

# HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS

by

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Little research has been conducted concerning public awareness of human trafficking. The purpose of this study was to investigate awareness of human trafficking, including the accuracy and the source of that knowledge. This study was largely exploratory. Participants were college students and individuals who are affiliated with an anti-human trafficking organization. Individuals from the anti-trafficking organization were more aware of trafficking, more willing to intervene in trafficking, more spiritual, and more exposed to nonfiction trafficking related media compared to students. Women score higher than men on measures of willingness to intervene, spirituality, and exposure to fictional trafficking related media. Results of this study will be shared to aid public education of human trafficking. A well-informed public can better prevent trafficking.



# HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS

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Master of Arts in General/Theoretical Psychology, Industrial/Organizational Concentration

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I'd like to dedicate this thesis to the victims of human trafficking.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Human trafficking is a worldwide problem that puts at least 20.9 million individuals in modern slavery (U.S. Department of State, 2012); other estimates have gone as high as 27 million (Polaris Project, 2010b). Human trafficking is said to be the fastest growing organized criminal industry in the world (Koerner, Harrison, Omland, Rush, & Pollock, 2010).

Unfortunately, due to its illegal nature and lack of reporting from victims, accurate statistics are very difficult to obtain, therefore, human trafficking statistics are at best estimates (Todres, 2011). Crime can be prevented if the public is aware of conditions in their area that promote human trafficking. Awareness of human trafficking is a crucial issue because law enforcement discovers what is occurring in the community through the general public. There appears to be a lack of prior work concerning public awareness of this issue. The goal of this study is to examine how the public learns about human trafficking and how the source of their knowledge is related to their accuracy of public knowledge of the issues. The focus of this paper is on the two major types of human trafficking: sex trafficking and labor trafficking.

### *Sex Trafficking*

Sex trafficking is described by federal law as when a “commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years” and the “recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act” (TVPA, 2000, p.1470). Worldwide, 22% of human trafficking victims are classified as victims of forced sexual exploitation (International Labour Organization, 2012). Eighty-three percent of identified sex trafficking victims in the United States are United States citizens (U.S. Department of Justice, 2011). This statistic contrasts starkly with anecdotal information about the general public, who believe that human trafficking, both sex and labor

trafficking, is primarily an issue in foreign countries or only affects immigrants. Contrary to the public image of sex trafficking, many victims in the United States are US citizens. No ethnic group is more susceptible to human trafficking than another (Reid, 2012). Some of the possible signs of sex trafficking include: changes in personality, spends time with older “boyfriend,” dressed inappropriately for age, suspicious tattoos or branding, and constantly monitored by others (Reid, 2012; P. Strickland, personal communication, October 25, 2012). These statements are particularly true of domestic minors under 18 and who are involved in commercial sex. Women are more likely than men to be sex trafficked and those in prostitution are most likely working for a pimp or trafficker (Reid, 2012; P. Strickland, personal communication, October 25, 2012).

Sex trafficking often receives special treatment in the media as compared to other forms of trafficking (Feingold, 2005; Marchionni, 2012). This coverage often depicts the harm that sex trafficking has done to individuals, as illustrated in such stories as those of *The New York Times* columnist and activist Nicholas Kristof. More about worldwide trafficking and abuses against women is included in his book written with his co-author, Sheryl WuDunn, titled *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide* (2009), which became a documentary of the same name.

Many factors contribute to the isolation of victims, such as drug abuse, family dysfunction, and sexual abuse (Reid, 2012). Experiences like these that typically occur early in life lead to the isolation of victims and go unnoticed by mainstream society. Domestic violence victims similarly experience a loss of social contact and rejection from others, an experience known as social isolation (Lanier & Maume, 2009). This isolation prevents individuals from finding a support system. Pimps are traffickers because they often use force, fraud, or coercion

to control women. Some isolation factors are common to both men and women but tend to affect them differently. These examples are true of both sex and labor trafficking victims: running away from home, homelessness, Aboriginal status, physical or mental disability, low school involvement, foster care, as well as physical and sexual abuse (Reid, 2012). Traffickers are adept at finding vulnerabilities like isolation and use that as a means of recruitment as illustrated in “The Backstory,” an online education project sponsored by MTV that seeks to explain how individuals become trafficking victims in order to better combat trafficking (MTVU; Rushton, 2013).

### *Labor Trafficking*

Labor trafficking may not be quite as well-known as sex trafficking but it is still deserving of attention. Labor trafficking is “the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery” (TVPA, 2000, p. 1470). Looking at human trafficking in its entirety, 68% of human trafficking worldwide is the result of private organizations and individuals who engage in forced labor exploitation (International Labour Organization, 2012). Another 10% arises from governments that impose forced labor and the remaining 22% come from sex trafficking (International Labour Organization, 2012). Victims of labor trafficking are often sexually abused in addition to the other exploitations they suffer (Feingold, 2005).

Industries commonly associated with labor trafficking include, but are not limited to, agriculture, restaurants, manufacturing, domestic servitude, and hotel service (Alvarez & Alessi, 2012). Essentially, human trafficking can be uncovered in any kind of industry or service. Child

soldiering is the only type of human trafficking that does not occur within the United States (Reid, 2012).

Labor trafficking holds much in common with sex trafficking, but one of its key differences concerns the citizenship of such laborers. Labor trafficking victims identified in the United States are 67% undocumented workers and 28% documented workers (U.S. Department of Justice, 2011). Based on that information, approximately 95% of labor trafficking victims in the United States are foreign. Anecdotally, it seems that many individuals have confused human trafficking and human smuggling as the same issue that primarily affects foreign laborers. It is not uncommon to see explicit statements that human trafficking is unrelated to smuggling or transportation across borders in the educational literature of anti-human trafficking organizations (e.g., Polaris Project, 2012b). Human trafficking is a crime against a person while human smuggling is considered a crime unto a country by crossing borders illegally (Polaris Project, 2010a).

Possible indicators of a labor trafficking victim include signs of confinement, malnourishment, poor hygiene, untreated illness, untreated injury, individuals who are not free to move about, and the individual does not know where he or she currently is located. A victim of trafficking may mention a large debt and receive threats of deportation if the individual is from another country. For both types of trafficking, signs of physical abuse, obvious dependency on another person, exposure to verbal threats, very little attention from others, and treated in an aggressive manner are signs that an individual may be trafficked. The majority of the signals discussed are not exclusive in the type of trafficking they belong with and there is overlap between the types (Reid, 2012; P. Strickland, personal communication, October 25, 2012).

Many of the factors that contribute to the isolation of domestic and sex trafficking victims also influence the isolation of labor trafficking victims (Reid, 2012). However, poverty, cultural and language barriers further strengthen the isolating process (Reid, 2012). Many individuals move into larger cities in order to find work, and sometimes this work puts a victim in the employ of someone who is looking for cheap labor (Feingold, 2005).

#### *Awareness of Human Trafficking through Media*

Individuals frequently learn about what is occurring beyond their own personal experience via the media, such as news channels, the Internet, TV, movies, etc. Media can be extremely powerful and have both positive and negative effects concerning human trafficking (Stiles, 2012). Media representations shape the way individuals think and what they know. The way society acts and talks about human trafficking stems from the attitudes and perceived knowledge that have been associated with the topic.

Media's strongest negative contribution is advertisements for commercial sex found in newspapers and online websites, which aid traffickers (Stiles, 2012). Fortunately, the issue is also becoming better represented in news media and literature (Bickford, 2012). A wide variety of other media attempts to combat trafficking by providing research, as well as personal accounts of survivors, books, newspapers, etc. Documentaries may further explain events to the public such as the Kony 2012 campaign, *Half the Sky*, or the documentary *Playground*, which focuses on the child sex trade in the United States. Sometimes trafficking becomes part of a fictionalized storyline. Television shows with episodes that feature human trafficking (e.g., *Criminal Minds* and *Major Crimes*) and movies (e.g., *Taken*) that focus on human trafficking are increasingly common forms of entertainment (Johnston, 2009). Fortunately for those who would like to use film to spread the word about human trafficking, the movie industry can afford to go into much

more detail than a public service announcement and audiences can become more familiar with the topic, potentially avoiding stereotypes. At the same time, clichés and stereotypes can also be reinforced depending upon the direction of the film (Brown, 2010). These types of media cannot compare to the amount of knowledge that is available on the Internet if an individual is searching for the information on the topic. Blogs, podcasts, and websites of anti-trafficking organizations all provide valuable learning tools.

Marchionni (2012) evaluated four major newspapers to identify stories related to human trafficking and the major themes and topics that run throughout them over a five year period. The papers included *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* (both based in the United States) as well as *The Guardian* and *The Times* (both based in the United Kingdom). Approximately 50% of the trafficking articles in these papers use sex trafficking as the main focus of their article. Surprisingly, labor trafficking is only the main focus in about 5% of the articles examined. Domestic trafficking is discussed in about 8% of articles about human trafficking published by *The Washington Post* but only 1.5% in *The Times*, while not a focus in either of the other papers. Another 5% of articles discuss different types of trafficking equally. Depending on the newspaper in question, about 25%-30% of the articles are about trafficking in general without focusing on any of the trafficking categories (Marchionni, 2012).

