Senate, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, 2017, p. 16). In particular, it intentionally removed specific keywords (i.e., young, little girl, amber alert, rape, schoolgirl) that

suggested that the person being advertised was in fact a minor (U.S. Senate, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, 2017).

As a result of this investigation, in 2018, the Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act (FOSTA) and the Stop Enabling Sex Trafficking Act (SESTA) were passed into law. The enactment of these laws led to the closure of Backpage.com and other online marketplaces that were used to facilitate CSE (Preble et al., 2019). Additionally, under FOSTA and SESTA, online marketplaces can now be held legally accountable for the content and messages its users post to the marketplace thus amending CDA (Preble et al., 2019). Although FOSTA and SESTA represent important milestones in curtailing sex trafficking, prostitution, pornography, and any other erotic services offered via online platforms, research on their effectiveness is still mixed (Blunt & Wolf, 2020; Jackson & Heineman, 2018; Polaris Project, 2018).

For instance, Blunt and Wolf (2020) argue that laws such as FOSTA and SESTA disregard consensual sex work altogether. Additionally, they can have an array of unintended consequences, especially for individuals who are still involved in CSE (Blunt & Wolf, 2020; COYOTE-RI, 2018; Jackson & Heineman, 2018; Polaris Project, 2018). For instance, COYOTE-RI (2018), which is an advocacy organization based in Rhode Island, found that by removing online spaces, because of these new policies, 60% of sex workers out of the 262 surveyed are engaging in riskier sex practices to meet clients. Other reports suggest that the absence of online platforms has made it more difficult for individuals to meet their nightly earning quotas and, as a result, are experiencing increased levels of violence from their sex traffickers (Polaris Project, 2018). However, this research study only examined the effect closing these sites has had on adults.

Thus, based on a review of prior studies completed, young people at-risk for CSE exhibit a wide range of vulnerabilities at the individual, relationship, community, and societal level. The individuals responsible for their exploitation often identify as family members, boyfriends, or friends. Some youth are also recruited by strangers, who rely on a range of recruitment techniques to lure youth into CSE. Front-line workers encounter youth involved in CSE frequently and are thus in a unique position to intervene and help during these moments. Training front-line workers on trafficking dynamics can help increase the victim identification.

CHAPTER 3: THE ROLE OF FRONT-LINE WORKERS

Previous research has focused predominantly on the importance of training law enforcement personnel and health care providers on the dynamics of CSE (Chisolm-Straker et al., 2007; Donahue et al., 2019; Farell et al., 2008; Mapp et al., 2016; Wilson et al., 2006). Very little research has explored the benefits of training public transportation personnel. These adults regularly interact with young people involved in CSE, giving them an opportunity to intervene and offer much needed assistance. They could be a critical set of eyes and ears that see what is going on in plain sight.

Law Enforcement Personnel

Law enforcement personnel, especially front-line officers, play a vital role in identifying youth involved in CSE, connecting young people with service providers, and arresting the individuals responsible for their exploitation. Given their role as first responders, it is perhaps not surprising that local police officers are amongst the first to encounter youth involved in CSE (De Baca & Tisi, 2002). In fact, police learn about CSE cases through various routine activities, such as calls for service, sting operations, and while investigating other criminal activities (e.g., domestic violence; Farrell et al., 2008). As many as 92% of law enforcement personnel believe that CSE is committed in connection with other crimes, most frequently alongside prostitution and drug trafficking (Farrell et al., 2008). Other studies suggest that police officers encounter youth involved in CSE while effectuating arrests for prostitution- related charges or status offenses (i.e., loitering, truancy, curfew violations, running away; Halter, 2010; Musto, 2016). For instance, the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP, 2019) found that, in 2019, there were 26,710 arrests being made for prostitution and commercialized vice nationally. Of these, 290 involved youth under the age of 17 (OJJDP, 2019).

Police Officers' Perceptions of Youth

A range of youth characteristics, case details, and implicit biases have been shown to influence police officers' perceptions of youth involved in CSE (Bejinariu et al., 2020; Finkelhor & Ormrod, 2004; Halter, 2010; Lutnick, 2016; Mitchell et al., 2010; Showden & Majic, 2018). For instance, Finkelhor and Ormrod (2004) found that only 1 in 5 youth involved in CSE received a victim designation by police officers. These authors identified youth's age and gender as significant factors. Specifically, younger females were significantly more likely to be treated as victims by the police and referred to social service agencies, while older males were more likely to be treated as offenders and placed under arrest (Finkelhor & Ormrod, 2004).

Similarly, Halter (2010) found that out of 126 youth involved in CSE, as many as 40% were conceptualized as offenders by the police. According to Halter (2010), when youth involved in CSE were discovered via police action, they were more likely to be treated as offenders. Police action involved acts that fall under criminal investigation, sting operation, or witnessing a crime taking place (Halter, 2010). Contrastingly, youth who cooperated with police demands, shared information pertaining to their sex traffickers, reported the crime to the police, were locals and had no prior record were more likely to be perceived as victims of crime and referred to social service providers (Halter, 2010).

Relatedly, Mitchell and colleagues (2010) found that youth involved in CSE were 7.92 times more likely to be perceived as victims if the case came to the attention of police through an incident report rather than via police action. Additionally, cases involving younger females, and youth who appeared frightened, sick, looked dirty or smelled were also more likely to be treated as victims and thus be diverted away from the criminal justice system (Michell et al., 2010). In fact, police perception of an "ideal victim" (Lutnick, 2016, p. 81) or "worthy victim" (Showden

& Majic, 2018) has been shown to be a strong predictor of youths' culpability status among a range of studies.

According to Showden and Majic (2018), youth who fit the "the innocent -girl – predatory man narrative" (e.g., young, White, in need of rescue; p. 21) are more likely to be conceptualized as victims and referred to social service providers. Youth who do not fit this profile are not deemed worthy of victim status and therefore are more likely to be treated as delinquents and placed in juvenile detention (Showden & Majic, 2018). Similarly, Lutnick (2016) found that youth who do not comply with police demands and were not exploited via a third party or refused to give up their sex traffickers were more likely to be treated as delinquents and thus be processed through the criminal justice system.

In some situations, police report using detention to keep youth safe and protect them from further victimization (Halter, 2010; Hornor, 2015; Musto, 2016), especially when other support services are not available or have failed them. Nonetheless, police practices that promote detention, arrest, and criminalization of youth have been shown to have an array of negative consequences, including resulting in a criminal record (Farrell & Pfeffer, 2014; Polaris Project, 2019). This is especially true for African American youth who are being criminalized at increasingly higher rates when compared to their White counterparts (Ocen, 2015; Sallmann, 2010; Showden & Majic, 2018; Tomura, 2009; Weitzer, 2009). Once labeled a criminal, young people have a more challenging time not only accessing victim services, finding legitimate employment, and securing safe housing, but also disentangling themselves from CSE and their sex traffickers (Polaris Project, 2019). Given the negative consequences resulting from these so-called interventions, it is surprising that criminalization is still the "dominant state policy vis-à-vis commercial sex" (Vanwesenbeeck, 2017, p. 1631).

Training Programs for Law Enforcement Personnel

Research suggests that police officers lack formal training and institutional resources to combat CSE (Farrell et al., 2019; Farrell & Pfeffer, 2014; Farrell et al., 2008; Mapp et al., 2016; Wilson et al., 2006), which might also explain why police are inconsistent in their treatment of youth involved in CSE. National studies on police agencies document that anywhere between 8-18% receive training on CSE and can confidently identify youth involved in CSE (Farell et al., 2008; Mapp et al., 2016; Wilson et al., 2006). For instance, out of 163 local police agencies surveyed, only 8% of agencies reported completing training on human trafficking (Wilson et al., 2006). Farrell and colleagues (2008) found somewhat higher training rates amongst their nationally randomized sample of law enforcement agencies. Out of 1,661 agencies sampled, 18% of agencies reported completing human trafficking training (Farell et al., 2008). Research conducted almost a decade later suggests that training rates have plateaued over the years. For instance, Mapp and colleagues (2016) found that out of 175 police officers surveyed across a Mid-Atlantic state, only 17% of police officers reported completing human trafficking training. Lack of training also resulted in 62% of the sample turning to mass media for information regarding CSE (Mapp et al., 2016).

Most police agencies do not have comprehensive policies in place regarding human trafficking (Farell et al., 2008; Wilson et al., 2006). For instance, out of 1,661 agencies sampled only 9% had human trafficking protocols in place (Farell et al., 2008). Additionally, only a third of police agencies have a specialized unit in place (e.g., Vice, Organized Crime, Crimes Against Persons), responsible for investigating CSE cases (Wilson et al., 2006). Given the lack of training and institutional resources available, victim identification should not be dependent on police officers' ability to accurately identify individuals as being trafficked. Several scholars

suggest that, instead, this process should occur via social service agencies, mental healthcare

providers, as well as trauma-informed and culturally sensitive advocates (Bejinariu et al., 2020;

Bergquist, 2015; Brittle, 2007; Farrell et al., 2019; Musto, 2016; Troshynski & Bejinariu, 2018).

Evaluations of Training Programs for Law Enforcement Personnel

Very little research has explored whether receiving specialized training on human

trafficking improves police responses to these crimes (Mapp et al., 2016; Newton et al., 2008;

Renzetti et al., 2015; Wilson & Dalton, 2008; Wilson et al., 2006). Research conducted by

Wilson and colleagues (2006) found changes in police perceptions of human trafficking after

attending specialized training. Out of 163 local police agencies surveyed, as many as 71% of

agencies believed that human trafficking could be committed by local crime networks when

compared to 48% of agencies that did not participate in the training. Additionally, among those

agencies that attended the training, 57% believed that human trafficking could be committed by

an individual without organized crime connections when compared to 46% of their counterparts.

Specialized training has also been shown to increase police officers' knowledge of the legal

definition of human trafficking (Newton et al., 2008).

Similarly, Mapp and colleagues (2016) found that specialized training increases police

officers' knowledge base of human trafficking, but only when the training is conducted by an

official source (i.e., police academy, federal government). Relatedly, Renzetti and colleagues'

(2015) evaluation of a four-hour human trafficking training module administered by victim

advocates to police officers in Kentucky also showed promising results. Their training module

resulted in changes to police perceptions regarding the prevalence of human trafficking within

their jurisdiction, but only for executive-level officers (Renzetti et al., 2015). Additionally, after

attending the training module, executive-level officers were more likely to report an increase in

the number of human trafficking investigations being made by their agencies. Executive-level officers were also more likely to believe that their agencies would encounter trafficking cases in the next year (Renzetti et al., 2015). Thus, these authors conclude that a one-size fits all approach is inappropriate, but rather different types of training are required for a range of police rankings (i.e., patrol, mid-level, and executive). Darwinkel and colleagues (2013) also caution that for a specialized training program to be effective and lead to significant changes in police officers' perceptions it must be comprehensive and relatively time intensive (i.e., 98 hours over four consecutive weeks). Although their training program did not cover trafficking as the content area, it included related topics on sexual assault and offending (Darwinkel et al., 2013).

Health Care Providers

Research suggests that medical professionals, such as physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, technicians, dentists, and the like, encounter victims frequently and in a variety of health care settings (Donahue et al., 2019; Kennedy et al., 2021; Lederer & Wetzel, 2014; Polaris Project, 2018). Healthcare providers have been identified as one of the top five points of access for youth involved in CSE, alongside CPS case workers, police officers, family members, and social media platforms (Polaris Project, 2018). One study found that out of 98 youth involved in CSE, 87.8% met at least once with a healthcare professional during the time of their exploitation (Lederer & Wetzel, 2014). Of these, 63.3% were treated for their injuries in the emergency room (ER), while close to a third received treatment through a clinical treatment facility such as Planned Parenthood (Lederer & Wetzel, 2014). The remaining medical treatment facilities sought out included urgent care clinics, women's health clinics, neighborhood clinics and on-site doctors.

Only a handful of screening tools are available to aid healthcare providers in identifying young people involved in CSE (Armstrong, 2017; Greenbaum et al., 2018). This is especially troublesome given that that "Hospitalization is one of the few occurrences that intersects the lives of the trafficking victim with the general public" (Donahue et al., 2019, p. 17). Healthcare professionals also lack formal training on trafficking dynamics (Beck et al., 2015; Chisolm-Straker et al., 2007; Hartinger-Saunders et al., 2017). For instance, Chisolm-Straker and colleagues (2007) found that out of the 180 health care providers surveyed only 3% had received human trafficking training. Although 29% believed that sex trafficking was in fact a problem within their ER, only 13% felt comfortable that they could successfully recognize a potential victim (Chisolm-Straker et al., 2007). Research suggests that when medical providers are trained on trafficking dynamics, they are more likely to describe sex trafficking as a major local problem, to recognize that they have encounter a victim during a medical visit, and to be more confident in their ability to recognize a potential victim (Beck et al., 2015).

Relatedly, research conducted by Hartinger-Saunders and colleagues (2017) suggests that an overwhelming majority of mandated reporters, including social workers, school personnel, law enforcement officers, and healthcare professionals, have not been trained on how to recognize domestic minor sex trafficking (DMST) victims. For instance, out of the 577 mandated reporters surveyed across the country, 60% indicated that they had not been trained on DMST dynamics. Additionally, 25% did not believe that DMST was prevalent in their communities, while 21% believed that most victims originate from foreign countries rather than within the U.S. (Hartinger-Saunders et al., 2017). This sample of 577 mandated reporters was screened based on their occupation from a larger online omnibus sample of 21,230 adults across the U.S., with ages between 18 and 64.

Evaluations of Training Programs for Health Care Professionals

Although research on the effectiveness of sex trafficking training programs for medical staff is limited, the few studies that are available show promising results (Beck et al., 2015; Chisolm-Straker et al., 2012; Donahue et al., 2019; Grace et al., 2014). For instance, Chisolm-Straker and colleagues (2012) found that after receiving training health care providers were more confident in their ability to define human trafficking, to identify trafficking victims, and subsequently to provide treatment for them. Before receiving training, only 19.2% out of 104 health care providers were *confident/very confident* in their ability to define human trafficking, while after training this number rose to 90.3%. Furthermore, confidence levels as it relates to victim identification increased from 4.8% to 53.8% after watching the 20-minute online training session. Confidence levels pertaining to treating potential victims also went up, increasing significantly from 7.7% to 56.7% (Chisolm-Straker et al., 2012).

Relatedly, Grace and colleagues (2014) found that participant's level of knowledge regarding human trafficking increased significantly after attending an in-person educational presentation. The training was administered by a law enforcement officer affiliated with a local police department along with a physician. The length of the presentation varied per location with the shortest being 25-minutes, while the longest was 60-minutes. To track improvements following implementation of the training, participants had to complete a pre-test immediately before the presentation and a post-test immediately after. Results suggest that prior to receiving the training only 7.2% out of 258 health care professionals knew who to contact if they suspected a patient to be a human trafficking victim. After the training this number rose to 59%. Participants ability to identify victims also increased from 17% to 38% after attending the in-person training (Grace et al., 2014).

Most recently, Donahue and colleagues (2019) found increases in three major areas because of a 20-minute online training module, including general knowledge about human trafficking, as well as confidence in identifying and treating victims. For instance, prior to receiving the training, 49% out of 75 health care professionals reported having a comprehensive understanding of human trafficking, while after training this number rose to 93%. A significant increase in confidence levels as it relates to victim identification was also reported, rising from 4/10 to 7/10. Confidence levels for treating trafficking victims also improved from 4/10 to 8/10 (Donahue et al., 2019). Their online training module consisted of a 20-minute PowerPoint presentation along with a description of two case studies, and guidelines for identifying and treating trafficking victims within the healthcare setting (Donahue et al., 2019).

Public Transportation Personnel

Public transportation personnel, especially front-line workers such as bus operators, security officers and the like, encounter youth involved in CSE frequently and throughout the course of their daily jobs (Dank et al., 2014, Polaris Project, 2018; Roe-Sepowitz, 2019). The high volume of daily passengers, coupled with the transit system's affordability, make public transportation especially appealing to sex traffickers (Polaris Project, 2018). Each year, Americans take approximately 10 billion trips using some form of public transportation (American Public Transportation Association [APTA], 2020).

Furthermore, over the past couple of decades, public transportation ridership has seen growth, increasing by 28% since 1995 (APTA, 2020). Thus, more individuals are now using public transportation than ever before. The general availability of these services and variety of transit options allows sex traffickers to blend amongst unassuming passengers and approach youth who are at-risk (i.e., youth who appear to have runaway or are homeless). Indeed, the

public transit system operates in every U.S. state through a variety of modes (i.e., rail, bus, vanpool, paratransit, trolleybus, ferryboat; APTA, 2020). With more than 430,000 employees across the country (APTA, 2020), the public transit sector can play a significant role in curtailing CSE by training its front-line workers on how to recognize CSE signs and indicators.

National Transit Initiatives

In response to these realities and recognizing the many intersecting points that exist between the transit sector and CSE, several awareness campaigns and training programs were initiated at the national level throughout the years. These are listed below in chronological order:

- The Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism, which was developed in 1996 by ECPAT Sweden. This was later adopted by the U.S. in 2004.

- The Transit Watch campaign, which was developed in 2003 by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), in collaboration with a range of transit partners, to encourage transit personnel and passengers to report any suspicious activity they might come across.

- Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT) is a non-profit organization, which was developed in 2009 in order to educate and train members of the trucking and busing industries on the dynamics of human trafficking.

- The Transportation Leaders Against Human Trafficking (TLAHT) initiative, which was developed in 2012 by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT).

- The Blue Lightening Initiative (BLI), which was developed in 2016 by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), along with the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT).

- Busing on the Lookout (BOTL) is a training program specifically designed for the busing industries, which was in developed in 2017 by TAT.

- And most recently, the Human Trafficking Awareness and Public Safety Initiative, which was developed in 2019 by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). It includes Two Notices of Funding Opportunity, each worth two million dollars, to prevent human trafficking and other related crimes from occurring on buses, trains, and other modes of public transportation: namely, the 1) *Innovations in Public Safety Program* and the 2) *Crime Prevention and Public Safety Awareness Program*.

The BOTL program, for example, offers a wide variety of industry specific training materials, which feature a 22-minute human trafficking training video, toolkits, wallet cards, flyers, dash stickers, and a smart phone application that transportation personnel can download and use to report any suspicious activity they might come across. Since its implementation in 2017, the BOTL program has trained 117,641 members of the bus industry, including 77,683 school bus drivers on how to recognize human trafficking red flags and indicators (TAT, 2020). The number of bus drivers trained in 2020 increased by 35% when compared to the previous year, while the number of school bus drivers trained increased by 15%, indicating that the program is gaining more popularity amongst the busing industry (TAT, 2020). Over the past three years, BOTL has provided human trafficking training to transit, motor coach, and school bus industries across 45 U.S. states and is now maximizing its reach to also include members of the casino industry (TAT, 2020).

In 2012, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), under the TLAHT initiative, required all its 55,000 DOT personnel to complete human trafficking training, with training workshops occurring every three years thereafter (DOT, 2021). The first human trafficking

training workshops were given in 2012, with a follow up in 2016. No other workshops have been completed since then. Additionally, under the TLAHT initiative, Amtrak, which is one of the main railroad services in the U.S., was able to provide human trafficking training to a total of 20,000 of its employees and roll out public awareness billboards in more than 20 Amtrak stations. Similarly, Greyhound, which is a popular bus carrier in North America, was able to train all its bus drivers through the TLAHT initiative (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2021). Relatedly, through the Blue Lighting Initiative (BLI), the aviation industry was able to train over 100,000 of its personnel on the dynamics and indicators of human trafficking (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2021).

These training programs represent an important first step in curtailing CSE, especially given the number of individuals employed within these specific industries as well as the volume of passengers that use these various forms of transportation every day. For instance, Amtrak has approximately 20,000 employees who serve a large volume of passengers each year (Amtrak, 2016). An estimated 31.3 million passengers traveled via Amtrak in 2016 alone, equating to approximately 85,700 passengers per day (Amtrak, 2016). The top five cities with the busiest train stations reported in 2016 were New York, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, Chicago, and Los Angeles (Amtrak, 2016). Overall, Amtrak has more than 30 train routes across 46 U.S. states, with three routes located outside of the U.S. in the Canadian provinces, covering a total of 21,300 miles and 500 destinations (Amtrak, 2016). Similarly, Greyhound operates in 48 U.S. states, three Canadian provinces, and 31 Mexican states, serving more than 16 million passengers per year (Greyhound, 2019). In fact, in 2015, Greyhound became the first international coach operator to launch domestic service in Mexico, with 2,400 destinations across North America. Having over 5,900 employees and around 1,700 operational buses, Greyhound is a preferred

method of travel for many passengers due to the number of routes available and the relative low cost of tickets (Greyhound, 2019).

Of the number of training programs available to transit personnel, perhaps the most popular is the one provided by the Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT). Since its implementation in 2009, TAT has trained 1,014,367 people in the transportation industry, many of whom identify themselves as truck drivers (TAT, 2020). This number is impressive, especially when given that in 2019 there were 3.6 million truck drivers employed in the U.S., which represents a 1.7% increase from the previous year (American Trucking Associations [ATA], 2019).

Evaluations of Training Programs for Transit Personnel

The specialized training provided by TAT has resulted in an increase in the number of calls made to the National Human Trafficking Hotline (NHTH) by individuals who identify as truck drivers (TAT, 2020). Overall, a total of 2,692 calls were made by truck drivers to NHTH over the course of a decade, leading to 708 trafficking cases being generated and 1,296 victims being identified (TAT, 2020). Prior to TAT implementing its training program, only a handful of calls were made to the national hotline by truck drivers. These numbers indicate that the training program provided by TAT to truck drivers has improved victim identification and resulted in an increase in the number of investigations being made. No other research study has evaluated the effectiveness of TAT's training program or, for that matter, any of the other training programs provided by the Department of Transportation (DOT) and other transit organizations.

Human Trafficking Legislations Specific to the Transit Sector

In recognizing that the transportation industry is being used to facilitate CSE, a number of federal laws have been enacted over the years to support national efforts in combating human trafficking. For instance, in 2013, the Uniform Act on the Prevention of and Remedies for

Human Trafficking was passed into law. It requires each state's department of transportation to advertise human trafficking awareness materials (e.g., posters, flyers, or billboards), including local and national hotline numbers, in areas that people involved in CSE have been frequently spotted. These include rest areas, transit stations, and welcome centers. According to the Uniform Law Commission (ULC, 2021), a total of 10 states have enacted the Uniform Act within their state legislation. First to pass this legislation, in 2014, were Pennsylvania, New Hampshire, Delaware, and Louisiana. A year later, North Dakota, South Carolina, and Montana followed, while Rhode Island and West Virginia endorsed it soon after, in 2017. The U.S. Virgin Islands enacted it most recently, in 2018 (ULC, 2021).

Furthermore, in 2016, the FAA Extension, Safety, and Security Act was signed into law (Pub. L. No. 114-190). The Act requires airlines to provide yearly human trafficking training to all their flight attendants. The training module was developed by the BLI and included a 17-minute video and consisted of four main topics, including human trafficking definition, indicators, reporting protocols, and an indicator challenge. Two years later, through the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 (Pub. L. No. 115-254), these training requirements were extended to include a range of airline personnel, including ticket counter agents and gate agents, among other front-line workers. Domestic airlines, as part of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018, are also required to keep track of the number of trainings provided as well as report the number of human trafficking tips received. As yet another way to raise awareness, in 2018, several U.S. airports (e.g.., Dallas Fort Worth, O'Hare, JFK, LaGuardia, Dulles airport) began incorporating human trafficking posters and billboards in their bathrooms, border control, and baggage areas, expanding the popular *Can You See Me* awareness campaign to the aviation sector (DOT, 2021).

In January 2018 the No Human Trafficking on our Roads Act was signed into law (Pub. L. No. 115-106). The Act bans individuals from ever possessing a commercial driver's licenses (CDL), if they have used a commercial vehicle to commit a felony involving human trafficking. Prior to this Act, federal law only required CDL drivers to lose their license for one year rather than be issued a lifetime ban. Since the Act was passed into law in 2018, states were given a three-year leeway period to update their legislation to match this federal mandate. However, as of 2020, only two states, namely Georgia and Delaware, enforce this language in their state legislation (Martinez, 2020) and are thus up to date with this Federal Act.

During the same year, the Combating Human Trafficking in Commercial Vehicles Act (Pub. L. No. 115-99) was signed into law. The Act requires the U.S. Department of Transportation to develop an advisory committee on human trafficking consisting of 15 external stakeholders and subject matter experts, including victim advocates, law enforcement personnel, and members affiliated with the transit industry. It also appointed a human trafficking coordinator within the U.S. Department of Transportation and authorized that several of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) funds be used to support human trafficking prevention and education programs (Pub. L. No. 115-99).

Additionally, many states are now requiring applicants for CDL and drivers, who are renewing their CDLs, to complete TAT's human trafficking training program and certification process (TAT, 2021). The training program is available via TAT's website[3] and includes a 30-minute video, requiring participants to pass a 15-question quiz at the end of the video to receive their certificate. A minimum score of 72% is required to pass the course and receive TAT's training certificate. Once the training is completed, participants are required to present their TAT

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[3] https://education.truckersagainsttrafficking.org/lesson/the-tat-training-video/

certificate to their local Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) office to be eligible to receive their CDLs. Overall, a total of 12 states have passed legislation mandating TAT's human trafficking training for CDL holders, including Washington, Kansas, Wisconsin, Maryland, Colorado, Oklahoma, Illinois, Ohio, Texas, Arkansas, Alabama, and Virginia (TAT, 2021). The hope is that the remaining states will soon follow and mandate TAT's human trafficking training for all CDL drivers.

Red Flags for Sex Trafficking and the Transit Industry

Several red flags for sex trafficking have been identified by TAT (2020) and the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT, 2019) that specifically apply to the transit industry. While on duty, bus operators and other members of the busing industry (i.e., ticketing staff, security officers, maintenance workers) are encouraged to pay close attention to the following signs and indicators for sex trafficking:

- Passengers who are not permitted to speak for themselves and/or appear to be held against their will.

- Passengers whose bus pass, money, or other forms of identifications are being handled by a third party.

- Passengers who do not appear to know the person who is picking them up at the destination or who bought their ticket.

- Passengers who come across as scared, confused, or panicked and are wearing dirty clothing.

- Passengers who are overheard talking about having a trafficker and are being asked to meet a daily quota.

- Children boarding without any adult supervision and/or during school session.

- Passengers who exhibit any physical injuries, such as bruising, markings or branding tattoos (e.g., barcode, dollar sign, crown, trafficker's name accompanied by the word property of).

- Passengers who are offering to trade sex to meet basic needs (i.e., food, shelter), especially if they appear to be under the age of 18.

- Cars that are often parked at the transit center or terminal without anyone ever getting out to board a bus.

- Individuals in the transit center or terminal who frequently approach passengers, especially those who appear to be at-risk or vulnerable (i.e., youth who appear to have runaway or are homeless,), but never board a bus (TAT, 2020; DOT, 2019).

In addition to transit operators, school bus drivers are also in a unique position to aid youth, as they encounter students on a daily basis during their commute to and from school. Because of their daily interaction with students, school bus drivers can recognize any changes that might occur in students' attitudes, behavior, and overall demeanor. Thus, the following indicators were created by TAT (2020) to help school transportation personnel in recognizing whether a student is being trafficked:

- Changes in the student's school attendance, indicating truancy and school absences.

