ABSTRACT

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AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE EFFICACY OF GENDER-SPECIFIC SEXUAL ASSAULT EDUCATION WITHIN A UNIVERSITY SETTING

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Sexual assault on college campuses is a global problem that results in emotional trauma of the victim. This research problem was explored by conducting a systematic review and focused specifically on the efficaciousness of gender-specific sexual assault education programs implemented within college and university settings. The literature review revealed that while gender-specific sexual assault programs have been developed to address this phenomenon, few are used. Furthermore, the vast majority of gender-specific sexual assault programs were more efficacious when they implemented the bystander approach. To give meaning to this problem the researcher explored the phenomenon through the theoretical lens of the Afrocentric perspective, Feminist Perspective, and Social-Ecological Model.

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE EFFICACY OF GENDER-SPECIFIC SEXUAL

ASSAULT EDUCATION WITHIN A UNIVERSITY SETTING

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Sexual assault is a traumatic experience that can have a devastating effect on the lives of victims. Garrity (2011) finds the definition of sexual assault to be non-exclusive and to vary by state. However, a more standard definition of sexual assault has been found to be, "sexual contact or behavior that is placed upon an individual who has not given consent to the perpetrator." (United States Department of Justice [USDJ], 2015). USDJ (2015) more specifically identifies these offenses as: forced sexual intercourse, forced sodomy, incest, child molestation, fondling, and unsuccessful attempts at rape.

College women face several challenges while matriculating through a collegiate program. A critical challenge for this population is the avoidance of sexual assault (Yeater, Hoyt, & Rinehart, 2008). Recent studies reveal that 54% of collegiate women have experienced some form of sexual assault since the age of 14 (Yeater et al., 2008). Expounding on the prevalence of sexual assault on college campuses, during the course of one's college tenure, between one-fifth and one-quarter of women experience a completed or attempted rape (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000). Research in this same study found that other forms of sexual assault occurred at an average of 34 percent (Fisher et al., 2000).

Historically, the subject of sexual assault among college-age women and women, in general, was taboo. As a result of the continued rise in prevalence, the subject of sexual assault has made its way into headlines. Federal laws, such as the Clery Act of 1990, have mandated that federally funded colleges and universities keep and disclose

information about crime on their campuses or in the surrounding area. Reports must also disclose how they plan to improve campus safety (Mills-Senn, 2013). In turn, colleges and universities have attempted to significantly eradicate the rate of sexual assault using a prevention program perspective. Unfortunately, while there is more awareness on college campuses and colleges have invested in safety measurements, the incidence of sexual victimization among female college students continues to increase (Yeater et al., 2008).

Statement of the Problem

Sexual assault is a common occurrence for women. It is estimated that the prevalence of sexual assault in a woman's lifetime is between 14 and 25 percent (Guerette & Caron, 2007). Twenty-nine percent of sexual assault incidents happen when a woman is between the ages of 18 and 24 making this population high risk (Guerette & Caron, 2007). Sexual assault has the potential to have long-lasting effects on the mental and physical health of the victim (Eadie, Runtz, & Spencer-Rodgers, 2008; Guerette & Caron, 2007; Santaularia et al., 2014; Weaver, Griffin, & Mitchell, 2014). Women who have experienced sexual assault are likely to be diagnosed with depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and anxiety (Eadie, Runtz, & Spencer-Rodgers, 2008; Santaularia et al., 2014; Weaver, Griffin, & Mitchell, 2014). However, physical distress following a rape often includes vaginal pain and bleeding, bruises, sexually transmitted diseases, and possible pregnancy (American Association of University Professors [AAU], 2012; Guerette & Caron, 2007). Of these consequences, the most serious is the possibility

of re-victimization (Hanson & Gidycz, 1993). Once a woman has been victimized she is twice as likely to experience another completed attempt (Yeater et al., 2008).

Much of the research done on sexual assault prevention involves educating the potential victim on how to avoid possible assault and recognition of actions to take in the aftermath (Cassel, 2012). Further, prevention also includes self-defense classes and eliminating rape myths as a means to increase the chances of reporting the offense (Katz & Moore, 2013). With this being a patriarchal, society much of the responsibility is consciously and unconsciously placed on the woman in preventing herself from potentially being attacked. Given the nature of this issue, it is unfathomable that little attention has been given to male-collegiate sexual assault education programs as a means for prevention. Assuming that the victim is not to blame for this forcible offense, the focus of preventive measures should be shifted.

Purpose of the Study

The central focus of this study is to examine the effects of sexual assault education. The study will specifically investigate the role gender plays in the effectiveness of sexual assault prevention programs. An examination of co-ed programs will not be conducted as these programs are not tailored to meet the needs of each group. The study aims to identify the differences in male and female collegiate sexual assault programs and what factors influence efficacy.

It is hypothesized that male-targeted programs facilitated on a college campus will have a greater chance at decreasing victimization rates than traditional female-oriented programs. It is expected that male-targeted programs will decrease the chances

of a male co-ed becoming a perpetrator. Further, these programs could potentially

increase the chances that male bystanders will intervene during risky situations.