This focus on sex trafficking appears disproportionate to the prevalence of other types of trafficking. There is speculation that the focus on sex trafficking comes from religious or feminist roots and this has a great impact on the direction of government efforts to combat trafficking (Gozdziak & Collett, 2005; Marchionni, 2012). Alternatively, the fall of communism in Eastern Europe and Indochina, globalization, and the AIDS epidemic have all been factors that influenced the spread of sex trafficking in recent history, creating a need to address it extensively

(Kristof & WuDunn, 2009). Of course, discussing sex trafficking is important, but it would cause great harm to do this at the expense of labor trafficking. Talking about labor trafficking in the media brings the topic to the attention of many more people, allowing more to be accomplished toward prevention. Both kinds of trafficking should be made known to the public.

The language the media uses can shift how human trafficking is discussed by the general public. Terminology used to describe trafficking and its related issues have changed over the years (Reid, 2012). Examples of this are given by Lisa Thompson, Liaison for the Abolition of Sexual Trafficking at the national headquarters of the Salvation Army's Initiative Against Sexual Trafficking. Many prostitutes are victims of sex trafficking and should be treated as such. Forced prostitution, voluntary prostitution, and commercial sex worker are all terms that have been used to frame views of prostitution, typically to imply that not all prostitution should be seen negatively (Thompson, 2012). Attitudes are greatly influenced by the language used to frame events (Bizer, Larsen, & Petty, 2011). The problem with some of the aforementioned terms is that they tend to legitimize these words, so that some individuals are biased against seeing prostitutes as victims. Many prostitutes come from backgrounds that include physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. Fourteen is the average age of entry in prostitution in the United States and Canada (Poulin, 2009). Most authorities have agreed to the age range of 11 to 14 as the typical entry age into prostitution in the United States (Shared Hope International, 2007). Based on such abuses, prostitutes are not typically in the best mental health position to be making decisions like prostitution as a career field (Marchionni, 2012).

Similarly, there is a problem with how almost any story related to sex is handled in the media. Focusing on cases of rape, molestation, and other sex-related violations as crimes against victims and not sensationalizing these stories with the phrase "sex scandal" would help to make

the public aware of the actions of the perpetrators, while not blaming victims (Thompson, 2012). Child soldiering is an example of another such crime where the individual is not to blame for their conduct. There should be an emphasis on treating trafficking victims as victims, not as criminals, to change how trafficking is viewed by the public.

Educational efforts through media and other means must be done with great care to correct some inaccurate impressions of human trafficking. These educational efforts are to reduce stereotypes about who commits crimes and reduce stereotypes about who are the victims. Focusing on an issue as a crime, even while viewing it as fictional television program, can be informative and change perspectives (Lee, Hust, Zhang, & Zhang, 2011). There is great potential for educational improvement by talking about human trafficking as a crime in such contexts. In addition to the hypotheses investigated in this study, an exploratory investigation of media sources related to trafficking was conducted to better understand how human trafficking is presented within various forms of media.

Media exposure, particularly nonfiction media, is believed to be connected to an accurate awareness of human trafficking issues. Based on this information, the first hypothesis states that those with more nonfiction media exposure related to trafficking will show more accurate awareness.

### *Legislation*

An understanding of current law helps to explain what an educated society has already determined about an issue and its current actions. The general public should be aware of such legislation if they are to help find solutions or be on the lookout for potential victims in their area. The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) was instituted in 2000 and requires reauthorization every few years for budgetary reasons. The TVPA requires that every year the

State Department publishes the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report in order to publish a worldwide report monitoring the progress each country has made in combating human trafficking (TVPA, 2000). The process is something akin to a report card describing the human trafficking conditions of each country and grading improvements every country has made to their anti-human trafficking efforts. The United States ranked itself in the report for the first time in 2010 (U.S. Department of State, 2010). Such a report provides a common language and definitions to use when describing trafficking across the globe. TVPA also makes provisions for victims of trafficking found within the United States (TVPA, 2000). One such provision is a T-Visa, which can be issued to allow international victims of trafficking to stay in the United States while their traffickers are being prosecuted; the victims are eventually eligible for a more permanent visa (TVPA, 2000). In North Carolina, human trafficking was not considered under state law as a unique crime until 2006 (James, 2012). Although many states are making improvements to their trafficking related laws, there are still gaps in state legislation.

Internationally, different countries offer different protections to trafficking victims (Christensen, 2011). The United States and a few other countries offer protection when victims work with authorities against traffickers (Christensen, 2011). In the United States, the TVPA has aided victims through legislation, but there is still more that could be done. The identity of victims is still not protected within the US while traffickers are being prosecuted (Reid, 2012).

The United States is one of the leading countries in the fight against human trafficking according to the newspaper coverage it receives. This media attention is concurrent with an expectation that government should take steps against this threat. Trafficking does tend to receive more coverage in countries with greater medical care, greater GDP per capita, privilege

and opportunities for women. Perhaps this is why the United States is making human trafficking such a priority compared to other countries (Koerner et al., 2010).

### *Intervention*

There are steps that a society may take to prevent or intervene in cases of human trafficking. Education can contribute to the prevention of violence against women (Flood, 2011). This principle can apply toward trafficking by using education to prevent more trafficking. One of the most critical tools to preventing human trafficking can be effective communication. Law enforcement can establish better relationships in the community by increasing the communication between officers and citizens, as well as empowering residents (Adams, Rohe, & Arcury, 2005). If such steps are taken, residents are more informed and able to recognize possible signs of human trafficking which in turn benefits law enforcement as citizens provide them with possible instances for investigation. There is an increasing focus at a federal level to talk about how officials in many fields such as education, health care, and law enforcement are capable of identifying victims (U.S. Department of State, Report 2013).

Increasing awareness in the public will assist in communicating with law enforcement. Any industry that expects to come into contact with marginalized populations should keep an eye out for suspicious behavior. Hotels and motels frequently deal with transient populations and are often where trafficked victims are kept or work. Hotel staff are in an ideal position to observe and report suspected incidences of human trafficking. Restaurants and bars are able to spot those who seem suspiciously anxious (Polaris Project, 2012c). When a number of possible trafficking vulnerabilities are present, these organizations would be well advised to consider contacting the national trafficking hotline for more information about how to appropriately handle their particular situation. Of course, in emergency situations law enforcement should be immediately

contacted. Information from observers is incredibly helpful but victims could receive aid more quickly if they came forward themselves. However, victims of human trafficking don't often take advantage of the 1-800 numbers presented to them. Other types of violence have been successfully prevented through the use of such numbers but because trafficking victims often do not self-identify as victims, it is much less likely that these victims will contact a call center (Lange, 2011). The national hotline for human trafficking has already done much to begin trafficking investigations and help victims, often through individuals calling in about someone they believe to be a potential victim (Polaris Project, 2012a).

The choices that people make about the goods they use have an impact on how labor is treated at the so-called "bottom of the pyramid." Fair Trade products are made with much attention to labor practices such as disallowing child or forced labor (Fair Trade USA). Therefore, one of the ways in which the public can help prevent trafficking is by supporting Fair Trade products in industries that tend to be exploitive. Other industries such as transportation and hotel chains are taking steps to reduce their impact on trafficking by keeping their employees updated on the issue and encouraging them to be aware of potential victims (Mercy Investment Services). Hotel chains are doing this specifically through a code of conduct specifically to prevent sexual exploitation in travel and tourism of children; it is a global effort (The Code). If such organizations flourish, trafficking can be better prevented. Intervention practices related to human trafficking are an extension of growing human trafficking knowledge. Thus, the second hypothesis states those who are more aware of trafficking will also commit to practices meant to reduce human trafficking.

### *People Associated with Human Trafficking Organizations*

There are a number of organizations with religious roots that oppose human trafficking: International Justice Mission, the Salvation Army, and Shared Hope International. Christians were abolitionists in the time of legalized slavery and continue to be involved in eliminating modern trafficking (Zimmerman, 2011). It is suspected that individuals' spirituality influences willingness to learn about humanitarian issues such as anti-trafficking efforts. That in turn impacts the religious organizations that support anti-trafficking efforts and the background of Christianity. It is possible that individuals with greater spirituality will be more aware of trafficking issues. Therefore, the third hypothesis is that those with greater spirituality will a) show greater awareness of human trafficking than those who do not, and b) be more likely to intervene.