- Changes in who is picking up or dropping off the student from the bus stop or at school, especially if this person is older than the child.

- Visible physical injuries, such as bruises, markings, or branding tattoos, as well as other signs suggesting that the student lacks a healthy diet or is uncared for.

- Attitude changes (i.e., anger, panic, irritability, crying).

- Changes in physical appearance, such as wearing new clothes and owning expensive items (i.e., phones, watches, jewelry).

- Students who are overheard talking about having a pimp and are being asked to meet a daily quota (TAT, 2020).

Knowing the red flags for sex trafficking will help transit front-line workers in identifying victims and referring them to service providers.

In sum, a number of human trafficking training programs for front-line workers exist. The utility of these training programs for law enforcement officers and health care providers has been demonstrated in prior research. However, for transportation personnel this topic has been underexamined. This dissertation attempts to build upon previous research by evaluating the effectiveness of a human trafficking training program given by a regional transportation agency to its employees using two indicators of success. The next chapter introduces the two theoretical frameworks that were used to structure this dissertation. These include Knowles' adult learning theory (1980) and Latané and Darley's (1968, 1970) situational model of bystander intervention.

CHAPTER 4: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Two theoretical frameworks were used to guide this dissertation: Knowles' adult learning theory (1980) and Latané and Darley's (1968,1970) situational model of bystander intervention. The principles underlying Knowles (198) adult learning theory are presented first and are then followed by recent applications of adult learning theory in several training programs on sex trafficking. Then, Latané and Darley's (1968, 1970) situational model of bystander intervention is introduced, which describes the cognitive and behavioral process bystanders go through before deciding whether to intervene or not. Barriers presented at each stage of model are also discussed along with the effectiveness of bystander-based prevention programs. Theoretical connections to the current study are also drawn.

Adult Learning Theory

The term andragogy was defined by Malcolm Knowles' in 1980 as "the art and science of helping adults learn" (p. 43). He was also one of the first to differentiate between andragogy, which refers to the process by which adults learn, and pedagogy, which refers to the process by which children learn. Therefore, Knowles' (1980) theory of andragogy assesses the process of adult learning and education, using a set of assumptions regarding adult learners (i.e., internally motivated, problem-oriented). Knowles (1980) also identifies which instructional designs are most conducive to the adult learning process.

Knowles (1980) also draws several implications for teaching and curriculum development based on the following assumptions regarding adult learners. Unlike child learners, Knowles (1980) posits that adult learners are self-driven, internally motivated, and that their learning process is problem-centered or performance-based. For example, teaching curriculum created for internally motivated adults might incorporate real-life examples and testimonies as

well as visually appealing content (i.e., videos versus PowerPoint slides). Problem-centered or performance-based curriculum might incorporate a series of problem-solving exercises, activities, scenarios or case studies to promote active learning and give adult learners an opportunity to practice the skills learned.

For adult learners to benefit from educational programs, they must be willing and eager to learn the content or skills being taught. Additionally, their readiness or eagerness to learn is triggered by real life issues or social tasks and is a direct result of newly developed social roles, such as starting a new job (Knowles, 1980). For example, a training program geared towards adult learning that promotes readiness and eagerness might incorporate self-reflection and self-assessment (i.e., survey questionnaires) activities. They might also incorporate discussion-based activities, as they allow adult learners to interact with other learners and reflect on the material or content being taught.

Therefore, in comparison to children learners, Knowles (1980) argues that adults are more likely to learn a subject matter if it has an immediate impact on their lives, regardless if it's in their personal or professional lives. To this end, adults learn best when the topic or specific skillset being taught is relevant and useful to them. According to Knowles (1980), understanding the reasons why a specific topic or skillset has been taught is important, as it will not only increase the adult learners' engagement, but also their motivation and retention rates.

For adult learners, the learning environment also matters and can help or hinder the process of learning. To this effect, Knowles (1980) argues that the adult learning environment must contain experiential learning activities, including problem-solving scenarios and simulation exercises to lead to a successful, positive learning experience. Because adults learn best by doing, these types of learning activities are preferred over memorization techniques. As a result,

Knowles (1980) suggests that learning strategies and activities that are task-oriented, problem focused, and require immediate application are more efficient and should be promoted over memorization techniques. Additionally, unlike children, adult learners come into the learning process with a number of lived experiences and prior knowledge. As such, these previous life experiences should be used as resources and taken into consideration by educators during the adult learning process.

Knowles' (1980) adult learning theory has faced debate over the years, with many of its critics arguing that it lacks a measurable instrument to evaluate its assumptions regarding adult learners (Darbyshire, 1993; Hartree, 1984; Taylor & Kroth, 2009). Knowles has argued that "andragogy is a model of assumptions about learning or a conceptual framework that serves as a basis for an emergent adult learning theory" (1989, p. 112). In sum, the assumptions outlined by Knowles (1980) describe adults as self-driven, internally motivated, and task-oriented learners. Their learning process also relies heavily on experiential learning activities. Experience also plays a key role in their learning process as does their readiness to learn.

Adult Learning Programming

Even without a measurable instrument to test and evaluate these assumptions regarding adult learners, the principles of adult learning theory have been implemented in several training programs on sex trafficking dynamics across a range of fields and personnel. These include ER physicians (Alvarado, 2021; Cole et al., 2018) and other healthcare professionals (Kent et al., 2014), social workers (McClerklin-Motley, 2019), police officers (Broderick, 2014), and most recently on medical students (Ruiz et al., 2022). For instance, in training medical students on sex trafficking dynamics, Ruiz and colleagues (2020) incorporated several teaching practices that align with Knowles' adult learning principles. For instance, their training programming was

delivered over an eight-week period and featured a range of speakers from various disciplines. So, medical students got to hear from victim advocates, sex trafficking survivors, physicians, and other individuals who were associated with the criminal justice system (e.g., local police detective, judge, district attorney, and prosecutor) throughout the course of the eight weeks (Ruiz et al., 2020). Trainees were also given copies of a book written by a local sex trafficking survivor, as an additional resource, which they could read after the implementation of the training program (Ruiz et al., 2020).

Similarly, in training emergency clinicians on human trafficking dynamics, Cole and colleagues (2018) utilized many of the adult learning assumptions outlined by Knowles (1980) in their educational curriculum. Specifically, these authors incorporated a number of simulation exercises and self-assessment activities (i.e., survey questionnaires) into their training programming (Cole et al., 2018). The simulation exercised presented trainees with three different clinical scenarios, which asked them to play the role of either a physician or victim, while the surveys were meant to evaluate their learning outcomes (Cole et al., 2018). Overall, these prior studies incorporated similar type teaching practices into their human trafficking training curriculums (e.g., survivor speaker, role-playing exercises, and self-assessment activities). These findings highlight the need for more studies to be completed that incorporate this theoretical perspective on adult learning styles.

Bystander Intervention Model

Five-Stage Situational Model

The bystander intervention model was created by Latané and Darley (1968, 1970) to explain why certain situations may elicit an intervention from bystanders while others may hinder helping behavior. Bystanders are individuals who are present at the time an incident is

taking place (e.g., bullying, sexual assault, violence) not only have an opportunity to step in and intervene, but also have a moral obligation to help. According to Latané and Darley (1968, 1970), bystanders go through a five-stage cognitive and behavioral process before deciding whether to intervene or not. The five-stages identified by Latané and Darley (1968, 1970) as part of their situational model of bystander intervention include: 1) notice the event, 2) interpret the event as an emergency, 3) take responsibility, 4) know how to help, and lastly, 5) decide to help. Additionally, Latané and Darley (1968, 1970) also identified several barriers that might prevent bystanders from intervening at any point during the five-stages of the situational model.

Stage 1: Notice the Event

According to Latané and Darley (1968, 1970), bystanders must first notice the event taking place. During this initial stage, several barriers may lead bystanders to not notice the event and thus fail to intervene and offer much needed assistance. These include sensory distractions (i.e., background noise) or being under a heavy cognitive load (i.e., too busy or in a hurry; Latané & Darley; 1968, 1970). Therefore, bystanders may fail to intervene during these moments because of the activities they are engaging in at the time of the event (i.e., self-focus) or because of other outside stimuli that may acts as a distraction.

Stage 2: Interpret the Event as an Emergency

Second, once bystanders notice the event, they must also interpret the event as an emergency requiring immediate intervention. Latané and Darley (1968, 1970) identify ambiguity and ignorance as barriers to intervention during this second stage of their situational model. For instance, bystanders are more likely to intervene in dangerous and violent situations because there is less ambiguity in these situations (Fisher et al., 2006, 2011; Harari et al., 1985). Contrastingly, if bystanders perceive a situation to be highly ambiguous, they are less to

intervene during these moments. When a situation is highly ambiguous, bystanders rely on other bystanders' reactions to the situation to determine if the situation should be considered an emergency and requires immediate intervention. If the other bystanders also fail to identify the situation as an emergency needing intervention, but rather deem it to be a nonemergency, then no help is given or offered. Latané and Darley (1968, 1970) describe this psychological process as pluralistic ignorance and use it to explain the behavior of unresponsive bystanders. Perceptions of relationship status have also been shown to play a deciding factor in bystanders' decision-making process to intervene (Shotland & Straw, 1976).

Stage 3: Take Responsibility

Third, once bystanders have noticed the event and deemed it to be an emergency, they then must decide to take personal responsibility and intervene. If other bystanders are present then the responsibility gets distributed amongst those present (Latané & Darley, 1968, 1970; Latané & Nida, 1981). Therefore, bystanders are less likely to intervene in a group setting where other bystanders are also present. Latané and Darley (1968, 1970) refer to this psychological process as diffusion of responsibility and argue that as the number of bystanders increases the diffusion of responsibility also increases. This is also colloquial known as the bystander effect or bystander apathy.

The relationship between the bystander and the victim also appears to matter, with bystanders more likely to intervene if they know the victim (i.e., in-group membership; Burn, 2009; Levine et al., 2002, 2005). Bystanders' perceptions of victim blameworthiness also appear to lead to less bystander intervention (Brickman et al., 1982; Burn, 2009; Loewensteing & Small, 2007). Gender differences have also been found, with women more likely to intervene as bystanders than males in situations involving sexual violence (Burn, 2009). Additionally, the

more barriers a bystander experienced the less likely they were to intervene, especially if the bystander was a male (Burn, 2009).

Stage 4: Know how to Help

Fourth, once bystanders have decided to take personal responsibility, they must also possess the skills necessary to intervene safely and effectively. Barriers to intervening during this fourth stage of the situational model include bystander's lack of skills, knowledge, or competence. Deficits in any of these areas will decrease the likelihood of intervention. For example, if bystanders do not know how to approach a victim, know what to say during these moments, or know how to appropriately help, they are less likely to intervene (Latané & Darley, 1968, 1970).

Stage 5: Decide to Help

Lastly, during the final stage of the situational model, bystanders must decide to intervene and act upon their decision. During these moments, Latané and Darley (1968, 1970) argue that bystanders may fail to intervene due to an audience inhibition barrier, which may elicit a negative emotional response from the bystanders. Some examples here include bystanders' fears about making a mistake, fears about being embarrassed, or fears about being publicly judged as a result of the intervention. During these moments, bystanders weigh in pros and cons of intervening. Latané and Darley (1968, 1970) describe this psychological process as evaluation apprehension, where bystanders' fear being negatively judged by others, especially if the intervention takes place in a public forum. Bystanders' fears of being judged have also been identified as a barrier to intervening in other more recent research studies on the topic (Berkowitx, 2009; Karakashian et al., 2006).

Taken together, these five stages of the situational model proposed by Latané and Darley (1968, 1970) provide an explanation for why bystanders intervene in certain situations but not in others. For bystanders to be willing to engage in prosocial helping behaviors, they must first be aware of the situation and be able to recognize the event as an emergency needing immediate intervention. Bystanders must also be willing to take personal responsibility for the situation when it arises and make a commitment to actively intervene, rather than push that responsibility onto other bystanders who might also be present. And finally, bystanders must also feel competent in their abilities to intervene and rescue potential victims. Therefore, bystander's skill level is also important to consider during the decision-making process. Barriers presented at any stage of the decision-making model as identified by Latané and Darley (1968, 1970), and discussed throughout this section, may hinder bystanders from intervening and offering much needed help to potential victims.

Bystander-Based Prevention Programming

The bystander intervention model has been applied to prevention programs for bullying (Polanin et al., 2012), adolescent suicide (Kalafat et al., 1993), sexual abuse and violence, particularly on college campuses (Banyard el al., 2004; Burn, 2009; Katz, 1995, 2018; Katz et al., 2011; Moynihan et al., 2010) and high schools (Coker et al., 2017; Cook-Craig et al., 2014) as wells as on U.S. military personnel (Potter & Moynihan, 2011). The Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) program was amongst the first to incorporate bystander intervention principles into their curriculum (Katz, 1995). The program was first designed for student athletes (Katz, 1995), but was later offered to the general student population, including high school and college students, and then to military personnel (Katz, 2018; Katz et al., 2011). Other well-known bystander intervention programs for sexual assault prevention include Bringing in the

Bystander, Green Dot, Men's Program, and Coaching Boys into Men (Banyard et al., 2004; Coker et al., 2011, 2016; Moynihan et al., 2010; Orchowski et al., 2018).

Bystander-based prevention programs incorporate a number of key elements in their curriculum, including raising awareness, developing skills, modeling prosocial behaviors, and conversations regarding personal safety (Banyard et al., 2004; Coker et al., 2011, 2016; Moynihan et al., 2010; Orchowski et al., 2018). For instance, in teaching college students how to be active, prosocial bystanders in sexual violence situations, Banyard and colleagues (2004) provided scenarios of what a successful bystander intervention looks like versus an unsuccessful one so students can model that behavior later. They also relied on role playing exercises to promote skill development amongst students and teach students how to intervene in sexual violence situations safely and effectively. Therefore, following the principles of bystander intervention, the program focused on skill building exercises, demonstrations of prosocial role modeling behavior, and conversations on how to safely intervene in risky situations (Banyard et al., 2004).

Only a handful of studies have evaluated the effectiveness of bystander-based programs to reduce sexual violence on college campuses (Banyard et a., 2007; Coker et al., 2011, 2016; DeGue et al., 2014; Moyniham et al., 2010). For instance, Banyard and colleagues (2007) evaluated the effectiveness of a sexual violence prevention program, which incorporated bystander behaviors. For instance, several increases were found regarding students' prosocial bystander attitudes, sexual assault knowledge, and confidence levels in intervening, after attending the bystander-based prevention program. The program was also effective in decreasing rape myths amongst trained students (Banyard et al., 2007). Students who attended the training

were also more likely to engage in prosocial bystander behaviors over a two-month follow-up period (Banyard et al., 2007).

Lastly, Coker and colleagues (2016) found that the Green Dot bystander intervention program implemented at a Kentucky college campus was effective at reducing interpersonal violence rates on campus by 17% when compared to two other college campuses that did not receive the Green Dot program intervention. Similarly, Moynihan and colleagues (2010) evaluated the effectiveness of the Bringing in the Bystander program amongst a sample of intercollegiate student athletes. Those who received the training were more likely to report increased confidence in intervening and engagement in bystander behaviors (Moynihan et al., 2010).

Theoretical Connections to the Current Study

Because RTC's training program utilized many of the adult learning assumptions outlined by Knowles (1980), I decided to use Knowles adult learning theory as one of the theoretical frameworks for this program evaluation. For instance, RTC's training program was designed with an adult population in mind, with transit personnel's ages ranging from 20 to 79 years. It also included experiential learning activities in the form of three transit simulation exercises. The first exercise trainees were presented with involved a transit ambassador and a potential trafficking victim. The second exercise involved a security officer and a potential sex trafficker, while the third exercise involved a bus operator and potential trafficking victim. These simulation exercises allowed for immediate application of the information and skillsets learned. Although the training program was mandatory for all RTC existing employees and new hires, trainees were informed of the importance of the topic and its utility to them, making their learning process more meaningful. Additionally, the skills and information learned from the

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training program would have an immediate impact on their day-to-day job responsibilities. RTC employees would be able to apply the knowledge learned in real time to identify potential victims they might come across while at work and thus increase victim identification and assistance.

The training program created by the RTC also incorporated certain practices that align with research on bystander behaviors and intervention. Trainees were informed that they not only have a moral and ethical responsibility to intervene, but that this responsibility is now part of their daily job requirements. To this end, trainees were compensated for attending the training program. To increase trainee's motivation, the training program also incorporated survivor testimonies, videos and examples illustrating survivors who were recruited into CSE via public transportation. To give trainees an opportunity to develop prosocial bystander behaviors, the training program included three skill building exercises (mentioned above). To empower trainees to intervene, the training program incorporated information on community resources, which would be provided by a community health partner (i.e., FirstMed Health and Wellness Center). Trainees were also taught how to safely intervene during these moments by following RTC's reporting protocols. Trainees were also told that they can rely on other professionals (e.g., dispatch, security officers, and local police) for help during these moments.

CHAPTER 5: METHODOLOGY

Based on research reviewed in the previous chapters, this study seeks to understand if transportation personnel in Las Vegas, Nevada: 1) are aware of trafficking, 2) have been impacted by the training program, 3) have any perceived concerns about intervening and rescuing potential victims, and 4) can actually intervene on behalf of victims. This methods chapter provides information about the research site location (i.e., Las Vegas, Nevada), information about the public transportation system where the study took place (i.e., the Regional Transportation Commission [RTC] of Southern Nevada), as well as important information about the human trafficking training program that is being evaluated (i.e., *What Does Human Trafficking Look Like? You Might Be Surprised*).

Research Site Location

Site Demographic Information

Nevada has a population of approximately 3.1 million people (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021), with approximately three-quarters of the state's population residing in Clark County. The five major cities located in Clark County are Las Vegas, Boulder City, Henderson, North Las Vegas, and Mesquite. Of these, Las Vegas is the largest city and has an estimated population of 641,903 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Most Nevadans identify as White (or 73.9%), nearly a third identify as Hispanic or Latino (or 29.2%), followed by Black or African American (10.3%; U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). In 2019, approximately 12.5% of Nevada's population lived under the poverty line, while the national poverty rate was estimated at 11.4% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). During the same year, the median household income in Nevada was $60,365, while the national average was $67,521 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021).

Additionally, Nevada has one of the highest rates of homelessness in the U.S., with 23.9 in every 10,000 people experiencing homelessness (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2019). For youth, these rates are even more dire, where 90 in every 10,000 youth are experiencing homelessness (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2019). For instance, in 2019, Nevada's homeless youth population was roughly 1,285, out of which 79% (or 1,012) were unsheltered (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2019). Because youth who are homeless do not have a stable home, it is only logical that they are more likely to rely on a range of public transportation modes to move from point A to point B, and in some situations, even to use bus stations, transit centers, and buses as temporary shelters (Carlson et al., 2006; Colby, 2011; Ensign & Bell, 2004; Polaris Project, 2018).

What Makes Las Vegas, Nevada Unique

With over 42 million visitors in 2019 (Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority [LVCVA], 2021), Las Vegas is one of the most visited cities in the world. The city's 24/7 gaming industry, adult entertainment, and nightlife scene make Las Vegas especially appealing to tourists from all over the world. Indeed, large tourist destinations, such as Las Vegas, are major hubs for CSE due, in part, to the high volume of transient male populations that visit these locations each year (Greenbaum, 2014; McClain & Garrity, 2011; Mletzko et al., 2018; Williamson & Pirori, 2009). In fact, Las Vegas has been described by some as the epicenter of North American prostitution and sex trafficking (Farley, 2007), while others have referred to it as America's Disneyland of Sex (Forrey, 2014).

Self-proclaimed as "Sin City" and known for the popular slogan "what happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas," Nevada is the only state in the country to legalize prostitution; however, only 10% of all prostitution in Nevada is legal (Farley, 2007). Furthermore, prostitution is only legal

in areas with lower populations, mainly rural counties, and not in places like Las Vegas, despite people's association of Las Vegas with prostitution. In 2013, Nevada officially recognized sex trafficking as a state crime (See Assembly Bill No. 67; NRS § 200.463-200.468; and NRS § 201.300-201.340), more than a decade later than when the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000 was authorized.

In 2015, Nevada enacted its own safe harbor law, which 1) places youth involved in CSE under the juvenile court's jurisdiction and 2) directs them to specialized services such as counseling and/or medical treatment (NRS § 62C.240). A 2019 report conducted by the Polaris Project ranks Nevada as 21st in the country for its criminal record relief statute afforded to survivors of human trafficking, meaning that survivors are not well protected under Nevada state law. In 2019, Nevada passed Senate Bill 173, which extended the types of offenses trafficking survivors are eligible for relief under state law. Before Senate Bill 173, only prostitution-related offenses were eligible for relief (Polaris Project, 2019). With the passage of Senate Bill 173, survivors can now also request to vacate convictions for other non-violent offenses not related to prostitution.

CSE Rates and Trends in Nevada

Nevada has consistently been regarded as one of the states with the highest rates of human trafficking cases in the country (Bejinariu, 2019; Polaris Project, 2019). For instance, in 2019, Nevada ranked 13th in the country for the number of human trafficking cases reported to the National Human Trafficking Hotline, which represents a decrease from 2018, when it ranked eighth in the nation and 2017, when it ranked ninth in the nation (Polaris Project, 2019). Since 2007, the National Human Trafficking Hotline has received nearly 3,400 calls from Nevada, resulting in close to 1,500 victims being identified (Polaris Project, 2019). Additionally, Las

Vegas has been identified as one of the top 17 destination cities for sex trafficking by the U.S. Department of Justice, while the F.B.I. has deemed it to be a High Intensity Child Prostitution Area along with 12 other locations[4] across the country (Forrey, 2014).

Given these designations, it is perhaps not surprising that the Nevada Coalition to Prevent the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC Coalition, 2017) estimates that there could be approximately 5,687 child sex trafficking victims in Nevada. Research conducted in Las Vegas also suggests that youth involved in CSE continue to be arrested for prostitution-related charges despite their inability to consent to sexual activity and also despite the existence of state law, which defines these youth as victims (Bejinariu et al., 2020; Kennedy & Pucci, 2007; Spencer et al., 2014). For instance, between 1994 and 2007, nearly 1,500 youth were processed for prostitution-related charges in Las Vegas, while only 435 traffickers had been arrested during this time frame (Kennedy & Pucci, 2007). Many of the youth arrested (17%) were under the age of 16 (Kennedy & Pucci, 2007), which represents the age of consent for sexual activity in Nevada.

Additionally, according to a report conducted by Spencer and colleagues (2014), of the 159 CSE cases processed in Las Vegas by the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) Vice and Sex Trafficking Investigations Unit in 2014, 65% involved a minor, with youths' age ranging from ages 12 to 17 years old. Current data provided by the Nevada Department of Public Safety (2019), suggest that in 2019, there were a total of 2,964 arrests effectuated for prostitution-related charges in Nevada. Of these, 110 involved youth under the age of 18, with the vast majority being females. Amongst these, as many as 19% were 15 years

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[4] Los Angeles, California; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Dallas, Texas; Detroit, Michigan; Tampa, Florida; Chicago, Illinois; San Francisco, California; San Diego, California; Miami, Florida; New York City; Washington, D.C.; and St. Luis, Missouri.

old or younger. During this time frame, there were a total of 34 arrests made for sex trafficking or commercial acts effectuated within the state of Nevada (Nevada Department of Public Safety, 2019).

To address CSE within the community, a series of initiatives and sex trafficking campaigns have been implemented at the local and state level. For instance, the Stop Turning Out Child Prostitutes (STOP) initiative, which was developed in 1994 by LVMPD; the Anti-Trafficking League Against Slavery (ATLAS) task force, which was developed in 2006 by LVMPD and is now commonly known as the Southern Nevada Human Trafficking Task Force (SNHTTF); the Nevada Sex Trafficking Awareness Campaign, which was developed in 2013 as a result of Nevada criminalizing sex trafficking within the state; and lastly, the Nevada Coalition to Prevent the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC Coalition), which was created in 2016 via Executive Order in response to the enactment of the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014.

The RTC: Overview

The RTC operates the public bus system in Southern Nevada, launching its public bus system in 1992. Currently, the RTC has more than 3,350 bus stops and operates over 400 transit buses across the Las Vegas valley (RTC, 2021). Of the 39 bus routes available, three of them provide access to the Las Vegas airport, two service the famous Las Vegas Strip and Downtown Las Vegas area, five operate during select Allegiant Stadium/ T-Mobile Arena events, while the remaining ones are residential routes (see Appendix A). All RTC buses are equipped with security cameras that offer real-time streaming for security purposes.

Additionally, the RTC operates six transit centers across the Las Vegas valley, including the South Strip Transit Terminal (SSTT), Centennial Hills Transit Center and Park & Ride,

Westcliff Transit Center and Park & Ride, Bonneville Transit Center (BTC), UNLV Transit Center, and Downtown Summerlin. Of these six transit centers, the most visited ones are perhaps the SSTT and BTC. The SSTT, which is located south of the Las Vegas Strip, is RTC's first transit center, with RTC launching it in 2004, and serves as a transit hub to and from the Las Vegas airport and the Las Vegas Strip. The BTC, on the other hand, is in Downtown Las Vegas and was launched in 2010, costing approximately 17 million dollars to build. The RTC employs a large number of personnel, including in-house workers and contractors (e.g., transit operators, security officers).

In 2020, the RTC transported approximately 56 million passengers across the Las Vegas valley; of these, more than 7.5 million rides were given to the Las Vegas Strip. These numbers represent a significant decrease in ridership from the previous year when the RTC provided services to over 64 million passengers. The reduced levels in ridership are a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time frame, drivers spent approximately 1.5 million service hours on the road. This also represents a decrease from 2019, when it reported over 1.7 million service hours spent on the road. According to the American Public Transportation Association (APTA, 2018), the RTC is among one the top 50 largest demand response agencies in the country, ranking 14th in the nation based on the number of transit rides given. Additionally, according to a recent report compiled by the National Transit Database (NTD, 2020), the RTC ranks first in the nation as the most cost-efficient bus-only system, a ranking it has been holding since 2012.

RTC's Comprehensive Human Trafficking Awareness Campaign: "What Does Human Trafficking Look Like? You Might Be Surprised"

In 2020, the RTC received a $160,000 grant from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to support national efforts in combating human trafficking, as part of the Innovations in Transit Public Safety program. As recipients of this FTA grant, the RTC were asked to develop a comprehensive human trafficking awareness campaign, including digital billboards, building wraps, bus wraps, business cards, as well as a social media campaign. They were also asked to create a comprehensive training program and train all their existing employees and new hires on human trafficking dynamics by June of 2021, which represented the end of the FTA grant. The comprehensive human trafficking awareness campaign officially started in January 2021 to coincide with the National Slavery and Human Trafficking Awareness month and featured a range of marketing materials, including:

- 20 digital billboards, which were displayed at several bus stops and transit hubs across the Las Vegas valley.

- 100-bathroom posters, which were installed at the main RTC transit centers (e.g., Bonneville Transit Center, South Strip Transit Center, Westcliff Transit Center).

- 21 bus wraps and several building wraps, which were displayed at the Bonneville Transit Center and South Strip Transit Center.

- Approximately 10,000 business cards for bus operators to use and handout to potential victims (see Appendix B).

- 65 transit shelter ads, which were printed both in English and Spanish.

- A series of digital advertisements, which were released via RTC's social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube). The social media and digital marketing campaigns were scheduled to run for approximately two months until March of 2021.