Significance of Study

This study will examine the effect gender-specific sexual assault education will

have on preventing rape. It will be significant for several reasons. First, the significance

of females being raped on college campuses continues to rise (Koelsch, Brown, &

Boisen, 2012). An evaluation of the efficacy of gender-specific programs will help

identify the gaps in current programs and in turn, decrease victimization rates. Second,

the current research can add to the body of knowledge and literature by identifying areas

of needed improvement within both program types. This can lead to implications for

further research which will continue to expand the knowledge base. Third, future

generations of collegiate females will benefit from these findings. Identifying efficient

programs will help to create safer campuses for these women.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature review is a systematic analysis that explored the efficacy of

college and university based gender-specific sexual assault programs in reducing

victimization. The literature review is organized to present a critical assessment of earlier

programs and compares and contrasts these programs to more current sexual assault

programs and their efficaciousness in reducing victimization. It outlines the history of

sexual assault education on college campuses and universities and focuses on the

effectiveness of gender-specific programs in reducing victimization. The review analyzes

the strengths and challenges of different program models revealing the differences

between female and male-targeted education programs. According to the literature,

women who experienced a previous sexual assault did not benefit from existing

programs. In contrast, men benefited from programs that were designed specifically for

their gender and focused on increasing empathy, which lowered the propensity to become

a perpetrator.

The review discusses the Afrocentric perspective and the theoretical framework

which follows a Feminist Perspective and Social-Ecological Model. The Afrocentric

perspective embodies a holistic view that embraces the person as well as their

surrounding community. It also allows for the person to identify their strengths when

addressing challenges. The Feminist Perspective addresses the need to change societal norms that describe aggressive behavior from men as "manly behavior." Like the Afrocentric Perspective, the Social-Ecological Model describes different levels where interventions can take place. These levels include the individual, his or her interpersonal relationships, the community, and society.

Historical Perspective

One of the most devastating violations against women is one of a sexual nature. According to Kelleher and McGilloway (2009), one out of three women have experienced sexual assault at some point in their lifetime. This is of concern because sexual assault has been related to the deterioration of mental (Eadie et al., 2008; Santaularia et al., 2014; Weave et al., 2014) and physical health (Guerette & Caron, 2007). Additionally, women who have been victimized are at heightened risk of re-victimization (Hanson & Gidycz, 1993).

Although sexual assault has been a taboo subject, within the last decade language such as "date rape," "sexual assault," and "domestic violence" have become a part of our vocabulary. These terms have prompted attention to the issues that affect not only women in society but a specific group, collegiate women (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000). It is reported that 20-27% of collegiate women identify with experiencing an incident classified as sexual assault (Choate, 2003). Unfortunately, in 80-90% of cases, female-college students know their aggressor (Yeater et al., 2008).

The prevalence of sexual assault on college campuses and universities throughout the United States has resulted in the development and passage of the Clery Act of 1990 (Mills-Senn, 2013). The purpose of this act is to encourage institutions of higher education to place more emphasis on campus safety. As a result, institutions of higher learning have been mandated to ensure college students have access to information on sexual assault programs, prevalence, and policies which include education programs that promote awareness of sexual assault (Mills-Senn, 2013). A common intervention used to reduce the rates of victimization implementation of sexual assault prevention programs. These programs aim to reduce the negative consequences of sexual assault on the victim and eliminate the "blame the victim" tone of society (Yeater et al., 2008).

Colleges and universities have traditionally taken a universal approach to sexual assault program development (Yeater et al., 2008). These programs expect to reduce victimization rates by increasing empathy in male counterparts and teaching women to identify risk factors (Yeater et al., 2008). However, because these programs have different goals for the participants, only half of the information presented is relative (Blackwell et al., 2004). Moreover, men who are at risk of becoming perpetrators may learn that the occurrence of sexual assault is high while the chances of the perpetrator being brought to justice are low (Blackwell et al., 2004; Yeater et al., 2008).

Another common model utilized in the implementation of prevention programs is the bystander approach. Also a co-ed model, the bystander approach differs in that it does not tailor the curriculum to reduce victimization and perpetration but rather takes a

community approach. It suggests that all members of the community play a part in prevention and have opportunities to assist the potential victim before, during, or after sexual assault (McMahon, 2015).

Finally, researchers have documented data that supports the notion of women with a prior history of sexual assault being at increased risk for re-victimization (Hanson & Gidycz, 1993). Studies also show that men who subscribe to rape myths are at risk of sexual aggression (Stewart, 2014). Additionally, men who hold traditional ideologies about masculinity are at increased risk as well. These ideals promote increased alcohol use which is associated with an increase in violent behavior (Orchowski et al., 2016). Since sexual assault prevention programs have historically been general in nature, it is implied that a "cookie-cutter" program will be effective in a population that is complex in nature. Therefore, prevention programs that are tailored to meet the gender-specific needs of those at risk of sexual victimization and aggression are likely to be more effective (Senn, 2015; Yeater et al., 2008).

Female- Only Sexual Assault Programs

Over the past two decades a series of studies (Breitenbecher & Gidycz, 1998; Breitenbecher & Scarce, 1999; 2001; Hanson & Gidycz, 1993; Gidycz et al., 2001; Gidycz et al., 2006; Senn, 2015) have been conducted to develop and evaluate sexual assault education programs for undergraduate women. The first of these programs used information and video-based techniques in order to eliminate common rape myths, bring

awareness to the prevalence of sexual assault, and educate participants on strategies for preventing rape (Hanson & Gidycz, 1993). In this study, it was stated that time of administration and sexual assault history play an important role in the effectiveness of these programs. In addition, among non-victimized participants, subjects who were administered sexual assault education at the beginning of the quarter had a victimization rate of 6% compared to 14% of those who did not participate at all. However, the program was found to be ineffective when it came to participants who had a previous history of sexual violence (Hanson & Gidycz, 1993). These results brought attention to the significance of sexual assault history.