There is not much empirical research available on the subject of sex's influence on willingness to intervene in human trafficking, rape, or other social issues without an educational component. However, a logical argument can be made that most people see human trafficking as a women's issue, because they see more information on sex trafficking (Marchionni, 2012) which happens more often to females than males (Kristof & WuDunn, 2009; Reid, 2012). Therefore, more women should be more interested in intervention. Spirituality differs by sex (Flannelly & Galek, 2006; Simpson, Cloud, Newman, & Fuqua, 2008; Vosloo, Wissing, & Temane, 2009). Most of the discussion related to victims of human trafficking tends to focus on women and children (Alvarez & Alessi, 2012; Reid, 2012). Women are likely more aware of trafficking than men because women are more likely to be victims of sex trafficking, which receives more press than labor trafficking (Marchionni, 2012). The combination of more media exposure and spirituality should lead to women becoming more informed on trafficking and

therefore, more likely to be willing to intervene. Hypothesis four states women will demonstrate more awareness of human trafficking, been exposed to more nonfiction human trafficking related media, more exposed to fictional media, more spiritual, and show greater willingness to participate in trafficking intervention practices than will men.

Raising awareness of a particular issue can decrease the likelihood that individuals are willing to engage in particular practices. Increasing the awareness of issues related to sexual violence against women, individuals, particularly men, are more likely to commit to practices meant to reduce such violence and are less likely to believe in rape myths and stereotypes (Bradley, Yeater, & O'Donohue, 2009). Logically, those who are connected to an organization that has a goal to educate the public should gain knowledge from that experience. Those associated with that organization will be informed about the organization's issues of primary concern through nonfiction media. What they have learned should inspire action as well. A connection between knowledge of trafficking and spirituality would be demonstrated within an anti-trafficking organization as well. The general public is not likely to be well informed when compared to those personally involved with an anti-human trafficking organization. Therefore, hypothesis five states participants who affiliate with an anti-human trafficking organization will be more aware of the issue, been exposed to more nonfiction and fiction trafficking related media, be more spiritual, and be more willing to participate in intervention practices than college students unaffiliated with the anti-trafficking organization.

To review, the hypotheses are:

1. Hypothesis 1 is: individuals with nonfiction media exposure related to trafficking will show more accurate awareness.

2. Hypothesis 2 is: individuals who are more aware of trafficking will also commit to practices meant to reduce human trafficking
3. Hypothesis 3 is: individuals with greater spirituality will a) show greater awareness of human trafficking than those who do not, and b) be more likely to intervene.
4. Hypothesis 4 is: women will demonstrate more awareness of human trafficking, been exposed to more nonfiction human trafficking related media, more exposed to fictional media, more spiritual, and show greater willingness to participate in trafficking intervention practices than will men.
5. Hypothesis 5 is: participants who affiliate with an anti-human trafficking organization will be more aware of the issue, been exposed to more nonfiction and fiction trafficking related media, be more spiritual, and be more willing to participate in intervention practices than college students unaffiliated with the anti-trafficking organization.

## CHAPTER 2: Method

### **Participants**

The sample was derived from two populations: 1) a student sample from a large southeastern university who were offered course credit for completion of the survey, 2) a targeted sample of individuals affiliated with an anti-human trafficking organization, Eastern North Carolina Stop Human Trafficking Now (ENC Stop). Those who subscribe to the organization's media outlets are typically volunteers of the organization and others who have an interest in preventing human trafficking. This too was a convenience sample. Participants were offered the chance to win a gift card for their completion of the survey. This \$25 gift card was donated by ENC Stop. Results from the survey will be shared with this organization. A power analysis indicated that approximately 73 participants would be necessary for the multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) analyses.

A total of 651 surveys were completed from both the university and the anti-trafficking organization. The free responses of all 651 surveys were used to examine media questions related to frequency of observance and naming trafficking related programs. For all other examinations, surveys that took less than 7.14 minutes to complete were removed from further analyses. This limit was chosen because after temporarily removing outliers who took longer than 60 minutes to complete the survey, 7.14 minutes was half a standard deviation below the mean completion time of 10.63 minutes, eliminating participants who did not give full attention to the survey. Additionally, participants who identified as both a student and who were made aware of the study through an anti-human trafficking organization were taken out of the final sample to eliminate possible subsample contamination. The university used for this sample had a relatively new anti-trafficking group at the time of this survey, which may explain the overlap

between students and anti-trafficking organization participants. This procedure left 376 student participants (127 male, 249 female) and 76 participants from the anti-trafficking organization (6 male, 70 female), a total of 452 participants.

Table 1. *Demographics*

	Student		Anti-trafficking		Total	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>						
African-American/Black	90	23.9	9	11.8	99	21.9
Caucasian/White	251	66.8	66	86.8	317	70.1
Latino/Hispanic	18	4.8	—	—	18	4.0
Middle-Eastern/Arabic	2	0.5	—	—	2	0.4
Asian-American/Pacific Islander	3	0.8	1	1.3	4	0.9
Native American	1	0.3	—	—	1	0.2
Other	11	2.9	—	—	11	2.4
<b>Religion</b>	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Christian	317	84.3	66	86.8	383	84.7
Jewish	1	0.3	1	1.3	2	0.4
Muslim	2	0.5	—	—	2	0.4
Agnostic	24	6.4	2	2.6	26	5.8
Atheist	17	4.5	3	3.9	20	4.4
Other	15	4.0	4	5.3	19	4.2

<b>Christian Denomination</b>	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Baptist	110	34.7	24	36.4	134	35.0
Catholic	63	19.9	2	3.0	65	17.0
Episcopal	12	3.8	—	—	12	3.1
Lutheran	5	1.6	1	1.5	6	1.6
Methodist	31	9.8	11	16.7	42	11.0
Non-denominational	39	12.3	13	19.7	52	13.6
Pentecostal	14	4.4	3	4.5	17	4.4
Presbyterian	13	4.1	2	3.0	15	3.9
Unaffiliated	19	6.0	6	9.1	25	6.5
Other	11	3.5	4	6.1	15	3.9
<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
High School or GED	16	4.3	3	3.9	19	4.2
Technical Training	—	—	3	3.9	3	0.7
Current College Student	353	93.9	—	—	353	78.1
Completed some college	4	1.1	8	10.5	12	2.7
Bachelor's degree	3	0.8	24	31.6	27	6.0
Master's degree	—	—	31	40.8	31	6.9
Graduate certificate	—	—	1	1.3	1	0.2
Doctorate	—	—	6	7.9	6	1.3
<b>Work Field</b>	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Current Student	274	72.9	2	2.6	276	61.1
Unemployed	26	6.9	4	5.3	30	6.6

Physical Health Services	11	2.9	8	10.5	19	4.2
Mental Health Services	2	0.5	4	5.3	6	1.3
Government and Public Sector Jobs	3	0.8	9	11.8	12	2.7
Research	2	0.5	1	1.3	3	0.7
Education	1	0.3	19	25.0	20	4.4
Human Resources	1	0.3	3	3.9	4	0.9
Business & Industry	31	8.2	6	7.9	37	8.2
Other	25	6.6	20	26.3	45	10.0

## Procedure

The IRB approval of exemption letter can be found in Appendix A. The ENC Stop sample viewed the advertisement through the organization’s newsletter and social media pages (Appendix B). They accessed the survey through the link provided in the advertisement. This link sent them to the informed consent form (Appendix C), which leads to an online survey. The debriefing form (Appendix D) was shown after the survey. The ENC Stop sample was told to provide their email for the gift card drawing following the debriefing form. These emails were given in a linked but separate survey in order to maintain anonymity.

The survey was posted in an online participant management system for the student sample. After this, students followed the same procedure as the ENC Stop sample. The informed consent form appeared after clicking the link. Students who agreed to participate were taken to the same survey. The debriefing form appeared following the survey. However, students were not to enter into the gift card drawing after survey completion because they earned partial course credit for their participation.

## **Materials**

I developed a measure of human trafficking awareness by examining awareness materials of anti-trafficking organizations, relevant literature, and consulting with those in human trafficking advocacy. Demographic variables examined include age, sex, race/ethnicity, educational attainment, and work field. Individuals were also asked if they have ever had human trafficking training and, if so, to what degree. The survey was split into several different types of awareness of human trafficking. The subscales were developed using the educational literature of the Polaris Project, a national anti-trafficking organization that works in both advocacy and victim services and with Pamela Strickland, the founder and director of ENC Stop, who is a subject matter expert. She provided information and aided in the development of these items. The survey measures accuracy of human trafficking awareness and was measured using two subscales. The response format of the knowledge scale did not allow for reliability or factor analyses.

The first subscale examines awareness of trafficking with 19 items. Participants were asked to respond to statements about their knowledge of human trafficking, such as “If someone does not see themselves as a victim they do not need help” and “Human trafficking never appears in normal businesses like restaurants.” Participants were asked to indicate each statement as true or false.

The second subscale is an eleven item multiple-choice measure of knowledge of general facts about trafficking. Most items have four possible responses, while one has five. An example of such an item is “What is a T-Visa?” with the correct answer of “a type of visa granted to trafficking victims in the United States.” Source material came from the Polaris Project (2010a, 2010b, 2012a, 2012b, and 2012c), Reid (2012), and the U. S. Department of Justice (2011).

Correct answers were summed for a total accuracy score. Both of these subscales were aggregated into one total score of accuracy of human trafficking awareness for a maximum possible score of 30.