Additionally, all the marketing materials displayed the name of the awareness campaign *What Does Human Trafficking Look Like? You Might Be Surprised* along with a 24-hour hotline number provided by a local federally qualified health clinic (i.e., FirstMed Health and Wellness Center). Thus, for the human trafficking awareness campaign the RTC established a community partnership with FirstMed Health and Wellness Center to provide crisis intervention to individuals once they have been identified. FirstMed Health and Wellness Center's 24-hour hotline number was included on all the newly developed marketing materials so that potential victims could also reach out directly, if needed. As a federally funded health center, FirstMed Health and Wellness Center provides a range of trauma-informed, wrap-around services, including physical and psychological evaluation, housing, and transportation among others and, most importantly, at no cost to the victims.

The marketing materials also included information on RTC's Transit Watch Application, which passengers could use anonymously to report any suspicious trafficking activity that may arise while using RTC's public transportation system. As a result of this awareness campaign, community members, passengers, and the like were made aware of three reporting options: 1) by approaching an RTC employee directly if they suspected someone to be a trafficking victim, 2) by calling FirstMed Health and Wellness Center's hotline number to request assistance, or 3) by reporting it anonymously online through RTC's Transit Watch Application.

RTC's Training Program

As recipients of the FTA grant, the RTC was also tasked with developing a training program for their existing employees and new hires, including bus operators, transit ambassadors, dispatch, security officers and the like. The training program was created by the RTC in collaboration with a female trafficking expert who is also a survivor, and with input from

the research team, distinguishing it from other training programs. The trafficking expert was contracted directly by the RTC for this project and has 30 years of experience working as a consultant. Given her expertise and background, she was hired by the RTC as an expert consultant for the entire duration of the grant.

The training program covered a range of topics, including 1) federal definition and overview of human trafficking, with a specific focus on sex trafficking; 2) information on local and national statistics; 3) victim characteristics and risk factors; 4) recruitment locations and techniques used by sex traffickers; 5) points of intersection with the transit industry, highlighting some of the red flags for sex trafficking. The training program also included a series of relevant videos on the topic (e.g., Busing on the Lookout video) and three transit simulation exercises to provide additional context.

The first transit simulation exercise asked transit personnel to envision themselves in the role of a transit ambassador who is working at one of RTC's transit center. They were then told that the transit ambassador notices a young female passenger with physical bruises walking around, pleading with other passenger to borrow their phones and lend her money to buy a bus ticket home. The exercise ends at this point and transit personnel were asked what they would do in this situation. The second transit simulation exercise asked transit personnel to envision themselves in the role of a security officer who is patrolling at one of RTC's transit center. They were then told that the security officer notices a male who spends hours at the transit center every day, but never gets onto a bus. Instead, he offers rides to people if they don't have enough money for a bus ticket or have missed their bus. The exercise ends at this point and transit personnel were asked what they would do in this situation. The third transit simulation exercise involved a bus operator who is approached by a female passenger on one of RTC's buses. She

tells the bus operator that she is being held against her will to sell sex and that her trafficker is also on the bus. The exercise ends at this point and transit personnel were asked what they would do in this situation. These simulation exercises allowed employees to practice and apply the knowledge learned from the training program. It also showcased how the training is relevant and useful in their day-to-day jobs, making their learning process more meaningful.

The training program also provided an overview of RTC's newly developed reporting protocols, which detail the steps RTC personnel must take if they suspect a potential trafficking situation. RTC's reporting protocols were based on four main principles: 1) to observe any suspicious activity, 2) to report the incident to dispatch, 3) to advise potential victims that RTC buses and transit centers are a safe space, and 4) to refer potential victims to the community health partner. Based on these newly established guidelines, transit operators and the like are required to notify dispatch of any suspicious activity, who then notifies the security team. Once at the scene, security officers are required to fill out an incident report, documenting the incident that had taken place, and contact LVMPD, if they deem it necessary. The security team is also required to make a referral to FirstMed Health and Wellness Center for victim services and advise the victim that RTC facilities are a safe space. The training module also included information on victim services and referrals, which would be provided by FirstMed Health and Wellness Center and their partners (e.g., SafeNest, the Shade Tree). FirstMed Health and Wellness Center is also required to keep a crisis log of all the calls they receive from the hotline number advertised by the RTC. The training program also featured testimonials from a local survivor who currently works with youth involved in CSE. During the training program, the survivor shared her sex trafficking story with participants, after which she participated in a Q&A segment to answer any additional questions participants might have had.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the training program was provided in an online format, using Cisco WebEx Meetings rather than in-person as originally intended. The training program included a two-hour module on human trafficking dynamics. The training format was primarily lecture-based accompanied by PowerPoint slides along with survivor testimonials, videos, role playing exercises, and a Q&A section. All RTC employees and contractors were mandated to attend the training program, with employees being compensated for their time.

The two-hour training module was facilitated by a Human Resource Manager associated with the RTC, who had experience leading training presentations, had been part of the research grant from the very beginning, and attended all foundational project meetings. She had twenty-four years of experience working in the human resource field. To prepare for the presentation, she met with several subject matter experts, including the Executive Consultant & Trainer at Southwest Transit Association (SWTA), Busing on the Lookout representative, FirstMed Health and Wellness Center personnel, survivor speaker, trafficking expert, and several in-house RTC personnel. The training presentation was pilot tested twice online by RTC stakeholders, with the research team and trafficking expert being in attendance, including once on August 13th, 2020, and then again, a week later, on August 20th, 2020. Table 1 provides a description of RTC's main training components.

Table 1

Description of RTC's Training Components

Component	Objective	Description
Pre-test survey	To introduce the pre-test survey and understand the flow of the webinar.	Qualtrics pre-test link is presented to participants at the beginning of the webinar.
Local survivor testimony	To introduce the local survivor and have her share her story.	Presentation and Q&A segment with local survivor.
Human trafficking	To understand human trafficking and identify elements of trafficking.	Lecture and discussion on: ⇒ what is human trafficking ⇒ the signs of human trafficking ⇒ description of the "Action-Means-Purpose" model ⇒ local and national statistics.
Sex trafficking	To understand sex trafficking.	Lecture and discussion on: ⇒ federal definition of sex trafficking ⇒ local and national statistics provided by LVMPD.
Victim characteristics and risk factors	To understand risk factors and identify victims.	Lecture and discussion on: ⇒ at-risk population ⇒ victim's needs, and challenges they face.
Sex Traffickers	To understand how sex traffickers operate.	Lecture and discussion on: ⇒ recruitment techniques and locations used by sex traffickers.
Points of intersection with transit	To understand the many intersecting points that exist between sex trafficking and the transit industry. To identify the red flags for sex trafficking associated with the transit industry.	Lecture and discussion on: ⇒ points of intersection with the transit industry ⇒ red flags for sex trafficking.

Component	Objective	Description
		Busing on the Lookout video is played for participants, which features a local sex trafficking survivor who was recruited at an RTC bus stop.
RTC's reporting protocols	To understand RTC's reporting protocols. To assist victims in need and provide a safe space for them. Introduction of three transit case simulation exercises.	Lecture and discussion on: ⇒ RTC's reporting protocols which follow four main principles (e.g., observe, report, advise, and refer). ⇒ Transit Watch Application o Examples of real trafficking reports received via the Transit Watch Application from other U.S. states. ⇒ Three transit case simulation exercises are introduced (e.g., transit ambassador, security officer, and bus operator).
Victim resources	To be familiar with the range of resources available to victims.	Overview of FirstMed Health and Wellness Center and their services. Lecture and discussion on FirstMed Health and Wellness Center partners, including: ⇒ SafeNest ⇒ The Shade Tree ⇒ The Rape Crisis Center.
Post-test	To introduce the post-test survey and see if participants have any final thoughts.	Qualtrics post-test link is presented to participants at the end of the training module. Participants are asked to reflect about what they learned during the training presentation.

The Current Study

The current study sought to evaluate the effectiveness of the human trafficking training program provided by the RTC using two indicators of success. First, the training program created by the RTC was evaluated based on its ability to change the attitudes of RTC personnel. Second, the training program was evaluated based on the number of interventions performed by RTC personnel and their community health partner (i.e., FirstMed Health and Wellness Center; research question #4). These interventions were performed following the implementation of the training program.

The training program included a two-hour module on human trafficking dynamics, with RTC employees having to complete it only once. Thus, using pre- and post-test survey measures and other data points, the goals of the current study were fourfold: 1) to determine whether transit personnel in Las Vegas were aware of trafficking dynamics prior to receiving any formal training on the topic; 2) to evaluate the degree to which transit personnel's perceived awareness, job-related skills, and confidence levels changed following the implementation of the training program; 3) to identify any perceived concerns that might prevent transit personnel from intervening if they suspect someone to be a potential trafficking victim; and 4) to consider whether any interventions were performed by RTC personnel and their community health partner after the implementation of the training program.

To meet the goals of this research project, I had the opportunity to work with the RTC as they were implementing their human trafficking training program. They allowed me to create pre- and post-test surveys and were willing to share internal reports generated after the implementation of the training program. Their community health partner (i.e., FirstMed Health and Wellness Center) also shared their call logs and response outcomes with me. Having access

to this information was crucial in assessing whether any interventions (i.e., victim identified, sex trafficker identified, arrests resulting from identification, victim assistance resulting from identification) were performed by RTC personnel and their community health partner (i.e., FirstMed Health and Wellness Center). All research procedures were approved by university-level Institutional Review Board (IRB) (see Appendix C). Therefore, the current study sought to answer the following research questions:

> *Research Question 1: Were RTC personnel aware of trafficking dynamics prior to the implementation of the training program?*
>
> *Research Question 2: To what degree did the training program change the perceived awareness, job-related skills, and confidence levels of transit personnel regarding trafficking dynamics?*
>
> *Research Question 3: What were the perceived concerns that might prevent transit personnel from intervening if they suspect someone to be a potential trafficking victim?*
>
> *Research Question 4: Were any interventions performed by RTC personnel after the implementation of the training program?*

Study Procedures

Pre- & Post-Test Measures

The training module included pre- and post-test surveys, which were embedded as links within the training presentation. The survey questionnaires were created using Qualtrics and included a series of closed and open-ended questions (see Appendix D and E). The closed-ended questions were structured either on a five-point Likert-type scale (e.g., ranging from 1 = *Not at all knowledgeable* to 5 = *Extremely knowledgeable*; 1 = *Strongly disagree* to 5 = *Strongly agree*; 1 = *Extremely uncomfortable* to 5 = *Extremely comfortable*; or 1 = *Not at all useful* to 5 =

Extremely useful;), using *Yes/Maybe/No* as the answer choices (coded as 1 = *Yes*, 2 = *Maybe*, 3 = *No*), or *True/False* statements (coded as 1 = *True* and 2 = *False*).

The surveys were pilot tested on five different occasions and then revised for clarity. First, the surveys were piloted by the research team, followed by RTC's stakeholders, then during the two dry runs of the training presentation, and lastly, again by the research team. Based on feedback from these foundational meetings, several changes were made to the surveys. For instance, customized links were created for both the pre-test and post-test. Therefore, rather than sharing the links created by Qualtrics, the links were customized to include the following verbiage *RTC Pre-Test Survey* and *RTC Post-Test Survey*. Additionally, the answer choice *Maybe* was added to the existing answer choices of *Yes* and *No*. The demographic questions, which were originally featured only in the pre-test survey, were added to the post-test as well. The flow of the pre-test was changed to be displayed on one continuous page rather than on multiple pages. Similarly, the flow of the post-test was changed to be displayed on two pages versus multiple ones.

The pre-test survey questionnaire included a total of 21 questions, with five of the questions asking for demographic information (i.e., age, race, gender, number of years in the profession, and type of employee). The variable race was coded as 1 = *White*, 2 = *Black*, 3 = *Hispanic*, 4 = *Asian*, 5 = *Native American* or *Pacific Islander*, 6 = *American Indian* or *Alaskan Native*, or 7 = *Two or more races*. The variable age was designed as an open-ended question. Type of employee was classified as 1 = *Bus Operator*, 2 = *Security Officer*, 3 = *Maintenance Worker*, and 4 = *Other*. The number of years in the profession variable was coded as 0 = *Less than a year,* 1 = *1 through 5 years*, 2 = *6 through 10 years*, 3 = *11 through 15 years*, and 4 = *More than 15 years*. The remaining questions were created based information that was presented

in the training presentation. Participants were asked to complete the pre-test survey at the beginning of the training module, prior to receiving any formal training on the topic.

The post-test survey was nearly identical to the pre-test to track improvements following implementation of the training; however, it included a few additional questions. The additional questions asked RTC employees to rate the utility of the training received. A range of questions were asked here, including if participants thought the training was useful (coded as 1 = *Not at all useful* to 5 = *Extremely useful*); if they would like to receive more training on the topic (coded as 1 = *True* and 2 = *False*); if the training should be offered on an annual basis (coded as 1 = *Strongly disagree* to 5 = *Strongly agree*); and what they liked most about the training (designed as an open-ended question). Participants were asked to complete the post-test survey immediately after receiving the training. Survey responses were completed anonymously, and participation was voluntary.

Sampling Design

Based on RTC's internal records, a total of 1,381 employees completed the training program, including 83 in-house RTC employees and 1,298 contractors (e.g., bus operators, security officers). There was a 90% completion rate for the pre-test survey, with 1,243 responses received via the pre-test link, while the post-test had a 61% completion rate, with 837 responses received via the post-test link. Figure 1 provides a timeline of when participants completed the pre- and post-test surveys, with most of the training sessions occurring in December of 2020. The training program officially began on September 1st, 2020 and ran until June 15th 2021 until every employee was trained. This date also represented the end of the FTA grant. The RTC first rolled out the training to its in-house employees and then released it to its contractors, including the bus operators and security officers. Because the RTC released the training in stages, it took

nearly a year to get every employee trained (i.e., from September 1st, 2020, until June 15th 2021).

The demographic information for the entire sample is presented in Table 2.

Figure 1

Pre- and Post-Test Timeline

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics for the Participants Trained Between September 1, 2020 and June 15, 2021

Sample Characteristics	Pre-Test		Post-Test	
	%	n	%	n
Gender				
Male	61.1%	741	57.8%	458
Female	38.4	466	41.5	329
Transgender	0.4	5	0.8	6
Age (mean)	47.96 (SD = 12.16)		48.06 (SD = 12.55)	
Race				
White	23.5%	283	19.8%	156
Black	47.9	576	51.2	403
Hispanic	13.4	161	13.5	106
Asian	5.5	66	5.5	43
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	2.2	27	2.3	18
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1.0	12	1.0	8
Two or more races	6.5	78	6.7	53
Type of Employee				
Bus Operator	80.9%	981	93.9%	745
Security Officer	5.9	72	0.4	3
Maintenance Worker	1.1	13	0.3	2
Other	12	146	5.4	43
Years in the Profession				
Less than a year	7.2%	88	9.2%	73
1 to 5 years	39.1	477	40.1	319
6 to 10 years	18.9	231	18.8	150
11 to 15 years	13.9	170	14.1	112
More than 15 years	20.8	253	17.8	142

Between September 1st and December 8th, 2020, a total of 415 participants completed the pre-test survey, but only 29 participants completed the post-test survey. The demographic information for this subsample is included in Table 3. It appears that participants who attended the training between September 1st and December 8th, 2020, did not (generally) complete the post-test survey, given that only a few post-test responses (n = 29) were received during that timeframe.

Given that those who completed the training between September 1st, 2020 and December 8th, 2020 did not generally complete the post-test survey, I limited the quantitative results to the data collected between December 9th, 2020, and June 15th 2021, since most participants completed the post-test survey during this timeframe. Between December 9th, 2020, and until June 15th 2021, a total of 828 participants completed the pre-test survey, while 808 participants completed the post-test survey. The demographic information for the subsample is presented in Table 4. Because most participants both on the pre-test survey (93%, n = 766) and post-test survey (94%, n = 730) identified as bus operators, the quantitative analyses were done with only bus operators who completed the training during this timeframe.

Table 3

Demographic Characteristics for the Participants Trained Between September 1, 2020 and

December 8, 2020

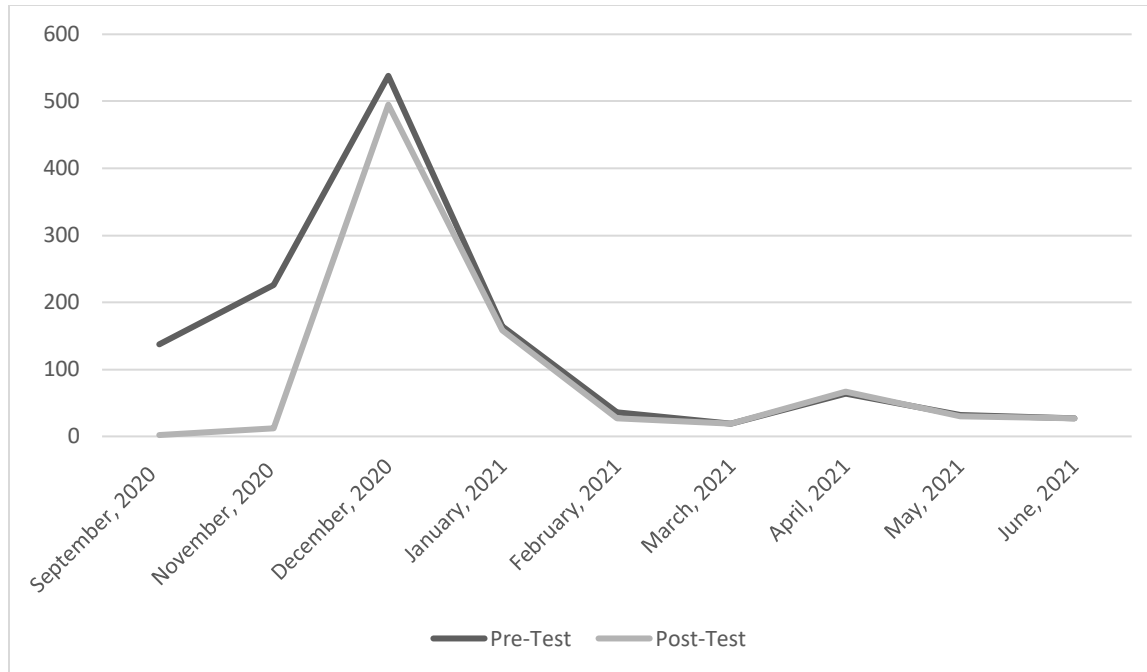| Subsample Characteristics	Pre-Test		Post-Test	
	%	n	%	n
Gender				
Male	67.2%	264	53.3%	8
Female	32.6	128	46.7	7
Transgender	0.3	1	0	0
Age (mean)	46.93 (SD = 11.79)		44 (SD = 16.57)	
Race				
White	31.5%	123	26.7%	4
Black	38.9	152	40.0	6
Hispanic	13.0	51	0	0
Asian	5.1	20	0	0
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	2.3	9	6.7	1
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.8	3	0	0
Two or more races	8.4	33	26.7	4
Type of Employee				
Bus Operator	54.8%	215	93.8%	15
Security Officer	18.1	71	0	0
Maintenance Worker	2.6	10	0	0
Other	24.5	96	6.3	1
Years in the Profession				
Less than a year	2.8%	11	6.3%	1
1 to 5 years	34.2	135	62.5	10
6 to 10 years	22.0	87	6.3	1
11 to 15 years	14.7	58	12.5	2
More than 15 years	26.3	104	12.5	2

Table 4

Demographic Characteristics for the Participants Trained Between December 9, 2020 and June 15, 2021

Subsample Characteristics	Pre-Test		Post-Test	
	%	n	%	n
Gender				
Male	58.2%	477	57.8%	450
Female	41.3	338	41.4	322
Transgender	0.5	4	0.8	6
Age (mean)	48.50 (SD = 12.33)		48.07 (SD = 12.37)	
Race				
White	19.7%	160	19.7%	152
Black	52.2	424	51.4	397
Hispanic	13.5	110	13.7	106
Asian	5.7	46	5.6	43
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	2.2	18	2.2	17
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1.1	9	1.0	8
Two or more races	5.5	45	6.3	49
Type of Employee				
Bus Operator	93.4%	766	94.0%	730
Security Officer	0.1	1	0.4	3
Maintenance Worker	0.4	3	0.3	2
Other	6.1	50	5.4	42
Years in the Profession				
Less than a year	9.3%	77	9.2%	72
1 to 5 years	41.5	342	39.6	309
6 to 10 years	17.5	144	19.1	149
11 to 15 years	13.6	112	14.1	110
More than 15 years	18.1	149	17.9	140

Data Analysis

To answer research question #1 and determine whether RTC personnel were aware of trafficking dynamics prior to receiving any formal training on the topic, frequencies were calculated for participant answers to seven of the closed-ended pre-test questions. Also incorporated here were participants' answers to an open-ended question about awareness of perceived locations for sex trafficking near their workplace or around their bus routes. Participants' responses were first coded to indicate if they had seen sex trafficking taking place in one centralized area (coded as 0) or multiple areas across the Las Vegas valley (coded as 1). From here, additional codes were systematically applied based on the geographical location of each area mentioned. After coding participants' answers, content analysis was used to identify how many times a particular location was mentioned by participants (Esterberg, 2002). In categorizing participants' responses to this qualitative question, I also relied on several RTC transit maps, which were obtained from RTC's website. The maps helped with the categorization of the qualitative data-related to sex trafficking locations and allowed me to reference participants' answers to specific transit areas around the Las Vegas valley. The RTC transit maps referenced were also incorporated in the results section to provide a visual, geographical display of the qualitative data-related to sex trafficking locations.

To answer research question #2 and determine the extent to which transit personnel's perceived awareness, job-related skills, and confidence levels changed following the implementation of the training program, I performed a number of independent samples t-tests. Because both the pre-test and post-test were completed anonymously, it was not possible to match pre- and post-test responses to specific participants to assess individual changes over time. As a result, measurement of changes from pre-test to post-test were done using independent,

rather than paired, samples t-tests. The use of independent samples t-tests instead of dependent, paired samples t-tests reduced the statistical power, making the tests conservative. Thus, for the test results that found a significant difference, I can confidently say that the results indicated a real difference. For the test results that did not find a significant difference, it might be that a Type II error was due to lower the statistical power because it was not possible to match the pre-test to the post-test data or that there was truly no difference. For those questions that did not utilize a five-point Likert-type scale and could not be examined through t-tests, a series of proportionality tests were performed instead. To compare the proportion of pre-test positive responses to post-test positive responses, z-scores were used to check for rejection of the null hypotheses (i.e., H_0: the two sample proportions were equal). The z-score value for rejecting the null hypothesis was set at ±1.96 for a two tailed test.

To answer research question #3 and identify any perceived concerns participants might have regarding their ability to intervene and rescue potential victims, I utilized an open-ended question. This open-ended question-related to concerns was included both on the pre-test and the post-test survey. Qualitative descriptive analyses (Sandelowski, 2000) were performed on participants' answers to the open-ended questions-related to concerns. First, codes were systematically applied to participants' answers using open coding techniques (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Feldman, 1995). Then, participants' responses were organized in themes, and content analysis was used to provide a count for each thematic finding (Esterberg, 2002). Other studies on CSE have used similar qualitative procedures as the ones described in this study (Bejinariu et al., 2020; McClelland & Newel, 2008; Sharpe, 2001). Proportionality tests were performed to determine whether participants' perceived safety concerns as a whole changed from pre-test to post-test, given that I could not compare individual changes. As such, z-scores were used to

check for rejection of the null hypothesis (i.e., H$_0$: the two sample proportions were equal). The

z-score value for rejecting the null hypothesis was set at ±1.96 for a two tailed test.

To answer research question #4 and determine whether any interventions were performed

by RTC personnel and their community health partner after the implementation of the training

program, I relied on three data sources including, 1) RTC's internal records, 2) Community

health partner's records (FirstMed Health and Wellness Center), and 3) RTC's Transit Watch

Application (i.e., online, mobile reporting tool). The RTC and their community health partner

(FirstMed Health and Wellness Center) were willing to give me access to their internal reports,

which were generated after the implementation of the training program. These internal reports

were incorporated as an added level of validity. Having access to this information was crucial in

assessing whether any interventions had been performed by RTC personnel and their community

health partner after the implementation of the training program. Several activities were

considered measures of intervention, including the number of victims identified and rescued, the

number of sex traffickers identified and arrested, the number of referrals made to the community

health partner along with the number of victim services and assistance being provided by the

community health partner. Therefore, multiple indicators were used to assess the number of

interventions performed by RTC personnel and their community health partner.

The quantitative analyses were limited to the bus operators who completed the training

between December 9th, 2020, and June 15th, 2021 given that they were the vast majority of

people trained. Although the quantitative analyses were limited to the bus operators who

completed the training during this period, the qualitative analyses did not need to be limited to

this timeframe. The qualitative open-ended questions gave participants an opportunity to share

any additional thoughts; therefore, I included all available answers that were shared. As such, the

qualitative analyses reflect participants' responses received between September 1st, 2020 until

June 15th, 2021 and were not limited to only the bus operators.

Bus Operators' Characteristics

A total of 766 bus operators answered the pre-test survey between December 9th, 2020

and June 15th, 2021. Over half of the bus operators on the pre-test survey identified as males

(58.9%), with an average age of 48.49 [range, 21-76 years; SD = 12.36]. More than half

identified as Black (53.5%), while 18.9% identified as White, followed by Hispanic (13.8%).

The other racial/ethnic categories were endorsed less often. Over 40% indicated having between

1 to 5 years of experience in the transportation industry (see Table 5). A total of 730 bus

operators answered the post-test survey between December 9th, 2020 and June 15th, 2021.

Participant's characteristics on the post-test were similar to pre-test sample. For instance, over

half of the bus operators on the post-test survey identified as males (59.2%) with an average age

of 48.06 [range, 21-76 years; SD = 12.41]. More than half identified as Black (52.2%), while

19.5% identified as White, followed by Hispanic (13.9%). The other racial/ethnic categories

were endorsed less often. Over 40% indicated having between 1 to 5 years of experience in the

transportation industry. Demographic information for both the pre- and post-test sample is

presented in Table 5. While completing the pre- and post-test surveys, participants were allowed

to skip questions they did not want to answer or felt uncomfortable answering; as a result, some

of the survey questions might have different response totals (n).

Table 5

Demographic Characteristics for the Bus Operators Trained Between December 9, 2020 and

June 15, 2021

Bus Operators' Characteristics	Pre-Test		Post-Test	
	%	n	%	n
Gender				
Male	58.9%	448	59.2%	430
Female	40.5	308	40.2	292
Transgender	0.5	4	0.6	4
Age (mean)	48.49 (SD = 12.36)		48.06 (SD = 12.41)	
Race				
White	18.9%	143	19.5%	141
Black	53.5	404	52.2	377
Hispanic	13.8	104	13.9	100
Asian	5.7	43	5.4	39
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1.9	14	2.2	16
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.9	7	1.0	7
Two or more races	5.3	40	5.8	42
Years in the Profession				
Less than a year	9.6%	73	9.5%	69
1 to 5 years	42.9	328	40.5	295
6 to 10 years	17.5	134	19.8	144
11 to 15 years	13.2	101	13.3	97
More than 15 years	16.8	128	17.0	124

CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS

Overall, and in sum, findings from the pre- and post-test measures reveal that transit personnel had a high awareness and understanding of trafficking dynamics prior to receiving any formal training on the topic. Changes from pre-test to post-test were reported on a number of the survey questions, indicating that the training program created by the RTC increased trainee's perceived awareness, job-related skills, and confidence levels. Most participants expressed concerns over their own personal safety. Four interventions were performed by RTC personnel following the implementation of the training program. An additional six interventions were performed by their community health partner (i.e., FirstMed Health and Wellness Center). The below includes analyses of findings for all dissertation research questions posed.