Breitenbecher and Gidycz (1998) attempted to design a program that would be more effective in the prevention of victimization among high-risk females. This program differed slightly from the original study in that it included information on the correlation between prior sexual assault victimization and re-victimization. This program was not only ineffective when administered to high-risk participants but, also those who had no prior history (Breitenbecher & Gidycz, 1998).

Continuing to build upon the previous model, Gidycz et al. (2001) incorporated the elaboration likelihood (ELM; Petty & Cacioppo, 1981, 1986) and the health belief models (HBM; Hochman, 1958). Adding the ELM component meant that central route processing would be maximized by increasing the program's ability to persuade and relate to the participant by encouraging them to be active participants (Gidycz et al., 2001). This increase in processing is important as it allows the participant to connect to the core concepts of the message rather than receive the message on a superficial level

(Gidycz et al., 2001). To facilitate this change, the authors implemented a video that displayed the self-report of rape on victims lives (Gidycz et al., 2001).

The health belief model theorizes that individuals are more likely to protect themselves when they understand the prevalence of risk and are confident in their ability avoid these threats. Thus, Gidycz et al. (2001) implemented a video that gives accounts of rape victims who had low levels of perceived risk.

Results of this study revealed that participants with a sexual assault history reported higher rates of victimization when compared to participants without a sexual assault history (Gidycz et al., 2001). Additionally, when a comparison was made between program participants and the control group, program participants did not report a decrease in victimization rates (Gidycz et al., 2001).

Continuing with the implementation of the above-mentioned models Gidycz et al. (2006) added a social learning component. The goal of the program was to make women cognizant of risky situations when dating co-eds. The same administration format was used with the addition of a self-defense and role-play component. The program measured participant's victimization; sexual assault knowledge; sexual communication; self-efficacy; and protective dating habits. Results indicated that the study was effective in increasing participant's protective dating habits when compared with the control group (Gidycz et al., 2006). However, the program did not have an effect on the other measures (Gidycz et al., 2006).

Breitenbecher & Scarce (1999) and Senn et al. (2015) took a different approach to prevention and used a knowledge and skill building intervention. In their initial study,

Breitenbecher and Scarce (1999) hoped to reduce the risk of sexual victimization by increasing participant's knowledge on sexual assault. To achieve this goal the researchers employed a program that educated participants on the occurrence of sexual assault on college campuses; factors that promote a rape-supportive environment; and the definition of rape in different components (Breitenbecher & Scarce, 1999). This program was effective in increasing participant's knowledge of sexual assault at the follow-up point which occurred at 7-months. However, the program was not effective in reducing victimization regardless of the participant being high risk or not. Irrespective of being assigned to the treatment group women with a history of sexual assault were more than twice as likely to have a sexual assault experience during the follow-up period (Breitenbecher & Scarce, 1999). When considering the dynamics of this program, Breitenbecher & Scarce (1999) suggest that the length of the program may have an influence on the outcome. A duration of one hour may not be long enough to have an impact on participants. The authors of the study also propose that the factors addressed by the program are not directly connected to sexual assault victimization (Breitenbecher & Scarce, 1999).

Breitenbecher and Scarce (2001) made modifications to their program based on the previous considerations. The length of the program was extended to 90-minutes and included content assumed to lessen verbal and behavioral barriers to resistance in risky situations (Breitenbecher & Scarce, 2001). When evaluating the results, there was no difference between participants in the treatment and control groups making the program unsuccessful.

Senn et al., (2015) also took a knowledge and skills approach to prevention programs. Senn and colleagues' (2015) program titled The Enhanced Assess, Acknowledge, Act Sexual Resistance program entailed four 3-hour units that used games that provided information, mini-lectures, facilitated discussion, and provided opportunities for application and practice. The study's outcome variables were: completed rape, attempted rape, coercion, attempted coercion, and nonconsensual sexual activity (Senn et al., 2015). Results of the study at the 1-year follow-up were successful in significantly lowering the occurrence of completed rape in the treatment group when comparisons were made to the control group (Senn et al., 2015). The program was also successful in reducing the prominence of attempted rape. The prevalence of non-consensual sexual contact was lower in the treatment group. However, a side-by-side comparison of the treatment and control groups showed no significant reduction in the measurement of coercion (Senn et al., 2015). Senn et al., (2015) posits that for programs to be effective: more hours of programming are needed; the use of interactive and practice exercises should be employed; less focus should be on "assertive communication" giving more attention to intensification of resistance when perpetrators are resistant; and positive sexuality content should be added.

Revisiting the findings of Hanson and Gidycz's (1993) study, Marx et al. (2001) focused only on women who had previously been victimized. This program was a modified version of Hanson and Gidycz's (1993) program and replaced a video case study with a relapse prevention component. During this segment, participant's ability to

identify perpetrators, situational and personal risk factors was assessed (Marx et al., 2001). Discussion regarding alternative responses to risky situations was also included during this time (Marx et al., 2001). The study measured participant's sexual assault history, present psychological distress, and self-efficacy. The program implemented a two-month follow-up period. Data revealed the program was not effective in reducing the overall rate of victimization (Marx et al., 2001). Further, the participants were also less likely to report these incidents than their counter-parts in the control group. Marx et al. (2001) attributed this to a presence of coercion and not physical force.