The trafficking knowledge scale was examined for unusual items and the possibility of excluding some items. Differences between the subsamples of students and the anti-trafficking organization using these scales show that the anti-trafficking organization is, as expected, more knowledgeable. The anti-trafficking organization answered two questions with complete accuracy from all participants. Although some items were missed by the majority of anti-trafficking participants, there is not enough evidence to justify removing any at this time.

The extent of media exposure to trafficking is a possible contributor to human trafficking awareness. These six items ask participants about the level of their exposure to human trafficking via different form of media. One sample question is “Approximately how many times have you seen human trafficking portrayed in fiction-based TV shows (e.g., *Criminal Minds*, *Major Crimes*, etc.) or fiction-based films, such as *Taken*?” This item’s frequency was determined by defining none as 0, N/A, and phrases with the same meaning. Moderate frequency was defined as numerical values of 1 to 10 or phrases such as “a few.” High frequency was defined as values greater than 10 or phrases like “many.” A similar pattern determined the frequency of other media exposure items. Nonfiction and fiction exposure were determined by use of the free response media items. If the respondent specified that they observed at least one incidence of one of these types of media, they were marked as having been exposed to it.

The next scale is the willingness to intervene in human trafficking. These seven items ask participants to rate their agreement with statements supporting ways they can personally

involve themselves in anti-human trafficking efforts, using a five-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). An example of such a statement is, “I would support organizations that are talking about the steps they take to prevent human trafficking.” The Mercy Investment Services article and phone applications like Free2Work were the inspiration for some of these questions by demonstrating trafficking prevention actions that can be accomplished by anyone. These questions were submitted to a principal components analysis in order to determine the number of factors accounted for in this scale. The analysis indicated Intervention has one factor with eigenvalues above 1.0, which accounts for 59.64% of the variance. No rotations were applied. The Cronbach’s alpha is .87. No items were dropped from analyses because this would not have improved Cronbach’s alpha. Analyses used the mean score of the items from this scale.

The final measure in this survey is the nine-item Combined Daily Spiritual and Values/Beliefs scale (Neff, 2006), which measures participants’ spirituality. The Cronbach’s alpha of this scale is .95. One item of this scale asks to rate agreement with the statement, “I feel a deep sense of responsibility for reducing pain and suffering in the world” on a five-point scale with response options ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The mean score of the items from this scale were used for analysis.

## CHAPTER 3: Results

Table 2 provides the average scores of participants on several variables. Average participant scores are slightly above the median of the possible scores for these scales.

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Table 2. *Means, Medians, and Standard Deviations of Variables*

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<i>Variable</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
Knowledge Total	20.71	21.00	2.94	10.00	29.00
Knowledge: MC	6.14	6.00	1.49	1.00	10.00
Intervention	3.96	4.00	.68	1.00	5.00
Spirituality	3.86	4.00	.95	1.00	5.00

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*Note.*  $N = 452$

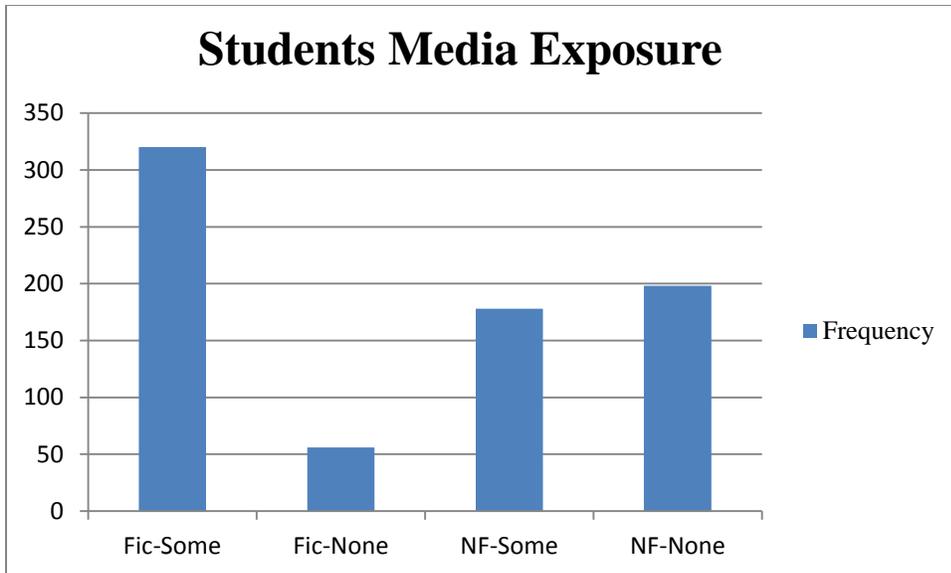
*Note.* Possible Ranges of variables: Knowledge Total 0-30; Knowledge MC 0-11; Intervention 1-5; Spirituality 1-5.

All open-ended media response items were examined for frequency (see Figures 1 and 2 below). All respondents were used, as nearly everyone made some response, even if it was a "never." I checked if titles were related to trafficking by examining movie plots and searching online for at least one TV episode that mentioned human trafficking. The same procedure was used for both fiction and nonfiction books. The majority of responses were relevant for books, while participants made more errors in TV and movie plots. For example, many participants listed TV and movies with drug trafficking and not human trafficking; these responses were eliminated from the data.

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Figure 1. *Students' Media Exposure*

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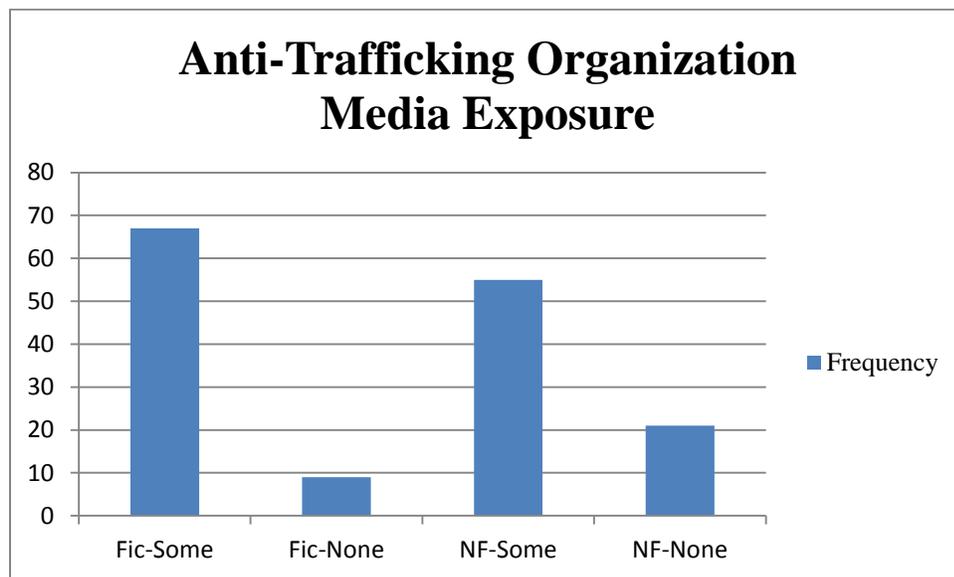
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*Note.*  $n = 376$ . Fic = Fiction exposure. NF = Nonfiction exposure.

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Figure 2. *Anti-trafficking Organization's Media Exposure*

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*Note.*  $n = 76$ . Fic= Fiction exposure. NF = Nonfiction exposure.

### *Hypothesis 1*

The first hypothesis states that those with more nonfiction media exposure related to trafficking will show more accurate awareness of human trafficking. The  $t$ -test supported this hypothesis using the entire sample,  $t(450) = -4.97, p < .001$ . People who were exposed to human trafficking nonfiction ( $n = 245, M = 21.33, SD = 2.87$ ) earned more accurate knowledge scores than those who were not exposed ( $n = 207, M = 19.98, SD = 2.87$ ). Post hoc  $t$ -tests were run to determine exposure to nonfiction's relation to other variables. The  $t$ -test indicated that nonfiction exposure is related to intervention, spirituality, and fiction exposure as well. The results, however, look quite different when separated by participant group (see tables 3 and 4). Students exposed to nonfiction media scored higher on the total knowledge scale (multiple

choice and true/false combined), intervention, and fiction exposure. Students with exposure to human trafficking nonfiction did not obtain differ in spirituality levels or the multiple choice part of the knowledge scale compared to students without exposure to nonfiction. However, participants in the anti-trafficking subsample only show significant differences pertaining to nonfiction exposure's relation to fiction exposure. Anti-trafficking participants who were not exposed to human trafficking nonfiction were less likely exposed to fiction compared to anti-trafficking participants who were exposed to trafficking nonfiction.