Research Question #1: Awareness of Trafficking Dynamics

Frequencies for Pre-Test Awareness Survey Questions

A total of eight questions, including seven closed-ended and one open-ended question, assessed bus operators' awareness of trafficking dynamics prior to attending RTC's training program. For instance, when asked if they believed sex trafficking was a problem in Nevada, 78.4% (n = 595) of the pre-test sample answered affirmatively, while 20.6% (n = 156) selected *maybe* as their answer choice, and 1.1% (n = 8) selected *no* as their answer choice. When presented with the following statement, "Victims can be U.S. citizens or foreigners," nearly all participants (98.5%) in the pre-test sample agreed with this statement. General agreement for where human trafficking occurs was also high amongst the pre-test sample (98.4%). Specifically, participants were able to correctly indicate that human trafficking occurs everywhere in the world, including in big cities and rural areas.

Participants were also asked about the dynamics of sex trafficking of minors, as defined under federal legislation (e.g., TVPA, 2000), a topic which was covered during the training program. Results indicate that participants' understanding of the federal definition, as it relates to youth victims, was high prior to attending the training program. For instance, as many as 78.4% (n = 584) of the pre-test sample were able to correctly indicate that "anyone under the age of 18, who performs a commercial sex act, is a victim of human trafficking regardless if force, fraud, or coercion has occurred." Participants were also asked if they were aware of any perceived locations for sex trafficking on their routes or near their workplace. Of the 739 participants who provided an answer to this question, over a quarter (or n = 209) answered affirmatively. Table 6 provides a breakdown of participants' pre-test awareness responses.

To further gauge participants' awareness of trafficking dynamics, participants were also asked to identify risks factors for becoming a victim and red flags for sex trafficking associated with the transit industry. Most of the pre-test sample (89.4%, n = 660) correctly indicated that traffickers are more likely to exploit individuals who are vulnerable (e.g., youth who are homeless, have a substance abuse problem, or low self-esteem). When asked to identify the red flags for sex trafficking associated with the transit industry, 74.9% (n = 556) of the pre-test sample selected all the correct items from the list provided (See Figure 2).

Table 6

Bus Operators' Pre-Test Awareness of Trafficking Dynamics

	Percent of Pre-Test Sample (n)		
Survey Questions	Yes	Maybe	No
Do you believe that sex trafficking is a problem in Nevada?	78.4% (595)	20.6% (156)	1.1% (8)
	True	**False**	
Victims can be U.S. citizens or foreigners.	98.5% (744)	1.5% (11)	
Human trafficking occurs everywhere in the world, including in big cities, suburbs, and rural towns.	98.4% (741)	1.6% (12)	
Anyone under the age of 18, who performs a commercial sex act, is a victim of human trafficking regardless if force, fraud, or coercion has occurred.	78.4% (584)	21.6% (161)	
	Yes	**No**	
To your knowledge, are there any locations for sex trafficking on your routes or near your workplace?	28.3% (209)	71.7% (530)	

Figure 2

Awareness of Red Flags for Sex Trafficking
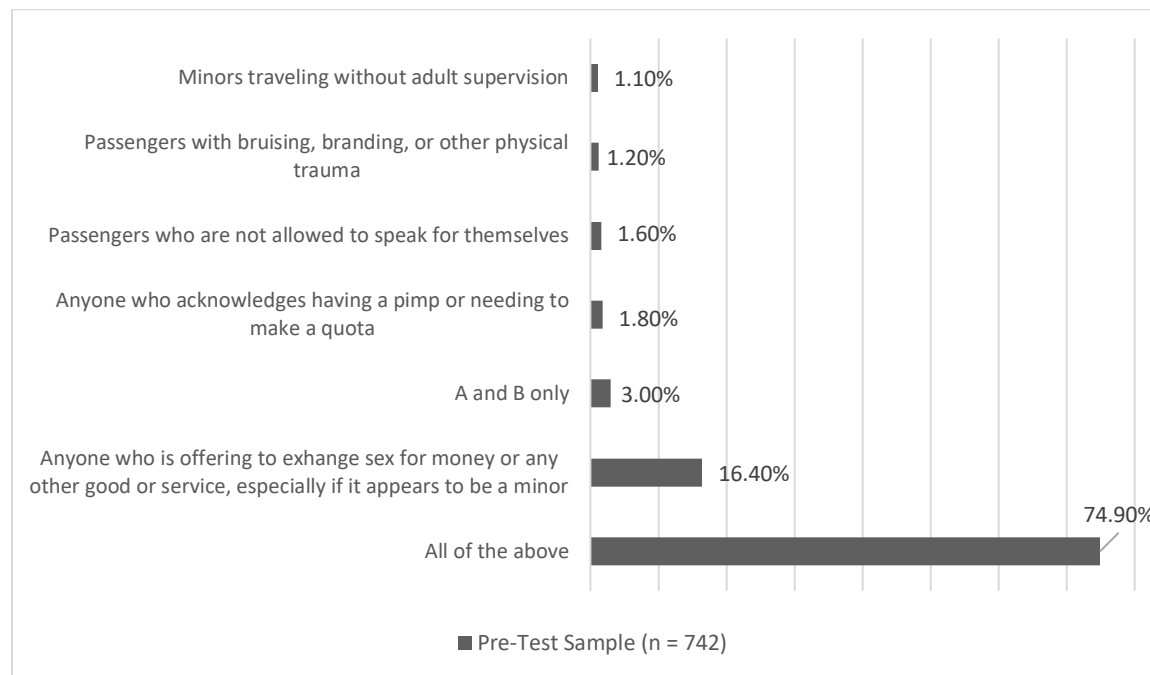
Pre-Test Survey Answers About Perceived Locations for Sex Trafficking

Using an open-ended question, participants were also asked to describe what perceived

locations for sex trafficking they had seen on their routes or near their workplace. A total of 294

responses were provided. Participants' responses were first coded to indicate if they had seen sex

trafficking taking place in one centralized area (coded as 0) or multiple areas across the Las

Vegas valley (coded as 1). Of the 294 responses provided, 192 participants described seeing sex

trafficking taking place in one centralized area, while 102 participants described seeing sex

trafficking in multiple areas across the Las Vegas valley. From here, additional codes were

created based on the geographical location of each area mentioned. After coding participants'

responses, content analysis was utilized to identify how many times a particular location was

mentioned by participants (Esterberg, 2002). In categorizing participants' responses to this

qualitative question, I also relied on several RTC transit maps, which were obtained from their

website. The maps helped with the categorization of the qualitative data and allowed me to

reference participants' answers to specific areas around the Las Vegas valley. The RTC transit

maps were also incorporated in the results section to provide a visual, geographical display of the

qualitative data. These findings are presented below from most common to the least common

category.

Amongst the 192 participants who described seeing CSE in one centralized area, a third

of participants (n = 64) identified Tropicana Avenue as the route with the most CSE activity,

specifically the area west of the Las Vegas Strip. Here, participants either mentioned a number of

cross streets as reference points or referenced the RTC residential bus route that services this

area, particularly the 201-bus route. The following cross streets were used as reference points by

participants, including Tropicana and Dean Martin, Tropicana and Polaris, Tropicana and Valley

View, Tropicana and Arville, Tropicana and Cameron, Tropicana and Decatur, or a combination

of these streets. For instance, one participant mentioned that the bus route that services Tropicana

Avenue, specifically the area "on the 201 going WB [westbound] from Dean Martin until

Decatur" was high in CSE activity.

Another participant mentioned that CSE is "most visible on Tropicana between LV Blvd

and Decatur" as well as on Tropicana and Polaris, specifically in front of the Budget Suites. The

area surrounding the Orleans Hotel and Casino and the Wild Wild West Casino, which is also

located on Tropicana between Decatur and Dean Martin, were also mentioned as reference

points. The truck stop located on Tropicana between the Orleans Hotel and Casino and Wild

Wild West Casino was also described as an area of high CSE activity, as was the Burger King

located across the street, between Tropicana and Procyon Avenue. Figure 3 provides a transit

map of RTC's 201 bus route servicing Tropicana Avenue, with the highlighted circle indicating the intersections and stretches of streets that participants identified in their open-ended answers.

Figure 3

RTC's 201 Bus Route Servicing Tropicana Avenue[5]
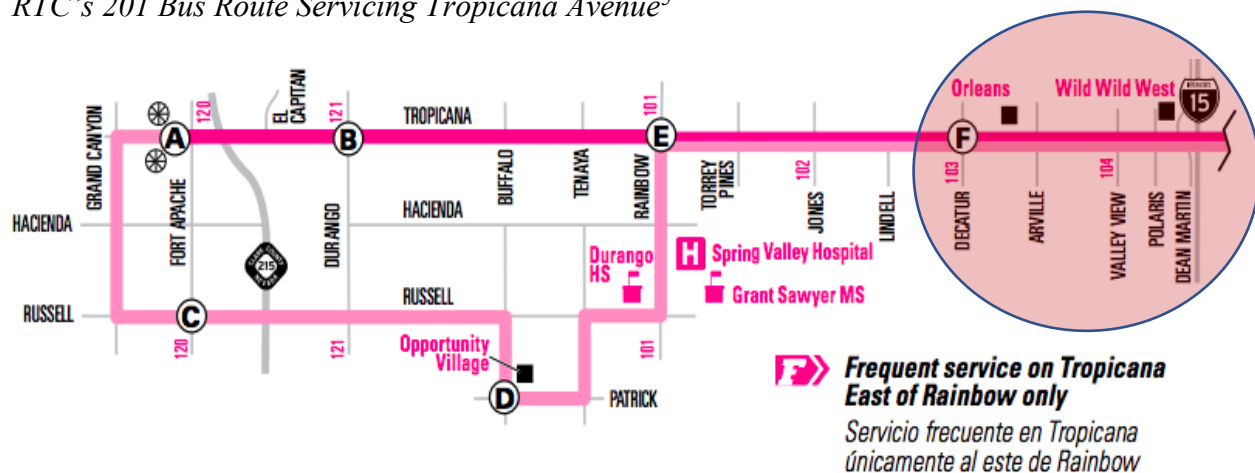
Approximately a quarter of participants (n = 45) described Downtown Las Vegas as an area of high CSE activity. Here, the Bonneville Transit Center (BTC), which is in the middle of Downtown Las Vegas and operated by the RTC, was used as a reference point by 25 participants. For instance, one participant stated that "The BTC lobby often has runaways or children who have been exploited," deeming it, in their opinion, an area of high CSE activity. Other reference points indicated in participants' responses were Fremont Street, North Las Vegas Boulevard, and a range of streets that are in Downtown Las Vegas (e.g., East Charleston, Washington, Bonanza, H and S Street). The 113-bus route, which services the Las Vegas Boulevard North was also mentioned. One participant in particular described the Lowe's parking lot, which is located on Charleston and Fremont Street, as an area of high CSE activity. The

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[5] Transit map obtained from RTC's website at https://rtcws.rtcsnv.com/routepdf/201.pdf

location of the Lowe's on Charleston and Fremont Street is not represented on the map, but it is still located in Downtown Las Vegas. For reference, it would be represented in the direction of the bottom/right corner of the map. Figure 4 provides RTC's transit map of Downtown Las Vegas.

As many as 20 percent of participants (n = 39) described the area east of the Las Vegas Strip, specifically the stretch along Boulder Highway, as an area of high CSE activity. Boulder Station Casino, which is located on Boulder Highway, was identified as the start of the stretch for CSE activity, with participants using several cross streets along Boulder Highway as reference points. These include Boulder Highway and Desert Inn, Boulder Highway and Nellis (by Sam's Town Hotel and Gambling Hall), Boulder Highway and Flamingo, as well as Boulder Highway and Tropicana, or a combination thereof. One participant identified that the routes serviced by the Boulder Highway Express (BTX), along the Boulder Highway stretch, as areas of high CSE activity. Figure 5 showcases RTC's transit map of Boulder Highway, with the highlighted circle indicating the stretched of streets that participants identified.

An additional 20 percent of participants (n = 39) described the Las Vegas Strip as well as the transit center operated by the RTC south of the Las Vegas Strip, namely the South Strip Transit Center (SSTT), as areas of high CSE activity. Three percent of participants (n = 5) mentioned a range of other areas that are located across town. For instance, one participant mentioned the 210-bus route, which services the Lake Mead Boulevard, while another one mentioned the area between Craig Road and Lamb Boulevard as areas of high CSE activity, but only after dark. The remaining three participants mentioned Twain as an area of high CSE activity, in particular the area between Maryland Parkway and Paradise Road.

Figure 4

RTC's Transit Map of Downtown Las Vegas[6]

A total of 102 participants described seeing CSE in multiple areas across the Las Vegas valley. Of these, most participants (80%, n = 82) identified a combination of the areas already discussed (e.g., Boulder Highway, the Las Vegas Strip, Tropicana Avenue, Downtown Las Vegas, SSTT). The remaining participants (n = 20) identified a combination of other areas located across the Las Vegas valley, including Swenson and Twain, Cambridge and Twain, Twain and University Center Drive, Summerlin, Sahara, Mountain View Hospital, Henderson, Boulder Highway between Indios and Atlantic, and the area surrounding the University of

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[6] Transit map obtained from RTC's website at https://rtcws.rtcsnv.com/routepdf/systemmap.pdf

Figure 5

RTC's Transit Map of Boulder Highway
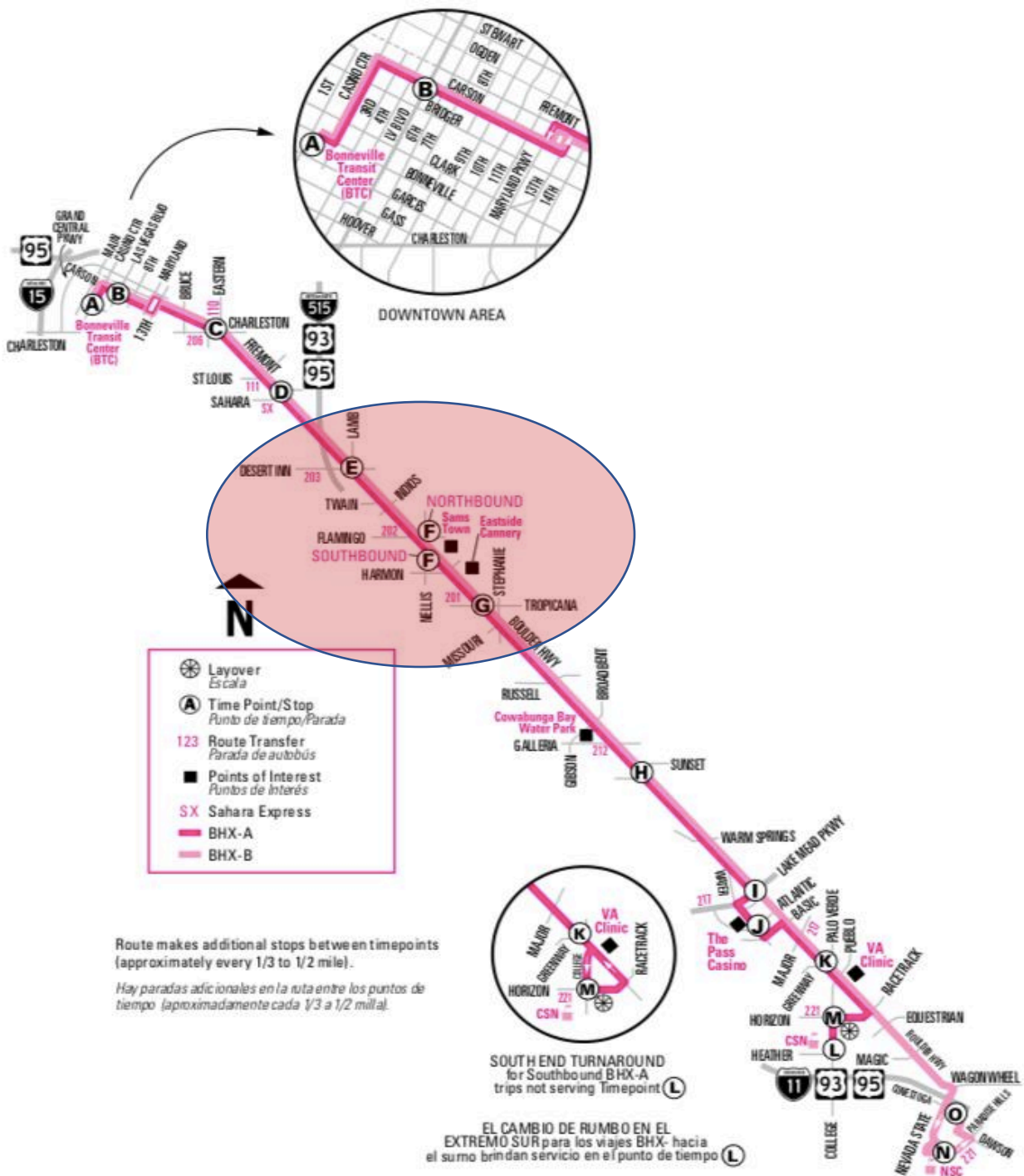
Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV). A range of bus routes operated by the RTC were also identified, including the Sahara Express (SX), the 203-bus route which services Spring Mountain, Dessert Inn, and Lamb, the 106-bus route which services Rancho and Centennial Hills, and the 206-bus route which services Charleston Boulevard. This open-ended question, which required participants to describe what perceived locations for sex trafficking they had seen on their routes or near their workplace, was asked again on the post-test. The same areas, routes, and cross streets that were mentioned on the pre-test were also mentioned on the post-test, revealing similar patterns.

Research Question #2: Attitude Change Following Training

Awareness Survey Questions

After attending RTC's training program, the proportion of participants who believed that sex trafficking is a problem in Nevada increased from 78.4% to 90.2%. This proportion difference was statistically significant ($z \geq 1.96$, $p < .05$, two tailed test), using z-scores to reject the null hypothesis that the proportions were equivalent. When presented with the following statement, "Victims can be U.S. citizens or foreigners," the proportion of participants who agreed with this statement increased from 98.5% to 98.9%. This proportion difference was not statistically significant. General agreement for where human trafficking occurs was also high in both groups (98.4% on the pre-test when compared to 99.4% on the post-test). This proportion difference was not statistically different. After attending the training module, the proportion of participants who were able to correctly identify the dynamics of sex trafficking of minors increased from 78.4% to 83%. This proportion difference was statistically significant ($z \geq 1.96$, $p < .05$, two tailed test).

After attending the training program, participants' perceived awareness of locations for sex trafficking increased from 28.3% to 35.8%. This proportion difference was statically significant ($z \geq 1.96$, $p < .05$, two tailed test). After attending the training program, the proportion of participants who were able to correctly identify risk factors for becoming a victim increased from 89.4% to 95.3%. This proportion difference was statistically significant ($z \geq 1.96$, $p < .05$, two tailed test). After attending the training, the proportion of participants who were able to correctly identify the red flags for sex trafficking associated with the transit industry increased from 74.9% to 81.3%. This proportion difference was statistically significant ($z \geq 1.96$, $p < .05$, two tailed test). Table 7 provides a summary of the tests comparing proportions.

Table 7

Proportionality Tests: Endorsement of Items

	Pre-Test (n)	Post-Test (n)	z-score
Participants who indicated that sex trafficking is a problem in Nevada.	78.4% (595)	90.2% (644)	6.24*
Participants who correctly indicated that victims can be U.S. citizens or foreigners.	98.5 (744)	98.9 (708)	0.75
Participants who correctly indicated where human trafficking occurs.	98.4 (741)	99.4 (716)	1.88
Participants who correctly identified the dynamics of sex trafficking of minors.	78.4 (584)	83 (585)	2.19*
Participants who indicated having knowledge of sex trafficking locations near their workplace or routes.	28.3 (209)	35.8 (252)	3.13*
Participants who correctly identified the red flags for sex trafficking.	74.9 (556)	81.3 (581)	2.98*
Participants who correctly identified the individuals likely to be exploited.	89.4 (660)	95.3 (676)	4.30*

*Rejection of the null hypothesis (i.e., H_0: the two groups have the same proportion).

Job-Related Survey Questions

Five job-related skill questions were included on both the pre-test and post-test surveys. When asked if all drivers receiving new commercial driver licenses should undergo human

training, 59% (n = 449) of the pre-test sample indicated that they *strongly agree* with this statement, 21.4% (n = 163) indicated that they *somewhat agree*, while 14.7% (n = 112) indicated that they *neither agree nor disagree*. After attending the training program, 67.9% (n = 490) of the post-test sample indicated that they *strongly agree* with this statement, 20.5% (n = 148) indicated that they *somewhat agree*, while 9.3% (n = 67) responded that they *neither agree nor disagree*. This change was statistically significant, $t(1455) = -4.41$, $p < .001$. The post-test group mean ($M_{post} = 4.53$, SD = .80) was .21 points higher than the pre-test group mean ($M_{pre} = 4.32$, SD = .97).

When asked if it's important for transit employees to know about human trafficking in their day-to-day jobs, 68.6% (n = 522) of the pre-test sample indicated that they *strongly agree* with this statement, 20% (n = 152) indicated that they *somewhat agree* with this statement, while 8.7% (n = 66) responded that they *neither agree nor disagree*. After attending the training program, 70.1% (n = 504) indicated that they *strongly agree* with this statement, 19.6% (n = 141) indicated that they *somewhat agree*, while 8.6% (n = 62) responded that they *neither agree nor disagree*. This change was not statistically significant.

More than half of the pre-test sample (52.4%, n = 398) *strongly agreed* that training transportation personnel is an effective strategy to combat human trafficking, while close to third (30%, n = 228) *somewhat agreed* with this statement and 13.2% (n = 100) *neither agreed nor disagreed*. After attending the training program, the proportion of participants who *strongly agreed* with this statement increased to 64% (n = 458), while nearly a quarter (24.3%, n = 174) *somewhat agreed* with this statement and 10.1% (n = 72) *neither agreed or disagreed*. This change was statistically significant, $t(1447) = -4.86$, $p < .001$. The post-test group mean ($M_{post} = 4.50$, SD =.77) was .22 points higher than the pre-test group mean ($M_{pre} = 4.28$, SD = .94).

Participants were also asked to rate their level of comfort in intervening, if they encountered a potential trafficking victim. Of the 759 participants who answered this pre-test question, 34.9% (n = 265) indicated that they felt *extremely comfortable* to intervene, an additional 35.6% (n = 270) indicated that they felt *somewhat comfortable*, while 17% (n = 129) stated that they felt *neither comfortable nor uncomfortable*. Eight percent indicated that they felt *somewhat uncomfortable* (n = 60), while five percent (n = 35) expressed that they felt *extremely uncomfortable*. Of the 720 participants who answered this question on the post-test, 36% (n = 259) indicated that they felt *extremely comfortable* to intervene, an additional 39.7% (n = 286) indicated that they felt *somewhat comfortable*, while 16.5% (n = 119) stated that they felt *neither comfortable nor uncomfortable*. Five percent indicated that they felt *somewhat uncomfortable* (n = 36), while three percent (n = 20) expressed that they felt *extremely uncomfortable*. This difference was statistically significant, $t(1470) = -2.34$, $p < .05$. The post-test group mean (M_{post} = 4.01, SD = .98) was .13 points higher than the pre-test group mean (M_{pre} = 3.88, SD = 1.11). Table 8 shows the results of the independent samples t-tests for the job-related survey questions and indicates where the assumption of homogeneity of variance was met.

Table 8

Independent Samples T-Test Results for Job-Related Survey Questions

Job-Related Survey Questions	Mean (SD)		t	df	Sig.**
	Pre	Post			
It is important to know about human trafficking in my day-to-day job.	4.52 (.83)	4.57 (.75)	-.1.10	1478	.269
How comfortable are you to intervene if you encounter a potential trafficking victim? *	3.88 (1.11)	4.01 (.98)	-2.34	1470	.019
All drivers receiving CDL should undergo human trafficking training. *	4.32 (.97)	4.53 (.80)	-4.41	1455	.001
Do you believe that training transportation personnel is an effective strategy? *	4.28 (.94)	4.50 (.77)	-4.86	1447	.001

* The assumption of equal variances was violated. Therefore, the test does not assume equal variances was used.
** Two-sided p-value.

When asked if the RTC has a human trafficking protocol in place, 56.3% (n = 427) of the pre-test sample answered affirmatively, while 35.9% (n = 272) indicated *maybe* as their answer choice. After attending RTC's training module, the proportion of participants who agreed with this statement increased to 88.3% (n = 106), while only 9.2% (n = 11) indicated *maybe* as their answer choice (see Figure 6). This proportion difference from pre-test to post-test survey was statistically significant ($z \geq 1.96$, $p < .05$, two tailed test), which indicated rejection of the null

hypothesis (i.e., H_0: the two groups have the same proportion). The obtained *z*-score value of 6.68 is much greater than the expected z-score value of 1.96.

Figure 6

Awareness of RTC's Human Trafficking Reporting Protocols
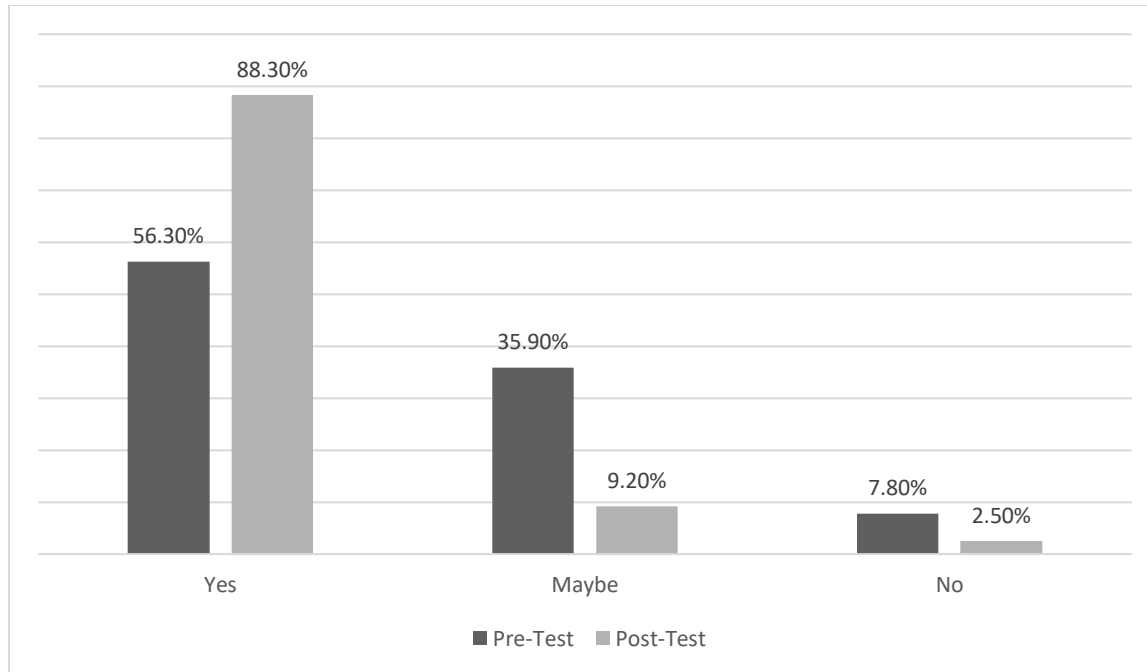
Confidence Survey Questions

Two closed-ended questions were included both on the pre-test and post-test surveys to assess participants' perceived confidence following the implementation of the training program. For instance, when asked, "I know what to do if I suspect someone to be a trafficking victim," 27.1% (n = 222) of the pre-test sample indicated that they *strongly agree* with this statement, 38.9% (n = 318) indicated that they *somewhat agree*, while 22.5% (n = 184) indicated that they *neither agree nor disagree*. After attending the training program, 48.8% (n = 376) indicated that they *strongly agree* with this statement, 34.6% (n = 267) indicated that they *somewhat agree*,

while 12.7% (n = 98) responded that they *neither agree nor disagree* (see Figure 7). This change was statistically significant, $t(1437) = -10.13$, $p < .001$. The post-test group mean ($M_{post} = 4.28$, SD = .85) was .51 points higher than the pre-test group mean ($M_{pre} = 3.77$, SD = 1.06).