Foubert, Langhinrichsen, Brasfield, and Hill (2010) combined the popular bystander model which delved deeper into the efficacy of college programs geared toward women. The research took a different approach by applying a bystander model to women. Findings revealed programs that equip women individually are less effective than those that educate women on prevention as a group. The study revealed that incorporating a bystander framework will encourage women to help one another when risky behavior is taking place (Foubert, 2010).

Male-Only Sexual Assault Programs

Traditionally, the bulk of sexual assault prevention programs has focused on teaching participants to recognize high-risk situations and ways to reduce threats of sexual assault. These programs have focused mainly on female, college students; however, research supports the need for male-specific programs (Foubert & Marriott, 1997; Stewart, 2014).

A majority of literature has focused on tailoring programming to male-fraternity members on the college campus (Choate, 2003; Foubert & Marriott, 1997; Foubert, 2000; Jackson & Davis, 2000). Members of these populations are at high risk of displaying aggressive behavior toward women and being involved in completed attempts at sexual assault (Choate, 2003; Jackson & Davis, 2000). Researchers posit fraternity members are at high risk of becoming perpetrators due to involvement in a culture supportive of rape myths and high alcohol use (Choate, 2003; Foubert & Marriott, 1997; Foubert, 2000; Jackson & Davis, 2000).

One of the first programs developed to reduce sexual aggression in fraternity members was conducted by Foubert and Marriott (1997). The program, How to Help a Sexual Assault Survivor, was presented in a one-hour peer education format. Foubert and Marriott's (1997) goal was to lower the acceptance of rape myths and decrease participant's likelihood of sexual aggression. Over the course of the program, participants learned the definition of rape, how to help sexual assault survivors, and watched a video of a male victim of sexual assault to increase relatedness (Foubert & Marriott, 1997).

Male college students who participated in the program reported a decrease in the acceptance of rape myths. However, members of the control group also revealed a decrease in the acceptance of rape myths over time. Foubert and Marriott (1997) believe that exposure to the pre-test tool, the Burt Rape Myth Acceptance Scale, increased awareness of rape myths among all participants enough to facilitate some degree of change. It is also suggested that these results could be a result of social desirability or conversation held between the fraternity members in between pre-test and post-test

administration (Foubert & Marriott, 1997). The program was also effective in reducing participant's likelihood of using force against women.

The results from the previous study were recorded at a two-month follow-up period. Foubert (2000) revisited the same program, with the same population, but this time extended the follow-up period to seven months, the length of an academic school year. Results revealed that the program was effective in reducing the likelihood of perpetration and the belief in rape myths over the seven month period. However, there was no evident change in the participant's tendency to display sexually coercive behavior (Foubert, 2000). It is suggested that in order to see a change in actual behavior, participation in the program may have to occur more than the one-time administration. Foubert (2000) further states the seven-month evaluation period may not have been a long enough time span to see a significant change in behavior. Another explanation is the program itself may have inadvertently created a social desirability effect which influenced participant's responses during the follow-up (Foubert, 2000).

In another study conducted by Choate (2003), the Men against Violence Model (MAV) utilizes a peer- educator approach to inform an all-male audience on sexual assault prevention. MAV operates as a student organization that takes an alternative approach towards sexual assault education. Its focus is on eliminating the pressure and/or maladaptive behavior, set forth by a male dominant society. The tone of this society is thought to have an underlying connotation which motivates aggression towards women (Choate, 2003). Similar to previous programs, (Foubert 2000; Foubert & Marriott, 1997) this model is geared toward male fraternity members currently attending a college or

university. Such as programs before it, the goal is to alleviate male dominant gender roles. However, MAV has other objectives such as increase campus and community sexual assault awareness, spread education to those in K-12 schools, and provide support to those who have been victims and their offenders (Choate, 2003).

Participants in the program received information on rape statistics for men and women on the college campus. They were also educated on the legal definition of rape. Presenters also discussed common rape myths that perpetuate a sexually aggressive society. Finally, participants were offered the opportunity to learn information on joining the organization (Choate, 2003).

Although the study did not measure actual change in behavior, the study was useful in that it made several implications for counselors (Choate, 2003). Based on the evaluation of MAV, participants reported that the program was beneficial for many reasons. Many of the participants confirmed they did not have a clear understanding of the legal definition of rape. Additionally, prior to the program, they did not know what constituted consent (Choate, 2003). This information is important because it supports the notion of a negative correlation between knowledge of sexual assault and perpetration.

Jackson and Davis (2000) state another population at risk of perpetration is the student-athlete. Their program was designed to decrease victimization and prepare students for life after sports by teaching students appropriate behavior separate from their careers as student-athletes (Jackson & Davis, 2000). Therefore, in contrast to the previous programs that focused on male fraternity members, Jackson and Davis (2000) intended to target student athletes through Preventing Assault by Young Student Athletes (PAYS).