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Table 3. *Students' Nonfiction Exposure and Other Variables*

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<b>Variables</b>	<b>Not-exposed</b>		<b>Exposed</b>		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Knowledge Total	19.83	2.82	20.52	2.71	2.41	374	.02
Knowledge: MC	5.81	1.47	6.10	1.41	1.89	374	.06
Intervention	3.81	.68	3.95	.63	2.07	374	.04
Spirituality	3.73	.92	3.86	.91	1.31	374	.19
Fiction exposure	.79	.41	.92	.27	3.76	343.88	.001

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*Note.* Equal variances not assumed for fiction exposure. Not-exposed ( $n = 198$ ). Exposed ( $n = 178$ ). Possible Ranges of variables: Knowledge Total 0-30; Knowledge MC 0-11; Intervention 1-5; Spirituality 1-5; Nonfiction exposure 0-1; Fiction exposure 0-1.

Table 4. *Anti-trafficking Organization Participants' Nonfiction Exposure and Other Variables.*

Variables	Not-exposed		Exposed		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Knowledge Total	23.22	1.92	23.46	2.11	.33	74	.75
Knowledge: MC	7.44	1.13	7.07	1.33	- .80	74	.43
Intervention	4.67	.40	4.35	.65	- 1.43	74	.16
Spirituality	3.85	1.36	4.22	.99	.99	74	.33
Fiction exposure	.33	.50	.78	.42	2.91	74	.01

*Note.* Not-exposed ( $n = 9$ ). Exposed ( $n = 67$ ). Possible ranges of variables: Knowledge Total 0-30; Knowledge MC 0-11; Intervention 1-5; Spirituality 1-5; Nonfiction exposure 0-1; Fiction exposure 0-1.

Although no differences were hypothesized, it seemed prudent to investigate fiction exposure's relation to knowledge intervention, spirituality, and nonfiction exposure. Only nonfiction exposure shows significant differences in this regard. Those exposed to fictional media were more likely to also observe nonfiction media ( $n = 375$ ,  $M = .58$ ,  $SD = .50$ ) than those who have not ( $n = 77$ ,  $M = .38$ ,  $SD = .49$ ),  $t(450) = - 3.23$ ,  $p < .001$ .

#### *Hypothesis 2*

The second hypothesis that those who demonstrate more awareness of trafficking, regardless of the subsample, will also commit to practices to reduce human trafficking, was supported. The correlations between trafficking knowledge and intervention are moderate, but

significant,  $r(450) = .22, p < .001$ . When separated by participant group, students demonstrate a significant, but weak correlation of  $r(374) = .13, p = .014$  between knowledge and intervention. The anti-trafficking organization shows no correlation between these variables,  $r(74) = .04, p = .734$ . Therefore, the majority of the relationship most likely comes from the students. The lack of variability in the knowledge scale among the anti-trafficking sample may have contributed to the lack of relationship between knowledge and intervention.

### *Hypothesis 3*

Hypothesis three states that those with greater spirituality will show greater awareness of human trafficking than those who do not, as well as being more willing to intervene. The hypothesis was partially supported, although the correlations are weak to moderate. The correlation between spirituality and intervention is moderate, but significant,  $r(450) = .31, p < .001$ . The students alone show a moderate and significant correlation  $r(374) = .26, p < .001$ . The anti-human trafficking organization shows a stronger correlation of  $r(74) = .40, p < .001$ . The correlation between spirituality and knowledge is weak, but significant,  $r(450) = .13, p = .004$ . However, when separated by subsample, the students reveal no significant correlation between spirituality and knowledge,  $r(374) = .08, p = .129$ ; the same is true for the anti-human trafficking organization,  $r(74) = .09, p = .450$ .

### *Hypothesis 4*

In the interest of removing the confounding variable of a small anti-trafficking male subsample ( $n = 6$ ), only students were examined for this hypothesis. A MANOVA tested the hypothesis that women ( $n = 249$ ) will obtain higher knowledge scores, be more willing to intervene in human trafficking, be more spiritual, be more likely exposed to nonfiction human trafficking media, and be more likely exposed to fictional human trafficking media than men ( $n =$

127); these hypotheses were partially supported,  $F(6, 369) = 4848.58, p < .001$  (see table 5).

The univariate  $F$  tests for multiple choice knowledge, intervention, and spirituality revealed significant differences between women and men in the expected direction. Men and women did not differ in exposure to fictional media. Nor did they differ in knowledge as measured by the total (multiple choice and true/false combined) scale. Unexpectedly, men were more likely exposed to trafficking related nonfiction media than women. While this was a significant difference, it was in the opposite direction as hypothesized.

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Table 5. *MANOVA Comparing Female Students and Male Students*

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<b>Variables</b>	<b>Female</b>		<b>Male</b>		<b><i>F</i></b>	<b><i>p</i></b>
	<b><i>M</i></b>	<b><i>SD</i></b>	<b><i>M</i></b>	<b><i>SD</i></b>		
Knowledge Total	20.30	2.58	19.89	3.14	1.80	.18
Knowledge: MC	6.06	1.37	5.72	1.57	4.56	.03
Intervention	3.95	.65	3.74	.65	9.16	.01
Spirituality	3.88	.88	3.63	.95	6.40	.01
Nonfiction exposure	.44	.50	.54	.50	3.78	.05
Fiction exposure	.84	.36	.87	.36	.34	.56

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*Note.* Possible ranges of variables: Knowledge Total 0-30; Knowledge MC 0-11; Intervention 1-5; Spirituality 1-5; Nonfiction exposure 0-1; Fiction exposure 0-1.

### Hypothesis 5

A MANOVA tested whether the anti-trafficking organization differed from the students on knowledge, intervention, spirituality, nonfiction exposure, and fiction exposure. As expected, those participants affiliated with the anti-human trafficking organization had more accurate knowledge scores, were more willing to intervene, were more spiritual, and were exposed to more human trafficking nonfiction media than the students  $F(6, 445) = 4321.56, p < .001$ . All univariate  $F$  tests for these variables were also significant (see table 6). Unexpectedly, the student group reported more exposure to fictional media than the anti-human trafficking organization, in the opposite direction as hypothesized. Therefore, the fifth hypothesis was supported for knowledge, intervention, spirituality, and nonfiction media exposure, but not for fictional media exposure.

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Table 6 MANOVA Comparing Students vs. Anti-trafficking Organization on Other Variables

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Variables	Students		Anti-trafficking		F	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
Knowledge Total	20.16	2.79	23.43	2.07	94.359	.001
Knowledge: MC	5.95	1.45	7.12	1.31	42.686	.001
Intervention	3.88	0.66	4.38	0.64	37.274	.001
Spirituality	3.79	0.91	4.17	1.04	10.490	.001
Nonfiction exposure	0.47	0.50	0.88	0.33	46.621	.001
Fiction exposure	0.85	0.36	0.72	0.45	7.344	.007

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*Note.* Students ( $n = 376$ ). Anti-trafficking organization ( $n = 76$ ). Ranges of variables: Knowledge Total 0-30; Knowledge MC 0-11; Intervention 1-5; Spirituality 1-5; Nonfiction exposure 0-1; Fiction exposure 0-1.

## **Media Responses**

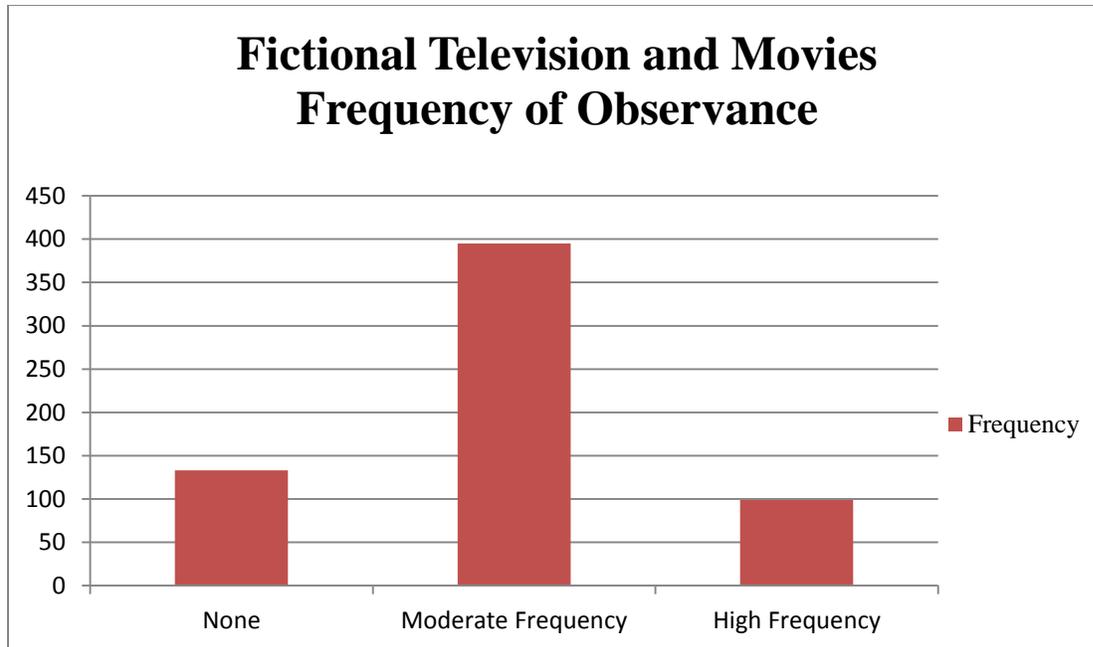
Both fiction and nonfiction books were largely unread by participants. The number of nonfiction TV and movies observed was also small. One hundred fifty-eight individuals read something about human trafficking in a newspaper. Free responses show this exposure was primarily from national news or organizational sources, but some from local newspapers as well. Two-hundred sixty-eight individuals saw something related to trafficking through televised news. Some remembered seeing trafficking on specific news programs and others remember stories that received much attention at the time (e.g., the Shaniya Davis case or the case against Ariel Castro).

