

ABSTRACT

Counselors' Attitudes Toward Sex Trafficking: A Quantitative, National Analysis

By

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For more than 20 years, the pervasive problem of sex trafficking has garnered increasing attention in research, advocacy, and legislation. The cumulative research focuses on the trafficking of women and girls based on the less frequent trafficking of men and boys. Recent research has conceptualized multidimensional attitudes toward the sex trafficking of women and girls. The purpose of this current study is to extend the existing research by comparing counselors' sex trafficking attitudes for any influence from the gender of the survivor or the gender of the counselor. Two forms of the Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (STAS) measured attitudes toward the sex trafficking of females and the sex trafficking of males. Stratified sampling provided the means to compare the STAS scores between male and female counselors.

The population of this current study included counseling students enrolled in CACREP accredited graduate programs. Inadequate survey responses did not indicate random sampling of participants. The nonprobability sample included 83 participants. A 2 x 2 factorial MANOVA provided the answers to the research questions. Statistical significance was found where a counselor's gender influenced the STAS subscales of Leaving, $F(1,79) = 150.51, p = .004, \eta_p^2 = .10$, and Empathy, $F(1,79) = 36.75, p = .039, \eta_p^2 = .05$. Influences on Knowledge, Awareness,

Paternalism, and Efficacy were non-significant. Influences from a survivor's gender and a survivor's gender with dependence on a counselor's gender were non-significant.

Findings support that a counselor's gender significantly influences their attitudes towards people being able to leave sex trafficking and their empathic reactions to sex trafficking.

Findings also demonstrate that counselors' paternalistic attitudes toward helping survivors were borderline favorable and similar for female and male counselors. These findings have implications for counseling practice, supervision, education, and future research.

COUNSELORS' ATTITUDES TOWARD SEX TRAFFICKING:
A QUANTITATIVE, NATIONAL ANALYSIS

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Department of Addictions and Rehabilitation Counseling
East Carolina University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Ph.D. Counselor Preparation and Research

By
Kenneth S. Pritchard

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all the survivors of trafficking and abuse whose voices are often silent, overlooked, or uniformed. I hope you find your voices along with ears that hear you well.

In loving memory of the people who have sown into my life. Some of these include Ken Pritchard, Lawrence Velvin, Greg Kennedy, Joseph Sasser, John Hobbs, David Anderson, Lloyd Goodwin, Ted “PeePaw” and Inez “Grannie” Pritchard, Scotty “Pop” Scott, Paul McCain, Dot “Gran” McCain, Laura Velvin, and Margaret “Grandma” Brown. May I steward the seeds of legacy well.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

TVPA	Trafficking Victims Protection Act	1
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, or Questioning	4
STAS	Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale	7
ACA	American Counseling Association.....	11
ACE	Adverse Childhood Experiences	27
CACREP	Counsel for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs	38
STAS-P	Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale-Preliminary	48
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis	50
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Efficacy	Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking.....	67
Empathy	Empathic Reactions Toward Sex Trafficking.....	67
Paternalism	Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors	67
Awareness	Awareness of Sex Trafficking	67
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin.....	72

CFI	Comparative Fit Index	74
TLI	Tucker-Lewis Index	74
RMSEA	Root Means Square Error of Approximation.....	74
SRMR	Standardized Root Mean Square Residual.....	74
OMB	Office of Management and Budget.....	83
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance.....	90
IRB	Institutional Review Board	98

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Study

This chapter begins with an overview of this current study investigating counselors' attitudes toward sex trafficking and the effect a client's gender and a counselor's gender have on those attitudes. This chapter presents the background of the study, statements of the problem, purpose of the study, the significance of the study, research questions, justification for the study, and definitions of relevant terms. A summarization will conclude the chapter.

Background of Study

In an executive memorandum, President William J. Clinton (1998) wrote, "The problem of trafficking in women and girls, an insidious form of violence, has received a great deal of attention from the world community." The president directed several cabinet members to collaborate with government and nongovernment organizations to reinforce and develop efforts to fight human trafficking, protect and assist survivors, and increase public awareness of traffickers' methods to exploit prospects. The release of this memorandum on International Women's Day may have contributed to the president's exclusive use of "women and girls," but his language aligned with the global perception that trafficking survivors are predominantly women and children. Clinton (1998) described trafficking as a global problem with domestic implications and committed to continue and improve efforts to prevent trafficking, protect and assist survivors, and enforce trafficking laws.

Since the 1980s, increased attention on human trafficking has fostered international intervention in research, advocacy, and policy (Lemoncelli, 2017). Congressional findings identified several decades of rapid industry growth before enacting the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA; 2000). This federal legislation established the two criteria of human

trafficking: (1) the *action* of recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person, and (2) the *purpose* of causing that person to provide labor or a commercial sex act. The actions apply to all forms of human trafficking, but a trafficker's purpose differentiates labor trafficking (e.g., slavery, forced labor, involuntary servitude) from sex trafficking.

Sex Trafficking

Sex trafficking occurs when a person is recruited, harbored, transported, provided, or obtained to cause that person to provide a commercial sex act (TVPA, 2000). Sex acts include direct sexual contact, pornography, sex tourism, and other sexual behaviors. The exchange of money, drugs, protection, or anything of value for sex acts establishes them as commercial. According to the TVPA (2000), the introduction of fraud, force, or coercion to cause a commercial sex act *or* involvement of a minor indicates a “severe” form of sex trafficking. Deception, physical violence, threats of physical violence, and legal threats compromise an adult's ability to provide meaningful consent. According to the TVPA (2000), a child under the age of 18 is the victim of a severe form of trafficking without fraud, force, or coercion because they are “incapable of giving meaningful consent.” Congress found that sex trafficking survivors were predominantly women and children and suggested women's “low status” in various regions of the world as a contributing factor to the substantial global growth in sex trafficking (TVPA, 2000). This initial legislation acknowledged women and children domestically trafficked while addressing the global problem emphasizing adult women survivors. Subsequent reauthorizations and amendments included specific attention to minors trafficked in the United States, and research explored factors that increase the risk for sex trafficking.

Risk Factors for Sex Trafficking

While any person is at risk regardless of race, ethnicity, age, gender, or socioeconomic status, the likelihood that someone becomes sex-trafficked increases based on different characteristics (Litam, 2017). Sex traffickers often target vulnerable people searching for a better life and living in poverty or unsafe situations (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021). Recruitment of homeless or runaway minors into trafficking groups often occurs within 48 hours of living on the street (Jordan et al., 2013). The risk increases when runaway behavior occurs with other risk factors, including childhood abuse (e.g., emotional, physical), friends who have sold sex, a boyfriend/girlfriend who is much older than the potential survivor, dropping out of school, uncertainty about where to eat and sleep, homelessness, and frequent substance use prior to being introduced to sex commerce (Fedina et al., 2019). In addition to these situational factors, some individual factors that increase the risk of being trafficked include a person's age, gender, and sexual orientation (Nichols, 2016; Mapp, 2016).

People of all ages are at risk of being sex trafficked, though the risk is greater between 14 and 25 years (Nichols, 2016). The average age of entry to sex trafficking is inconsistent in the research, but one study identified persons who were introduced as young as seven years of age (Dank et al., 2015). Nichols (2016) suggested that trafficked persons become less desirable as they reach their mid-twenties and usually "age out" as demand decreases. While a person's age is one risk factor of becoming sex trafficked, another is their gender.

The actual rates of sex trafficking by gender vary, but data is consistent in supporting females are at the greatest risk of being trafficked. Gerassi and Nichols (2018) reported the prominence of females among identified sex trafficking survivors citing three studies in which 77% to 94% of the survivors were female, 3% to 22% were male, and when reported less than

1% were transgender (The Polaris Project, 2013; Fedina et al., 2016; Banks & Kyckelhahn, 2011). Neither age nor gender is a sole risk as intersectional factors compound vulnerability to sex trafficking.

Xian et al. (2017) explained that part of the vulnerability of youth identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning (LGBTQ) stems from familial reactions of rejection, abandonment, and abuse often rooted in homophobia and transphobia. According to Brooks (2021), these youth may choose to engage in sex work to support themselves, but their participation as minors constitutes sex trafficking (TVPA, 2000). The education, legal, mental health, and health care systems present with systemic discrimination, which compounds the heightened risk to LGBTQ youth (Kian et al., 2017). Societal attitudes (e.g., racism, sexism, classism) also contribute to a heightened risk for sex trafficking (Mapp, 2016). These characteristics, conditions, and attitudes contribute to an increased risk of sex trafficking and resultant needs.

Resultant Needs from Sex Trafficking

In addition to the sex acts of trafficking, survivors often endure physical abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect (Kaplan et al., 2018). Survivors present with mental, emotional, behavioral, and medical needs, all of which require professional attention (Kaplan et al., 2018). Of specific interest to counselors, those sex trafficking survivors may experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress, anxiety, depression, paranoia, dissociation, substance use, difficulty developing healthy attachments, and general difficulty adjusting to life after being sex trafficked (Kaplan et al., 2018; Williamson et al., 2010). According to Kaplan et al. (2018), trafficking may further compound needs developed during survivors' experiences before being trafficked (e.g., family rejection, homelessness, prior abuse).

Sex Trafficking Attitudes

The underlying beliefs of *modern sexism* include denial of the ongoing discrimination against women, antagonism toward the demands made by women, and resentment about “special favors” for women, including programs that aid women in educational and workplace pursuits (Swim et al., 1995). Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) found that modern sexism and acceptance of rape myths were negatively associated with attitudes toward sex trafficking of women and children. Some prevalent *rape myths* include: (1) rape is primarily about sex; (2) rape victims are responsible for their rape based on the way they look and dress along with their neglect of safety issues; (3) people often make false reports of rape out of vengeance; and (4) sexual assaults are only committed by strangers lurking in dark alleys (Lee & Jordan, 2014). Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) found relationships among rape myths acceptance, attitudes toward prostitutes, and sex trafficking attitudes. The authors reported negative relationships between both modern sexism and acceptance of rape myths, with knowledge about sex trafficking, attitudes toward survivors’ ability to leave trafficking, empathetic feelings about sex trafficking, and attitudes toward helping, while modern sexism is also negatively correlated with efficacy to reduce trafficking. Rape myth beliefs and attitudes toward survivors of violence against women framed by victim-blaming and gender-related attitudes may influence survivors’ access to appropriate services (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2020).