Jackson and Davis (2000) have designed this program to highlight sexual assault through the lens of an athlete. The program follows the common approach of teaching participants about sexual assault by providing definitions on the subject and providing information on prevalence. However, Jackson and Davis (2000) differ in that PAYS also addresses the cost of sexual assault to an athlete and his team. The program has an underlying theme that sexually aggressive behavior can be detrimental to the athlete's career. Jackson and Davis (2000) report that due to limited funding and parental and institution apprehensions this program has been unable to reach a wide audience.

The Men's Project (Stewart, 2014) is the first program discussed which addresses the general, male collegiate population. The program uses a combination of empathy-based interventions, a bystander model, and social norms interventions. The author employed these methods to help participants understand the emotional effects of sexual assault. They also aimed to increase the ability to recognize situations that can be dangerous for their co-eds and the likelihood of intervening (Stewart, 2014). The Men's Project differed from previous programs (Choate, 2003; Foubert & Marriott, 1997; Foubert, 2000; Jackson & Davis, 2000) because it was an 11-week program that met every week, for two hours. It was also facilitated by a graduate student presented as a sexual assault prevention expert (Stewart, 2014). Over the course of 11-weeks, participants learned about masculinity and male privilege; the emotional impact of victimization; and helpful bystander strategies (Stewart, 2014). Participants of The Men's Project showed lower sexism and rape myth acceptance and increased the likelihood of intervening in a potential victim – perpetrator interaction (Stewart, 2014). The Men's

Project's results showed promise of the program encouraging men to challenge sexual assault (Stewart, 2014). However, because the program implements three interventions it is difficult to identify which were effective in facilitating change.

Afrocentric Perspective

The social work profession's main mission is to "embrace human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people. Particular attention is given to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty." (National Association of Social Work [NASW], 2008). Despite social work's emphasis on improving the lives of the poor and oppressed population, there has been little evidence that the interventions which dominate the field are helpful in improving the lives of African-Americans (Sherr, 2006). Although the profession has made claims to enhancement through the achievements of movements leading to the Civil Rights Act, a large percentage of African-Americans continue to experience social and economic disadvantages forcing them to live in poverty, be unemployed, and be discriminated against leading to an increased risk of jail time (Sherr, 2006). In order to circumvent these events, there is a need for a theoretical perspective that takes into consideration the cultural background of African-Americans. This perspective should be used to empower the African-American race by applying principles that are grounded in African history and offer an understanding of the different challenges that the African-American race has had to overcome.

The Afrocentric Perspective is a theoretical construct established on the philosophical belief of modern day African-Americans and traditional Africa (Schiele, 1996). Although, the perspective intertwines the ideologies of contemporary African-Americans and traditional Africans the origins can exclusively be traced to Africa (Schiele, 1996). This perspective has three objectives which are to: (1) promote an alternative to the European perspective in the field of social work; (2) negate the negative distortions that people hold about people of color; (3) promote a view that is encompassed globally. This view will facilitate a spiritual, moral, and humanistic transformation that will cause others to believe that all ethnic and cultural groups share a mutual interest (Schiele, 1996).

The Afrocentric Perspective subscribes to general principles that help guide the treatment process. The first principle is Fundamental Goodness which expresses that each individual is fundamentally good (Bent-Goodley, 2005). Self-Knowledge, is a principle that encourages the practitioner to begin where he/she is; (3) Communalism, acknowledging the importance of the needs of the community above the individual's needs; (4) Interconnectedness recognizes that people are connected to one another and operate as one; (5) Spirituality is the acknowledgment of a higher being or divine nature; (6) Self-reliance, although at the core of the perspective is communalism, individuals are expected to contribute to the community and society in a positive manner; (7) Language and Oral Tradition helps to bring people together and develop an innate understanding of one another; and (8) Thought and Practice is the notion of being informed of social injustice and being an active participant in making a change (Schiele, 1996). To be a

nonproductive bystander is contrary to the Afrocentric Perspective (Bent-Goodley, 2005;

Graham, 1999; Harvey, 2001; Martin & Martin, 2002 in Schriver, 2011 p. 217-218).

The Afrocentric Perspective can aid in the assistance of victims of sexual assault

because its focus is on community involvement and support. Studies show that social

support plays an important role in the adjustment process of victims of sexual assault

(Ahrens, Cabral, & Abeling, 2008; Borja, Callahan, & Long, 2006; Mason et al., 2009).

By building strong relationships, victims will be more likely to confide in their natural

support system. Not only will the Afrocentric Perspective promote collectivity but it will

also encourage the community to take responsibility for its members. If the community

develops a, we are one perspective, members will be more likely to advocate on the

victim's behalf (Sherr, 2006). In addition to promoting social support, the Afrocentric

Perspective encourages knowledge through the Thought and Practice principle. This

principle states that if one is aware of an injustice then he or she must take the necessary

actions to bring about change (Schriver, 2011 p. 217). Rape promoting ideologies can be

eliminated by obtaining knowledge on sexual assault education (Choate, 2003).

Education on sexual assault can help bring about awareness and bring this phenomenon

to the forefront of our society. By applying the Afrocentric Perspective individuals will

have to acknowledge the information available on sexual assault and use it to help make a

change in the community and society while providing support to victims.