Unlike the other media categories, fictional TV and movies were observed with great frequency (see figure 3) with an extensive number of titles. Few titles appeared frequently except for the movie *Taken*, which appeared 293 times (not including mention of the sequel), which is unsurprising as it was given as an example. Other popular titles are considered part of the police procedural genre or action movies. Much rarer were mention of comedies (e.g., *Family Guy*).

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Figure 3. *Fictional Television and Movies Frequency of Observance*

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## CHAPTER 4: Discussion

Overall, the majority of the hypotheses were supported. Those who were exposed to nonfictional media on human trafficking also were more knowledgeable about trafficking. Nonfiction media's purpose is to present facts to the public as accurately as possible to be educational, and it appears it may be doing this, although not so well among male students. Participants were exposed to fiction books, TV shows, and movies. People with exposure to fictional media were similarly moderately knowledgeable as those not exposed to fiction about human trafficking. Unlike nonfiction, fictional media does not need to make human trafficking stories realistic. Even among fictional media, some TV shows or movies vary in their accuracy and realism. Information about trafficking presented in fictional media may not be true and does not necessarily mean those exposed to it are more knowledgeable. Although students may read fiction when they have the time (Gilbert & Fister, 2011), they may not read much nonfiction human trafficking material. Despite an arguably steady presence in the news, the majority of individuals do not seem able to recall seeing human trafficking news stories. Six hundred twenty-four individuals responded to the item asking if they had observed trafficking in the news. Only 268 individuals (42.95%) responded in the affirmative. Participants may have heard of the topic in passing and thus have less accurate recall. Some of the TV shows and movies chosen by participants were about drug trafficking and human smuggling and not human trafficking (and were thus deleted from the data). Many participants were unclear about the nature of the differences between human smuggling and human trafficking despite the majority of participants identifying that human trafficking is different than human smuggling. Many individuals may not recognize that smuggling is an offense against a country while trafficking is

committed against a person. More people, particularly among students and younger people should be made aware of this distinction.

Those who are more aware of trafficking have a greater willingness to intervene, supporting anti-human trafficking efforts. Knowledge of a problem comes before action taken against it. Education can prevent violence toward women (Flood, 2011); thus it follows that education about human trafficking can fuel anti-trafficking efforts. Organizations take measures to engage in practices with the potential to deter trafficking (The Code; Fair Trade USA) because their knowledge of trafficking helps them find ways they can make a difference.

Although spirituality is not related to trafficking knowledge, spirituality is related to willingness to intervene. Trafficking knowledge is most likely explained by media exposure rather than spirituality. Those without a particular spiritual connection are still exposed to various forms of trafficking related media. Spirituality may not be associated with greater trafficking knowledge, but spirituality's link to willingness to intervene may explain the religious-based (particularly Christian), anti-trafficking organizations. Historically, Christians have been actively involved in the abolition of slavery (Zimmerman, 2011), which may further explain their desire to be involved.

There is still uncertainty regarding whether women are more aware of trafficking than men. Although women and men were equally knowledgeable as measured by the combined multiple choice and true/false items, women were more knowledgeable than men using the multiple choice measure only. These differences could be illustrative of the weaknesses of true/false measures. True/false measures have a positivity bias because they have fewer options and less chance of error compared to other measures like multiple choice. When given more room for error, participants are less likely to answer correctly by simple guessing and must base

their answers on actual knowledge. Participants had to be more knowledgeable in order to answer a four-choice question correctly compared to a two-choice question. As an issue that is publicized as primarily affecting women and female children (Alvarez & Alessi, 2012; Reid, 2012) it follows that women would be more concerned about it than men. More research is required, including a stronger measure of knowledge, on human trafficking to determine if women are more aware of trafficking than are men.

Women are more likely to be willing to commit to intervening in trafficking efforts and be more spiritual. The media promotes a view that women are more likely to be victims of trafficking than men which is borne out in women's knowledge of the issue and willingness to confront it. Sex is associated with differences in spirituality (Flannelly & Galek, 2006; Simpson et al., 2008; Vosloo et al., 2009). The link between spirituality and increased knowledge of trafficking combined with the focus on women in trafficking news may further explain why women are more spiritual and more knowledgeable of trafficking.

However, women do not differ from men in their exposure to fictional trafficking related media. No matter one's sex, people appear to gravitate toward similar trafficking related fictional entertainment. Although men are more exposed to trafficking-related nonfiction than women, they are not retaining the information. This lack of retention explains why women may be more knowledgeable about trafficking even though men are exposed to more media coverage on the topic. Men may be more likely to mistake drug trafficking/smuggling for human trafficking, as may be found in many of the comments in the media section. A more detailed and in-depth analysis of exposure may detect differences in quantity of exposure or media content for both fiction and nonfiction.

These data suggest that individuals involved with an anti-trafficking organization are more aware of human trafficking than students. This result was expected because those who belong to an anti-trafficking organization clearly find it an important issue, pay attention to it, and thus should be more knowledgeable than students. It was not surprising that those from the anti-trafficking organization were more willing to intervene, were more spiritual, and were more exposed to human trafficking nonfiction. It was surprising that students were exposed to more human trafficking-related fiction than anti-human trafficking participants. I had expected that anti-human trafficking participants would recall seeing more fiction examples than students because of the organization's focus on the issue. These results may be explained by some anti-human trafficking participants remarking that they do not watch much television. One participant mentioned that she sees enough of the issue through research and nonprofit activities. It is quite possible that those who work in anti-trafficking related fields may choose completely unrelated forms of entertainment. A separation between career and entertainment helps create an emotional distance from work. The effect can be likened to vacations from work and avoiding work related activities, which promotes improved well-being (de Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2012; de Bloom et al., 2011). A short break like an evening away from work may not be as helpful to well-being as an extended vacation (Fritz & Sonnentag, 2005; Van Hooff, Geurts, Kompier, & Taris, 2007), but individuals should benefit from regularly removing themselves from work. Anti-human trafficking participants could also choose to ignore human trafficking fictional media due to discrepancies found between fiction and reality that knowledgeable people on the topic may find annoying or disrespectful.

This measure of knowledge of human trafficking reveals clear differences between the average awareness of students and those affiliated with an anti-human trafficking organization.

The differences between these two groups may account for other differences observed in this study. Differences between men and women may also account for some differences between students and the anti-trafficking organization. The anti-trafficking organization sample was only 8% male. That gender gap points to a lack of men involved in anti-trafficking efforts as a whole. Perhaps women are more knowledgeable and involved in anti-trafficking efforts. Unfortunately, the anti-trafficking male sample was too small to analyze alone; however, the very low numbers of men support the point that women may be more interested in being involved with anti-human trafficking organizations. One suggestion is for anti-human trafficking organizations to conduct outreach with men as well as women.

There is much less variability among anti-trafficking participants' responses compared to the students' responses. A clear majority of the anti-human trafficking group answered nearly all of the accuracy items correctly. For example, the true/false question, "If someone does not see themselves as a victim, they do not need help" was one item in which all of the anti-trafficking participants answered correctly. The lack of error variability among the anti-trafficking organization indicates that most anti-trafficking participants are well-informed. This result is unsurprising as those who learned of the study through the anti-trafficking organization should be exposed to the same information. Anti-trafficking organizations educate about Fair Trade and its relationship to trafficking deterrence, which corresponds with the fact that 84% of the anti-trafficking organization correctly identified the meaning of Fair Trade. The number of anti-trafficking participants not exposed to human trafficking nonfiction was small, which may be the reason this hypothesis could not be confirmed among this subsample. Such a majority of anti-trafficking participants exposed to human trafficking nonfiction indicates that those from anti-trafficking organizations remember coming across this information in the media and may even

actively look for this information. This abundant nonfiction exposure from the anti-trafficking organization further supports that those from the organization are more aware of human trafficking because they have the necessary background knowledge to do so.