Figure 7

Perceived Confidence in Identifying Victims
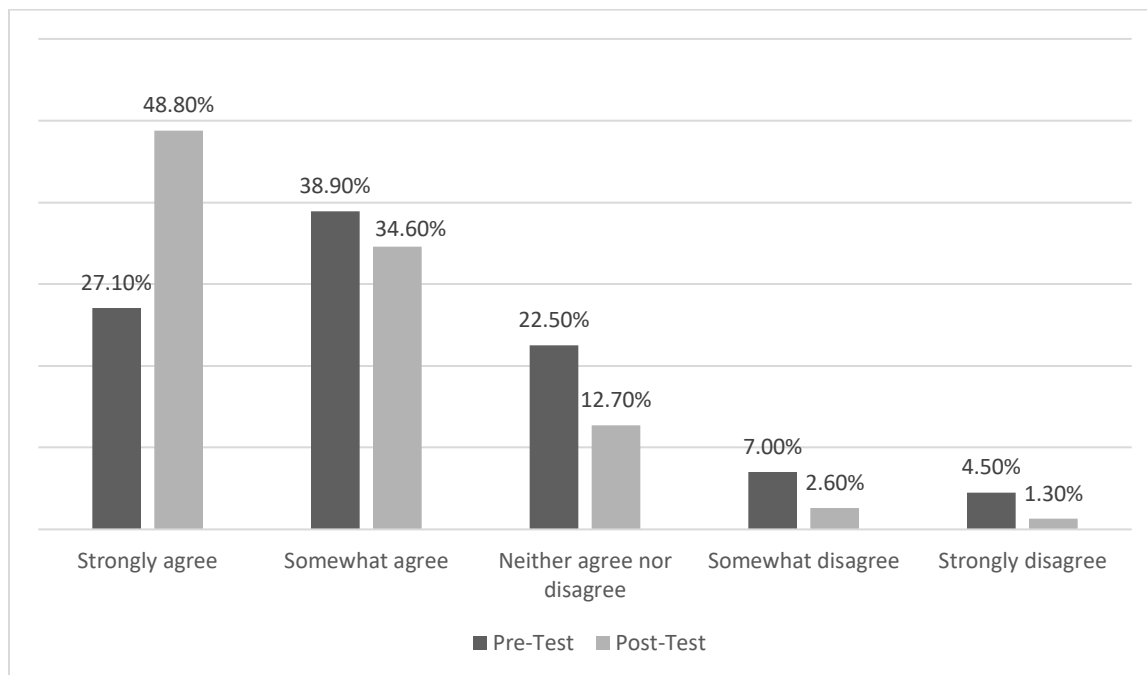
Additionally, the proportion of participants who rated themselves as *extremely knowledgeable* regarding human trafficking increased from 9.2% to 16.5%, after attending RTC's training module. The proportion of participants who rated themselves as *very knowledgeable* also increased from 19.4% to 35.6% (see Figure 8). The increase in the mean on this question was statistically significant, $t(1475) = -9.86$, $p < .001$. There was a .52-point difference between the post-test group mean ($M_{post} = 3.54$, SD = .97) and the pre-test group mean

($M_{pre} = 3.02$, SD = 1.04). Table 9 shows the results of the independent samples t-tests for the two

confidence questions and indicates where the assumption of homogeneity of variance was met.

Figure 8

Perceived Knowledge of Human Trafficking
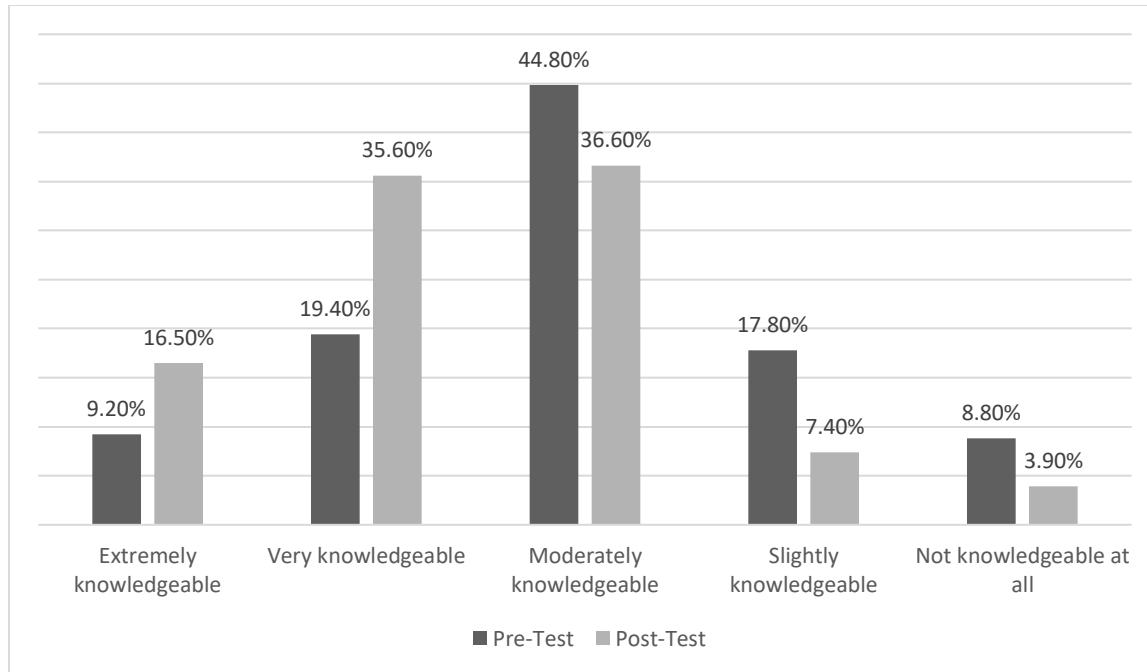
Table 9

Independent Samples T-Test Results for Confidence Survey Questions

Confidence Survey Questions	Mean (SD)		t	df	Sig.**
	Pre	Post	*t*	df	Sig.**
When it comes to human trafficking, I consider myself. *	3.02 (1.04)	3.54 (.97)	-9.86	1475	.001
I know what to do if I suspect someone to be trafficking victim. *	3.77 (1.06)	4.28 (.85)	-10.13	1437	.001

The assumption of equal variances was violated. Therefore, the test does not assume equal variances was used.
** Two-sided p-value.

Perceptions Regarding the Utility of the Training Received

The final questions asked participants to rate the utility of the training received. Because the questions-related to the utility of the training program were only asked on the post-test survey, they did not require to be limited to the sample of bus operators. As such, a summary of participants' responses received between September 1st, 2020 and June 15th, 2021 were included below. Almost half of the participants in the post-test sample (49.6%, n = 393) rated the training as *extremely useful*, while over a third believed that the training was *very useful*. Participants were asked in an open-ended question to also describe what they like most about the training, with 504 responses received. Comments were unequivocally positive and indicated that the training module was highly informative, comprehensive, and helpful in their day-to-day jobs.

Many participants acknowledged that they now have the tools needed to identify potentials victims and make a formal report. Others indicated that the highlights of the human trafficking training module provided by the RTC were the survivor stories and their connection to the Las Vegas community.

Participants' responses on the open-ended question also indicated that they felt empowered by the training program and the information shared during it. For instance, one participant stated, "I can finally do something about it," implying that bus drivers were already seeing CSE happening on their bus routes or near their workplace but were unsure how to help. Another participant acknowledged that "We [as in the bus operators] can make a difference," while another stated that "I can save someone from being a victim." Another participant shared this concluding thought, "Helping others is what I enjoy doing that's why I work paratransit. I hope to provide help in the future because of this training." Lastly, eight participants indicated that they did not enjoy any aspect of the training program, with one participant recommending that "admin should ride the bus" to have a better understanding of what bus operators' day-to-day looks like.

When asked if this type of training should be offered on a yearly basis, more than half (56.3%, n = 447) of the 794 participants indicated that they *strongly agreed* with this statement (see Table 10). Moreover, 70.2% of the post-test sample (n = 550) indicated that they would like to receive additional training on the topic. Overall, most participants endorsed the utility of the training program provided by the RTC and expressed a desire in receiving annual training on the topic.

Table 10

Perceptions Regarding the Quality of the Training Received

Survey Questions	Percent of Post-Test Sample (n)				
The information and human trafficking training I received was?	Extremely Useful	Very Useful	Moderately Useful	Slightly Useful	Not at all Useful
	49.6% (393)	34.3% (272)	12.6% (100)	1.6% (13)	1.9% (15)
Do you think this type of training should be offered on a yearly basis?	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	56.3% (447)	24.8% (197)	14.6% (116)	1.6% (13)	2.6% (21)
I would like to receive additional training on the topic.	True		False		
	70.2% (550)		29.8% (234)		

Research Question #3: Concerns Expressed by Participants

Pre-Test Survey Responses

Participants were asked to describe what they were most concerned regarding their ability to intervene and rescue potential victims, using an open-ended question. A total of 236 participants answered this question. Qualitative descriptive analyses (Sandelowski, 2000) were

performed on participants' answers to the open-ended questions-related to concerns. First, codes were systematically applied to participants' answers using open coding techniques (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Feldman, 1995). Then, participants' responses were organized in themes, and content analysis was used to provide a count for each thematic finding (Esterberg, 2002).

Of the 236 participants who answered this open-ended question, the vast majority (69.5% or n = 164) expressed concerns over their own personal safety, and this was the most common theme. Amongst these participants, 115 were concerned that the sex trafficker might attack them and physically hurt them in the process if they intervened. For instance, one participant was worried about "Being assaulted by the pimp or the person watching over the victim," while another participant questioned what would happen, "If someone tries to hurt me in the process." Other participants echoed this sentiment and were worried about "Getting hurt by someone," "Any harm that may come unto me," "The person might attack me," or "Safety of myself operating alone." One participant was worried for their personal safety because of their height, stating "my physical stature makes me nervous if I have to intervene, but at the same time that's what a duty belt is for." Eighteen participants were concerned that the sex trafficker might have a weapon (either a gun or knife) and would use it to harm them.

Concerns over retaliation were also brought up (n = 15), with participants fearing that the sex trafficker or their associates might later target them or their families for intervening and trying to help the victim. For instance, one participant stated, "I don't want them coming after me and my family," while another one expressed concern about "being targeted afterwards in retribution by the offending individual or organization." Concerns over loss of life because of the possible intervention were expressed by fourteen participants. Two participants were concerned that the sex trafficker would kidnap them.

Participants who expressed concerns over their own personal safety shared the following demographic characteristics. More than half identified as males (53.1% or n = 85), while 46.9% identified as females (n = 75). Close to half identified as Black (47.8% or n = 76), while nearly a third identified as White (29.6% or n = 47), followed by Hispanic with 8.2% (n = 13). The other racial/ethnic categories were endorsed less often. The vast majority identified as bus operators (83.9% or n= 135), followed by the *other* category with 11.8% (n = 19). Only 2.4% (n =4) identified as security officers and 1.9% identified as maintenance workers (n = 3). Over a third (36.4% or n = 59) indicated having between *1 to five years* of experience in the transportation industry. The average age was 47.97 [range, 22-76; SD = 12.85].

Twenty-two participants (9.3%) expressed concerns over the safety of a range of people, including the individuals who are being exploited and RTC passengers who are riding the bus. For instance, one participant was worried that he might be "making matters worse for the victim if she is seen talking to me," while another one was worried that they would get someone hurt or even worse killed if they intervened. Similarly, another participant was nervous that the intervention might intensify the situation rather than help, "making [the sex traffickers] desperate and more dangerous to the victim." Others expressed concerns over the safety of their passengers, who may find themselves on the bus during the incident, but not know what is going on or what to do in the moment.

Eighteen participants (7.6%) were concerned about the legitimacy of the situation and were worried about the possibility of making a mistake. Specifically, participants were concerned that they might say the wrong thing to the victim and potentially offend them or misjudge the situation altogether and get the potential suspect in trouble for no apparent reason. One participant was worried that their decision would later be challenged by the criminal justice

system, while someone else was worried that their decision might violate a person's 4th amendment right. Another participant questioned what the right course of action would be if they were unsure whether the situation deemed an intervention or not.

Fourteen participants (5.9%) felt that they lack the tools, knowledge, or resources needed to identify potential victims and be able to safely intervene. For instance, one participant acknowledged, "I wouldn't know what to do other than call 911," while another participant stated that they did not have enough information on the topic to be able to help. Relatedly, another participant admitted that they wouldn't know "what to actually do, who to contact, how to keep the person safe, what the steps are to not place them in further danger." Because of their lack of knowledge, one participant was worried that they would not be able to help the victim in the right way.

Seven participants (3%) did not think it was their responsibility to intervene, but rather something law enforcement officers should be handling instead. For instance, one participant mentioned that they were not planning on intervening because "[It's] not my job, it's F.B.I. or police, security. I will not be protected hardly in anyway," Other participants echoed this sentiment by stating, "I'm not law enforcement," "[it's] not my job, I don't get paid for it," "Not my concern;" "I don't want to get involved;" and "Where I'm from, you don't mess with people's property, you can get killed." Four participants (1.7%) expressed multiple concerns, which included concerns regarding their own personal safety, but also worries about the legitimacy of the situation and the possibility of making a mistake.

Four participants (1.7%) expressed concerns over how the training and added responsibilities could potentially impact their employment and day-to-day routine. With the added responsibility, one participant felt that they could easily get distracted, "losing focus in

completing my route safely." Another participant was worried about not having time to make a report, as they are already "a busy body," while two participants indicated that they were worried about the possibility of losing their jobs as a result of the incident. Three participants (1.3%) expressed concerns over victims' acceptance of the help offered. Here, one participant felt that potential victims might be more comfortable receiving help from female employees rather than males, because of the abuse and trauma they have experienced at the hands of their sex traffickers. Another participant mentioned that the victim's age might also determine their willingness to accept help and believed that older victims would be less inclined to receive help from a stranger.

Post-Test Survey Responses

Following the same format as the pre-test survey, participants were then asked to describe what they were most concerned about, using an open-ended question. A total of 109 participants answered this post-test survey question. Participants' responses were organized in themes and content analysis was used to provide a count for each thematic finding. These findings are presented below from most common to the least common category. Even after attending RTC's human trafficking training, most participants (76.1% or n = 83) still felt that their personal safety was at risk if they tried to intervene. Of these, 55 participants were concerned that they might get physically hurt if they tried to help a potential trafficking victim. For instance, one participant was worried of how the sex traffickers might react when questioned and feared that their interaction might turn violent.

Other participants echoed this sentiment, stating that the situation could easily become "very dangerous," and that "there is a possibility of being assaulted," or "getting physically hurt." Similarly, another participant was concerned that things would escalate to violence and

because bus drivers are not law enforcement officers, they would not be able to manage the situation safely. Ten participants feared retaliation from the sex traffickers. For instance, one participant was worried that the sex trafficker would come after them once released from the criminal justice system. This fear was shared by other participants, who were concerned that they would be targeted for helping, because the sex trafficker would know their identity and could track them down easily if needed. Seven participants expressed concerns over the sex trafficker having a weapon (either a gun or a knife). One participant was worried that the sex trafficker would "pull out a gun on me while driving." Seven participants were concerned that they could be killed for trying to help. And lastly, three participants were concerned that the sex trafficker would kidnap them and were worried that they might become trafficking victims themselves.

Participants who expressed concerns over their own personal safety shared the following demographic characteristics. Close to half identified as females (53.2% or n = 41), while 46.8% identified as males (n = 36). Close to half identified as Black (47.4% or n = 36), while 18.4% identified as White (n = 14), followed by Hispanic with 13.2% (n = 10) and Mixed-race with also 13.2% (n = 10). The other racial/ethnic categories were endorsed less often. The vast majority identified as bus operators (96.2% or n = 75), followed by the *other* category with 3.6% (n = 3). Over a third (34.2% or n = 27) indicated having between *1 to five years* of experience in the transportation industry, followed by over a quarter (27.8% or n = 22) who indicated having between *six to ten years* of experience in the transportation industry. The average age was 47.05 [range, 23-73; SD = 11.61].

Fifteen participants (13.8%) expressed concerns over the safety of a range of people, including the individuals who are being exploited, as well as RTC passengers who might be riding the bus. Five participants (4.6%) felt that they were still not able to help potential victims

or knew how to best approach someone who might be in danger. Despite these remarks, one of these participants mentioned that even "if I can't help, I would call the police or report to my company what I think is going on." Even after attending the training, four participants still did not think it was their responsibility to intervene, but rather something that law enforcement officers should be handling. One participant (0.9%) expressed concerns over how the added responsibilities could potentially impact their day-to-day routine. Particularly, they were worried that they would get "distracted and lose focus in driving a big bus to complete my route safely." Lastly, worries about the possibility of making a mistake and misjudging the situation altogether were only expressed by one participant (0.9%). Table 11 provides a summary of participant's pre- and post-test answers on this open-ended qualitative question-related to concerns.

Before attending the training program, 69.5% (n = 164) expressed concerns over their own personal safety. After attending the training program, 76.1% (n = 83) expressed concerns over their own personal safety. This proportion difference from pre-test to post-test survey was not statistically significant (H$_1$: $z \geq \pm 1.96$, $p < .05$, two tailed test). The obtained z-score value of 1.27 is lower than the expected z-score value of 1.96.

Table 11

Concerns Expressed by Participants

Thematic Classification	Percent Pre-Test (n = 236)	Percent Post-Test (n = 109)
Personal safety	69.5% (164)	76.1% (83)
Safety of a range of people	9.3% (22)	13.8% (15)
Legitimacy of the situation	7.6% (18)	0.9% (1)
Lack of tools, knowledge, or resources	5.9% (14)	4.6% (5)
Denial of responsibility	3% (7)	3.7% (4)
Multiple concerns	1.7% (4)	NA
Impact on employment and day-to-day routine	1.7% (4)	0.9% (1)
Concerns over victim's response	1.3% (3)	NA

Research Question #4: Interventions Performed by RTC Personnel and Their Community

Health Partner

To assess whether any interventions were performed by RTC personnel and their community health partner after the implementation of the training program, the RTC were willing to share with me their internal reports generated as well as their community partner's internal records. To this end, three data points were used, including 1) RTC's internal records, 2) Community health partner's internal records (i.e., FirstMed Health and Wellness Center), and 3) RTC's Transit Watch Application (i.e., online reporting tool). Being granted access to this information was crucial in determining if any interventions had been performed by RTC personnel and their community health partner.

RTC Internal Reports

The first data point used to determine if any interventions had been performed after the implementation of the training program were RTC's internal reports. To date, a total of four sex trafficking incidents have been reported by RTC security officers since September 1st, 2020 when the training program officially launched. The first two incidents were reported soon after the RTC rolled out its training program, specifically in September and October of 2020. The remaining two were reported nine months later, in June of 2021, which also represented the end of the FTA grant and the last month that RTC's training program was offered.

Two of the incidents occurred at the Bonneville Transit Center (BTC), while the other two occurred at the South Strip Transit Terminal (SSTT). These areas represent two of the six transit centers that the RTC operates across the Las Vegas valley. The BTC is in Downtown Las Vegas, while the SSTT is located south of the Las Vegas Strip. All four victims were females. One of the victims was a minor while the oldest one was 24 years old. All four victims were originally from out-of-state: two were from California, one was from Arizona, while another one was from Arkansas. Therefore, all four victims were originally recruited somewhere else and

then transported to Las Vegas, Nevada where they were forced to sell sex. One of the incidents was featured in the local newspaper (i.e., Las Vegas Review Journal) and resulted in the sex trafficker's arrest (see Appendix F for a copy of the newspaper feature). A summary of each incident report filled by RTC security officers is provided below and available in Table 12. Victims' names have been removed to protect their identities.

Incident Report #1

On September 28th, 2020 at approximately 7:00 PM, a young Black female entered the BTC lobby crying and asked the two RTC security officers patrolling the area for help. She informed the security officers that she was running away from an older Black male, who had followed her inside the RTC building. When the older Black male entered the lobby, he then started screaming at the young female, demanding that they leave together. At this point, the two security officers stepped in and separated the pair, making sure that the male could not physically harm the victim. After asking her a series of follow-up questions, the security officers learned that the victim was being forced to sell sex against her will. The victim was 19 years old and originally from Los Angeles, California. She was brought to Las Vegas, Nevada by the older Black male under false pretenses. Following RTC's reporting protocols, the security officers called LVMPD for assistance, at which point the older Black male decided to leave the BTC lobby. The security officers remained with the victim until LVMPD arrived at the scene. Upon arrival, LVMPD assessed the situation and decided to transfer the case over to VICE detectives. They then transported the victim to an offsite location to conduct a further investigation.

Incident Report #2

On October 5th, 2020 at approximately 8:20 AM, the two security officers patrolling the SSTT area noticed a young Hispanic female, who appeared to be sleeping on one of the transit

benches. Upon a closer look, they realized that the young female had been crying and looked scared. After asking her a series of follow up questions (e.g., what bus are you trying to take, where are you headed, do you need help purchasing a bus ticket), the security officers learned that the victim, who was 24 years old, had no money or any form of identification (e.g., driver's license, passport, social security card). In realizing that some of her answers matched the red flags for sex trafficking discussed during the training program, the security officers continued to ask her additional probing questions. After this exchange, the young female told the security officers that she was running away from a Black male, who was also on property. She arrived in Las Vegas two days prior on a Greyhound bus and was trying to get back home to California. Following RTC's reporting protocols, the security officers moved her inside the lobby and called LVMPD for assistance. During this time, the Black male tried to approach the young female multiple times but was unsuccessful as RTC security were there to separate the pair. He then left the SSTT lobby and caught one of the buses on his way out. When LVMPD officers arrived at the scene, they decide to move the victim to a separate location, where she would be offered shelter and a Greyhound bus ticket to California.

Incident Report #3

On June 17th, 2021 at approximately 6:35 PM, a young Black female entered the SSTT lobby and asked the two RTC security officers patrolling the area for help. She informed the security officers that she had been involved in a sex trafficking ring and was trying to get back home. The victim, who was 23 years old, was transported to Las Vegas, Nevada from Arkansas against her will along with several other women. She somehow escaped her sex trafficker but was scared that he would find her. She informs the security officers that a missing person's report had been filled under her name. Following RTC's reporting protocols, the security officers

called LVMPD for assistance and advised the victim that the SSTT lobby is a safe space. While waiting for LVMPD to arrive, the security officers also contacted FirstMed Health and Wellness Center for assistance. When LVMPD officers arrived at the scene, they offered to secure transportation for the victim, but instead the victim decided to purchase her own Greyhound bus ticket to Arkansas. The security officers waited with the victim onsite until her bus arrived.

Incident Report #4

On June 22nd, 2021, the security officers patrolling the BTC area contacted LVMPD regarding a sex trafficking incident involving a female youth. The minor was originally from Arizona and met her sex trafficker online sometime in December of 2020. In February of 2021, he convinced her to move together to Oakland, California, where she was forced to sell sex against her will. He then brought her to Las Vegas, Nevada for the same reasons. From February to June of 2021, she was forced to have sex with over 100 people, earning approximately $10,000 from these exchanges. During this time, she was beaten daily by her sex trafficker, threatened with a gun, and had all her money taken away. To escape her sex trafficker, the youth victim purchased an RTC bus ticket and sought refuge at the BTC facility, which is in Downtown Las Vegas. The sex trafficker was arrested because of this incident and is now facing multiple charges, including suspicion of kidnapping a minor, assault with a deadline weapon, sex trafficking of a person under 18, and child abuse or neglect (see Appendix F for a copy of the newspaper feature).

Table 12

Sex Trafficking Interventions Performed by RTC Personnel

Date	Location	LVMPD was Called	Victim Profile				Sex Trafficker Status
			Age	Gender	Race	Residence	
09.28.20	BTC	Yes	19	Female	Black	California	Fled the scene
10.05.20	SSTT	Yes	24	Female	Hispanic	California	Fled the scene
06.17.21	SSTT	Yes	23	Female	Black	Arkansas	Not available
06.22.21	BTC	Yes	Minor	Female	Not available	Arizona	Arrested

Community Health Partner: FirstMed Health and Wellness Center

The second data point used to determine if any interventions had been performed after the implementation of the training program were the community health partner's (i.e., FirstMed Health and Wellness Center) internal reports. Based on FirstMed Health and Wellness Center's internal call log, a total of six calls were received between September 1st, 2020, when the RTC rolled out its human trafficking training program and July, 2021. The first call was received on September 28th, 2020 when an LVMPD officer contacted FirstMed Health and Wellness Center regarding help with out of state transportation. This call was in connection to incident report #1 filled by RTC security officers. Because the police officer did not leave a phone number to call back, the community health partner was unable to accommodate their request. The second call

came in almost three months later, on December 25th, 2020, and it involved a female victim who had been trafficked in Las Vegas, Nevada, but was seeking resources in Anaheim, California. FirstMed Health and Wellness Center operator was able to refer her to a domestic violence and human trafficking shelter located in Orange County, California. The FirstMed Health and Wellness Center operator also connected the victim to an intake worker associated with the shelter. The third call came in on January 20th, 2021 and involved a male trafficking victim, who needed safe housing. FirstMed Health and Wellness Center made a referral to a local domestic violence shelter, who was able to accommodate the client's request by placing him in a motel. Later that day, the client called back asking for help with out of state transportation so he could possibly return home to Tennessee. He was also in need of food. FistMed Health and Wellness Center referred him to patient services. No other information was listed passed this point. I do not know if FirstMed Health and Wellness Center was able to accommodate his transportation or food request, as this information was not included in their call log.

The fourth call was received on January 26th, 2021 and involved a female victim, who was trying to escape an abusive situation. She first tried to file a report with LVMPD officers, but they were unable to help. She then decided to call FirstMed Health and Wellness Center, after seeing their hotline number being advertised on one of the RTC buses[7]. FirstMed Health and Wellness Center was able to schedule her an appointment with patient services (e.g., medical care, therapy) for the following week, February 3rd, 2021. No other information was listed passed this point, so I do not know if the victim followed through with the appointment and received help. The fifth call occurred on January 27th, 2021 and involved a male victim, who also needed

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[7] The RTC began advertising the community health partner's hotline number in January of 2021 to coincide with the National Slavery and Human Trafficking Awareness month. Their hotline number was displayed on RTC buses, at their transit centers, and even on their business cards so that victims could reach out directly for help if needed.

help escaping an abusive situation. Because he did not respond to any of the follow-up calls or text, FirstMed Health and Wellness Center was unable to assist him. The last call was received on July 2nd, 2021 and involved a female victim, who was forced to sell sex by her boyfriend. FirstMed Health and Wellness Center referred her to a local domestic violence shelter and scheduled an appointment with patient services. The victim did not follow through with her appointment nor did she respond to any of the subsequent calls made by either FirstMed Health and Wellness Center or the local domestic violence shelter.