<center>Theoretical Framework</center>

As previously mentioned, the mission of the social work profession is to enhance

the well-being of clients and assist those who are oppressed while also empowering

client's to realize and actualize their own potential (National Association of Social Work [NASW], 2008). In order to achieve these goals, a theoretical framework will be utilized to outline the interventions used to implement change in the lives of the student body and communities surrounding the college and university campus. The purpose of this section is to explain the theoretical frameworks that will guide the researcher throughout the course of the study.

<div align="center">Feminist Perspective</div>

NASW's principles align closely with the Feminist Theory. This paradigm emerged in the 1960's as a result of the Women's Movement (Stanford University, 2014). Feminist Theory aligns with the social work mission as it is rooted in the advancement of women's rights while paying special attention to the oppression of women (Wood, 2015). This theory also aims to empower women against sexual inequality and the misplacement of power which often lies primarily in the hands of men (Saulnier, 2000; Wood, 2015).

The use of a feminist perspective is an appropriate method to counteract gender biases that occur in society's perception of the victim/perpetrator relationship as it pertains to sexual assault (Saulnier, 2000). This theory empowers women by educating them on exhibiting assertive behavior, improving communication by articulating their needs, and improving overall self-esteem and relationship values (Stanford University, 2014). This theory is not exclusive to the female client; it can also be used with the male population as well. Use of the Feminist Theory can help to eliminate many of the rape

myths we see in society that are held by men (Saulnier, 2000). By eliminating rape myths

that suggest men should be in power and are justified for their actions that are deemed as

"manly," we can begin to eliminate a number of sexual assault perpetrators. Men can also

benefit from this theory by exploring their core beliefs and how they influence their

thoughts about male and female roles in society and the treatment of women when it

comes to sexual assault (Saulnier, 2000).

Social-Ecological Model

A Social-Ecological Model will also be used in this study. The ultimate goal of

prevention is to forsee a threat and prevent it from happening (CDC, 2015). Before

choosing unplanned strategies that may have minimal impact, effective prevention of

sexual assault requires an understanding of the factors that influence sexually aggressive

behavior. This model studies the multifaceted relationship between individual,

relationship, community, and societal dynamics (CDC, 2015). It allows us to comprehend

the assortment of influences that put people in danger of violence or guard them against

experiencing or perpetrating violence (CDC, 2015). The Social-Ecological Model

suggests that in order to prevent violence, action must exist at the multiple levels

concurrently. Using this approach has a greater chance at sustaining prevention over time

than any other intervention (CDC, 2015).

The first level of this model involves identifying biological and personal history

that increases the likelihood of individuals becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence

(CDC, 2015). Prevention strategies at this level aim to enforce attitudes, beliefs, and

behaviors that prevent violence (CDC, 2015). These approaches may include education and skills training such as the ones seen in the female-targeted programs. Female college students have several risk factors that increase victimization. Hanson and Gidycz (1993) found that a history of sexual assault increases the likelihood of female college students being victimized. Additionally, males who engage in excessive alcohol use and subscribe to rape myths are more likely to become perpetrators (Choate, 2003; Jackson & Davis, 2000). Prevention strategies at this level should promote attitudes and behaviors that prevent violence (CDC, 2015). This may come in the form of education or skills training.

The examination of interpersonal relationships that may increase victimization or perpetration is important. Those included in an individual's social circle and family play a role in their behavior (CDC, 2015). Risky behavior that is supported by peers on the college campus can be circumvented through peer education programs that help to reduce anti-feminist behavior in males and empower females.

Physical environments play a role in the high or low risk associated with becoming a victim or perpetrator. These areas include the workplace, schools, and neighborhood (CDC, 2015). The goal of prevention strategies at this level is typically aimed to impact the social and physical environment. For example, colleges may increase on-campus security and provide escorts for females when needed (CDC, 2015).

Societal factors help play a role in the shaping of a community that is favorable of a rape-supportive culture (CDC, 2015). The fifth level looks at the societal factors that help support social norms that influence aggressive male behavior and a "blame-the-victim" approach to sexual assault.

The Social-Ecological Model assists the research in showing that prevention programs should not be created with the idea of focusing on co-ed programs but rather addressing female and male college students individually as well as collectively. For this study, the Social-Ecological Model provides the opportunity to create a program that is all-inclusive and offers interventions at the individual and community levels for the potential victim and perpetrator. This model allows for the prevention of sexual assault to be seen as multi-faceted and not just a women-centered problem. Moreover, it suggests that the male population is in need of interventions geared toward prevention of possible perpetration. Finally, it reveals societies role in the creation of cultural norms that influence the acceptance of aggressive behavior from males and the idea that females are solely responsible for preventing these actions.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the methods used to explore the effectiveness of gender-specific programs in preventing sexual assault in a college and/or university setting.

Methods of Study

The study used a systematic review to address the question of the efficacy of gender-specific sexual assault education programs. This approach allows the researcher to identify, evaluate, and synthesize research from previous studies that either support or negate the author's hypothesis (Walker, Hernandez, & Kattan, 2008).