## **Media**

One respondent commented on the focus on sex trafficking among TV and movies. Another described these programs as frightening while at the same time discussing how they are seen by society. As this respondent said, using *Taken* as an example, these programs generate much initial talk but die out over time due to the availability heuristic. The availability heuristic explains how individuals assess the probability of an event based on how easily the individual can recall examples of said event (Tversky & Kahneman, 1973). When a topic like trafficking is no longer at the forefront of media concern, there is less talk about it, and after that people forget. Media coverage can increase the general population's estimation of the frequency of certain risks (Lichtenstein, Slovic, Fischhoff, Layman, & Combs, 1978). Risk estimation is less affected by media coverage and the availability heuristic than by a social connection or emotional response but it still plays some role in public attitudes (Pachur, Hertwig, & Steinmann, 2012). Individuals watching media coverage tend to believe that trafficking incidents occur frequently but not as frequently as those with personal experience. People with personal experience related to trafficking would believe that trafficking occurs with great frequency. Those who have observed trafficking in the media would also believe trafficking occurs with great frequency but to a lesser extent than those personally affected. The public's beliefs about trafficking can be uncovered by researching the relationship between the amount of media coverage and knowledge/awareness of human trafficking.

Some of the comments individuals made provided some insight into what some may perceive as the media's focus. One person commented "Most trafficking (sic) is featured on the news OUTSIDE of the US, maybe biased for one and another it just makes me believe other countries have a different outlook on life but I know trafficking (sic) happens in the US too." Others remember local examples of news stories relevant to human trafficking. Another comments "CNN, NBC, ABC; many major news outlets have run stories on human trafficking. However, they unfortunately tend to focus on sex trafficking, specifically." This comment was made presumably in recognition of the imbalance of coverage with labor trafficking. New empirical studies similar to Marchionni's (2012) work examining the trafficking focus of newspapers would provide some validity to this claim. However, the comments alone demonstrate that there are individuals who have considered how human trafficking is affected by its representation in media.

### **Limitations**

There are concerns when examining the items of the knowledge scale. Positivity bias may have occurred among the true/false questions. There are too few distractor options and some individuals answer correctly by chance. The inability to confirm that there are knowledge differences between men and women demonstrates another reason that multiple choice items will be preferable to true/false items in future research.

The simple yes or no evaluation of media exposure is a potential weakness. A more detailed analysis may be able to detect differences in the kinds of media witnessed. The amount of exposure could be examined more extensively. For example, do particular fictional programs usually present the facts or are they more interested in twisting circumstances to suit stereotypes

and move the story? As for nonfiction media, a distinction between sex and labor trafficking would be informative.

The intervention scale asks whether people would be likely to intervene; it does not test their actual behavior with regards to intervention in human trafficking. The actions questioned in the intervention scale could be taken by anyone and most participants indicate willingness toward these intervention behaviors. However, this does not mean that participants will act in the manner they indicated in the survey if presented with the opportunity. There can be a disconnect between attitudes that lead a person to be willing to complete a particular action and the behaviors that should stem from that willingness (Ajzen, Joyce, Sheikh, & Cote, 2011). Other factors come into play to determine how individuals behave. For example, one of the intervention scale items asks participants to rate their willingness to boycott organizations that are not preventing trafficking within themselves. Many organizations known to have poor labor practices do so to keep costs down. The cost of an item plays a large role in determining what consumers buy. Up to a certain price point, individuals will choose a higher cost item of similar quality if a socially responsible reason can be given for doing so (Hainmueller, Hiscox, & Sequeira, 2011). Few people, particularly college students, have the opportunity to actively intervene in a known instance of human trafficking. This measure makes no attempt to investigate an individual's willingness to become involved to stop such a case. More questions would be needed to investigate that but that information would still only tell researchers about underlying attitudes, not what would happen in a real world situation.

The self-selection of the anti-trafficking sample was a weakness of participants. Participants were informed of the study through either the monthly newsletter they read to stay informed on trafficking issues or through a social media post with the same purpose. This

organization often accepts invitations to speak at churches and promotes the actions of religiously-based anti-trafficking organizations. Reaching men is still quite difficult for anti-trafficking organizations. Women are the majority in attendance at anti-trafficking education events and the newsletter recipients of the anti-trafficking organization used for this study is estimated to be two-thirds female (P. Strickland, personal communication, October 15, 2013). Those who chose to participate in the study are likely those most willing to help the organization. The gift card drawing was used to give people who would not otherwise be interested in the survey an incentive to participate.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

Future researchers should consider avoiding true/false measures and examine the benefits of other measures to estimate knowledge. Gathering data from other anti-human trafficking education organizations, particularly men involved in these groups, would be of great value to further validation of the knowledge and intervention scales. To obtain such validation is challenging because of the minority of men involved in anti-trafficking organizations. A new study examining several organizations from a widespread area would perhaps be able to provide a sample of sufficient size. Further validation on the general population is needed as well, but this would require a national random sample. It is difficult to obtain such a sample because randomly selected samples rarely obtain a sufficient number of willing participants. These constraints are a limitation but those conducting future studies should strive for broader samples.

Extensive inquiry about trafficking's representation in media is beneficial to understanding public knowledge of trafficking. Nonfiction and fictional trafficking related media cover many formats and the amount of exposure individuals receive is uncertain. Asking about media exposure in a specific recent time period could correct for issues related to failing

memory. Men and women may be exposed to the same forms of media but women may remember more trafficking related information. Demographic differences require further investigation among subsamples.

Among those who claimed to receive formal training on human trafficking, an examination of what kinds of training were received would provide some needed clarification. We should clarify what kind of training is provided to those affiliated with human trafficking. We should also investigate anti-human trafficking training from other sources, such as law enforcement and healthcare providers. Five students reported receiving training and 25 in the anti-trafficking organization received training. The question of training was too general to know if the training was purely educational or what field someone intended to use their training in (e.g. medical, law enforcement, etc.). Relationships, specifically family relationships, may also be a factor that influences trafficking awareness. Parents may be more aware of trafficking as they look out for their children. Mothers may be more knowledgeable than fathers because they are also women, exposed to primarily sex trafficking in the media (Marchionni, 2012), which they worrying about affecting their own daughters. Due to this media focus, trafficking is still often seen as mostly a women's issue. Similarly to domestic violence, which relies on recognizing that sex has played a role in both the continuation and prevention strategies of more violence (Cermele, 2007), preventing trafficking will require awareness from both sexes. It is still uncertain just how much more aware of trafficking women are than men, making it difficult to make further statements about relationships that affect trafficking perception. Personal experience or knowing someone who has been a victim could be other factors affecting awareness because personal experience can increase the frequency perception of something like trafficking (Pachur et al., 2012).

## **Implications**

Many respondents may still be confused about the nature of human trafficking. Some respondents gave titles of movies and TV shows that are related to drug trafficking, kidnapping, prostitution, and gang rape. While these topics are related to human trafficking, they do not constitute human trafficking on their own and future human trafficking education projects should note how trafficking is different from other crimes as a clarification point, particularly among the young and students. Increasing the presence of educational efforts on campuses for college students would bring greater awareness to this group. Anti-trafficking organizations educate the public by speaking at events to which they are invited, such as church meetings, as well as setting up booths at community events for people to come to and engage in conversation. Expansion is crucial to reaching more people.

The small number of men recruited from the anti-trafficking subsample may be representative of anti-trafficking organizations as a whole. Targeting men with anti-trafficking education would be very beneficial to preventing trafficking because they appear to be a largely unreached group. Many organizations are already aware of the benefits of educating men. They talk about demand of sex leading to an increase in sex trafficking but are still searching for better ways to reach men. These results suggest that continuing those efforts and talking about trafficking in general to men could be of great help to trafficking prevention.

## **Conclusions**

Expanding public awareness is important to deterring human trafficking. Anti-human trafficking organizations should focus their education efforts on defining human trafficking and explaining its relation to other crimes because it's clear there are a number of people who do not yet understand this. Once people are aware of the issue, they will do what they can to prevent

trafficking in everyday life. Future studies need to reach more demographic groups and individuals from both anti-trafficking organizations and the general population.

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## Appendix A IRB Approval Letter



### **EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY**

#### **University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board Office**

4N-70 Brody Medical Sciences Building · Mail Stop 682

600 Moyer Boulevard · Greenville, NC 27834

Office **252-744-2914** · Fax **252-744-2284** · [www.ecu.edu/irb](http://www.ecu.edu/irb)

Notification of Exempt Certification

From: Social/Behavioral IRB  
To: [Molly Overholt](#)  
CC: [Amy Lyndon](#)  
Date: 4/22/2013  
Re: [UMCIRB 12-002281](#)  
Human Trafficking

I am pleased to inform you that your research submission has been certified as exempt on 4/21/2013. This study is eligible for Exempt Certification under category #2.

It is your responsibility to ensure that this research is conducted in the manner reported in your application and/or protocol, as well as being consistent with the ethical principles of the Belmont Report and your profession.

This research study does not require any additional interaction with the UMCIRB unless there are proposed changes to this study. Any change, prior to implementing that change, must be submitted to the UMCIRB for review and approval. The UMCIRB will determine if the change impacts the eligibility of the research for exempt status. If more substantive review is required, you will be notified within

five business days.

The UMCIRB office will hold your exemption application for a period of five years from the date of this letter. If you wish to continue this protocol beyond this period, you will need to submit an Exemption Certification request at least 30 days before the end of the five year period.