RTC's Transit Watch Application

The third data point used to determine if any interventions had been performed after the implementation of the training program was RTC's Transit Watch Application. This online reporting tool allows passengers, victims, and the public to anonymously report any suspicious trafficking activity and safety issues that may arise while using RTC's public transportation services. By July of 2021, no incidents had been reported through RTC's Transit Watch Application following the implementation of the training program.

Overall, this study found that bus operators had a high awareness and understanding of trafficking dynamics prior to attending RTC's training program. A number of perceived locations for sex trafficking were identified by transit personnel. This study also found that the training program was effective at increasing trainee's perceived awareness, job-related skills, and confidence levels. A number of perceived concerns were identified that might prevent transit personnel from intervening and rescuing potential victims. A total of ten interventions were performed by RTC personnel and their community health partner (i.e., FirstMed Health and Wellness Center) following the implementation of the training program.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION

Human trafficking is a problem of concern beyond the tourist areas of Las Vegas. This research project demonstrated that human trafficking is happening in plain sight in Las Vegas and that implementing a training program and protocol can lead to increased confidence in how to address this issue and intervene. The goals of the current study were fourfold: 1) to determine whether transit personnel in Las Vegas were aware of trafficking dynamics prior to receiving any formal training on the topic; 2) to evaluate the degree to which transit personnel's perceived awareness, job-related skills, and confidence levels changed following the implementation of the training program; 3) to identify perceived concerns that might prevent transit personnel from intervening if they suspect someone to be a potential trafficking victim; and, 4) to consider whether any interventions were performed by RTC personnel and their community health partner after the implementation of the training program. Interventions included reports to the transportation agency and its community-based health partners.

Overview of Findings From Research Question #1: Awareness of Trafficking Dynamics

It has been suggested that bus operators are the "eyes and ears" of a city (Department of Transportation [DOT], 2019, p. 28) and can play a critical role in the identification of trafficking victims. This research confirmed that bus operators demonstrate a high awareness and understanding of trafficking dynamics prior to receiving any formal training on the topic. Awareness questions about the scope of the problem showed that the majority of transportation staff recognized the issue (78% was the lowest correct identification level on items asked on the universality and prevalence of trafficking). Bus operators were also aware that sex traffickers are more likely to target at-risk youth (89%), specifically youth who appear to have runaway or are homeless. Their perceptions of sex trafficking being a problem in Nevada aligned with prior

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research completed on the topic (Bejinariu, 2019; Bejinariu et al., 2020; Farley, 2007; Forrey, 2014; Kennedy & Pucci, 2007; Polaris Project, 2019; Spencer et al., 2014). For instance, prior research has identified Las Vegas as one of the top 17 destination cities for sex trafficking in the U.S. (Forrey, 2014). The number of arrests effectuated for sex trafficking within the state of Nevada along with the number of victims identified (Bejinariu, 2019; Bejinariu et al., 2020; Farley, 2007; Kennedy & Pucci, 2007; Polaris Project, 2019; Spencer et al., 2014) also indicate that sex trafficking is prevalent in Nevada.

Prior to receiving any training formal training on the topic, participants were also able to identify a range of areas as perceived locations for sex trafficking, including the Las Vegas Strip, Downtown Las Vegas, West Tropicana Avenue, and Boulder Highway. Local police were able to corroborate that the areas identified by transportation personnel matched the CSE locations known to law enforcement (Personal communication with Elynne Green, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department Human Trafficking Task Force Coordinator, April 2022). Prior research has not asked transportation personnel where they are seeing sex trafficking so these findings confirm that they are the eyes and ears of the transit industry.

Overview of Findings From Research Question #2: Attitude Change Following Training

The utility of specialized training programs to improve identification of and intervention with human trafficking victims has been demonstrated in prior research on police (Mapp et al., 2016; Newton et al., 2008; Renzetti et al., 2015; Wilson & Dalton, 2008; Wilson et al., 2006) and medical staff (Beck et al., 2015; Chisolm-Straker et al., 2012; Donahue et al., 2019; Grace et al., 2014). The benefits of training bus operators on human trafficking dynamics has yet to be evaluated. Because bus operators encounter youth involved in CSE frequently and throughout the course of their daily jobs (Polaris Project, 2018; NASEM, 2020), they are in a unique

position to intervene and help. This brief educational training program (i.e., two hours) created by the RTC also demonstrated considerable promise for changing bus operator's awareness, job-related skills, and confidence levels regarding trafficking dynamics. Significant changes from pre-test to post-test were reported on several of the survey questions, suggesting that the training program created by the RTC was indeed effective at changing trainee's attitudes.

In terms of perceived awareness, after attending the training program, bus operators were more likely to believe that sex trafficking is a problem in Nevada. Trained bus operators were also better at identifying the types of individuals sex traffickers are more likely to target as well as the red flags for sex trafficking. The red flags for sex trafficking identified by participants are similar to the ones outlined by the U.S. Department of Transportation (2019) and Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT, 2020). These red flags have also been used in other specialized training programs designed specifically for transportation personnel, including truck drivers and school bus drivers (e.g., Busing on the Lookout, Truckers Against Trafficking). Trained bus operators had a better understanding of the dynamics of sex trafficking of minors. This finding aligns with prior research that specialized training programs can increase front-line workers perceived knowledge of human trafficking (Chisolm-Straker et al., 2012; Donahue et al., 2019).

After attending the training program, bus operators' perceived awareness of sex trafficking locations also increased. Similar to prior research on the importance of specialized training programs for police (Mapp et al., 2016; Renzetti et al., 2015; Wilson et al., 2006) and medical staff (Chisolm-Straker et al., 2012; Donahue et al., 2019; Grace et al., 2014), this finding revealed that transportation personnel should be also be trained to intervene given that they are seeing CSE in their day-to-day jobs.

In terms of job-related skills, trained bus operators were more knowledgeable about RTC's reporting protocols. Trained bus operators were also more likely to believe that all drivers receiving commercial driving licenses (CDLs) should undergo human trafficking training. Trained bus operators reported feeling more comfortable to intervene if they encountered a potential trafficking victim. Additionally, they were more likely to believe that training transportation personnel is an effective strategy in combating human trafficking, after attending the training program. Significant changes from pre-test to post-test were not only reported regarding bus operator's perceived awareness and job-related skills, but also in their confidence levels. For instance, bus operators were also more likely to rate themselves as *extremely knowledgeable* regarding human trafficking, after attending the training program. Trained bus operators reported that they were more likely to know what to do if they suspect someone to be a potential trafficking victim. These findings demonstrate the importance of training bus operators on trafficking dynamics similar to training law enforcement personnel (Mapp et al., 2016; Renzetti et al., 2015; Wilson et al., 2006) and medical staff (Chisolm-Straker et al., 2012; Donahue et al., 2019; Grace et al., 2014).

Overview of Findings From Research Question #3: Concerns Expressed by Participants

The utility of sex trafficking awareness programs will be limited if transportation personnel have reservations about intervening. In this study, participants reported personal safety as their greatest concern over intervening, both on the pre-test survey (n = 164) and then again on post-test survey (n = 83). Specifically, participants were worried about getting injured, being physically attacked by the sex trafficker, or even worse being killed if they tried to intervene and rescue potential victims. Both Black men and women expressed safety concerns. The second highest concern reported by training participants involved the safety of a range of people,

including the victims who are being exploited and RTC passengers who might also be riding the bus. This was expressed both on the pre-test survey (n = 22) and then again on the post-test (n =15), so the training did not alleviate this concern.

This finding aligns with prior research that a range of barriers can prevent bystanders from intervening (Berkowitx, 2009; Burn, 2009; Karakashian et al., 2006; Latané & Darley; 1968, 1970; Latané & Nida, 1981; Levine et al., 2002, 2005). For instance, fear of being judged has been identified as a barrier to bystander intervention (Berkowitx, 2009; Karakashian et al., 2006; Latané & Darley; 1968, 1970). Perceptions of victim blameworthiness has been identified as a barrier, more so for men than women (Burn, 2009). Other barriers identified in prior research include the presence of other bystanders, the ambiguity of the situation, and bystanders lacking the tools needed to effectively intervene (Latané & Darley; 1968, 1970; Latané & Nida, 1981).

Overview of Findings From Research Question #4: Interventions Performed by RTC Personnel and Their Community Health Partner

There was a limited window to assess the application of the training due to the short grant timeframe. The training program began on September 1st, 2020 and data collection ended in June 15th, 2021. During this ten-month window, a total of four interventions were performed by RTC security officers following the implementation of the training program. The interventions meant that four victims were identified and rescued, while one sex trafficker was arrested and indicted on several counts (i.e., suspicion of kidnapping a minor, assault with a deadline weapon, sex trafficking of a person under 18, and child abuse or neglect). These findings align with prior research that specialized training programs for front-line workers can improve victim identification (Chisolm-Straker et al., 2012; Donahue et al., 2019; Grace et al., 2014). According

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to the RTC, there were no reports of human trafficking made in the years prior to the implementation of the human trafficking training program. However, it could be that RTC personnel were calling 911 prior to the implementation of the human trafficking training program, but now are using the internal mechanisms of reporting via dispatch, as outlined in their reporting protocols.

Also, important to note is that none of the four reports were initiated by bus operators, even though bus operators were the majority of the people trained. Therefore, it is possible that the training had a greater impact on security officers because they were the ones who reported the four incidents. Another possible explanation could be that security officers were more likely to intervene because they work in teams of two, whereas the bus operators operate alone. The security officers are also equipped with body cameras as well as a handgun, baton, and beacon that tracks their location in real time (Las Vegas Review-Journal, 2020). They have also been trained on de-escalation tactics (Las Vegas Review-Journal, 2020) in addition to receiving the human trafficking training provided by the RTC. Unfortunately, only three of the 72 security officers in the training completed a post-test survey so their attitude change could not be measured directly. The fact that no victims were identified by bus operators might indicate that they still do not feel comfortable to intervene despite reporting seeing CSE taking place near their routes or workplace.

All four victims identified were female. Victims age varied with the youngest being a minor, while the oldest was only 24. Two identified as Black, one identified as Hispanic, while the minor's demographic information was redacted to protect her identity and maintain her anonymity. None of the four victims identified were local to Las Vegas. Two were from California, one was from Arkansas, while the fourth one was from Arizona. So, all four victims

were originally recruited somewhere else and then transported to Las Vegas where they were forced to sell sex by their traffickers. One of the four victims was brought to Las Vegas on a Greyhound bus. All four victims were identified at two of the six transit centers operated by the RTC, namely the SSTT and the BTC. This confirms prior research that the transportation industry is being used to facilitate CSE and that victims use buses during their exiting attempts (Connell et al., 2018; Dank et al., 2014; Mills et al., 2019; Polaris Project, 2018; Roe-Sepowitz, 2019; Shoop, 2019; Wilson, 2012).

In all four incidents, RTC security officers called LVMPD for assistance, following RTC's human trafficking reporting protocols. The one incident involving a minor resulted in the sex trafficker's arrest and indictment (i.e., suspicion of kidnapping a minor, assault with a deadline weapon, sex trafficking of a person under 18, and child abuse or neglect). Using their body-cameras, the security officers captured pictures of the suspects and shared this information with the police. So, the training went beyond RTC personnel identifying victims and sex traffickers, but also helped local law enforcement build cases. Three of the four sex traffickers were described as young Black males. Because one of the sex traffickers was not present when the victim was identified, their demographic information was not reported by RTC security officers. The victims also gave statements to the police, describing their traffickers, to aid the police in apprehending the suspects. It is possible that the suspects were later apprehended, but I do not know for a fact because I was not given access to LVMPD's internal records.

In addition to the four interventions performed by RTC personnel, six referrals were made to the community health partner (i.e., FirstMed Health and Wellness Center). A range of services were provided to victims, including out-of-state transportation, safe housing, and patient services (i.e., medical care, therapy). Because their hotline number was advertised on RTC's

buses and at their transit centers, victims were able to call directly for help. These services were

provided to victims at no cost to them and regardless if a police or an RTC report had been filled.

The community health partner was able to assist victims with out of state requests (i.e.,

placement in human trafficking shelter located in Orange County, California). They were also

able to help victims even when they were denied help by LVMPD. Although there were some

hiccups in the beginning when the first referrals came through, having a community health

partner ready to pair people who identified as victims with mental health/medical/supportive

services was crucial to the success of the training program and RTC's ability to assist victims.

Given the success of the two reporting measures (i.e., RTC personnel and community

health partner), I also thought that reports would be coming in through RTC's Transit Watch

Application. However, to date, there haven't been any reports submitted through the online

application by victims, transit passengers, or the public. This was surprising, especially given

that four human trafficking incidents have been reported using the Transit Watch Application by

transit passengers in other states[8].

Lack of reporting via RTC's Transit Watch Application in Southern Nevada could be

explained by several factors. First, victims, community members, and passengers might prefer

the other two reporting options (e.g., by approaching an RTC employee directly or calling the

community partner's hotline number). Another possible explanation could be that those reporting

might not have the Transit Watch Application downloaded onto their smart phones or know of it.

If they are familiar with it, passengers and/or victims might not know how to use the online

application or might not have access to a smart phone to initiate a report. Also, the public did not

receive the training that RTC personnel were mandated to attend. The public was only made

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[8] For a copy of the human trafficking reports submitted using the Transit Watch Application in other states, please see https://elerts.com/assets/ELERTS-Human-Trafficking.pdf

aware of the three reporting options available to them via the human trafficking awareness campaign. Future research should continue to explore how increasing public awareness about the red flags for sex trafficking might impact the identification of victims.

Overall, the effectiveness of the training program was measured using two indicators of success. First, the training program was evaluated based on its ability to change the attitudes of its trainees. Given that the training program led to an increase in trainee's perceived awareness, job-related skills, and confidence levels, its effectiveness was proven on this metric. The second indicator used was the number of interventions performed by RTC personnel and their community health partner (i.e., FirstMed Health and Wellness Center) following the implementation of the training program. Given that ten interventions were performed (i.e., four by RTC security and six by FirstMed Health and Wellness Center) with one resulting in the sex trafficker's arrest, the training program's effectiveness on this metric was also proven.

Connections to Adult Learning Theory and Bystander Intervention

Adult Learning Theory

The adult learning theory proposed by Knowles (1980) identifies several teaching practices that are most conducive to adult learning. The training program developed by the RTC incorporated many of Knowles' (1980) teaching practices in their curriculum. For instance, during the training presentation, the RTC played several relevant videos on trafficking to reinforce the concept taught and enhance the quality of the training presentation. One of the videos played during the training presentation featured a local survivor who was recruited by a sex trafficker at an RTC bus stop while waiting for the bus. So, trainees got to see how the transit industry, specifically a local transportation agency like the RTC, is being used to facilitate sex trafficking. This gave trainees an opportunity to find relevance in the material taught.

Incorporating videos into training presentations, rather than just relying on lecture slides alone, has been shown to increase trainees' retention rates (Hurtubise et al., 2013; Pinsky & Wipf, 2000; Reed et al., 2014).

Additionally, the training presentation included testimonials from a local survivor. Thus, trainees got to also hear firsthand from a local survivor how she was recruited into CSE and how difficult it was for her to escape her sex trafficker. Survivor's testimony once again reinforced the connection between the transit industry and sex trafficking. Trainees were also shown examples of real trafficking reports received through the Transit Watch Application from passengers from other U.S. states thus reinforcing once again the connection between the transit industry and sex trafficking.

Trainees were also presented with three simulation exercises, which were relevant to their workplace, making their learning process more meaningful. These exercises gave trainees an opportunity to practice RTC's reporting protocols in real time and promote skill development. The first exercise trainees were presented with involved a transit ambassador and a potential trafficking victim. The second exercise involved a security officer and a potential sex trafficker, while the third exercise involved a bus operator and potential trafficking victim. In between each exercise, trainees were asked how they would respond in these moments, what steps they would follow and why. During these moments, they were asked to display their understanding of RTC's reporting protocols, which presented an opportunity for further instruction and discussion. Skill-building exercises, such as the ones used by the RTC, have been shown to improve learning (Knowles, 1980). In their survey responses, trainees indicated that they found these practices to be useful in their day-to-day jobs. As such, 50% of trainees indicated that the training program was *extremely useful,* while over a third indicated that it was *very useful.* Hearing first-hand

from the survivor was indicated as a highlight of the training program as was the information and victim resources shares during the training presentation.

Based on Knowles' adult learning theory (1980), I would recommend several improvements to RTC's training program. Although bus drivers were most of the people trained, none of the four incident reports were initiated by bus operators. Therefore, my recommendations highlight the things that the RTC could do so that the bus operators call dispatch like they were trained to do and follow the reporting protocol. For instance, to make the training even more relevant to employees, the RTC might consider having one of the security officers who identified and helped rescue one of the four victims talk to trainees about their experience. If trainees see a fellow employee talk about their experiences saving a life, they might be more inclined to follow suit and help rescue a potential victim. The RTC should also have someone who is either a bus operator or a security officer describe the reporting protocols rather than the Human Resource manager who facilitated the training presentation. Learning about the reporting protocols from one of their peers might be more impactful to employees. They would be able to relate and connect with trainees based on their shared responsibilities and experiences. To make the training even more impactful, the RTC should enlist the help of one of the four victims they helped identify and rescue. Having the victim speak directly to RTC trainees about how the intervention saved her life and helped her reunite with her family might help employees understand the impact their actions could have on someone's life. If the victim hadn't been identified by RTC personnel, she would potentially still be forced to sell sex.

Bystander Intervention Model

The bystander intervention model can help explain why certain situations elicit an intervention from bystanders while others do not (Latané & Darley, 1968, 1970). It also

identifies several barriers that aim to explain the behavior of inactive bystanders (Latané & Darley, 1968, 1970). Certain aspects of RTC's training program align with research on bystander intervention and were designed to reduce the inaction of RTC employees and contractors. Similar to bystander responsibilities, RTC trainees were told that they have a moral and ethical obligation to intervene if they suspect a potential trafficking situation. It was also communicated that this responsibility is now part of their day-to-day job requirements. The training presentation created by the RTC featured survivor testimonies, videos, and examples depicting survivors. By bringing in a survivor speaker, the RTC attempted to increase trainees' empathy towards victims so that they would be more motivated to intervene.

Additionally, the RTC incorporated three skill building exercises into their curriculum, which allowed trainees to practice the skills learned from the training presentation. Skill building exercises, such like the ones used by the RTC, are often incorporated into bystander-based prevention programs because they allow bystander to practice the prosocial behaviors needed to intervene (Banyard et al., 2004, 2007; Coker et al., 2011, 2016). The RTC also shared with trainees several resources that would support them in intervening as well as the victims/ survivors' needing assistance. To this end, the RTC created a partnership with a community health center (FirstMed Health and Wellness Center) that would be able to provide crisis intervention to victims. The RTC shared this information with trainees along with information on other service providers (e.g., SafeNest, the Shade Tree) so that they have knowledge of resources available to them.

The RTC also established a human trafficking reporting protocol that would provide guidance during these moments and keep employees safe. RTC's reporting protocols were based on four main principles, including 1) to observe any suspicious activity, 2) to report the incident

to dispatch, 3) advise potential victims that the RTC is a safe space, and, lastly, 4) to refer victims to the community health partner. Bus operators were given a code name that they could use when calling dispatch that would indicate that they noticed a potential trafficking situation. The code name was also created to keep bus operators save during these moments.

The training also engaged other RTC employees and not just the bus operators, with the security officers being responsible for responding to the incident and reporting it. Thus, the reporting protocol asked bus operators to act as the eyes and years of their agency, while it required the security officers to intervene. Because security officers cannot legally detain anyone nor have any legal jurisdiction outside of RTC facilities, they were also instructed to contact local law enforcement in these moments. Again, these policies were implemented to provide guidance and keep employees safe as they intervene.

The bystander intervention model, proposed by Latané and Darley (1968, 1970), may help explain why none of the four reports were initiated by bus drivers, even though bus drivers were the majority of the people trained. Trainees indicated via an open-ended question that they did not think it was they responsibility to intervene, but rather something law enforcement officers or security officers should be handling instead. Latané and Darley (1968, 1970) refer to this barrier as diffusion of responsibility and argue that as the number of bystanders increase so does the diffusion of responsibility. Trainees also reported that they were concerned about the legitimacy of the situation and worried about the possibility of making a mistake if they intervened. Latané and Darley (1968, 1970) refer to this barrier as an audience inhibitor, where bystanders fear being judged by others, especially if the intervention is in a public setting, so they decide to not intervene as a result. According to Latané and Darley (1968, 1970), highly ambiguous situations are also more likely to render an inaction for bystanders. More recent

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studies have also identified fears of being judged as a barrier to intervening (Berkowitx, 2009; Karakashian, et al., 2006). A small number of trainees also felt that they lack the tools, knowledge, and resources needed to effectively intervene. Prior research has identified skill-based deficits as barriers to bystander intervention (Latané & Darley,1968, 1970).

Based upon research and theory on the bystander effect, I would recommend several improvements to RTC's training program. First, the RTC should incorporate scenarios of what a successful intervention should look like. Here, the RTC could have paid actors act the out scenarios and therefore, demonstrate prosocial role modeling behaviors. The scenarios would be presented in addition to the simulation exercises, which are currently utilized by the RTC. The scenarios would showcase a variety of employees (i.e., actors playing the role of a bus operator, security officer) interacting with victims and following the steps outlined in RTC's reporting protocols. Second, the RTC should incorporate a section on safety protocols, given that only a third of bus operators felt *extremely comfortable* to intervene if the suspect someone to be a potential trafficking victim. Additionally, most trainees expressed concerns over their own personal safety, followed by concerns over the safety of range of people (e.g., victims, RTC passengers). The RTC should have a lengthier conversation on their reporting protocols and what each type of employee is responsible for doing if they encounter a potential trafficking victim. The RTC should reinforce how they are planning to keep employees safe during these interactions. Future training programs should include strategies for effective interventions and bystander approaches to address trainees' safety concerns.

Limitations

There are several limitations associated with this research study which should be considered when interpreting this study's findings. Because the study was conducted in an area

with high levels of documented CSE activity, it is possible that participants had a baseline understanding of the topic prior to receiving any formal training on it by virtue of living in Las Vegas, Nevada. Henceforth, it is possible that the training program might have a greater impact on transit personnel from other regions of the U.S., where there is less awareness or knowledge of CSE. Future research should examine the impact a sex trafficking program would have on transit personnel from other geographical locations. Additionally, with only one study site (i.e., Las Vegas, Nevada), there might be a limited generalizability of the study findings.

Another limitation of this study is that fewer participants completed the post-test (61%) than the pre-test survey (90%). A total of 1,243 participants completed the pre-test survey, whereas only 837 participants completed the post-test survey. This represents an attrition rate of approximately 33% of participants. It might be that the participants who did not complete the post-test were the people who either (a) did not like the training or (b) did not learn much from the training. This is an inherent limitation of online surveys (selection bias). It appears that the participants who were less likely to complete the post-test survey were the people who completed the training between September 1st and December 8th, 2020. Because the participants who completed the training during this timeframe did not generally complete the post, they were not included in the quantitative analyses. Therefore, the quantitative analyses were limited to the sample of bus operators since they were the vast majority of people who completed the pre- and post-test (between December 9th, 2020 and June 15th, 2021). Future research should compare pre- and post-test outcomes based on participants' demographic information (i.e., gender, race, age, years of experience).

Because participants completed the online surveys anonymously, it was not possible to track individual changes from pre-test to post-test. Matching pre-test to post-test scores based on

demographic information (i.e., age, race, gender, type of employees, number of years in the profession) was also not possible. For instance, some participants did not indicate their demographic information on both surveys (i.e., pre-test survey and post-test survey). Many of the participants that indicated their demographic information on both the pre-test and post-test surveys shared similar characteristics, so it was not possible to confidently narrow down participants this way.

As a result, measurement of changes from pre-test to post-test were done using independent, rather than paired, samples t-tests. The use of independent samples t-tests instead of dependent, paired samples t-tests reduced the statistical power, making the t-tests conservative. Thus, for the test results that found a significant difference, I can confidently say that the results indicated a real difference. For the test results that did not find a significant difference, it might be that a Type II error was due to lower the statistical power because it was not possible to match the pre-test to the post-test data or that there was truly no difference. Future research should attempt to match pre- and post-test responses to specific participants to assess individual changes over time.

Participants were asked to complete the post-test survey immediately after receiving the training. Thus, only a few hours had passed between completing the pre-test and the post-test, which might have resulted in an overestimation of the impact of the human trafficking training program. Regardless, this format has been used in other program evaluations (see Grace et al., 2014), where participants were assessed immediately after attending a 25-minute human trafficking presentation. However, future research should assess participants' awareness, job-related skills, and confidence levels at multiple points in time to determine whether changes are stable over time. For instance, the first assessment should occur immediately after the training

was delivered. The second assessment should occur at the six-months mark, while the third assessment should occur at the one-year mark to assess participant's retention rates.

The survey design (i.e., online versus in-person) might also provide an explanation to why less participants completed the post-test than the pre-test survey. Using an in-person format rather than an online one might have increased participant's responses on the post-test survey. In fact, both the human trafficking training presentation provided by the RTC, and the pre- and post-test surveys created to assess participant's awareness, job-related skills, and confidence were intended to be offered in person originally. However, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was decided that an online format might be a better and safer venue, especially given the large number of participants who completed the training. Switching to an online format allowed the RTC to deliver the training to a larger audience and without having to worry about health concerns.

On several of the questions, participants were asked to rate their perceived levels of awareness, job-related skills, and confidence, which might have presented an opportunity for social desirability bias. It is possible that participants rated themselves as *extremely knowledgeable* or *extremely comfortable* on several of the items or indicated *strongly agree* for some of the questions, when this might not have been the case, to appear in a more favorable light. In their survey answers, participants reported concerns for their personal safety. Future research should use fear of crime theory as a theoretical framework to explain safety concerns. Future research should also explore whether these safety concerns vary by gender, race, or number of years of experience in the field and whether participant's demographic information impacts training and likelihood of intervening. Additionally, because trainees were compensated

for attending the training program, this might have influenced their perceptions regarding the utility of the training program and thus rated it more favorably.

Furthermore, this study assessed the effectiveness of RTC's training program based on several items that were covered during the training presentation. However, there are other indicators outside of the ones listed in this study that could be considered when assessing the effectiveness of any training program (e.g., ability to define human trafficking or sex trafficking, use of vignettes).

Lastly, the author was responsible for the coding and thematic organization of the qualitative data (i.e., open-ended questions). Therefore, with only one person performing the thematic classification of participants' answers to the open-ended questions, rather than having multiple coders, there might be a greater likelihood of bias. Despite these limitations, the current study addresses an important topic, one that oftentimes goes understudied. To my knowledge, this is the first study to provide evidence that training bus operators on human trafficking dynamics could positively impact their awareness, job-related skills, and confidence levels in identifying victims.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

Overall, important findings from this study suggest that RTC's training program was effective as it increased participant's awareness, job-related skills, and confidence levels in identifying victims. In addition to changing participant's attitudes, a number of interventions were also performed following the implementation of the training program. Of these interventions, four were performed by RTC personnel, while six were performed by their community health partner (i.e., FirstMed Health and Wellness Center). These interventions meant that ten victims were helped and that one sex trafficker was arrested. Implications for future research directions are drawn as well as policy recommendations for improving sex trafficking training curriculum for transit personnel. Even with the noted limitations above, there is a greater understanding of the safety concerns that might prevent transit personnel from intervening and rescuing potential victims. In conclusion, and in light of the findings of this study, the following section offers suggestions based on the strengths of the training program as well as relevant policy recommendations and future research directions.