Research about sexual violence, prostitution, and sex trafficking focuses on women and girls because they represent most of the survivors. However, modern sexism and rape myths may influence attitudes towards survivors who are men and boys. Denial of the ongoing presence of gender discrimination is the fundamental belief of modern sexism, which suggests the perpetuation of existing gender attitudes (Swim et al., 1995). Indeed, a meta-analysis of rape-

myths acceptance literature found a strong correlation between this acceptance and hostile attitudes and behaviors toward women, complicated by the finding that men endorse these beliefs significantly more than women (Suarez & Gadalla, 2010). While modern sexism and rape myths may result in victim-blaming and a paternalistic need to protect women from rape and themselves, they may also result in overlooking male survivors as having been raped.

Weiss (2010) suggested that failure to recognize male survivors may be due to traditional gender expectations. The authors contrasted the expectations of masculinity (i.e., strength, toughness, autonomy, and inviolability) with those of sexual victims (i.e., weakness and sexual vulnerability), which more closely reflect society's traditional constructs of femininity. Turchik and Edwards (2012) conducted a literature review of male rape myths and classified them into nine categories. The most relevant myth categories to this study are: (1) men are incapable of being raped, (2) "real" men would be able to defend themselves against rape, (3) a woman is not able to assault a man sexually, and (4) if a man physically responds to an assault, he must have wanted it. Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) found that sex trafficking attitudes toward women and girls were negatively associated with modern sexism and the acceptance of rape myths. Their studies did not explore attitudes toward men and boys. While the survivors' gender may influence counselors' sex trafficking attitudes, the gender of the counselor may also play a role.

Several studies have shown that a person's gender may influence their attitudes toward sex trafficking. One study reported that women participants scored significantly higher in their empathic reactions and attitudes toward the ability to leave sex trafficking than men (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016). Another study found that females demonstrated more desirable sex trafficking attitudes (i.e., empathy and non-paternalistic helping attitudes) than men (Litam et al., 2021). Sex trafficking attitudes are multifaceted, requiring a model for assessment that attends to

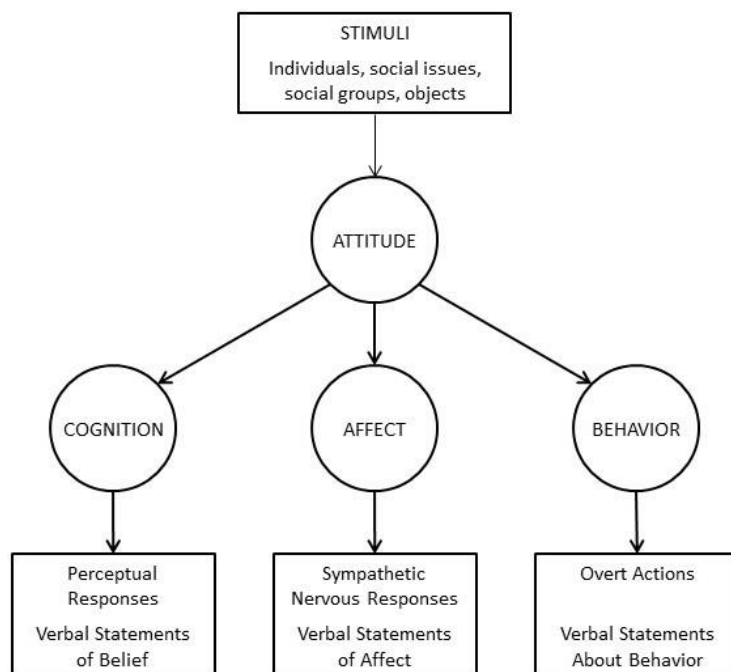
these complexities. The current study used the Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (STAS; Houston-Kolnik, 2016) and a multi-dimensional construct of sex trafficking attitudes based on Breckler's (1984) tripartite model of attitude assessment.

Tripartite Model of Attitude Assessment

Steven Breckler (1984) explored the prevalent model of attitude structure, which included *cognition* (knowing), *behavior* (acting), and *affect* (feeling) as three dimensions of attitude. The author defined attitude as people's responses to some stimulus or attitude object. He provided the diagram below (Figure 1) as a practical way to conceptualize the tripartite model. Breckler (1984) explained that attitude objects include individuals, groups, tangible things, or ideas or topics of interest. Sex trafficking was the topic of interest for this current study and was used as the attitude object to explore the history and structure of the tripartite attitude model.

Figure 1

The Tripartite Model of Attitude Structure



Note. From Breckler, 1984, p. 1192.

Following this tripartite attitude model, this current study will discuss the cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes toward sex trafficking and survivors of sex trafficking. Specifically, these attitudinal dimensions represent counselors' responses to sex trafficking and survivors of sex trafficking as follows: (1) *cognitions* are the responses related to thoughts, beliefs, perceptions, and conceptualizations; (2) *behaviors* are statements regarding explicit acts along with intentions and statements regarding behavior, and (3) *affect* relates to the visceral feelings or emotional responses. A review of these components begins with cognitions.

According to Breckler (1984), verbal statements of belief (cognitions) comprised of knowledge, awareness, and perception may vary from favorable (e.g., supporting) to unfavorable (e.g., arguing, dismissive). Exploration of counselors' cognitive sex trafficking attitudes includes sex trafficking knowledge, awareness of sex trafficking, and attitudes toward ability to leave sex trafficking. Favorable cognitions include accurate knowledge about sex trafficking (e.g., *"Someone under the age of 18 who works in the sex industry is trafficked."*), awareness of the ongoing problem of trafficking and anti-trafficking efforts (e.g., *"I have seen public awareness announcements about sex trafficking."*), and informed attitudes toward survivors' ability to leave trafficking situations (e.g., *"It is not a person's choice to be trafficked."*). Some unfavorable cognitions include: *"A prostitute can [not] become trafficked if she is restrained from leaving her occupation," "I do not understand the issues surrounding sex trafficking,"* and *"If a trafficked person chose to leave, her problem would be over."* Counselors' affective sex trafficking attitudes are their emotional responses to trafficking-related behaviors and their beliefs about them (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016).

Measurement of affective attitudes includes monitoring physiological responses (e.g., heart rate variability, galvanic skin responses) or observing self-reports of emotions or moods

ranging from pleasurable (e.g., good mood, happy) to unpleasurable (e.g., bad mood, unhappy; Breckler, 1984). Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) suggested that affective attitudes may serve as indicators of how people will respond to trafficking and survivors. They added that their research supported a relationship between participants' emotional responses to trafficking (e.g., anger, sympathy, being upset, indifference) and whether they support survivors or anti-trafficking policies. *"I am angry about the issue of trafficking"* may represent an "unpleasurable" affective response. However, this attitude may be favorable if a counselor's anger evokes their motivation to help survivors. In contrast, a counselor may demonstrate a pleasurable affective attitude with a statement like, *"Trafficking does not upset me,"* without a favorable motivation to help survivors or contribute to anti-trafficking efforts. Exploring counselors' behaviors and what they are thinking and feeling provides a greater understanding of their sex trafficking attitudes (Breckler, 1984; Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016).

Breckler (1984) describes behavioral attitude assessment as the exploration of actions and statements about actions along with intentions to act, which can range from favorable and supportive (e.g., empowering, efficacious) to unfavorable and hostile (e.g., paternalistic, inadequate). The behavioral component of sex trafficking attitudes encompasses counselors' statements about helping survivors and how effective they believe their efforts will reduce sex trafficking. Favorable behavioral attitudes would include counselors determined to trust survivors and empower them to make decisions for themselves and confidence in their ability to help survivors and diminish the trafficking problem. Counselors demonstrating these attitudes would disagree with a statement like, *"If it is for the trafficked individual's good, an outsider should do whatever is needed to make decisions for the trafficked person,"* while endorsing, *"I can make a difference for trafficked persons."* Unfavorable behavioral attitudes may include

statements like, *“Even if a trafficked person objects, an outsider should do whatever they think is best for the trafficked individual in the long run,”* and, *“I feel inadequate to help trafficked persons.”*

This current study uses the tripartite model of attitude assessment to consider cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses to sex trafficking. This model helps provide a framework within which to interpret the results of this current study. Chapter 2 provides a detailed review of this tripartite model.

Statement of the Problem

The identification of trafficking survivors continues to present challenges despite more than 20 years of attention given in research, advocacy, and legislation. Some factors that have contributed to overlooking or misidentifying survivors include limited knowledge about trafficking, definitions, and perceptions about survivors (Clawson et al., 2004). As introduced among trafficking risk factors, data indicates that trafficking survivors are disproportionately women and girls (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016). Survivor data from three studies included 77%-94% identifying as female and 3%-22% male (Gerassi & Nichols, 2018). Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) identified a need to understand societal attitudes toward sex trafficking, given the public's power to support programs and policies to regulate if not eradicate it (Special Committee on Violence Against Women, 2010; Deb et al., 2011). They found a negative correlation between societal sex trafficking attitudes and both modern sexism and rape myths.

Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) sought to advance research on societal perceptions about sex trafficking and inform or test attempts to raise awareness and reduce sex trafficking. In the absence of a validated tool to assess attitudes toward sex trafficking, the authors developed the Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (STAS). A two-study analysis confirmed the Sex Trafficking

Attitudes Scale (STAS; Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016) used to assess the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of attitude toward the sex trafficking of women and girls.

Based on the above, the problem is that counselors' attitudes about sex trafficking may differ based on their gender and may also differ when faced with women and girl survivors compared to men and boys. If attitudinal differences exist, counselors may treat persons being trafficked differently. Counselors are responsible for assessing the needs and safety of people seeking their help. The American Counseling Association (ACA, 2014) Code of Ethics requires counselors to provide services to every client to promote their well-being and respect their diversity. If counselors do not recognize men and boys as survivors needing treatment for issues related to their sex trafficking experiences, this failure violates the principles of *nonmaleficence* and *justice*. From a fundamental ethical perspective, clinical decisions influenced by gender do not represent equitable treatment (i.e., justice) or protection from harm (i.e., nonmaleficence). Such decisions may even cause harm to survivors. Attitudinal differences may result in inequitable treatment provided by counselors to clients being trafficked.

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this current study is to investigate whether gendered language (i.e., masculine and feminine) used in the Sex Trafficking Attitude Scale (STAS) influences counselor trainees' measured attitude responses. Additionally, this current study will explore whether the gender of a counselor further influences their perceptions of the sex trafficking of people.