This study utilized the Atlanta University Center's Robert W. Woodruff Library to access the following databases: Academic Search Complete; Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection; Psychology Journals; EBSCO Host; ProQuest Research Library and Social Sciences Journal. There were eight keyword searches used to conduct this search. They included: sexual assault education; sexual assault prevention; sexual assault and college campuses; sexual assault education and females; sexual assault education and males; sexual assault education and rape myths; rape prevention and males; and rape prevention and females. The researcher also searched terms to access

information for the theoretical framework and Afrocentric Perspective. Keyword searches included: Afrocentric Perspective; Feminist Theory; and Social-Ecological Model. As a result, over 600 articles were found but a review determined only 59 met the criteria for use as primary research. Of these articles, the researcher employed 35 psychology journal articles, five women's journal articles, four traumatic stress journal articles, two health journal articles, and one marriage and family journal article and twelve internet transcripts.

The selected articles were chosen for their ability to provide relevant information on the subject of sexual assault education. These articles gave a clear account on the dynamics of current education programs and their effectiveness as well as limitations. However, not all articles selected met the researcher's satisfaction. These articles were excluded because they addressed the issue of sexual assault education but their population included high school students.

Limitations

When carefully conducted a systematic review summarizes and integrates results from a number of studies and analyzes differences in the results (Walker, Hernandez, & Kattan, 2008). Moreover, this type of study allows the researcher to determine if additional research is needed to further investigate an issue. A systematic review allows for a new hypothesis to be developed to guide further research (Walker, Hernandez, & Kattan, 2008). In order to successfully use this design, relevant studies must be identified.

Further, when reviewing the data, results should be diverse (Walker, Hernandez, & Kattan, 2008).

A systematic review is beneficial because it has the potential to improve the influence of small studies (Ioannidis & Lau, 1995). In addition, a systematic review may reveal how a difference in population affects the effectiveness of an intervention. Finally, conducting this type of study can help identify biases in the literature and studies from the current study's author (Ioannidis & Lau, 1995).

Within the current study, the author experienced many limitations. First, much of the data was acquired by the participant's self-report. Utilization of such a method increases the risk of social desirability (Foubert et al., 2010). This concept is the tendency of participants to report information about themselves in a favorable manner (Fisher, 1993). As a result of this limitation, positive results may be exaggerated contaminating the actual effectiveness of the program. Second, a major limitation was the use of a non-randomized population making the possibility of generalization difficult (Sawyer, 2002). Much of the research focused on white, male fraternity members and was not representative of a diverse population. Additionally, the population size was limited. The studies had a large enough sample to indicate a change in attitude but still limited the ability to indicate a significant behavior change (Foubert, 2000). As a result, the effectiveness of such programs can only be applied to fraternity members.

Future research should be conducted to include non-white, male college students. Additionally, the sample size should be increased to obtain significant results. Finally, researchers should employ the use of other methods to obtain results that will limit social

desirability. Utilizing online surveys may increase the participant's sense of anonymity and decrease the presence of social desirability.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

This conceptual paper explored the effectiveness of gender-specific sexual assault

education programs within a college/university setting. Using a systematic review, the

researcher studied literature on different male-only and female-only sexual assault

programs and their effectiveness. The findings support the idea that gender-specific

programs show promise to reduce sexual victimization and sexual aggression on the

college campus (Senn et al., 2013). Across both programs, a positive correlation was seen

between the length of program time and program effectiveness (Foubert, 2000; Hanson &

Gidycz, 1993; Senn, 2015). For women, programs that focus on teaching women to

increase their ability to resist aggressive behavior offer a key component to effectiveness

(Senn, 2015). Men showed positive results when they were engaged in peer-support

programs and interventions were used to create relativity (Foubert, 2000).

Findings on Female-Only Sexual Assault Programs

The first study issue explored the effectiveness of female-only sexual assault

education programs. Overall results of these programs revealed there are several

multifaceted factors that play a role in the efficacy of a program. A major finding was the

influence of prior sexual assault history on re-victimization and the effectiveness of

programming. Female students who have a history of sexual assault prior to attending

college are twice as likely to be victimized than those without a sexual assault history (Hanson & Gidycz, 1993). This brings the importance of introducing female collegiates to sexual assault education at the beginning of their college career to the forefront.

Many of the programs evaluated shared a common theme. These programs were 60-minute to 90-minute programs lasting for one day. Additionally, these programs focused on providing information to participants or engaged them by showing a video. Finally, they taught participants to use assertive communication when engaging with a potential perpetrator. Programs that followed this format were inconsistent in their results and did not benefit high-risk participants. However, a resistant program created by Senn et al. (2015) implemented more programming hours, interactive and practice exercises, and shifted the focus from assertive communication to escalating resistance when a perpetrator is persistent. These tactics showed a decrease in sexual assault victimization, regardless of sexual history, that lasted for one year (Senn et al., 2015).

Findings on Male-Only Sexual Assault Programs

The second study issue explored male-only sexual assault programs. The most common theme in regard to male-only programs was their tendency to focus on fraternity members. This population was targeted because of their likelihood to believe rape myths that suggest women enjoy sexual aggression (Foubert, 2006). These beliefs put this population at high risk of perpetration. Many of the programs reviewed focused on eliminating rape myths, increasing relatedness, and increasing empathy for female victims. Another common theme was the use of peers to facilitate these programs. The

use of peers and relativity strategies were thought to reduce defensiveness in participants. Additionally, it was important to provide a narrative that portrayed male participants as a part of the solution rather than a part of the problem.