Strengths of the Training Program

One unique strategy of this training program was the collaboration with a range of partners, including transit contractors, law enforcement officers (i.e., Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department), and a community health provider (i.e., FirstMed Health and Wellness Center). The transit contractors assisted with victim identification as well as reporting of incidents. LVMPD police officers helped victims once they were identified, while they also focused on investigating and prosecuting their sex traffickers. As a federally qualified health center, FirstMed Health and Wellness Center provided a range of services to victims, including safe housing, health, therapy, and out-of-state transportation amongst other support services,

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depending on victim's individual needs. These services were available to victims regardless of whether a police report or an RTC report had been filled and, most importantly, at no cost to the victims. Over the course of a year, four victims were identified, and one sex trafficker was arrested. Additionally, six referrals were made to the community health partner. Other transit agencies across the U.S. that are looking to implement a human trafficking training module into their protocols should leverage existing community partnerships to this goal.

Another unique strategy of this training program was the inclusion of local survivors of sex trafficking in various capacities. For instance, in developing the training program, the RTC enlisted the help of an expert consultant, who is also sex trafficking survivor. She provided guidance during the implementation phase and helped draft the training curriculum. To complement the training program, the RTC also hired a second sex trafficking survivor who shared her testimony with participants during the training presentation. Additionally, one of the videos presented during the training module featured a local survivor, who was recruited by a sex trafficker at a local RTC bus stop, specifically the 201A bus route, while waiting to take the bus home. When developing training programs, policies, and even laws, it is important to enlist the help of survivors as they are the real subject matter experts. Trainees also found their testimonies to be extremely impactful and a highlight of the training module. During the training presentation, participants were also provided with three transit simulation exercises that were relevant to their workplace, making the learning process more meaningful (Knowles, 1990).

In addition to training its existing employees and new hires on human trafficking dynamics, the RTC also developed an awareness campaign to encourage the public to report possible trafficking incidents. As a result, a series of digital billboards were installed at several bus stops and transit hubs across the Las Vegas valley. Several bus and building wraps were also

installed at RTC's main transit centers along with transit shelter ads and bathroom posters. New business cards were created for bus operators and security officers to use and hand out to potential victims when needed.

And lastly, a series of digital advertisements were released on RTC's social media platforms to coincide with the National Slavery and Human Trafficking Awareness month, which ran for approximately two months. Several people called the community health partner's hotline number, after seeing their number being advertised on one of the RTC buses. Moving forward, the RTC should consider running the digital campaign for longer than two months to give the public more time to retain and recall the information. The awareness campaign should also include information on specific risk factors or indicators to look out for and not just reporting options. Other transit agencies across the U.S. that are looking to implement a human trafficking training presentation within their protocols should consider developing an awareness campaign in addition to training their personnel on human trafficking dynamics. By raising awareness and providing the public with the tools needed to assist, there is a greater chance that more victims will be identified.

Policy Recommendations

Several policy recommendations can be drawn from these findings. First, given that more than half of the post-test sample indicated that this type of training should be offered on a yearly basis, the RTC should accommodate this request by repeating this training annually. Investing in long-term, ongoing training will not only help improve RTC employee's awareness, job-related skills, and confidence levels, but also their retention rates. Ongoing training might be needed to maintain participant's knowledge base over long periods of time. The RTC should also share a recording of the training presentation so that personnel can access it at their convenience and

when they deem a review is needed. Additionally, because most participants indicated that they would like to receive additional training on the topic, a series of refresher trainings should also be scheduled throughout the year.

Given participants feedback, the RTC has already begun delivering refresher trainings. As of yet, the RTC has delivered three refresher courses on the topic during the following dates: June 28th, 29th, and 30th of 2021. The refresher trainings lasted approximately an hour each and provided a review of RTC reporting protocols regarding human trafficking and local resources available to victims through the community health partner (i.e., FirstMed Health and Wellness Center). Similar to the initial training presentation offered by the RTC, the refresher courses also featured a series of role-playing exercises specific to the transit sector. Experiential learning activities like the ones used by the RTC have been shown to be conducive to adult learning (Knowle, 1980) and should be noted as a recommended practice. Overall, the refresher training sessions should help solidify transit personnel's knowledge of trafficking dynamics, RTC's reporting protocols, and their ability to identify and assist potential victims.

The RTC should also consider increasing the time allocated for their training presentation and refresher courses and thus developing a more intensive training program. For instance, Darwinkel and colleagues (2013) argue that for a specialized training program to be effective it must be relatively time intensive (e.g., 98 hours over four consecutive weeks). However, their specialized training program did not cover human trafficking as the content area, but rather sexual assault, whilst their sample included police officers and not transit personnel.

Other specialized training programs have produced moderate changes in police officers' perceptions of human trafficking after only a brief, four-hour training (Renzetti et al., 2015). In the medical field, human trafficking training programs as brief as 20 minutes (Chisolm-Straker et

al., 2012; Donahue et al., 2019) or 25 minutes (Grace et al., 2014) have shown to be effective, while in the busing and trucking industry, human trafficking training programs have been as brief as 22 minutes (through the BOTL program) or 30 minutes (via TAT's program). However, the effectiveness of either of these transit training programs has not been evaluated. Given these studies, it appears that the time allocated per training program is industry specific and dependent on the topic matter and target population.

As RTC tweaks its training program, they must also keep in mind the varied concerns of their employees and discuss how they are planning on ensuring not only employee safety, but also passenger and public safety. In developing a safety protocol, the RTC should discuss the number of security and safety enhancements they have recently invested in. For instance, they have made several upgrades to their video surveillance system (Las Vegas Review-Journal, 2020). As a result, all RTC buses and transit centers are now equipped with security cameras that offer real-time streaming to the security team and LVMPD. In fact, each RTC bus has a total of 12 cameras installed for security purposes.

The RTC has also increased the number of security officers employed by 33% (Las Vegas Review-Journal, 2020). Security officers are now equipped with body cameras as well as a handgun, baton, and beacon that tracks their location in real time. Security officers have also been trained in de-escalation tactics to reduce violent incidents on RTC buses and at their facilities. Additional security upgrades were made to increase bus operator's safety specifically, including installing screen shields and emergency buttons on each RTC bus. The RTC has even made changes to its landscaping and eliminated any rock formation found at their facilities, as yet another creative way to prevent violent assaults. In total, the RTC spent approximately $21 million in safety and security enhancements to protect transit personnel from future victimization

as well as to reduce the likelihood of violent incidents (Las Vegas Review-Journal, 2020). This information should be shared during the training program, as some employees might not be aware of all the changes and improvements the RTC has made to ensure their safety as well as the safety of passengers and the public.

As yet another way to ensure employee safety, the RTC should require all of its front-line workers, and not just their security officers, to be trained on de-escalation tactics. To this end, the RTC could partner with other transit or security agencies that are already providing these training courses. For instance, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) offers an online course on *Assault Awareness and Prevention for Transit Operators*, in partnership with the National Transit Institute, that the RTC could incorporate into their training curriculum. The online course is approximately four hours long and teaches transit operates a range of de-escalation tactics and prevention strategies. It is possible that once RTC employees receive this type of training and are familiar with some of the communication and response skills needed in these situations, they might feel more comfortable to intervene and report human trafficking incidents.

Given that most trainees expressed concerns over their own personal safety, the RTC should consider covering this topic extensively during their presentation and explain how they are planning on maintaining employee safety during these moments. This is especially important given that RTC transit employees face growing rates of assaults (Las Vegas Review-Journal, 2020). For instance, in 2019, there were a total of 186 assaults reported on RTC buses and at their properties (Las Vegas Review-Journal, 2020). Of these, 162 assaults occurred on RTC buses, while 24 assaults occurred at RTC properties (e.g., bus stops, transit centers). The assaults consisted of a range of behaviors (e.g., punches, spitting) and involved either passenger on transit operator attacks or passenger on passenger attacks. The number of assaults reported in 2019

represents a 27% increase from the number of assaults reported in 2017 (Las Vegas Review-Journal, 2020). Deadly incidents have also been reported on RTC buses or at their properties; however, these instances were rare (Las Vegas Review-Journal, 2020). It is important that the RTC addresses the safety concerns of their bus operators and other front-line workers, as these concerns might prevent some employees from intervening. Henceforth, many victims might go unidentified.

Given participants' responses to the open-ended question related to locations, additional LVMPD patrol officers could be assigned at the locations identified by trainees as perceived locations for sex trafficking. On West Tropicana Avenue, additional patrol units should be assigned between Dean Martin and Decatur, specifically in front of the Orleans Casino, Wild Wild West Casino, as well as at the truck stop located between these two casinos. On Boulder Highway, additional patrol officers should be assigned between Dessert Inn and East Tropicana Avenue, specifically in front of the Boulder Station Casino and Sam's Town Hotel and Gambling Hall. Routine patrol activities should also be effectuated in these areas, especially at nighttime. The Las Vegas Strip and Downtown Las Vegas are patrolled regularly because of the high number of tourists that visit these locations each year.

However, LVMPD officers could include the BTC, which is in Downtown Las Vegas, and the SSTT, which is located south of the Las Vegas Strip, as part of their patrol activities considering they were identified as areas of high CSE activity by participants. As an additional strategy to monitor these areas, several street surveillance cameras (CCTV) could also be installed at some of these locations. To support LVMPD efforts, the RTC should allocate additional security officers on their buses (i.e., 106, 113, 201, 203, 206, 210, Sahara Express (SX), the Boulder Highway Express (BHX)), as well as at their transit centers (i.e., BTC, SSTT).

Currently, the RTC assigns one security officer for every six buses (La Vegas Review-Journal, 2020); however, for these specific bus routes, they could increase this ratio to one security officer per bus. Perhaps having this added level of security and protection might make bus operators more comfortable to intervene.

Given that one of the victims identified by RTC personnel reported being brought to Nevada from California on a Greyhound bus, this training should be expanded to Greyhound bus operators also. Although Greyhound bus operators were trained on human trafficking dynamics by the U.S. Department of Transportation (2021), their last training session dates to 2016. Given that six years have passed since then, a refresher course might be needed.

Given that the effectiveness of the training programs provided by the U.S Department of Transportation (2021) has not been evaluated, Greyhound could partner with the RTC and implement RTC's training program within their curriculum instead. The RTC and Greyhound could join efforts in combating human trafficking and take the training program nationally, as Greyhound operates in 48 U.S. states and even provides services internationally (i.e., Canada, Mexico; Greyhound, 2019). The training could also be offered to a range of transit operators (i.e., Amtrak, school bus drivers). The more eyes and ears on the ground, the higher the chances are that more victims will be identified and rescued.

Final Thoughts

In a relatively short time (i.e., ten months), this training implementation saw ten victims get help through interventions performed by either RTC personnel or their community health partner (i.e., FirstMed Health and Wellness Center). Based on this study's findings, the training program created by the RTC also increased trainee's perceived awareness, job-related skills, and confidence levels in identifying victims. Although it is difficult to measure the value of any

given training program, measures of success or effectiveness shouldn't be based solely on attitude changes or the number of arrests made, but also on the number of victims rescued and helped. Thus, the goal of any training program should be to open doors for victims so that they feel comfortable to come forward and ask for help as well as to change trainee's attitudes. Training programs should also attempt to alleviate any perceived concerns their trainees might have so that they feel comfortable intervening and rescuing potential victims. Otherwise, the utility of any training program will be diminished if trainees have reservations about intervening. For the minor victim whose sex trafficker was arrested, and the other victims connected to services, the money saved in future harm to them could easily outweigh the cost required for the training program. Now that we are aware of human trafficking, it is incumbent on all of us to stop and prevent this harm from occurring in plain sight. We all have a responsibility to be active bystanders.

This program evaluation provides a framework for understanding how a successful and comprehensive human trafficking training module could be implemented within any transit organization. Other transportation agencies across the U.S. could use these guidelines and policy recommendations to implement their own human trafficking training module and train their existing employees on human trafficking dynamics. Transportation agencies, along with other related sectors, could collaborate with the RTC to create and implement their own human trafficking training curriculum and public awareness campaign.

As we have learned from this program evaluation, securing partnerships with a range of local community agencies (e.g., transit contractors, community health partner, local law enforcement agency) is key to the success of any training program. Also important is the inclusion of local survivors in various capacities, as they are the true content experts. Their input

and feedback should always be sought out to help guide policy, laws, and protocols. The inclusion of simulation exercises along with relevant videos on the topic should also be noted as a recommended practice, as they have been shown to be conducive to adult learning (Hurtubise et al., 2013; Knowles, 1980; Pinsky & Wipf, 2000; Reed et al., 2014).

Skill building exercises are often incorporated in bystander-based prevention programs as they allow bystanders to actively practice the behaviors needed for intervention (Banyard et al., 2004; Coker et al., 2011, 2016; Moynihan et al., 2010; Orchowski et al., 2018). They are also noted as a recommended practice. Similarly, scenarios of what a successful intervention should look like should also be noted as a recommended practice as they allow bystanders to model prosocial, helping behavior. The inclusion of safety protocols for employees, passengers, and the public are also a must and should be noted as recommended practice. Training employees on human trafficking dynamics will not matter if they are not willing to intervene due to safety concerns. Taken together, these guidelines could be used to develop effective training programs that improve transit personnel's awareness, job-related skillset, and confidence levels in identifying victims.

APPENDIX A: RTC BUS ROUTES

Route #	Route Name

Residential Routes

Route #	Route Name
101	Rainbow
102	Jones
103	Decatur
104	Valley View
105	Martin L. King
106	Rancho/ Centennial Hills
108	Paradise
109	Maryland Pkwy.
110	Eastern
111	Pecos/ Green Valley Pkwy.
113	Las Vegas Blvd. North
115	Nellis/ Stephanie
117	Las Vegas Blvd. South/ Silverado Ranch
119	Simmons/ Koval
120	Fort Apache/ Rampart
121	Durango/ Bufallo
122	S. Maryland Pkwy/ W. Henderson
201	Tropicana
202	Flamingo
203	Spring Mountain/ Dessert Inn/ Lamb
206	Charleston
207	Alta/ Stewart
208	Washington
209	Vegas Dr./ Owens
210	Lake Mead Owens
212	Sunset Road
214	East H Street/ West D Street
215	Bonanza
217	Warm Springs/ Lake Mead Pkwy
218	Cheyenne
219	Craig
220	Ann/ Tropical
221	Cactus/ Horizon Ridge/ Boulder City
401	N. Outlets/ Symphony Park

Strip and Downtown Routes

Route #	Route Name
Deuce	The Deuce

Route #	Route Name
Downtown Loop	Downtown Loop
Express Routes	
BHX	Boulder Highway Express (BHX)
CX	Centennial Express
DVX	Downtown & Veterans Medical Center Express
SX	Sahara Express (SX)
Silver Star Routes*	
Temporary Route	Temporary Route: Bonanza/ Lamb
704	Eastern/ Decatur
705	Stewart/ Eastern
706	Sunrise/ Henderson
708	Charleston/ Sahara
709	North Las Vegas
711	Paradise Cambridge
712	Sunrise Manor/ Whitney
714	Charleston Heights
715	Boulder Hwy
716	Henderson
717	Green Valley
718	Eastern/ Serene
Game Day Express*	
605	Summerlin: Red Rock Casino Resort Spa
606	Green Valley: Green Valley Ranch Resort Casino and Spa
607	Centennial Hills: Santa Fe Station Hotel and Casino
609	East Side: Boulder Station Hotel and Casino
612	West Henderson: M Resort Spa Casino

Note. Game Day Express bus service launched in 2021 and operates during select Allegiant Stadium/ T-Mobile Arena events.
Silver Star routes provide services to senior citizens. They stop at several senior communities across the valley and then connect to the other routes provided by the RTC.
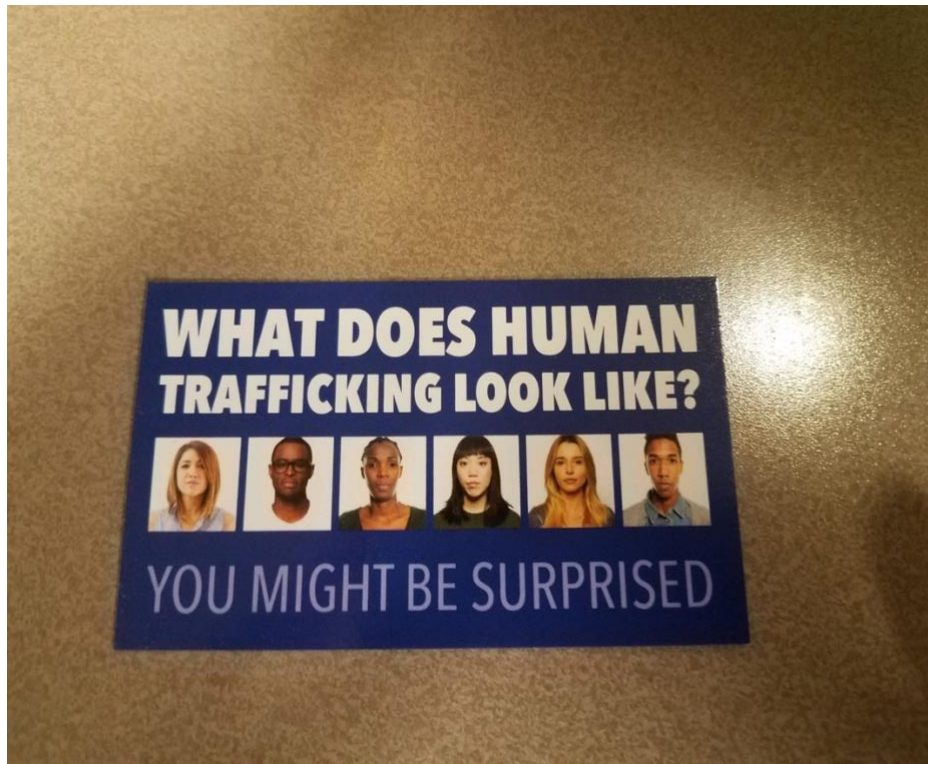
APPENDIX B: RTC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

BUS OPERATORS AND OFFICERS ARE TRAINED TO HELP YOU.

If you cannot safely approach staff, call the FirstMed 24-hour hotline: **1-844-460-0003**, or report it anonymously on the RTC Transit Watch app.

APPENDIX C: IRB APPROVAL FORM

UNLV

UNLV Social/Behavioral IRB - Exempt Review
Exempt Notice

DATE: March 4, 2021

TO: M. Alexis Kennedy
FROM: Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects

PROTOCOL TITLE: [1648713-2] Human trafficking trainings for transportation agencies

ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS
EXEMPT DATE: March 4, 2021
REVIEW CATEGORY: Exemption category #4(ii)

Thank you for your submission of Revision materials for this protocol. This memorandum is notification that the protocol referenced above has been reviewed as indicated in Federal regulatory statutes 45CFR46.101(b) and deemed exempt.

We will retain a copy of this correspondence with our records.

PLEASE NOTE:
Upon final determination of exempt status, the research team is responsible for conducting the research as stated in the exempt application reviewed by the ORI - HS and/or the IRB which shall include using the most recently submitted Informed Consent/Assent Forms (Information Sheet) and recruitment materials.

If your project involves paying research participants, it is recommended to contact Carisa Shaffer, ORI Program Coordinator at (702) 895-2794 to ensure compliance with the Policy for Incentives for Human Research Subjects.

Any changes to the application may cause this protocol to require a different level of IRB review. Should any changes need to be made, please submit a **Modification Form**. When the above-referenced protocol has been completed, please submit a **Continuing Review/Progress Completion report** to notify ORI - HS of its closure.

If you have questions, please contact the Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects at IRB@unlv.edu or call 702-895-2794. Please include your protocol title and IRBNet ID in all correspondence.

Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects
4505 Maryland Parkway . Box 451047 . Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-1047
(702) 895-2794 . FAX: (702) 895-0805 . IRB@unlv.edu

APPENDIX D: RTC PRE-TEST QUESTIONS

Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions.

1. What is your age?

2. What gender do you identify as?

    A. Male

    B. Female

    C. Transgender

3. Which race/ ethnicity best describes you?

    A. White/Caucasian

    B. Black/ African American

    C. Hispanic/ Latinx

    D. Asian

    E. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

    F. American Indian or Alaskan Native

    G. Two or more races/ Other. Please explain:

4. What type of employee are you?

    A. Bus Operator

    B. Security Officer

    C. Maintenance Worker

    D. Other. Please explain:

5. How many years in the profession have you completed?

    A. Less than 1 year

    B. 1 to 5 years

C. 6 to10 years

D. 11 to 15 years

E. More than 15 years

Please rate the following statements.

6. It is important for me to know about human trafficking in my day-to day job.

   A. Strongly agree

   B. Somewhat agree

   C. Neither agree nor disagree

   D. Somewhat disagree

   E. Strongly disagree

7. All drivers receiving new commercial driver licenses (CDL) should undergo human

   trafficking training.

   A. Strongly agree

   B. Somewhat agree

   C. Neither agree nor disagree

   D. Somewhat disagree

   E. Strongly disagree

8. How comfortable are you to intervene if you encounter a potential trafficking victim?

   A. Extremely comfortable

   B. Somewhat comfortable

   C. Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable

   D. Somewhat uncomfortable

   E. Extremely uncomfortable

9. If uncomfortable, what are you most concerned about?

10. Do you believe that training transportation personnel is an effective strategy to help respond to human trafficking?

    A. Strongly agree

    B. Somewhat agree

    C. Neither agree nor disagree

    D. Somewhat disagree

    E. Strongly disagree

11. Do you believe that sex trafficking is a problem in Nevada?

    A. Yes

    B. Maybe

    C. No

12. To your knowledge, are there any locations for sex trafficking on your routes/ near your workplace?

    A. Yes

    B. No

13. If yes, what locations have you seen at work?

14. When it comes to human trafficking, I consider myself to be:

    A. Extremely knowledgeable

    B. Very knowledgeable

    C. Moderately knowledgeable

    D. Slightly knowledgeable

    E. Not at all knowledgeable

15. I know what to do if I suspect someone to be a trafficking victim.

    A. Strongly agree

    B. Somewhat agree

    C. Neither agree nor disagree

    D. Somewhat disagree

    E. Strongly disagree

16. The RTC has a protocol/ formal procedure in place providing instructions on how to identify and respond to human trafficking cases and whom to contact for assistance?

    A. Yes

    B. Maybe

    C. No

17. Human trafficking occurs everywhere in the world, including in big cities, suburbs, and rural towns.

    A. True

    B. False

18. Victims can be U.S. citizens or foreigners.

    A. True

    B. False

19. Anyone under the age of 18, who performs a commercial sex act, is automatically considered a victim of human trafficking regardless if force, fraud, or coercion has occurred.

    A. True

    B. False

20. What types of individuals are traffickers more likely to exploit?

    A. Individuals who are vulnerable (i.e., homeless, substance abuse problem, history of childhood abuse, low self-esteem, etc.)

    B. Only women and girls

    C. Individuals who are good looking

    D. Individuals who are physically strong

21. What are some of the red flags for transit?

    A. Anyone who is offering to exchange sex for money or any other good or service, especially if it appears to be a minor

    B. Anyone who acknowledges having a pimp or needing to make a quota

    C. Minors traveling without adult supervision

    D. Passengers who are not allowed to speak for themselves or make eye contact

    E. Passengers with bruising, branding, or other physical trauma

    F. A and B only

    G. All of the above

APPENDIX E: RTC POST-TEST QUESTIONS

Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions.

1. What is your age?

2. What gender do you identify as?

    D. Male

    E. Female

    F. Transgender

3. Which race/ ethnicity best describes you?

    A. White/Caucasian

    B. Black/ African American

    C. Hispanic/ Latinx

    D. Asian

    E. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

    F. American Indian or Alaskan Native

    G. Two or more races/ Other. Please explain.

4. What type of employee are you?

    A. Bus Operator

    B. Security Officer

    C. Maintenance Worker

    D. Other. Please explain:

5. How many years in the profession have you completed?

    A. Less than 1 year

    B. 1 to 5 years

C. 6 to 10 years

D. 11 to 15 years

E. More than 15 years

6. Do you believe that sex trafficking is a problem in Nevada?

A. Yes

B. Maybe

C. No

7. Human trafficking occurs everywhere in the world, including in big cities, suburbs, and rural towns.

A. True

B. False

8. Victims can be U.S. citizens or foreigners.

A. True

B. False

9. Anyone under the age of 18, who performs a commercial sex act, is automatically considered a victim of human trafficking regardless if force, fraud, or coercion has occurred.

A. True

B. False

10. What types of individuals are traffickers more likely to exploit?

A. Individuals who are vulnerable (i.e., homeless, substance abuse problem, history of childhood abuse, low self-esteem, etc.)

B. Only women and girls

C. Individuals who are good looking

D. Individuals who are physically strong

11. What are some of the red flags for transit?

    A. Anyone who is offering to exchange sex for money or any other good or service, especially if it appears to be a minor

    B. Anyone who acknowledges having a pimp or needing to make a quota

    C. Minors traveling without adult supervision

    D. Passengers who are not allowed to speak for themselves or make eye contact

    E. Passengers with bruising, branding, or other physical trauma

    F. A and B only

    G. All of the above

12. The RTC has a protocol/ formal procedure in place providing instructions on how to identify and respond to human trafficking cases and whom to contact for assistance?

    A. Yes

    B. Maybe

    C. No

13. Where do pimps recruit their victims?

    A. Schools

    B. Shopping Malls

    C. Social Media

    D. Classified Ads

    E. Bus Stops

    F. Place of Employment

G. Other

H. All of the above

14. It is important for me to know about human trafficking in my day-to day job.

    A. Strongly agree

    B. Somewhat agree

    C. Neither agree nor disagree

    D. Somewhat disagree

    E. Strongly disagree

15. All drivers receiving new commercial driver licenses (CDL) should undergo human

    trafficking training.

    A. Strongly agree

    B. Somewhat agree

    C. Neither agree nor disagree

    D. Somewhat disagree

    E. Strongly disagree

16. How comfortable are you to intervene if you encounter a potential trafficking victim?

    A. Extremely comfortable

    B. Somewhat comfortable

    C. Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable

    D. Somewhat uncomfortable

    E. Extremely uncomfortable

17. If uncomfortable, what are you most concerned about?

18. Do you believe that training transportation personnel is an effective strategy to help respond to human trafficking?

    A. Strongly agree

    B. Somewhat agree

    C. Neither agree not disagree

    D. Somewhat disagree

    E. Strongly disagree

19. To your knowledge, are there any locations for sex trafficking on your routes/ near your workplace?

    A. Yes

    B. No

20. If yes, what locations have you seen at work?

21. When it comes to human trafficking, I consider myself to be:

    A. Extremely knowledgeable

    B. Very knowledgeable

    C. Moderately knowledgeable

    D. Slightly knowledgeable

    E. Not at all knowledgeable

22. I know what to do if I suspect someone to be a trafficking victim.

    A. Strongly agree

    B. Somewhat agree

    C. Neither agree nor disagree

    D. Somewhat disagree

E. Strongly disagree

23. Please arrange in order the following RTC Reporting Protocols:

    A. Observe

    B. Report

    C. Advise

    D. Refer

24. I think I might have seen sex trafficking occur at my job before.

    A. Yes

    B. No

25. If yes, please describe what you saw:

26. Did you report this incident when it happened?

    A. Yes

    B. No

27. If no, what prevented you from reporting it?

28. Are there any reasons why you might not make a report now? Check all that apply.

    A. I'm worried about making a mistake

    B. I'm worried filling a report will be time consuming and I'm already too busy

    C. I feel I need additional training first

    D. I don't think it's my place to get involved

    E. I'm ready to make a report

    F. Other. Please explain.

29. Bus drivers can help stop trafficking because they are often in locations where trafficking

    occurs.