Research Questions

After decades of sex trafficking research, gender bias remains a theme worth exploring. Specifically, existing research has suggested that gender bias is present in sex trafficking policy, reporting, and research. This current study explores how gendered language (feminine and

masculine) influences counselors' sex trafficking attitudes and how the attitudes differ based on counselors' gender.

One study reviewed over 200 peer-reviewed articles on sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation to find that 85% of these articles did not even mention men or boys (Dennis, 2008). Of the remaining articles, all but five mentioned males while using feminine language exclusively. Dennis posited that gender bias may have influenced research decisions (e.g., coding and inclusion). Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) found that women had significantly higher scores than men in *Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking* and *Empathic Reactions to Sex Trafficking*. While not statistically significant, women had numerically higher means on the remaining four subscales. This current study is concerned with the influence of counselors' gender, gendered language related to sex trafficking and survivors, and any interaction of counselor gender and gendered language. This current study explores the following research questions:

Question 1

What influence does a survivor's gender have on counselors' attitudes toward sex trafficking as measured using the *Sex Trafficking Attitude Scale (STAS)*?

Question 2

What influence does a counselor's gender have on their attitudes toward sex trafficking as measured using the *Sex Trafficking Attitude Scale (STAS)*?

Question 3

Does the influence of a survivor's gender on attitudes toward sex trafficking as measured using the *Sex Trafficking Attitude Scale (STAS)* depend on the counselor's gender?

Research suggests that modern sexism and acceptance of rape myths may contribute to society's failure to recognize or acknowledge male survivors. The first two research questions for this current study explored the influence that gendered language (*survivors' gender*) and a counselor's gender have on counselors' sex trafficking attitudes (*Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking, Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking, Knowledge About Sex Trafficking, Empathic Reactions Toward Sex Trafficking, Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors, and Awareness of Sex Trafficking*). The third question considers how a counselor's gender influences how much a survivor's gender influences the counselor's sex trafficking attitudes.

Significance and Justification of the Study

Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) developed the Sex Trafficking Attitude Scale (STAS) to assess counselors' cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes toward the sex trafficking of women and girls. This study explored the influence of counselors' characteristics on these attitudes. However, it did not address any difference between the sex trafficking of women and girls versus men and boys.

Existing literature reveals the complex role that the trafficking survivors' gender plays in decisions about policymaking, medical screening and treatment, and research. The existing body of research has yet to address whether a survivor's gender influences counselors' attitudes toward sex trafficking. The ethical principle of *justice* is the commitment counselors make to equitable treatment of people while promoting fairness and equality (ACA, 2014). We do not know if there are differences in counselors' sex trafficking attitudes, but counselors' blind spots, biases, and countertransference provide possible sources of attitudinal differences toward sex trafficking. If counselors present attitudinal differences toward sex trafficking, a survivor's gender may influence treatment decisions for the presenting symptoms or needs. Such decisions

present barriers to treatment access and may result in counselors developing clinical impressions that fail to recognize a person as being trafficked. Treatment planning without consideration for the implications of sex trafficking may attend to presenting symptoms (e.g., anxiety, depression) while neglecting to address survivors' needs in the context of their multifaceted trauma experience (e.g., repeated and prolonged abuse), which could include changes in self-perception, trauma bonds, and difficulties with relationships and healthy attachments (Kaplan et al., 2018; Woehler & Akers, 2021).

The implications of this current study pertain to the ethical principles of nonmaleficence and justice as they apply to counselors, clinical supervisors, and counselor educators relate. Specifically, this current study showed whether a counselor's gender or survivor's gender influenced counselors' sex trafficking attitudes. Counselors must remain committed to their ethical responsibilities to providing equitable treatment (justice) in a way that protects them from harm (nonmaleficence) when screening, assessing and conceptualizing cases involving sex trafficking. The implications of this current study also concern clinical supervisors responsible for overseeing the services provided by counselors and counselor educators whose tasks include instruction of eight core competencies (CACREP, 2016), including social and cultural diversity and counseling and helping relationships.

Examining the influence of counselors' gender and the gender of sex trafficking survivors on counselors' cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes toward sex trafficking extends existing sex trafficking attitude research. This contribution provides insight into counselors' sex trafficking attitudes influenced by survivor and counselor gender, which could help identify deficits in attitudes toward men and boy survivors. If deficits are present, this current study will help inform counseling pedagogy, supervision, professional development, and research to

address counselors' cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes toward male and female survivors.

Definition of Terms

Commercial sex act: Any sex act provided in exchange for anything of value given to or received by any person (TVPA, 2000). Sex acts are commercialized when provided in exchange for anything of value and include direct sexual contact, pornography, sex tourism, or other sexual services.

Favorable/unfavorable sex trafficking attitudes: More desirable and well-informed attitudes toward sex trafficking and survivors are favorable. Less desirable and less informed attitudes toward sex trafficking and survivors are unfavorable (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016).

Human trafficking: The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for exploitation, especially into the sex trade industry, slavery, and involuntary servitude. (TVPA, 2000).

Sex act: Any sexual behavior including direct sexual contact, pornography, sex tourism, and other sexual behaviors (TVPA, 2000).

Severe Sex trafficking: Sex trafficking is deemed severe in form when either: (1) the trafficking involves fraud, force, or coercion to cause a commercial sex act, or (2) the trafficking involves a minor (TVPA, 2000).

Sex trafficking attitudes: A person's way of thinking, acting, and feeling in response to sex trafficking and survivors of sex trafficking (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016).

Sex trafficking/trafficking: A specific form of human trafficking where the purpose of recruitment, harboring, transportation, or obtaining a person is for their participation in a

commercial sex act (TVPA, 2000). For this current study, “trafficking” will refer to sex trafficking, while all other forms of trafficking will be specified (e.g., human trafficking).

Survivor/victim. A person who is being or has been sex trafficked. Shared Hope International and Villanova Law Institute to Address Commercial Sexual Exploitation (2020) explained that both “victim” and “survivor” are used in sex trafficking policy, research, and advocacy discussions. They acknowledge that people are survivors throughout their trafficking and recovery, their exploitation does not define them, and they are not limited to either of these terms. This current study will use “survivor” unless “victim” is more appropriate to the discussion (e.g., Trafficking Victims Protection Act, rape victim myths, victim-blaming).

Trafficker: A person who facilitates or benefits financially or otherwise from human trafficking (Smith et al., 2009).

Chapter Summary

This chapter introduced this current study exploring the effect that a survivor’s gender and a counselor’s gender have on counselors’ cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes toward sex trafficking and survivors. The background of the study highlighted the history of sex trafficking in the United States, the pervasive issue of sex trafficking, and the challenges of survivor identification and treatment access. This chapter presented statements of the problem and purpose of the study, the significance of the study, research questions, justification for the study, and definitions of relevant terms.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction to the Chapter

This chapter will provide an overview of sex trafficking, societal attitudes, and a review of tripartite attitudes theory as the theoretical foundation of this current study. The discussion in this chapter will elaborate on: (a) the components, risk factors, contexts, and consequences of sex trafficking; (b) a conceptualization of counselors' cognitive, affective, and behavioral sex trafficking attitudes; (c) the influence that the gender of a survivor or counselor may have on those attitudes; and (e) the Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (STAS) used in this current study.

Sex Trafficking

In 1998, President William Clinton acknowledged human trafficking as a global problem with implications specific to the United States. The president called upon several of his cabinet members to partner with government and nongovernment agencies in their efforts to: (1) develop and implement strategies to fight trafficking; (2) protect and assist survivors; and (3) increase public awareness about the prevalence, risks, recruitment tactics, and consequences of sex trafficking in the United States. One of the foundational products of this collaboration was the passing of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA; 2000) less than a month before the United Nations (Annex, 2000) introduced the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* ("Trafficking Protocol"). While the TVPA (2000) explored the domestic implications and the United Nations' Trafficking Protocol (Annex, 2000) discussed the global context, both provided trends and characteristics of human trafficking, contributing to a working understanding of trafficking.

Components of Sex Trafficking

The International Labour Organization (2017) described the global problem of human trafficking as an issue of human rights abuse and a modern form of slavery. The Trafficking Protocol (Annex, 2000) presented three criteria for human trafficking, or *trafficking in persons*: (1) an *act*, (2) a *purpose*, and (3) a *means*. This protocol defined human trafficking as follows:

... recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons [*act*], *by means of* the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation [*purpose*]. (p. 2)

According to the Trafficking Protocol (Annex, 2000), exploitation may involve commercial sex acts, involuntary labor, debt servitude, organ removal, slavery, or similar practices. The TVPA (2000) acknowledged the global nature of trafficking but focused on the domestic implications when it occurs within the borders of the United States.

According to the TVPA (2000), two components comprise domestic human trafficking: an *act* and a *purpose*. The Act stipulates that domestic human trafficking includes an *act* of recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the *purpose* of exploitation. Both the international and domestic policies establish the purpose of human trafficking as the exploitation of a person. Domestically, exploitation is the exchange of money, drugs, protection, or anything else of value in return for labor, services, or sex acts (TVPA, 2000). *Sex trafficking* is the form of exploitation involving any sex act.

Act

The first component of sex trafficking is the act of recruiting, harboring, transporting, providing, or obtaining a person (TVPA, 2000). Trafficking refers to the illegal act of buying or selling goods or people or of profiting financially from nonconsensual work (Cambridge, n.d.). As a result, persons being trafficked are unwilling sources of revenue or commodities. A person performing one or more of these acts to facilitate a commercial sex act is engaged in sex trafficking (TVPA, 2000).

Purpose

The TVPA (2000) describes a commercial sex act as exchanging anything of value with a person for a sex act. According to this federal act, sex acts are any sexual behaviors, including direct sexual contact, pornography, sex tourism, or other sexual behaviors. Any person making or receiving payment of any kind for a sex act is engaging in a commercial sex act. While these exchanges commonly use money, payment may also take the form of food, clothing, shelter, protection, or anything else of value. This commerce component differentiates sex trafficking from rape, sexual assault, or molestation crimes (Smith et al., 2009). Commercial sex acts are classified as sex trafficking when participants have not provided meaningful consent. According to the TVPA (2000), sex trafficking is severe in form when it includes the *means* of fraud, force, or coercion *or* involves any person under 18 years of age.