The Chairperson (or designee) does not have a potential for conflict of interest on this study.

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IRB00000705 East Carolina U IRB #1 (Biomedical) IORG0000418

IRB00003781 East Carolina U IRB #2 (Behavioral/SS) IORG0000418

—  
Study.PI Name:

Study.Co-Investigators:

## **Appendix B Advertisements**

### Advertisements

Advertisement to be posted on Sona Systems, the online participant management system:

“Participants will answer questions related to awareness of human trafficking and its prevention. Results will be shared with anti-human trafficking organizations and used in a master’s thesis.”

Advertisement to be posted in Eastern North Carolina Stop Human Trafficking Now’s newsletter and/or Facebook page:

“ENC Stop is partnering with East Carolina University for a new, more thorough, survey of human trafficking awareness and prevention. Results will be shared with this organization and used in a master’s thesis. Please take this survey and contribute to the improvement of human trafficking education. You may enter your email at the end of the survey for a chance to win a \$25 Visa gift card.”

## **Appendix C Informed Consent**

### Informed Consent Form

Title of study: Human Trafficking Awareness  
Principal Investigator: Molly Overholt  
Institution/Department or Division: Psychology Department  
Address: Rawl 104  
Telephone #: 328-2589

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Researchers at East Carolina University (ECU) study problems in society, health problems, environmental problems, behavior problems and the human condition. Our goal is to try to find ways to improve the lives of you and others. To do this, we need the help of people who are willing to take part in research.

You may have questions that this form does not answer. If you do, feel free to contact the person explaining the study. You may have questions later and you should ask those questions. There is no time limit for asking questions about this research.

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#### **Why is this research being done?**

Through this research, we hope to learn how the public perceives human trafficking and use this information to improve trafficking education efforts. To accomplish this, we will measure knowledge of human trafficking, attitudes related to trafficking, perceptions of victims, and media exposure related to trafficking. The decision to take part in this research is yours.

#### **Why am I being invited to take part in this research?**

Your invitation to participate in this research is extended for one of two reasons. If you volunteer to take part in this research, you will be one of about 150 people to do so as a sample at ECU. This study also requires a group of individuals with prior knowledge of human trafficking. Therefore, you were asked to participate through your contact with an anti-trafficking organization; you will be one of about another 150 participants from that group.

#### **What incentive do I have to complete this research?**

If you are a student at ECU completing this survey for research credit, you will of course receive said credit upon completion. If you are participating through Eastern North Carolina Stop Human Trafficking Now, you have the option of submitting your name and contact information to participate in a drawing for a \$25 Visa gift card at the end of the survey.

#### **Are there reasons I should not take part in this research?**

There are no restrictions for participation in this research.

#### **What other choices do I have if I do not take part in this research?**

You have the choice of not taking part in this research study. If you are a student earning research credit, you may earn your research credits through answering questions about research articles as described in your Psychology class.

**Where is the research going to take place and how long will it last?**

The research procedures will be conducted online. The total amount of time you will be asked to volunteer for this study is approximately 40 minutes.

**What will I be asked to do?**

You will be asked to do the following: Answer questions about facts related to human trafficking, attitudes related to human trafficking and its victims, media coverage related to human trafficking, and possible intervention steps.

**What possible harms or discomforts might I experience if I take part in the research?**

There are always risks (the chance of harm) when taking part in research. It has been determined that the risks associated with this research are no more than what you would experience in a normal life. However, some people react to things differently so it is important for you to tell us as quickly as possible if you experience any negative feelings. You can contact Molly Overholt at [overholtm11@students.ecu.edu](mailto:overholtm11@students.ecu.edu).

**What are the possible benefits I may experience from taking part in this research?**

You may learn something about human trafficking through your participation in this study. There are no guaranteed personal benefits from your participation but the information gained by doing this research may help others in the future. This research is to help us learn more about what individuals think about human trafficking and how they learn it.

**Who will know that I took part in this research and learn personal information about me?**

Participation in this study is anonymous. This means that no one will be able to connect your responses to your name. Your responses will be saved on a secure and password-protected server and computers of the researchers. Scientific reports will be based on group data and will not identify you or any individual as being in this project.

With your permission, the following people may use your private – but anonymous – information to do this research:

- The University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board (UMCIRB) and its staff, who have responsibility for overseeing your welfare during this research, and other ECU staff who oversee this research.
- Molly Overholt, Dr. Amy Lyndon of the Psychology Department at ECU, and Molly Overholt's thesis committee.

**How will you keep the information you collect about me secure? How long will you keep it?**

Your responses will be downloaded onto a secure server and saved onto password protected computers. This information will be kept for five years after they have been used anonymously in publication of research reports.

**What if I decide I do not want to continue in this research?**

If you decide you no longer want to be in this research after it has already started, you may stop at any time. You will not be penalized or criticized for stopping.

**Who should I contact if I have questions?**

The people conducting this study will be available to answer any questions concerning this research, now or in the future. You may contact the Principal Investigator, Molly Overholt, at [overholtm11@students.ecu.edu](mailto:overholtm11@students.ecu.edu).

If you have questions about your rights as someone taking part in research, you may call the Office for Human Research and Integrity (OHRI) at phone number 252-744-2914 (days, 8:00 am-5:00 pm). If you would like to report a complaint or concern about this research study, you may call the Director of OHRI Office, at 252-744-1971.

**Is there anything else I should know?**

You may wish to take note of your surroundings to ensure privacy as you take this online survey. When you finish the survey, you should close the browser (e.g., Firefox, Chrome, or Internet Explorer).

**I have decided I want to take part in this research. What should I do now?**

Read the statements below and if you agree to participate in this research, click the button below to proceed to the survey. This indicates that you have given your consent.

- I have read (or had read to me) all of the above information.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions about things in this research I did not understand and have received satisfactory answers.
- I understand that I can stop taking part in this study at any time.
- By clicking “proceed”, which indicates consent, I know that am not giving up any of my rights.
- I may print out a copy of this consent document, which is mine to keep.

## **Appendix D Debriefing Form**

### Debriefing

This study's purpose was to learn about current perceptions and knowledge of human trafficking within the general population. Results from a sample of the general population will be compared to a sample of individuals who are more active in human trafficking prevention. The goal of this study is to use the results of this study to better inform anti-trafficking education groups' decisions about outreach services.

More information on human trafficking is below:

- Human Trafficking can be defined as using force, fraud or coercion to induce a person into a commercial sex act. The term human trafficking also applies if a person under 18 is engaged in the commercial sex industry, in any circumstance (force, fraud or coercion doesn't have to be proved). The other half of the definition is using force, fraud or coercion to induce a person into labor or service (slavery). Human trafficking is not directly related to human smuggling or illegal immigration.
- Many victims of trafficking do not immediately appear to be victims or recognize themselves as such.
- Sex trafficking is more often discussed in the media but labor trafficking is equally important.
- If you would like to learn more about this topic, more information on human trafficking can be found at <http://www.polarisproject.org/>. Polaris Project is a leading anti-human trafficking organization and their website provides many educational and awareness materials. You may also contact Eastern North Carolina Stop Human Trafficking Now (ENC Stop) at [encstophumantrafficking@gmail.com](mailto:encstophumantrafficking@gmail.com).
- If you believe that you have observed a possible instance of human trafficking, please call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center at 1-888-3737-888.
- The phone application mentioned in the survey concerning access to information about labor practices is called Free2Work and is available for many smartphones.
- More organizations are taking steps to make their anti-trafficking efforts known.

If you find that participating in this study has made you uncomfortable or caused some distress and you are a student at ECU, please contact the ECU Counseling Center at 328-6661, which is located on the second floor of the Wright Building, Room 316, <http://www.ecu.edu/studentlife/counselingcenter/>.

Resources unrelated to East Carolina University include the following:

- REAL crisis center, [www.realcrisis.org](http://www.realcrisis.org), a non-profit agency offering free 24/7 counseling and extensive referral service: (252) 758-4357 REAL Crisis center provides the following:
  - Counseling
  - Information & Referral
  - Sexual Assault Services

- Advocacy
  - Suicide Intervention/Prevention
  - Pitt Resource Connection
  - Dial-A-Teen
  - Community Resource Connection
  - Outreach/Education
  - Pathways to life, Inc. Mobile crisis center 11-855-459-9507
  - Integrated Family Services in Eastern North Carolina  
<http://www.integratedfamilyservices.net/>, Greenville: 252-439-0700
- They offer services related to:
- Suicidal or depressed persons
  - Persons with homicidal ideations
  - Domestic violence
  - Emergency petitions situations
  - Family education
  - Delusional and psychotic persons
  - Death notification and support
  - Links to Mental Health services
  - Links to Detox
  - Family and Marital conflicts
  - Anyone in Crisis

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study or your rights as a research participant and would like to talk to someone other than the researchers, contact the Chair of the Office for Human Research and Integrity at (252) 744-2914. If you have any questions about the study, you may write Molly Overholt at [overholtm11@students.ecu.edu](mailto:overholtm11@students.ecu.edu).