A. True

B. False

30. The information and human trafficking training received was:

    A. Extremely useful

    B. Very useful

    C. Moderately useful

    D. Slightly useful

    E. Not at all useful

31. What did you like most about this training?

32. I would like to receive more training on human trafficking.

    A. True

    B. False

33. Do you think this type of training should be offered on a regular, yearly basis?

    A. Strongly agree

    B. Somewhat agree

    C. Neither agree nor disagree

    D. Somewhat disagree

    E. Strongly disagree

APPENDIX F: RTC FEATURED IN THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER

Home >> Crime >> Sex Crimes

California man jailed in Las Vegas on child sex trafficking charges

Gregory Davis (Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department)

By Glenn Puit Las Vegas Review-Journal
June 25, 2021 - 8:53 am

Don't miss the big stories. Like us on Facebook.   👍 Like 288K

A California man is accused of bringing a child to Las Vegas and trafficking her in prostitution, Las Vegas police said.

Gregory Don Davis, 27, of Richmond, is in custody at the Clark County Detention Center on suspicion of kidnapping of a minor, assault with a deadly weapon, sex trafficking of a child under 18, and child abuse or neglect.

An arrest report for Davis said police were called Tuesday to the Bonneville Transit Center in downtown Las Vegas for a report of a youth on the property. When officers talked to the youth they learned the female, who's age was blacked out in the report, "was brought to Las Vegas as a prostitute by another individual."

Police said the girl told detectives she met Davis online in late December and that Davis then drove to Arizona to pick her up. She was taken to California and forced to have sex with multiple men in Oakland, California, where Davis told her she would be working as a prostitute.

"Throughout February 2021 to June 2021 (the youth) completed approximately one hundred prostitution dates as a prostitute for Davis," police wrote in the arrest report. "(She) made approximately $10,000 during these prostitution dates from various illicit sex acts in exchange for money. (She) was forced to give all money to Davis or he would routinely beat her."

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May 2022   Ph.D., Criminology, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
                        Dissertation | *Commercial Sexual Exploitation: A Survey of the Knowledge, Barriers, and Training of Transit Personnel in Las Vegas*

2016   M.A., Criminal Justice, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
                        Thesis | *Judicial Differences in Protective Orders Issuance Rates: An Examination of Courtroom Actors, Case Aspects, and Individual Characteristics.* Available at http://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu

2012   B.A., Criminal Justice *(cum laude)*, Communication Studies *(cum laude),* University of Nevada, Las Vegas

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Gender-Based Violence	Intimate Partner Violence	Human Trafficking
Critical Criminology	Commercial Sexual Exploitation	Immigration

PUBLICATIONS

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

2021   **Bejinariu, A.,** Troshynski, E. I., & Miethe, T. (2021). A Content Analysis of Civil Protection Order Statutes: What Makes Some State Statutes More Comprehensive Than Others?. *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, *1-20*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12103-021-09651-8

2021   Troshynski, E. I., & **Bejinariu, A.** (2021). Exploring the Rhetoric: How State Gender Diversity Laws Address Rights for Gender-Diverse Students. *Critical Criminology, 1-20.* https://doi.org/10.1007/s10612-021-09563-3

2020   **Bejinariu, A.,** & Troshynski, E. I. (2020). "They Threatened to Call Immigration": Challenges Faced by Civil Protection Order Applicants and Respondents. *Race and Justice*. https://doi.org/10.1177/2153368720923018

2020   **Bejinariu, A.,** Kennedy, M. A., & Cimino, A. N. (2020). "They Said They Were Going to Help Us Get Through This…": Documenting Interactions between Police and

Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth. *Journal of Crime and Justice.*
https://doi.org/10.1080/0735648X.2020.1807389

2020   Troshynski, E. I., **Bejinariu, A.,** & Willis, C. S. (2020). Lost in Translation: Experiences of ESL/LEP Civil Protection Order Petitioners. *Contemporary Justice Review*, 1-27. https://doi.org/10.1080/10282580.2020.1819804

2019   **Bejinariu, A**., Troshynski, E. I., & Miethe, T. D. (2019). Civil Protection Orders and Their Courtroom Context: The Impact of Gatekeepers on Legal Decisions. *Journal of Family Violence*, *34*(3), 231-243. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-018-9999-7

BOOK CHAPTERS

2019   **Bejinariu, A.,** & Troshynski, E. I. (2019). Orders of Protection. In Frances P. Bernat and Kelly Frailing (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Women and Crime.* Hoboken, NJ: Wiley & Sons Inc.

2018   Troshynski, E. I., & **Bejinariu, A**. (2018). Research on Human Trafficking: Victim Characteristics, Consequences, Service Needs, and Future Research Directions. In *The Routledge International Handbook of Violence Studies* (pp. 362-374). New York: Routledge.

TECHNICAL RESEARCH REPORTS FOR LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL AGENCIES

2021   **Bejinariu, A**., & Kennedy, M. A. (2021). Program Evaluation of Human Trafficking Training for Nevada Transit Personnel. A report prepared for the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) of Southern Nevada and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

2021   Troshynski, E. I., & **Bejinariu, A.** (2021). Year 1 Evaluation of Hope for Prisoners (HFP) Southern Nevada Reentry Program. A report prepared for Hope for Prisoners.

2019   **Bejinariu, A.,** (2019). Human Trafficking: A Comparison of National and Nevada Trends. *Center for Crime and Justice Policy (CCJP).* Available at https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page_files/27/HumanTrafficking-ComparisonNationalNevadaTrends.pdf

2019   Kennedy, M. A., Trejbalova, T., & **Bejinariu, A.** (2019). Best Practice Recommendations for Transitional Age Youth in Clark County, Nevada. Report prepared for Legal and Social Issues Research Lab, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

2018   Kennedy, M. A., Stout, K., & **Bejinariu, A.** (2018). Caliente Girls' Needs Assessment Final Report. Report prepared for the State of Nevada, Department of Health and Human Services.

2017   Troshynski, E. I., **Bejinariu, A.**, & Gonzalez, C. L. (2017). Evaluation of Hope for

Prisoners Pre-/Post-Release Reentry Program. Findings from Year 1 (2016 - 2017). Nevada Workforce Connections. Report prepared for Hope for Prisoners and WorkForce Connections Grant Award.

NEWSLETTER, MEDIA, AND PRESS FEATURES

2021   The Washington Post. (2021). Sex-Trafficked kids are crime victims. In Las Vegas, they still go to jail.

2019   **Bejinariu, A.,** (2019). Critical Graduate Student Spotlight. In the Critical Criminologist Spotlight Newsletter. Available at https://divisiononcriticalcriminology.com/wp-content/uploads/Spotlight-Spring-2019.pdf

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES AND REPORTS IN PROGRESS

2022   **Bejinariu, A.** (nd). Why No T-Visas? Understanding the United States' Response to Human Trafficking Victims. In preparation for submission to Sociology Compass.

2022   Zhou, A., Kennedy, M. A., **Bejinariu, A**., Hannon, L. & Cimino, N, A. (nd). The Ethics and Urgency of Identifying Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking Victims in Clinical Settings. In preparation for submission to Journal of Ethics.

2022   Cimino, A.N., Kennedy, M.A., Thompson, K., **Bejinariu, A**. et al., (nd). Addressing Risks and Missed Opportunities to Intervene with Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST) Victims. In preparation for submission to the Center for Crime and Justice Policy, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Nevada.

GRANT EXPERIENCE

2021   Co-PI, *Monitoring and Evaluation (ME) Program Proposal for Multidisciplinary Teams Combating Human Trafficking.* PI: Dr. M. Alexis Kennedy ($354,400, Howard G. Buffett Foundation) (under review).

2020   Co-PI, *Human Trafficking Training for Transportation Agencies*. PI: Dr. M. Alexis Kennedy ($160,000, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) (Grant # NV-2020-011-00).

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2022   Instructor of Record for *CRJ 301: Research Methods in Criminal Justice*; Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV).
   ● Spring 2022: Section 1003 (online).

2022   Instructor of Record for CRJ 302: *Quantitative Applications in Criminal Justice*; Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV).
   ● Spring 2021: Section 1004 (online).

2021   Instructor of Record for *CRJ 302: Quantitative Applications in Criminal Justice*;
Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV).
- Spring 2021: Sections 1002 (online) and 1003 (online).
- Fall 2021: Section 1003 and 1004 (online).

2020   Instructor of Record for *CRJ 302: Quantitative Applications in Criminal Justice*;
Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV).
- Spring 2020: Sections 1002 (online) and 1003 (online).
- Fall 2020: Sections 1002 (online) and 1003 (online).

2020   Instructor of Record for *Graduate Students Online Teaching Essentials*; The Office of
Online Education, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV).
- Section 10 (online) for GA faculty.

2019   Instructor of Record for *CRJ 302: Quantitative Applications in Criminal Justice*;
Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV).
- Fall 2019: Sections 1003 (hybrid) and 1004 (online).
- Spring 2019: Sections 1002 (hybrid) and 1003 (online).

2018   Instructor of Record for *CRJ 302: Quantitative Applications in Criminal Justice*;
Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV).
- Fall 2018: Sections 1004 (hybrid) and 1005 (online).

2017   Instructor of Record for *CRJ 302: Quantitative Applications in Criminal Justice*;
Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV).
- Fall 2017: Section 1003 (online).

2017   Graduate Teaching Assistant; Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nevada, Las
Vegas (UNLV).
- *CRJ 428: Women and Crime.*
- *CRJ 104: Introduction to Administration of Justice.*

2016   Graduate Teaching Assistant; Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nevada, Las
Vegas (UNLV).
- *CRJ 409: Youth, Crime, and Society.*
- *CRJ 469: Psychology and the Legal System.*

2015   Internship Coordinator, *CRJ 499*, Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nevada,
Las Vegas (UNLV).

2014   Internship Coordinator, *CRJ 499*, Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nevada,
Las Vegas (UNLV).

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2020 PI, *Assessing the Impacts of COVID-19 on Criminal Justice Students' Lives and Their Course Performance.*
- Co-PI: Dr. Joel Lieberman. This research project seeks to assess the impacts of COVID-19 on criminal justice students' lives and their course performance.
- Roles: Applied for Institutional Review Board (IRB), developed survey protocol, wrote the consent form, recruited participants, collected and analyzed the data. Participated in writing and editing manuscripts for submission.

2020 Co-PI, *Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) of Southern Nevada and Human Trafficking Training.*
- PI: Dr. M. Alexis Kennedy. This research project seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of the human trafficking training program offered by the RTC to its existing employees and new hires. Research project funded by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA; $160,000; Grant # NV-2020-011-00).
- Roles: Assisted with developing the human trafficking training protocol; applied for IRB, developed the pre and posttest survey protocol; administered the survey questionnaire to 1,200 RTC employees via Qualtrics; collected and analyzed the data. Participated in writing the final report. Data from this project were also the basis of my dissertation project.

2020 RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, *Prisoner Reentry Program Evaluation: Hope for Prisoners.*
- PI: Dr. Emily Troshynski (Assistant Professor, Department of Criminal Justice, UNLV). This project analyzes a prisoner reentry nonprofit agency's success with employment and recidivism outcomes.
- Roles: Participated in data collection and analysis; writing and editing the final report for the funding agency.

2020 RESEARCH TEAM MEMBER, *Prostitution, PCL-C, and Chronic Health Problems in New Zealand.*
- PI: Dr. Melissa Farley. This research project was conducted in New Zealand, specifically in Wellington and Auckland.
- Roles: Coded interviews conducted with 46 participants.

2019 RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, *Exploring the Rhetoric: How State Gender Diversity Laws Address Rights for Gender Diverse Students.*
- PI: Dr. Emily Troshynski. Community based participatory action research that explores rhetoric around state education policy reform.
- Roles: Transcribed video recordings of community town hall meetings; analyzed data using qualitative measures. Participated in writing and editing the manuscript for submission.

2018 RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, *Failure to Appear*: *Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking Victims Experience with the Juvenile Justice System and their Readiness to Change.*
PI: Dr. M. Alexis Kennedy (Associate Professor, Department of Criminal Justice, UNLV) and Andrea N. Cimino (Faculty Research Associate, Johns Hopkins School of Nursing). Research project funded by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ: 2015-VF-

GX-0064; $623,600). This project explores the physical and psychological barriers victims encounter when attempting to exit commercial sexual exploitation.

- Roles: Part of a national team of researchers; analyzed interviews with trafficking victims regarding their interaction with the police, using qualitative measures. Participated in writing and editing the manuscript for submission.

2017   RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, *Prisoner Reentry Program Evaluation: Hope for Prisoners.*
- PI: Dr. Emily Troshynski (Assistant Professor, Department of Criminal Justice, UNLV). Project funded by the Nevada Workforce Connections, Federal Workforce Grant ($500,000). This project analyzes a prisoner reentry nonprofit agency success with employment and recidivism outcomes.
- Roles: Coded and analyzed 1 year of intake and outcome data; interviewed clients about re-entry needs and employment successes/barriers. Participated in writing and editing final reports for the funding agency.

2017   RESEARCH TEAM LEAD *Perception of Trust and Procedural Justice as Sources of Receptivity and Resistance to Visual Surveillance.*
- PI: Dr. Terance Miethe (Professor of Criminal Justice, UNLV) and Dr. Joel Lieberman (Professor of Criminal Justice, UNLV). Research project funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF: 2016-1625808; $276,041). This project seeks to examine the impact of public perceptions about procedural justice and police legitimacy on their support for video policing activities (i.e., body-worn cameras and aerial drones).
- Roles: Surveyed Las Vegas residents regarding their experiences with the police.

2014   RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, *From Victims to Litigants: Domestic Violence, Legal Aid Partnerships with the Courts, and the Politics of Self-Help*.
- PI: Dr. Emily Troshynski (Assistant Professor, Department of Criminal Justice, UNLV) and Elizabeth L. MacDowell (William S. Boyd School of Law, UNLV). Project supported by the American Association of Law Schools (AALS), and the Office of the Vice President for Research, UNLV ($50,000). This project seeks to examine courthouse clinics assisting self-represented litigants with civil domestic violence restraining orders.
- Roles: Conducted ethnographic observations of protection order hearings over the course of two years. Analyzed data both quantitatively via SPSS and qualitatively. Participated in writing and editing manuscripts for submission. Data from this project were also the basis of my thesis project.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

ACADEMIC PAPER PRESENTATIONS

2022   Troshynski, E. I., & **Bejinariu, A.** Working through reentry research: A focus on understanding the complexities and realities of everyday reentry experiences. Abstract submitted to the *Law and Society Association (LSA),* in Lisbon, Portugal (July 13-16).

2021   **Bejinariu, A**., Troshynski, E. I., & Miethe, T. D. Civil Protection Orders: What Makes some State Statutes More Comprehensive than Others? Paper submitted to the *4th European Conference on Domestic Violence*, Ljubljana, Slovenia.

2019   **Bejinariu, A.,** Kennedy, M. A., & Cimino, A. N. "They said they were going to help us get through this...": Documenting Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking Victims' Interactions with Police while Trading Sex. Paper presented at the *Western Society of Criminology (WSC)*, in Oahu, Hawaii.
- Also presented at the Graduate & Professional Student Research Forum, in Las Vegas, Nevada (2.23.2019).

2018   **Bejinariu, A.,** Troshynski, E. I., & Miethe, T. D. Civil Protection Orders and Domestic Violence: The Impact of Formal and Informal Actors on these Legal Decisions. Paper presented at the *Law and Society Association (LSA)*, in Toronto, Canada.

2018   **Bejinariu, A**., Troshynski, E. I., & Willis, C. S. Barriers to Justice: Challenges Faced by Immigrant Women Applying for Civil Protection Orders. Paper presented at the *Western Society of Criminology (WSC)*, in Long Beach, California.

2016   **Bejinariu, A.,** Troshynski, E. I., & Miethe, T. D. Civil Protection Orders: Identifying Factors Associated with a Successful PO. Paper presented at the *American Society of Criminology (ASC),* in New Orleans, Louisiana.
- Also presented at the Graduate & Professional Student Research Forum, in Las Vegas, Nevada (4/08/2017).

2016   Troshynski, E. I., **Bejinariu, A.,** & Willis, C. S. Limited English Proficient (LEP) and/or English as a Second Language (ESL) Applicant Experiences with a Civil Protection Order Court. Paper presented at the *American Society of Criminology (ASC),* in New Orleans, Louisiana.

ROUNDTABLE PRESENTATIONS

2019   **Bejinariu, A.,** Boyer, C., & Logan, K. How Do You Teach Criminal Justice Courses for the First Time? Thematic Roundtable presented at the *American Society of Criminology (ASC)* in San Francisco, California.

2015   Troshynski, E. I., **Bejinariu, A**., Magnus, A., & Mizrachi, D. Researching Self-Represented Litigants, Civil Protection Orders, and Access to Justice. Thematic Roundtable presented at the *American Society of Criminology (ASC)* in Washington, D.C.
- Also presented at the Graduate & Professional Student Research Forum, in Las Vegas, Nevada (4/08/2016).

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

2022   Bejinariu, A., & Lieberman, J. D. Assessing the Impacts of COVID-19 on Criminal Justice Students' Lives and Their College Experience. Poster presented at the *Western*

Society of Criminology (WSC), Oahu, Hawaii.

2021   **Bejinariu, A.,** Hoover, K., Kennedy, M. A., & Cimino, A. N. Slipping Through the Cracks: Assessing the Role of Child Protective Services in the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Youth. Poster presented at the *American Society of Criminology (ASC)*, in Chicago, Il.
- Also presented at the Graduate & Professional Student Research Forum, the Fall 2020 Virtual Rebel Grand Slam, (11/10/2020), and the Spring 2020 Virtual Undergraduate Student Symposium, in Las Vegas, Nevada (05/01/2020). Also available at: http://oursymposium.sites.unlv.edu/v2/program/slipping-through-the-cracks-assessing-the-role-of-child-protective-services-in-the-commercial-sexual-exploitation-of-youth/

2017   **Bejinariu, A.,** Troshynski, E. I., & Miethe, T. D. Civil Protection Orders and Their Courtroom Context. Poster presented at the *American Society of Criminology (ASC)*, in Philadelphia, PA.

2014   **Bejinariu, A.,** Lieberman, J. D., & Malempati, S. The Devil Made Me Do It: The Effects of Focus of Concern and Level of Authority on Perceptions of Domination in Death Penalty Cases. Poster presented at the *American Society of Criminology (ASC*), in San Francisco, California.
- Also presented at the Graduate & Professional Student Research Forum, in Las Vegas, Nevada (4/08/2015).

PANEL CHAIR

2019   **Bejinariu, A**. A Discussion on Teaching Hybrid Versus Online Courses in the Criminal Justice Field. *American Society of Criminology (ASC)* in San Francisco, California.

2019   **Bejinariu, A.** Improving Understanding of and Responses to Victimization. *Western Society of Criminology (WSC)* in Oahu, Hawaii.

2016   **Bejinariu, A.** Narrative Accounts of Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence and Factors Associated with Civil Protection Orders. *American Society of Criminology (ASC)* in New Orleans, Louisiana.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

GUEST SPEAKER

2018   CRJ 723: Qualitative Research Methods, An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

2018   CRJ 712: Punishment and Corrections, Lesson from the Field: The False Hope of Hope Probation, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

2018   CRJ 712: Punishment and Corrections, Motivational Interviewing: Engaging, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

2017   CRJ 302: Quantitative Applications in Criminal Justice, Chapter 11: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

2016   CRJ 302: Quantitative Applications in Criminal Justice, Chapter 6 Assessing Differences Among Cases, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

2016   CRJ 700: Proseminar in Criminal Justice, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

2016   CRJ 701: Proseminar on Theory, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

AWARDS

2021   **The UNLV OISS International Student Distinguished Contribution Award** ($1000) to recognize and acknowledge a UNLV student who has greatly contributed to the development and continued growth of their field through scholarly or creative projects at UNLV.

2021   Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA) Fall Travel Fund Award ($871.16) to present at the American Society of Criminology (ASC) in Chicago, Illinois.

2020   **The UNLV Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Award:** Third Place Winner ($1500) to recognize outstanding pedagogy that has had a positive impact on students' educational experiences at UNLV.

2020   The Greenspun College of Urban Affairs "**Finishing Fellow**" Nominee.

2019   The Greenspun College of Urban Affairs "**Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Award**" Nominee.

2019   Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA) **Spring Travel Fund Award** ($600) to present at the Western Society of Criminology (WSC) in Oahu, Hawaii.

2018   Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA) **Spring Travel Fund Award** ($517) to present at the Western Society of Criminology (WSC) in Long Beach, California.

2018   Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA) **Summer Travel Fund Award** ($800) to present at the Law and Society Association (LSA) in Toronto, Canada.

2016   Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA) **Fall Travel Fund Award** ($600) to present at the American Society of Criminology (ASC) in New Orleans, Louisiana.

2016   **Criminal Justice Outstanding Graduate Student Research Award** provided by the
        Criminal Justice Department for master thesis.

2016   The Greenspun College of Urban Affairs "**Outstanding Thesis**" Nominee.

2015   Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA) **Fall Travel Fund Award** ($300)
        to present at the American Society of Criminology (ASC) in Washington, D.C.

2015   Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA) **Merit Award** ($300) awarded to
        graduate students who have proven to be outstanding scholars in their field.

2015   **Criminal Justice Graduate Student Research Award** ($2500) for research conducted
        on civil protection orders.

2014   Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA) **Fall Travel Fund Award** ($110)
        to present at the American Society of Criminology (ASC) in San Francisco, California.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS

2021   **Horowitz Foundation for Social Policy** ($7500). Fellowship application under review.

2021   **Division on Critical Criminology and Social Justice (DCCSJ) Fellowship** ($1250)
        awarded for growing the DCCSJ (social) media presence and the development of The
        Critical Criminologist, the Division's bi-annual newsletter. Also awarded in 2020, 2019,
        and 2018.

2020   **The Graduate College Rebel Ambassadors Program Grant** ($500) awarded for
        building a strong graduate student Rebel Community and strengthening ties between the
        Graduate College, alumni, and other community members.

2019   **Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA) Book Scholarship** ($150).

2019   **The Graduate College Rebel Research and Mentorship Program (RAMP)
        Scholarship** ($1500) awarded to mentors who collaborate with undergraduate students
        on research/creative/scholarly projects over the course of a year.

2017   **Patricia Sastaunik Scholarship** ($2500) awarded for financial need.

2016   **Fred C. Albrecht Alumni Association** Scholarship ($2500) awarded to outstanding
        UNLV alumni.

2016   **James F. Adams/ GPSA Scholarship** ($1000) to recognize the academic achievement of
        outstanding master students.

SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION

EDITORIAL POSITIONS HELD

2018 -Current Co-Editor and Communications Committee Co-Chair for the Division on Critical Criminology and Social Justice (DCCSJ) Newsletter: The Critical Criminologist: Spotlight. Available at http://divisiononcriticalcriminology.com/publications/newsletter/

PEER REVIEWER OF MANUSCRIPTS FOR PROFESSIONAL JOURNALS

Journal of Human Trafficking (2020)   Journal of Crime and Justice (2020)
Journal of Justice Policy (2019)   Journal of Family Violence (2021, 2019)
Journal of Violence and Victims (2019)

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

2021   Student Needs Committee Member – part of the National League of Cities. Goal: support students who are experiencing food and housing insecurities. For more information, please see https://www.unlv.edu/news/article/unlv-las-vegas-team-address-student-needs

DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE

2017   Assisted with the Mock Trial Tournament, hosted by the Department of Criminal Justice at UNLV.
2016   Served as the Visual Media Coordinator for the Department of Criminal Justice at UNLV (i.e., identified photographs that help depict the coursework and faculty expertise within the department.)

COMMUNITY SERVICE

2018   Assisted with Compassionate Fatigue Training for first responders (i.e., Clark County Fire Station Number 18 and 11) as a result of October 1st, 2017 shooting.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY PROGRAMS & CERTIFICATIONS

2020   **UNLV The Graduate Rebel Ambassadors Program**
- Year-long professional program that allows graduate students to strengthen their leadership, networking, and communication skills. Ambassadors serve as the official representatives for the Graduate College and are responsible for strengthening the relationship between the university and local community.
- Program Requirements: attended all mandatory meetings, events, and training sessions; participated in the Rebel Grand Slam or the Graduate Showcase.

2020   **"At-Risk" Students** for University Faculty and Staff via **https://kognitocampus.com/login**
- Goal: recognize when students are exhibiting signs of psychological distress and connect them with the appropriate campus support service.

2020 **UNLV Graduate College Mentorship Certification (GTMC)**
- Year- long professional program that provides graduate students with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively serve as a mentor in higher education settings.
- Program Requirements: served as a mentor to an undergraduate student, completed five approved campus workshops, and presented a mentorship portfolio.

2020 **UNLV Graduate College Rebel Research and Mentorship Program (RAMP)**
- Year- long professional program designed to provide graduate students with the opportunity to gain valuable research/scholarly/creative skills and mentorship skills, respectively.
- Program Requirements: completed a research proposal and Individual Development Plan (IDP), attended all mandatory cohort meetings, and co-presented research at the Graduate & Professional Student Research Forum, the Office of Undergraduate Research Symposium in Las Vegas, Nevada, and at a national conference.

2018 **UNLV Graduate College Teaching Certification (GCTC)**
- Year-long professional program that provides graduate students with the skills and knowledge necessary to teach successfully in a post-secondary classroom.
- Program Requirements: completed a graduate seminar on college teaching, attended all mandatory cohort meetings, several campus workshops, and created a teaching portfolio.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS AND TRAININGS ATTENDED

ACJS/ SAGE Junior Faculty Professional Development Workshops:
2020 Transitioning to Online Teaching on the Fly with Stacy Mallicoat.
Active Learning in Criminal Justice with Cathy Marcum.
Integrating Research and Teaching: Empowering Students as Difference Makers in their Community with Jared Dmello.
Teaching about Race, Ethnicity, and Crime.
Using Courseware in Criminal Justice Courses
Publishing and Finding Time to Write: Tips for Junior Faculty.

National Transit Institute:
2020 Human Trafficking Awareness: Transit's Role and Responsibilities.

The National Center for Rural Road Safety
2020 The Human Trafficking Tie to Transportation.

The UNLV Graduate College:
2020 Culturally Aware Mentoring.
2020 Diversity Statement.
2019 Effective Communication and Conflict Resolution.
2019 Effective Mentoring.
2019 Supporting Students Who Experience Food & Housing Insecurity.

2019   How to Get Hired and Promoted: Leadership Essentials.
2019   IRB.
2019   Pursuing Careers in Academia.
2018   Work/Life Balance.
2018   Bystander Intervention.
2018   Mentoring Across Genders.
2017   Teaching Statement.
2017   Teaching at UNLV for the First Time.