Means

The TVPA (2000) stipulates that commercial sex becomes this severe form of sex trafficking when the facilitation includes fraud, force, or coercion. However, the Act makes an exception where commercial sex involving minors under the age of 18 is sex trafficking, even in the absence of fraud, force, or coercion. In a bulletin from the United Nations, Secretary-General

Kofi Annan (2003) defined sexual exploitation broadly as “any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes, including but not limited to profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.” This definition suggests that such interpersonal imbalance would compromise a person’s ability to provide meaningful consent. That is to say that a person in a lesser position could not enter an informed, competent agreement to participate in some activity or arrangement which may waive certain personal rights (Haverkamp et al., 2019). The case of Jules helps explore the role of consent in sex trafficking.

As an 18-year-old woman, Jules has reached the age of consent and is interested in working as a sex worker in a brothel. She is fully aware that she would be engaging in sex acts with clients for money, along with the implications of this activity. Her willing participation would indicate that Jules is not sex-trafficked because she would be able to provide meaningful consent. Jules would become sex-trafficked if she did not provide consent or if fraud, force, or coercion compromised her consent.

Jules’ consent to sex work would be suspect if the brothel abuses her trust, vulnerability, or power differential to influence her decision. Her consent would be based on fraud if the brothel misrepresents the working conditions or promises that they did not intend to keep. If the brothel tries to influence Jules’ decision by using physical violence or threats of physical harm, this use of force compromises her consent. The brothel introduces coercion if it applies pressure, makes threats, or uses manipulation to influence Jules’ decision. In each of these cases, the brothel’s failure to operate in good faith would compromise Jules’ ability to provide meaningful consent. Jules would be sex trafficked when she agreed to engage in sex work in the brothel.

Even if the brothel protects Jules' right to provide and rescind informed consent, her clients may traffic her.

Each commercial sex encounter presents Jules with an opportunity to consent. She can set the terms in which she chooses when, where, with whom, and in what specific sex acts she agrees to participate. A client can abuse any vulnerability or power differential present in Jules' position or her trust in the agreed-upon arrangement. When clients enter a commercial sex arrangement by making empty promises, they circumvent consent (fraud), resulting in sex trafficking. Suppose an adult client agrees to pay Jules her regular rate for a sex act. If the client pays Jules as arranged, this exchange is consensual commercial sex. However, this exchange becomes sex trafficking if the client fails to make payment to fulfill their obligation in the arrangement. A client may use physical threats or force to get Jules to engage in sex acts outside their agreement and her consent. A client can use verbal threats, manipulation, or pressure to coerce Jules to consent to certain sex acts. Whether introduced by the brothel, a client, or a combination of both, the use of fraud, force, or coercion compromises Jules' consent to participate in commercial sex when then becomes sex trafficking. According to the TVPA (2000), if Jules was not yet 18 years of age, she would be unable to provide meaningful consent.

Consent. The matter of consent to enter any contract or agreement (e.g., choosing to participate in any sex act) is complicated. According to *The People's Law Dictionary* (Hill & Hill, n.d.), *consent* is the voluntary agreement to another's proposal and can range from contracts to sexual activity. Consent requires a person to have enough mental capacity to make an informed decision (Lehman & Phelps, n.d.). Statutory sex offense laws establish that a person who has not reached the age of consent is not capable of consenting to sexual activity (O'Conner et al., 2017). A person faces possible prosecution for statutory rape if they engage in sexual

activity with a person under the age of consent, even if both agree to and believe they are voluntary participants (Glosser et al., 2004). The TVPA (2000), PROTECT Act (2003), and Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act (2006) define minors as those who have not reached 18 years of age in the context of sexual offenses. The U.S. Supreme Court (*Esquivel v. Sessions*, 2017) held that the age of sexual consent is 16 years, but state laws vary with the age of consent ranging between 16 and 18 years of age (Small, 2020). The age of consent is a complex issue compounded by state laws that provide exceptions for married minors and minors engaging in sexual activities with an adult close in age.

Minors can legally engage in sexual activity before the age of consent based on some state laws that provide exceptions when they are married or when their age is within a certain number of years as their partner's age. In some states, a married person under the established age can consent to sex but only with their spouse (Small, 2020). A review of state statutes in 2015 identified 25 states that had "Romeo and Juliet" laws, which provide for sexual activity between an adult and a minor within a specific age range of each other (Bierie and Budd, 2018). Under these laws, when the age difference between an adult and a minor is within a certain number of years or the context of marriage, the minor is deemed capable of providing informed consent to participate in sexual activity. The inconsistency between federal and state laws and the exceptions made within the laws of each state further confounds the determination of a person's ability to consent to engage in sex acts. North Carolina General Statutes provide an example of how a state can establish an age of consent and make these exceptions.

In North Carolina, the complexities of consent to sexual acts include the age of each participant, their age difference, and the nature of the sex acts themselves. North Carolina General Statute § 48A-1 (1971) establishes 18 years as the age of majority. At the age of 18, a

person is an adult with the capacity to enter into contracts or agreements. A review of the statutory rape and other sexual offense laws in North Carolina's Criminal Code (NCGS § 14-7B, 2015) (see Table 1) demonstrates the complexities of participants' ages, age difference, nature of the sexual activity, and marital status. A sexual act involving a child under the age of 13 years is a statutory sexual offense when the older participant is at least 18 years of age (NCGS § 14-27.28) or at least 15 years old with an age difference of four years or more (NCGS § 14-27.29; NCGS § 14-27.30). The crime of statutory sexual offense with a person who is 15 years of age or younger (NCGS § 14-27.30) involves an older participant at least 12 years old with an age difference of at least four years *unless* they are legally married to each other. However, the crime is more severe when the age difference is six years or more. The legal definition of sexual acts includes cunnilingus, fellatio, analingus, or anal intercourse but excludes vaginal intercourse (NCGS § 14-27.20). These sexual offenses become the more severe crime of statutory rape when the sex act is vaginal intercourse. (NCGS § 14-27.23; NCGS § 14-27.24; NCGS § 14-27.25). The age of consent, age difference standards, and the marriage exception for statutory rape crimes are the same as those for their sexual offense counterparts. This review of North Carolina statutory rape and other sexual offenses reveals the complex issue of a person's capacity to consent to sexual acts and age of consent.

Table 1*North Carolina Statutory Rape and Other Sexual Offense Laws*

General Statute	Sexual Activity	Defendant Age*	Child Age*	Age* Difference
§14-27.23 <i>Statutory Rape</i> of a child by an adult	vaginal intercourse	≥18	<13	n/a
§14-27.24 First-degree <i>Statutory Rape</i>	vaginal intercourse	≥12	<13	≥4
§14-27.25 <i>Statutory Rape</i> of person who is 15 years of age or younger	vaginal intercourse	≥12	≤15	≥4
§14-27.28 <i>Statutory Sexual Offense</i> of a child by an adult	a sex act	≥18	<13	n/a
§14-27.29 First-degree <i>Statutory Sexual Offense</i>	a sex act	≥12	<13	≥4
§14-27.30 <i>Statutory Sexual Offense</i> with a person who is 15 years of age or younger	a sex act	≥12	≤15	≥4

Note: From N.C. General Stat., 2015.

*All ages are in years

While the legal age of consent is 18 years, North Carolina statutes make provisions for varying severity when a minor's capacity to consent is compromised. Based on the above and returning to the example of Jules, she would need to be absent any impairment to her mental capacity to provide consent to sexual acts. Revisiting the case of Jules frames a discussion of various factors that influence a minor's capacity to consent to sexual acts.

At age 17, Jules became sexually active with Van, her 20-year-old boyfriend. According to North Carolina law, a minor cannot provide consent; however, Van is not guilty of a crime since their age difference is less than four years. Had Jules been 15, Van would be at least guilty

of *statutory sexual offense with a person who is 15 years of age or younger*, even if Jules had wanted and agreed to participate in sexual activity with him. Had Jules been 14, the 6-year age difference would have further compromised Jules' ability to consent and resulted in more severe sentencing for the same crime (NCGS §14-27.30). The crime would increase in severity to a *first-degree statutory sexual offense* if Jules were 13 years old. The most severe of these crimes, the *statutory sexual offense of a child by an adult*, would be indicated if Jules had been 12 years old. If Van and Jules engaged in vaginal intercourse, Van would be guilty of the corresponding statutory rape charges, which are more severe. If Van and Jules were married to each other, the statutes would provide an exemption that supports their capacity to consent.

While North Carolina considers a minor to be incapable of entering into a contract or an agreement including sexual activity, the stratified severity of these crimes suggests the following are also true: (1) a person under the age of 15 is *less* capable of consenting with a person at least four years older than they are; (2) a person under the age of 15 is *even less* capable of consenting with a person at least six years older than they are; and (3) a person 12 or younger is *least* capable of consenting with an adult. The marital exemption implies that married participants have legally established a capacity to consent. The absence of statutory crimes specifying that the younger participant has reached the age of 16 years suggests that at that age, minors can consent to sexual activity and vaginal intercourse despite the legally established age of majority (18 years old). Legal standards for sexual consent vary by state, and North Carolina's laws demonstrate how complicated they can be to understand. The complexities of sexual consent may confound a counselor's ability to distinguish among consensual sex, statutory sex offenses, and sex trafficking. The TVPA (2000) provides clear criteria to address consent in the context of sex trafficking.

In describing the *means* of sex trafficking, the TVPA (2000) stipulates that consent is not meaningful or lawful in the presence of fraud, force, or coercion nor when a person has not reached 18 years of age. This stipulation clarifies that, without exception, any commercial sex act involving a minor who has not reached 18 years of age is a *severe form of sex trafficking*. The difference between the federal ages of consent for sexual activity and commercial sex acts suggests that a 16-year-old can consent to sexual activity but not commercial sex acts. At the same time, an 18-year-old can consent to sex work without fraud, force, or coercion, which would compromise their consent.

Counselors are not legal professionals charged with accurate discernment of applicable criminal statutes. They are responsible for recognizing various types of abuse to develop a clinical impression, diagnosis, and appropriate course of treatment for persons seeking their help. In the absence of sex trafficking knowledge (i.e., cognitive attitude), a counselor may also lack the empathy (i.e., affective attitude) specific to trafficking survivors and have difficulty recognizing the resulting needs toward an intent (i.e., behavioral attitude) to provide treatment that addresses the needs. Counselors may have difficulty identifying whether a minor participating in sexual acts is the victim of a crime, a participant in sexual activity lacking any criminal component, or the victim of sex trafficking. Likewise, a counselor may not realize that the use of fraud, force, or coercion would nullify any consent an adult initially provided to engage in commercial sex acts, resulting in sex trafficking. Counselors who do not accurately identify sex trafficking situations may overlook survivors, exclude them from treatment, or treat them for needs unrelated to sex trafficking.