Male programs were effective in reducing the belief in rape myths. Further, participants showed a reduction in sexually aggressive behavior. However, these results only lasted a period of two to five months. The literature suggests that this is due to brief contact with the intervention. A study conducted by Stewart (2014) engaged participants in a program for 11-weeks. It also differed from other programs in that it integrated different interventions that aim to challenge social norms, increase the likelihood to intervene in a risky situation, and increase empathy. Adding a bystander component to a traditional individual model showed promising results across all areas of measurement. This suggests that when developing male-only programs, an integrative approach may be more effective in preventing sexual assault and increasing female support from male-collegiates.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Using a systematic review, this study sought to conduct a comparative review of sexual assault programs that were designed to have a gender-specific population. The researcher hypothesized gender-specific programs would be effective in reducing sexual assault victimization on college campuses. Female-only programs have the potential to inform participants on different strategies that can aid in recognizing risky situations. Additionally, specific skills can be taught that will aid female collegiates in reducing the likelihood of completed assault.

The researcher also hypothesized male-only programs will reduce behavior that leads to perpetration in men. By engaging in these programs, male collegiates will have a complete understanding of what sexual assault is and the behavior associated with perpetration. Also, these programs will help reduce social norms that support sexually aggressive behavior.

The researcher used the Afrocentric Perspective, Feminist Perspective, and Social-Ecological Model as theoretical frameworks for the study. The Afrocentric Perspective helps to guide male and female collegiates by encouraging a community perspective. It posits that all members play a role in reducing female sexual assault victimization. Moreover, this task should be met through education. The Feminist

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Perspective works to eradicate masculine norms that support sexually aggressive behavior in males. It also helps to remove the negative stigma associated with victimization which blames them for their own trauma.

Finally, the Social-Ecological Model is an outline that has the potential to guide the design of sexual assault programs. It requires interactions at the individual, interpersonal, community, and societal levels. Interventions that take place at each of these stages can aid in reducing sexual violence.

Discussion

The literature review and findings of this study revealed a need for gender-specific programs. The study revealed female college students face a higher risk of victimization than women in the general population. Therefore, sexual assault education should take place on the college campus. One of the first studies on female-only sexual assault education revealed the influence prior sexual assault history had on re-victimization (Hanson & Gidycz, 1993). Females who had been previously victimized were twice as likely to experience re-victimization when compared to those with no previous history. This put this population of females at high risk for sexual assault. Further, it proved to have an effect on the outcome of programming. Therefore, when developing programs for females, sexual assault history should be considered. Additionally, these programs should be administered early in their college career to reduce any chances of assault before contact with the program.

The literature revealed several programs have been developed following a female-only model however they are not being utilized. The research supports the need for these

programs. However, they have until recently, shown to be inconsistent in their results. Senn et al. (2015) recently developed a model that is consistent in reducing instances of victimization. This program is also effective regardless of sexual assault history.

After conducting a review of male-only programs, several limitations were found. There is a gap in literature when it comes to male-only programs. Only five programs were found and of those only one was tailored to the average, male collegiate. Many researchers have made male fraternity members a focus of their programs. This is because male fraternity members are more likely to engage in practices that increase sexually aggressive behavior such as excessive alcohol use and a belief in rape supporting narratives.

Researchers found that typically, male collegiates are resistant to sexual assault programs that view them as a part of the problem. The literature states when programs are created to teach males how to help protect females, participants are more receptive. Additionally, many successful programs followed a peer-educator model. Stewart (2014) developed a program that implemented three interventions and showed promising results. The program sought to reduce rape-myths, increase empathy for victims, and used a bystander approach.

Implications for Social Work

Several implications for social work can be made as a result of the current study. First, the findings of the current study have the ability to change the way social workers approach sexual assault prevention. Prevention programs currently in use follow a co-ed

format or use a bystander approach. Implementing gender-specific programs that include

a bystander approach can educate males and females on how to reduce their chances of

victimization and perpetration. In addition, a bystander component can teach efficient

ways to assist those who are in a risky situation.

Second, findings of the present study imply prevention should begin early.

Programs should be administered at the beginning of one's college career. Additionally,

prevention programs occurring in middle and high school can be beneficial to reduce

sexual victimization prior to college. This information can be valuable to school social

workers. Social workers in a school environment can host workshops teaching female

students techniques that can potentially prevent victimization. Further, school social

workers can implement interventions that will serve as a barrier to re-victimization for

students that already have a history of sexual assault. Additionally, high school presents

an opportunity to prevent concrete beliefs in rape myths. At this developmental stage, the

values of students are still being formed. School social workers can challenge these

beliefs and create a school environment that has an anti-rape culture.

Third, the Clery Act of 1990 was created with the intent to encourage institutions

of higher education to place more emphasis on campus safety. Institutions of higher

learning have been mandated to ensure college students have access to information on

sexual assault programs, prevalence, and policies which include education programs that

promote awareness of sexual assault (Mills-Senn, 2013). However, these institutions are

not given an outline to follow. This results in institutions providing sexual assault

education or, placing brochures on sexual assault awareness around campus as a

preventative measure. Social workers can lobby to make changes to this policy. An updated version of the Clery Act of 1990 could have a clause that requires the use of evidence-based sexual assault programs as an effort to reduce victimization.

Finally, the present study has implications for future research. Continued investigation into male-specific programs is greatly needed. It is imperative that future studies include a diverse population and large sample size. Additionally, as a bystander approach has yielded positive results in the male population, research should study a similar model for female-only programs.

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