Risk Factors of Sex Trafficking

While any person is at risk, the likelihood that someone in the United States becomes sex-trafficked increases based on certain factors. Survivors under the age of 18 often have a history of sex abuse, child welfare involvement, foster care placement, homelessness, substance use or addiction, and running away or being thrown away (Sprang & Cole, 2018; Polaris Project, 2019). Significantly more likely than non-sex trafficked homeless young adults, homeless young adults who have been trafficked report histories of emotional, physical, and sexual abuses by parent/guardian; witnessing domestic violence in the household with either parent hitting the other; domestic violence relationships (as abusers *and* survivors); bullying and harassment by school peers; experiencing each of the ten Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs); and experiencing four or more ACEs (Roe-Sepowitz et al., 2020). The authors also reported that the trafficked homeless young adults were more likely to engage in self-harming behaviors, identify as LGBT, and report having one or more of the following: an ACE, multiple mental health diagnoses (e.g., depression, PTSD, schizophrenia, borderline personality disorder), a history of suicide attempts, and asthma. These factors represent a greater general vulnerability to sex trafficking; characteristics of age, sex, gender, social class, intellectual disability, racial marginalization, and citizenship status further compound this risk (Nichols, 2016).

Age

People of all ages are at risk of being sex trafficked, though the risk is greater between 14 and 25 years (Nichols, 2016). The average age of entry to sex trafficking is inconsistent in the research, but one study identified persons who were introduced as young as seven years of age (Dank et al., 2015). Nichols (2016) suggests that persons being trafficked become less desirable

as they reach their mid-twenties and usually “age out” as demand decreases. While a person’s age is one risk factor of becoming sex trafficked, another is their gender.

Gender

This current study is interested in whether gender, specifically male and female, influences counselors’ sex trafficking attitudes. Women and children disproportionately comprise sex trafficking survivors globally and within the United States (Clawson et al., 2009). A study of prosecuted sex trafficking cases found that 94% of the survivors were women and girls (Banks & Kyckelhahn, 2011). One study found that of the responding multidisciplinary professionals that provide services to at-risk youth and crime victims, 49.8% had worked with a victim or suspected victim of sex trafficking (Cole, 2018). The author also found that more than half (57.8%) of the respondents reporting to have worked with any trafficking victims or suspected victims had worked with at least one male victim. Respondents reported they had worked with victims that were exclusively female (55.1%), exclusively male (17.7%), or a mixture of male and female (27.2%). Further analysis comparing the groups that worked exclusively with males and exclusively with females produced no significant difference in tactics used to control victims or perceived bond between victim and trafficker (see Table 2). Any differences in the perceptions of victims’ vulnerability factors, victims’ greatest needs, or the systems or agencies the victims encountered were also statistically non-significant (see Table 3).

Table 2*Characteristics of Victims' Trafficking Situation*

	Worked with male victims only (%)	Worked with female victims only (%)	<i>p</i> -value
How the trafficker maintained control over the victim			
Force or coercion	69.2	60.0	.399
Fraud	19.2	26.3	.470
Alcohol or drugs	19.2	26.3	.470
Victim dependent on trafficker	7.7	22.5	.094
Strong bond between victim and trafficker			
Yes	61.5	67.5	.577

Note: Excerpted from Cole, 2018, p. 428.

Additionally, the findings in Table 3 below (Cole, 2018) include a significant difference between the number of respondents who reported victims had been criminally charged. Specifically, respondents working exclusively with male victims reported a greater frequency of criminal charges filed against victims than those working exclusively with females. The similarities of the respondents' encounters with male and female victims, along with the differences in the rates of the victims' experiences with the criminal justice system, support the need to explore counselors' knowledge (cognition) about consent as it relates to the means of sex trafficking along with how they feel (affect) about and develop a plan to act (behavior) in cases involving males in comparison to females.

Table 3*Vulnerability Factors, Greatest Needs, and Systems Encountered by Victims*

	Worked with male victims only (%)	Worked with female victims only (%)	p-value
Vulnerability factors			
Unstable home/compromised parenting	57.7	63.8	.580
Material needs	50.0	42.5	.504
Substance abuse (parents', victim's)	38.5	30.0	.422
Developmental issues (e.g., age)	30.8	33.8	.779
Victim's mental health and feelings about self	19.2	25.0	.547
Perceived greatest needs			
Mental health care	76.9	69.6	.475
Safety, protection, security	42.3	33.3	.405
Basic living needs (e.g., housing, financial support)	38.5	34.2	.692
Systems/agencies victims encountered			
Behavioral health providers	100	93.5	.191
Court system (inc. juvenile or adult)	96.2	81.5	.068
Child welfare	85.2	84.6	.943
School	84.6	87.2	.740
Child advocacy centers	62.5	62.0	.963
Victim services	57.7	55.6	.849
Runaway/homeless shelters or outreach programs	50.0	57.9	.484
Faith-based programs	43.5	40.6	.807
Criminal charges filed against			
Minor (i.e., victim)	72.0	41.3	.008
Trafficker	84.2	62.5	.076
Buyer	23.5	15.8	.462

Note: From Cole, 2018, p. 429.

One author (Franchino-Olsen, 2019) found that young boys, girls, and transgender youth are all vulnerable to sex trafficking, with boys and transgender individuals facing even less visibility than female survivors, as demonstrated in society and published research (Choi, 2015; Clawson et al., 2009; Greenbaum, 2014; Miller-Perrin & Wurtele, 2017). Familial rejection,

abandonment, and emotional and physical abuse contribute to the vulnerability of children who self-identified as LGBTQ (Xian et al., 2017).

Societal Factors

Along with the risks related to age, sex, gender, and sexual orientation, potential victims are more vulnerable to sex trafficking based on societal factors around poverty, racial marginalization, intellectual disability, and undocumented citizenship status (Nichols, 2016). Some societal attitudes (e.g., racism, sexism, classism) contribute to an environment in the US where children are sold for sex. (Mapp, 2016). Many in the United States struggle to meet their basic needs, but barriers to success remain greater for those who are non-white. (Smith et al., 2005). Exposure to sexual content in media has increased teen sexual activity and raised the risk of coercive sexual victimization (Ybarra et al., 2014). The sexualization of females in media includes ads that use sexualized images of young children or emulate child pornography in their ads. (Smith et al., 2005).

Contexts of Sex Trafficking

According to the Human Trafficking Hotline (n.d.), “sex trafficking exists within diverse and unique sets of venues and businesses including fake massage businesses, escort services, residential brothels, in public on city streets and truck stops, strip clubs, hostess clubs, hotels and motels, and elsewhere” (para. 3). Services provided include prostitution, pornography, remote interactive services, private sexual services, and other sex-related acts (Countering Trafficking-Data Collaborative, 2020). One study asked adult women about their recruiters into commercial sex and found similar response rates identifying a pimp, family member, friend, and self (Kennedy et al., 2007). More recent research acknowledged that news and media coverage direct the most attention on sex trafficking involving a stereotypical third party trafficker, or “pimp,”

but acknowledges other models involving survival sex and trafficking by force along with sex trafficking by family members, intimate partners, and nonintimate partners (Mapp, 2016; Gerassi & Nichols, 2017). Below is a discussion of these types of sex trafficking, but they should not be viewed as independent of each other as some may overlap others, and some trafficking situations may change over time (Gerassi & Nichols, 2017). For example, Jules may have been introduced into sex trafficking by an uncle (i.e., familial and trafficking by force) and later sold to a trafficker she had never met (i.e., nonintimate partner).

Survival Sex

Survival sex is the exchange of sex for food, clothing, shelter, or other basic needs (Gerassi & Nichols, 2017). When a person consents to trade sex acts to meet their needs, they willingly engage in *transactional sex*. A displaced person living on the streets or in poverty may not have the resources or access to other options to meet these needs, leaving them more vulnerable to exploitation by pimps and buyers. Following the earlier consent discussion, a person may decide to participate in survival sex (i.e., consensual) or become exploited for commercial sex. However, transactional sex, in either case, becomes survival sex trafficking with the introduction of fraud, force, or coercion or when a minor participates.

As an adult, if Jules is short on funds and unable to pay her rent, she may arrange to exchange sexual acts with her landlord for the amount due. Regardless of who initiated the agreement, if she understands and consents to this transaction, she is consenting to survival sex. However, if her landlord recognizes Jules' vulnerable position and coerces her with threats of eviction if she does not perform the sexual acts, this becomes survival sex trafficking. Survival sex will automatically be trafficking if Jules is a minor. A survivor's trauma experience and

resultant needs may be similar whether their situation constitutes sex trafficking or exploitation (Gerassi & Nichols, 2017).

Familial Sex Trafficking

Familial sex trafficking occurs when a family member facilitates a person's engagement in commercial sex (Gerassi & Nichols, 2017). A person may have multiple traffickers throughout their trafficking experience. In one study, more than 82% of persons receiving services reported a family member had trafficked them, including 18% reporting an "intimate partner" trafficked them (Cole & Sprang, 2015; Mapp, 2016). Another study found that many women exiting prostitution had a family of commercial sex, which normalized prostitution for them and led to exploitation or trafficking situations involving their children (Oselin, 2014; Gerassi & Nichols, 2017). Parents have been prosecuted for sex trafficking when they have received cash or drugs for their children's participation in live sex shows, involving them in child pornography productions, and allowing them to be molested or raped. Other cases involved parents charged with direct prostitution of their children in various settings, including truck stops, church basements, online, or their own homes (Nichols, 2016; Gerassi & Nichols, 2017). The Polaris Project (2015) found that some children reported they lived with traffickers referred to as "parents" though they were neither biological nor legal guardians. Gerassi and Nichols (2017) concluded that familial trafficking could include trafficking facilitated or permitted by parents, relatives, guardians, or people with parental roles in the family (i.e., "fictive parents").

Intimate Partner Sex Trafficking

Over a third of the sex trafficking cases reported to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center involved one romantic partner trafficking another (Polaris Project, 2013). In intimate partner sex trafficking, the trafficker usually pretends to develop a friendship or

romantic relationship with someone. Next, the trafficker exploits the trust to engage the victim in commercial sex (Gerassi & Nichols, 2017). The authors add that existing research focuses primarily on adult males trafficking female youth, but targets of boyfriend pimps can include any sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Transgender clients seeking legal services for sex trafficking by their partners (Egyes, 2019), gay men exploited by their boyfriends (Dank et al., 2015), and homeless gay male youth targeted and romanced by trafficked by older men are examples of intimate partner sex trafficking that vary from the prevalent assumption of older boyfriend pimp trafficking younger female targets (Heil & Nichols, 2015). “Boyfriend” pimp trafficking often includes coercive forms of control found in the broader context of intimate partner violence, including economic, emotional, sexual, and physical abuses (Gerassi & Nichols, 2017). The authors acknowledged that research lacks the study of “girlfriend” pimp trafficking while admonishing clinicians to avoid assumptions that traffickers are male or identify as men.

Nonintimate Partner Pimps and Traffickers

Another form of sex trafficking is nonintimate partner pimps, which may be male or female (Gerassi & Nichols, 2017). The authors determined that nonintimate partner trafficking may overlap with other types of trafficking as traffickers may include family members, members of gangs or other organized crime groups, those who traffic by force, or traffickers that operate alone or in small groups.

Trafficking by Force

While trafficking most often represented in the media and sex trafficking awareness campaigns is trafficking by force, research indicates that only a small percentage of sex trafficking cases present in this form (Gerassi & Nichols, 2017). The authors cited several studies

that have found survival sex and intimate partner sex trafficking more prevalent than trafficking by force (Curtis et al., 2008; Dank et al., 2015; Heil & Nichols, 2015; Polaris Project, 2013, 2015). No matter the context, sex trafficking leads to consequences for the health of survivors.

Consequences of Sex Trafficking

While the pre-trafficking experiences of survivors present with their own needs, trafficking experiences may involve various forms of abuse and neglect, resulting in medical, mental, emotional, and behavioral needs requiring professional attention (Kaplan et al., 2018). Survivors often experience psychological, physical, and sexual abuse along with the practices of social restriction and manipulation, economic exploitation, debt-bondage, and forced or coerced substance use (Zimmerman et al., 2011). The authors posited a model of potential health consequences linked categorically to these forms of abuse or risk, as shown below in Table 4. Revisiting the case of Jules frames the conceptualization of these consequences.

Table 4

Forms of Sex Trafficking Abuse and Potential Health Consequences

Forms of abuse	Type of potential health consequences
<i>Psychological abuse</i>	<i>Mental health</i>
Fraud	Suicidal ideation, self-harm, suicide
Coercion	Post-trauma symptoms and syndromes (PTSD, depression)
Unsafe, unpredictable, uncontrollable events and environment	Somatic complaints and immune suppression, sleep disturbances, frequent nightmares,
Isolation and forced dependency (see “social restrictions” below)	Memory loss, dissociation, and cognition problems
	Aggressive behavior, irritability, violent outbursts
<i>Physical abuse (Force)</i>	<i>Physical health</i>
Murder, torture, physical attacks with or without a weapon	Death, acute injuries, or chronic physical pain

Deprivation (sleep, food, light, basic needs)	Physical disabilities
Confinement, physical restraint	Fatigue, exhaustion, poor nutrition, malnutrition, starvation, pesticide poisoning, asthma
Withholding medical or other essential care	Deterioration of pre-existing conditions leading to disability or death
<i>Sexual abuse</i>	<i>Sexual and reproductive health</i>
Forced and coerced sex	Sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, and related complications
Forced prostitution or sexual exploitation	Reproductive or sexual health complications
Limited access to sexual or reproductive health products and care	Acute or chronic pain during sex, tearing, and other damage to vaginal tract or anus
Sexual humiliation, forced nakedness, forced pornography	Unwanted pregnancy, forced or unsafe termination of pregnancy, complications from unsafe terminations
Coerced misuse of oral contraceptives or other contraceptive needs	
<i>Forced or coerced substance use</i>	<i>Substance use or misuse</i>
Non-consensual administering and coercive use of alcohol or other substance to:	Drug or alcohol addiction, overdose, self-harm
Abduct, rape, prostitute individuals	Participation in high-risk activities
Control activities, coerce compliance, decrease self-protection, prevent escape	Needle-introduced infection, brain or liver damage
Impose long work hours or greater productivity	Sleep problems, negative coping behaviors, smoking, risk-taking, isolation
<i>Social restrictions and manipulations</i>	<i>Social health consequences of social abuse</i>
Restriction of movement and activities	Feelings of isolation, loneliness, helplessness
Restriction of interpersonal contact	Shame, guilt, loss of self-esteem, stigma, and discrimination
Favoritism or prerequisites to cause divisiveness between co-workers	Mistrust of others, social withdrawal, difficulty developing healthy relationships
Denial or control of access to information, health, and other services	Re-trafficking, re-entry into high-risk conditions
<i>Economic exploitation and debt-bondage</i>	<i>Finance-related problems</i>

Indentured servitude resulting from inflated debt or the resale of individuals or their debt	Inability to afford basic hygiene, nutrition, safe housing, medical care
Usurious charges/deceptive accounting	Heightened vulnerability to infections, work-related injuries
Money-related punishment for perceived misbehavior, escape attempts	Dangerous self-medication or foregoing of medication
Overwork to meet payment demands	Rejection by the family for not sending or returning with money

Note: Adapted from Zimmerman et al., 2011, p. 332.

Jules is a survivor who reports that their trafficking included being tied to a chair, injected with heroin, and sexual humiliation. The use of restraints is one form of physical abuse that could result in physical health needs (e.g., acute injury). Jules did not voluntarily use heroin, and the authors identify addiction as one possible substance use or misuse consequence of such forced substance use. The sexual humiliation Jules experienced is one form of sexual abuse possibly resulting in sexually transmitted infections or sexual health complications. While these specific forms of Jules' abuse present risks to related health dimensions, this situation presents as psychological abuse given its unsafe, unpredictable, uncontrollable nature (Zimmerman et al., 2011). Post-traumatic stress and depression are two of the direct mental health consequences of psychological abuse. Some of Jules' health consequences (e.g., physical disabilities, sexual health complications) may also lead to mental health issues secondary to those directly resultant of trafficking experiences, further complicating assessment and treatment planning.

In addition to direct psychological abuse, survivors experience harm to mental health from experienced trauma and physical manifestations of common somatic complaints (Zimmerman et al., 2011). While health consequences vary in severity and specificity, the authors identified mental health as the most pervasive aspect of these health consequences of sex trafficking. Sex trafficking survivors often present with high levels of substance use along with

mental health issues including depression, post-traumatic stress, anxiety, depression, paranoia, suicidality, dissociation, substance use, difficulty developing healthy attachments, and generally adjusting to life after being trafficked (Le et al., 2018; Cook et al., 2018; Kaplan et al., 2018; Williamson et al., 2010). Survivors' trafficking experiences often exacerbate trauma from pre-trafficking abuse, neglect, and other safety threats putting counselors in the unique position to provide unconditional acceptance, support, and affirmation needed by survivors (Litam, 2017). Counselors must recognize, conceptualize, plan, and provide appropriate interventions when working with sex trafficking survivors seeking help with needs in any of these areas.

The Counsel for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) accredits and provides the standards for counselor education programs in the United States. Among the core areas of curriculum content required for students' professional counseling identity, accrediting programs must address *social and cultural diversity* and *counseling and helping relationships* (CACREP, 2016). Table 5 below displays some selected standards for these areas. This current study addresses three specific standards as presented in Table 5 below. A counselor's perceptions of male and female survivors may differ based on their attitudes, beliefs, and understanding of the role gender plays in sex trafficking (2.d.), and a counselor's gender and behavioral attitudes may influence the counseling process (2.h. & 5.f.). The complex interaction of needs experienced by sex trafficking survivors requires counselors who are prepared to provide trauma-informed approaches (5.m.) that address survivors' resultant symptoms. Counselor education programs should prepare counselors familiar with trauma-informed strategies and the ability to identify and implement evidence-based techniques and approaches (5.j.), including those indicated for survivors.

Table 5*Selected CACREP Standards for Core Curriculum Areas*

Core Curriculum Areas	Standards
2. Social and Cultural Diversity	d. the impact of heritage, attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences on an individual's views of others h. strategies for identifying and eliminating barriers, prejudices, and processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination
5. Counseling and Helping Relationships	f. counselor characteristics and behaviors that influence the counseling process j. evidence-based counseling strategies and techniques for prevention and intervention m. crisis intervention, trauma-informed, and community-based strategies, such as Psychological First Aid

Note: Excerpted from CACREP, 2016.

Considering the identified mental health consequences of sex trafficking, some indicated counseling approaches incorporate cognitive behavioral therapy, cognitive restructuring, exposure therapy, eye movement desensitization and reprocessing, stress inoculation training, and interpersonal psychotherapy, among others (Macias-Konstantopoulos, 2016; Williamson et al., 2010). Counselors' attitudes play a role in their ability and motivation to conceptualize treatment for the needs of survivors in the context of their trafficking experience.

Tripartite Attitude Theory

As discussed in Chapter 1, attitudes are people's responses to some stimulus or attitude object. According to Steven Breckler (1984), discussions about attitude commonly distinguish among three dimensions of responses: *cognition* (knowing), *affect* (feeling), and *behavior* (acting) related to an attitude object. He explained that attitude objects include individuals,

groups, tangible things, ideas, or topics of interest. A person's responses to an attitude object represent their evaluations of it (Eagly et al., 1994). The attitude object for this current study is sex trafficking, which will frame the exploration of the history and structure of the tripartite model of attitude.

History of the Tripartite Attitudes Theory

The first formal application of this tripartite model to the concept of attitude occurred when Brewster Smith (1947) differentiated the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of attitude (Breckler, 1984). Milton Rosenberg et al. (1960) introduced a tripartite model of attitude, which considered beliefs, behaviors, and emotional responses as the bases for attitude formation. These responses represent a person's evaluations of attitude objects (Eagly et al., 1994). The emphasis placed on this tripartite model in attitude and attitude change discussions, including books specifically attending to attitude theory, demonstrated the model's growing acceptance (Breckler, 1984). Despite this emerging multidimensional perspective, research continued to focus on affect with little regard for the other attitudinal components.

Steven Breckler (1984) advanced attitude theory by testing the validity of the tripartite model structure addressing *cognition*, *affect*, and *behavior*. *Cognitive* responses are related to thoughts, beliefs, perceptions, and conceptualizations. *Affect* relates to the visceral feelings or emotional responses someone has to a stimulus. *Behavioral* responses are explicit acts along with intentions and statements regarding behavior. Breckler (1984) posited that these attitudes are measurable and range from favorable to unfavorable. He acknowledged that examining attitude requires the collective observation of these three components while these responses' precipitating influences and constructs distinguish each from the others (Breckler, 1984). His study supported the distinct attitude components (cognition, affect, and behavior) and determined that this three-

component attitude model fit better than a single-component attitude model. This tripartite model of attitude assessment provides a way to explore sex trafficking as the attitude object of this current study.

Cognitive Attitudes

One assumption is that a person's beliefs (i.e., cognitions) about an attitude object inform their attitude toward the object (Eagly et al., 1994). According to Breckler (1984), cognitive attitudes consist of knowledge, awareness, and judgments about an attitude object or stimulus. These cognitions entail a person's thoughts about an object, which are often present in their opinions or facts as they perceive them (Daffin & Lane, 2021). Favorable cognitions can range from supportive opinions and statements to derogating arguments (Breckler, 1984). People develop cognitive attitudes based on previous messages related to personal experience, exposure, or education related to the attitude object (i.e., sex trafficking; Breckler, 1984). This opinion may support survivors who experience this type of sex trafficking while criticizing or dismissing survivors with different experiences.

In the absence of personal sex trafficking experience, exposure, or education, the counselor may develop an opinion based on the pervasive portrayal in movies and television that sex trafficking involves women and girls being kidnapped and transported internationally into the sex trade. As defined in Chapter 1, more desirable and well-informed attitudes toward sex trafficking and survivors are *favorable*, and less desirable and less informed sex trafficking attitudes are *unfavorable*. Using the earlier case, if Jules is a female abducted from her hometown when she was a girl and sex trafficked abroad, the counselor may believe Jules has been sex trafficked (i.e., favorable). Conversely, suppose Jules is a male who is being sex trafficked in his hometown. In that case, this same belief may lead the counselor to assume that

Jules is choosing or enjoying his participation (i.e., unfavorable). Attitudinal responses include a person's beliefs along with their feelings.

Affective Attitudes

A person's visceral reactions to an attitude object represent their *affect* (Breckler, 1984). These affective responses represent emotions or empathy about an object, idea, or another person (Breckler, 1984; Daffin & Lane, 2021). Verbal reports of feelings or physiological responses represent affect observations with measurements ranging from pleasurable to unpleasurable (Breckler, 1984). While emotions like anger, sympathy, and distress are not pleasurable, they may be favorable responses to sex trafficking where their absence may be unfavorable. These emotional responses may result from the knowledge they gained while working with trafficking survivors or during training, but they may also be independent of cognitive processes or instrumental conditioning (Breckler, 1984). That is to say that a counselor who has not received sex trafficking training or worked with any survivors may still have an emotional response when they hear a client share their sex trafficking experience for the first time. For example, Jules' counselor may experience empathy (i.e., favorable affective) and plan treatment that addresses any trafficking-related needs (i.e., favorable behavioral) based on the counselor's knowledge and awareness (i.e., favorable cognitive) of sex trafficking. Alternately, Jules' counselor may experience empathy (i.e., favorable affective) without any specific trafficking knowledge or awareness (i.e., unfavorable cognitive). Cognitive and affective processes may not be the source of formed behavioral responses.

Behavioral Attitudes

Behavioral attitudes involve a person's actions related to their cognitions in response to an attitude object (Daffin & Lane, 2021). These attitudes include overt behaviors, intentions, and

statements related to action (Breckler, 1984). According to Breckler (1984), the favorable actions include providing support and protection, while behaviors demonstrating blame and disregard are unfavorable. Many of these action tendencies result from operant conditioning through nonverbal or noncognitive instruments that reinforce specific responses to an attitude object (Breckler, 1984). Jules' counselor would demonstrate favorable behavioral attitudes by providing support and appropriate treatment planning that attended to needs resulting from sex trafficking. Conversely, Jules' counselor would demonstrate unfavorable behavioral attitudes by overlooking Jules' exposure to sex trafficking exposure or blaming Jules for being trafficked. The tripartite model distinguishes among these three dimensions to further inform the overall construct of attitude.

Daffin and Lane (2021) suggested exploring attitudes using cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions. The authors reported that the initial assumption was that every attitude includes all three of these components. At the same time, research has established that some attitudes lack one or more of these dimensions and that, in some cases, may conflict with one another (Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960; Millar & Tesser, 1986). The case of Jules provides an application of these tripartite attitudes. A counselor has heard Jules' account of their sex trafficking experiences. The counselor may believe Jules' account to be accurate (i.e., cognition) and become angry or upset (i.e., affect). If the counselor does not demonstrate any action or intent to act (i.e., behavior), the behavioral component would be missing. The consistent behavioral response would be an intent to support recovery from their resulting needs while promoting Jules' autonomy. Taking over decision-making responsibilities from Jules would represent an unfavorable behavior in conflict with the favorable cognitions and affective

responses. The implication remains that counselors' cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses to survivors and their sex trafficking experiences influence the treatment they provide.

Counselor Attitudes and Treatment of Sex Trafficking

Counselors' attitudinal responses are represented in their cognitions, affect, and behaviors, each influencing their interactions with survivors of sex trafficking and the treatment they provide. Counselors who are unaware and unknowledgeable about sex trafficking may believe that women and girls are survivors while men and boys have chosen to engage in commercial sex. Along with this unfavorable cognitive attitude, counselors may have little or no emotional response to trafficking experiences reported by males. These counselors may develop a plan to take charge of a survivor's decision-making for their protection, or they may not consider taking any action. The American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics (2014) require that counselors act in a manner that both helps *and* does not harm those seeking their services.

Two of the fundamental principles established in the *ACA Code of Ethics* (2014) are nonmaleficence and beneficence. In addition to counselors not causing or promoting harm, they must promote mental health and well-being. The possibility of retraumatizing a sex trafficking survivor is an issue of nonmaleficence. A survivor may experience retraumatization from counselor questioning (Greenbaum, 2016). This retraumatization may complicate the therapeutic relationship, threatening the safety and well-being charged of counselors to promote (ACA, 2014). Toward beneficence, in the absence of identified treatment protocols for counselors working with sex trafficking survivors, they must draw from approaches established in other traumatized populations (Gordon et al., 2018). Research suggests that empathy is the basis of the counseling process.

A meta-analysis of 224 studies about the relationship between empathy and therapy outcomes confirmed the role of empathy (affect) as a foundational change process in therapy (Elliott et al., 2011). According to this study, client-perceived empathy represents a stronger predictor of treatment outcomes than theoretical orientation, treatment format, and severity of presenting issues. In addition to empathy, counselors need to attend to factors of the sex trafficking culture and the role of trauma in treatment.

Counselors must acknowledge and remain sensitive to survivors' experiences within the sex trafficking culture resulting from their traffickers' use of abuse and manipulation (Hemmings et al., 2016; Lavoie et al., 2019). Working with survivors requires that counselors develop a therapeutic relationship based on trust and unconditional acceptance (Hemmings et al., 2016). Trauma-informed care promotes safety, support, sensitivity, and empowerment which mitigates the risk of retraumatizing survivors and attends to their collective needs (Rafferty, 2018). A literature review provided insight into how gender influences counselors' attitudes and services.

Survivor's Gender

As discussed earlier in gender as a risk factor, the risk of sex trafficking exists for males, females, and transgender individuals (Cole, 2018). Correct identification of survivors is essential to providing appropriate therapeutic interventions (Shared Hope International (2015). Revisiting Cole's (2018) study, the participants ($n = 323$) included legal, welfare, behavioral health, medical, and school professionals who worked in agencies providing services to youth deemed at-risk or crime victims. The respondents that had worked with at least one male survivor ($n = 93$) represented more than a quarter (28.8%) of all respondents ($n = 323$) and more than half (57.8%) of the respondents who had worked with minor survivors ($n = 161$). About one out of every five survivors (20.1%) who received services from these 93 professionals were male.

These findings reinforce the presence of male sex trafficking survivors despite a larger representation of females. At the same time, the statistical analysis supported the potential for a survivor's gender to influence counselors' sex trafficking attitudes.

Cole (2018) refined the study sample ($n = 107$) to compare the data gathered from respondents who had worked exclusively with males ($n = 26$) and those who worked only with females ($n = 81$). A key finding of this study was the different percentages of respondents who received reports that a survivor had been criminally charged for their participation when comparing respondents who only worked with males (72.0%) with those who only worked with females (42.9%). These differences suggest that a survivor's gender at least influences the perceptions of legal professionals. Suppose professionals (e.g., counselors) hold the common misperception that sex trafficking does not involve male survivors. In that case, they need to increase their knowledge and capabilities to intervene effectively with and provide services (e.g., counseling) to male survivors (Cole, 2018). In addition to a survivor's gender, a counselor's gender may influence their sex trafficking attitudes.

Counselor's Gender

A recent study (Litam & Lam, 2021) using empathy and helping attitudes found that female counselors present with more favorable sex trafficking beliefs when compared with males. The authors determined these findings were consistent with existing research citing two specific studies as examples. Cunningham and Cromer (2016) explored the presence of human trafficking myths in a sample of 409 undergraduate students (57% female, 42% male). The authors found that in a comparison between males and females, males were more likely to accept trafficking myths and blame the victim for the situation. However, they were less likely to believe the portrayal of a sex trafficking vignette. Another study found that female counselors

were more likely to believe sex trafficking resulted from victimization rather than choice and perceive survivors as victims of a crime (Litam, 2019). Greater rape myth acceptance increases the likelihood that psychologists, social workers, and psychiatrists would employ victim-blaming interventions when working with sexual assault victims (Dye & Roth, 1990). The literature suggests that gender may influence counselors' sex trafficking attitudes, resulting in ineffective, if not harmful, counseling approaches. This current study will explore the sex trafficking attitudes of counselors for any influence from their gender or the gender of a survivor.

This current study involves an analysis of counselors' sex trafficking attitudes as influenced by the attributes of respondents (e.g., counselors' gender) and attitude objects (e.g., survivors' gender). The collection of data necessary to conduct this analysis requires some instrument that measures sex trafficking attitudes and provides a means to assess these attitudes (favorable and unfavorable). Failing to find an existing instrument, Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) developed the Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (STAS) to assess the cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes toward the sex trafficking of women and girls.

Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (STAS)

Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) recognized a gap in research when they could not identify an instrument to measure sex trafficking attitudes. They posited the importance of measuring attitudes toward the sex trafficking of women and girls, explaining that unfavorable attitudes may obstruct public support toward change, hinder the support for services and policies proposed to help survivors, and reveal other ways to promote support and action. They developed the Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (STAS) with preliminary validation to assess cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes toward the sex trafficking of women and girls.

Construction of the Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale-Preliminary (STAS-P)

Initial construction of the Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale-Preliminary (STAS-P) scales included a review of the research on sex trafficking attitudes and an exploration of identified misperceptions about the sex trafficking of women and girls (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016). The authors identified seven aspects of sex trafficking attitudes where four assessed the cognitive dimensions, one assessed affect, and two assessed behavioral dimensions.

Assessment required drafting the items for each identified dimension of sex trafficking attitude. Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) composed six to eight items for each dimension based on the identified misperceptions and conversations with a community group focused on ending human trafficking. The resultant STAS-P consisted of 55 items to assess sex trafficking attitudes across the seven subscales. Table 6 below provides the name of each STAS-P subscale with the attitude dimension, the number of items, and an example item for each subscale. For example, the six-item cognitive scales to assess *Knowledge About Sex Trafficking* included, “A prostitute can become trafficked if she is restrained from leaving her occupation.” Upon reviews and revisions, the authors conducted a pilot test to assess the sex trafficking attitudes of undergraduate students using the STAS-P.

Table 6*Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scales-Preliminary (STAS-P) Subscales*

Subscales	Attitude Dimension	Item Qty	Subscale Item Examples
<i>Knowledge About Sex Trafficking</i>	Cognitive	6	A prostitute can become trafficked if she is restrained from leaving her occupation.
<i>Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking</i>	Cognitive	11	If a trafficked person chose to leave, the problem would be over. (Reverse-scored)
<i>Awareness of Sex Trafficking</i>	Cognitive	10	I have heard about sex trafficking in the news.
<i>Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors</i>	Behavioral	7	If it is for the trafficked individual's own good, an outsider should do whatever is needed to make decisions for the trafficked person. (Reverse-scored)
<i>International Versus Domestic Recognition of Trafficking</i>	Cognitive	5	Trafficking happens across the globe.
<i>Empathic Reactions to Sex Trafficking</i>	Affective	9	I am angry about the issue of trafficking.
<i>Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking</i>	Behavioral	9	I feel helpless to assist trafficked persons. (Reverse-scored)

Note: Excerpted from Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016.

Pilot Study

The 42 undergraduate participants in the pilot study responded to each item using a six-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). They then provided free-response feedback for each item set to assess the seven dimensions. The authors reviewed the feedback and edited the items to establish the STAS-P for use in two subsequent studies.

Sampling

Next, the authors drew a sample of 601 undergraduates from an online psychology participant pool at DePaul University. Each participant completed 115 items across five surveys to refine the STAS-P instrument and confirm convergent validity. The survey included the 19-item Rape Myth Acceptance scale (Burt, 1980), eight-item Modern Sexism scale (Swim et al., 1995), 15-item Attitudes Toward Prostitutes scale (Levin & Peled, 2011), 13-item Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale-Form C (Reynolds, 1982), and the 55 items of the STAS-P developed for these two studies. Participants were randomly assigned to two study groups to conduct an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The following discussion provides the details of each study.

Study 1: Exploratory Factor Analysis

The EFA focused on the 300 randomly assigned participants to Study 1; the analysis included their responses to the 115 items. This EFA provided the information used to evaluate the factor structure of the STAS-P and identify which items to retain for each subscale (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016). Three of the most critical decisions to address when conducting an EFA include which model to use, how many factors to retain, and which rotation method to apply (Preacher & MacCallum, 2003).

Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) examined common and unique variances using a common factor model. The common factor model differentiates variance explained by common factors (i.e., common variance) from variance not explained by common factors (unique variance; Preacher & MacCallum, 2003). The common factor analysis with principal axis factoring provided the variance attributed to the items (e.g., “I have heard about sex trafficking in the news”) along with the variance attributed to the subscales (e.g., Awareness of Sex Trafficking).

The absence of highly correlated items, the sampling adequacy, and the significant sphericity of the data supported their decision to use an EFA. Improved model indices excluded four items from the original 55 due to sampling inadequacy. Further analyses of the retained 51 items informed the decisions of how many items to retain for each subscale and which rotation method to use.

Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) determined how many factors (i.e., items) to request for each subscale using the parallel analysis, scree plot of eigenvalues, percentage of factor variance explained, and theoretical model of seven factors. These analyses informed their decision to request six factors that balanced the risks of inflating or deflating attribution to the common factors (i.e., subscales). The authors' next task was to choose a rotation method for the EFA.

Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) decided to use a direct oblique oblimin rotation based on their expectation of factor correlations. Oblique factor rotations allow for correlations among observed factors, whereas orthogonal rotation assumes the absence of such common factors (Kieffer, 1998). A review of the factor loadings and cross-loadings with other factors revealed 18 items that did not meet the criteria. Subsequent analyses excluded these items consisted of 33 remaining items across six factors. These six identified factors parallel six of the seven original dimensions of sex trafficking attitudes proposed by Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016). Further analyses excluded the *International Versus Domestic Recognition of Sex Trafficking* subscale, lacking empirical support. The CFA conducted in Study 2 used the remaining 33 items across the six identified subscales.

Study 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The CFA focused on the 301 participants randomly assigned to Study 2 and their responses to all five of the scales provided. The CFA explored convergent validity among the 33

sex trafficking attitudes developed in Study 1 compared with established scales that assess rape myth acceptance, modern sexism, attitudes toward prostitutes, and social desirability. The CFA included 98 of the 116 completed survey items based on the findings from Study 1. The retained items assessed the common factors of sex trafficking attitudes, including *Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking*, *Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking*, *Knowledge About Sex Trafficking*, *Empathic Reactions Toward Sex Trafficking*, *Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors*, and *Awareness of Sex Trafficking*.

Sex Trafficking Attitudes

Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) concentrated on the 33-item Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scales (STAS) established in Study 1 to assess sex trafficking attitudes. Appendix A provides the 33-item STAS. These 33 items represent six sex trafficking subscales: *Knowledge About Sex Trafficking*, *Attitudes Toward Leaving Sex Trafficking*, *Awareness of Sex Trafficking*, *Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors*, *Empathic Reactions to Sex Trafficking*, and *Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking*. Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) used exclusively female-gendered language in ten items across two subscales, while the remaining 23 items lacked any gendered language. The overall STAS directions and those for each of the six subscales framed sex trafficking in the context of women and girls while acknowledging that survivors include men, boys, and transgender individuals (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016). The authors focused on the trafficking of women and girls, noting the established practice in sex trafficking research based on their disproportionate representation among survivors.

Rape Myth Acceptance

Burt's (1980) 19-item scale assessed participants' rape myth acceptance using a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). Higher scores represent

greater acceptance of rape myths (e.g., “any healthy woman can successfully resist a rapist if she really wants to”). The language in this scale focused primarily on the rape of women (16 items), with one item referring to “females,” one referring to the report of rape by “girl,” and two items absent any gendered language. The author reported a strong correlation between rape myth acceptance and acceptance of sex-role stereotypes, interpersonal violence, and adversarial sexual beliefs. Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) expected a relationship where higher Rape Myth Acceptance scores are associated with lower (i.e., unfavorable) STAS subscale scores: Knowledge About Sex Trafficking, Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking, Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors, and Empathic Reactions Toward Sex Trafficking.

Modern Sexism

Swim et al. (1995) developed the eight-item Modern Sexism scale to assess modern sexism as indicated by the denial of continued discrimination against women, antagonism toward women’s demands, and resentment about special favors for women. Two items included language comparing males with females: (Item 4, “On average, people in our society treat husbands and wives equally” and Item 5, “Society has reached the point where women and men have equal opportunities for achievement”; Swim et al., 1995; p. 212). “Women” was the only gendered language used in the remaining six items. Participants respond to each item using a six-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*) for each item (e.g., “it is rare to see women treated in a sexist manner on television”). Higher scores represent greater modern sexism (i.e., denial, antagonism, and resentment). Swim et al. (1995) reported that Modern Sexism directly correlated with *non-egalitarian gender roles, a protestant work ethic*, and overestimation of *the percentage of women in male-dominated occupations*. Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) expected a relationship where higher Modern Sexism scores were associated

with lower (i.e., unfavorable) STAS subscale scores: Knowledge About Sex Trafficking, Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking, Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors, and Empathic Reactions Toward Sex Trafficking.

Attitudes Toward Prostitutes

Leven and Peled (2011) developed the Attitude Toward Prostitutes (ATP) scale to assess perceptions of prostitutes as deviant (e.g., “most prostitutes are morally corrupt”) and whether they choose prostitution (e.g., “many prostitutes are students who prefer a convenient, profitable job”). The authors specified the focus of the ATP as the attitudes toward “women in prostitution” (p. 591). Participants responded to each item using a six-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*) for each item. Higher ATP scores suggest attitudes toward prostitutes as being deviant and choosing prostitution, while lower scores represent attitudes that prostitutes are normative women who are victims of prostitution. Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) expected a relationship where higher ATP scores were associated with lower (i.e., unfavorable) STAS subscale scores: Knowledge About Sex Trafficking, Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking, Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors, and Empathic Reactions Toward Sex Trafficking.

Social Desirability

The Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale Form C (M-C Form C; Reynolds, 1982) includes 13 true-false items to assess tendencies to think and behave in socially desirable ways. The M-C Form C comprises first-person statements and does not include gendered language. Scoring for these five items (e.g., “I am always willing to admit it when I make a mistake.”) coded a true response as a “1” and a false response as a “0. Eight items required reverse coding (e.g., “There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone.”). Scoring for these items

coded a true response as a “0” and a false response as a “1”. Higher M-C Form C scores represent greater (i.e., favorable) tendencies to respond in socially desirable ways. Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) expected no relationship between social desirability and the STAS subscales.

Chapter Summary

For more than 20 years, the focus on sex trafficking research, advocacy, and legislation in the United States has continued to grow. While scholars continue to establish evidence-based practices for survivors, an emerging concern has been the matter of counselor sex trafficking attitudes and their influence on the therapeutic relationship and the services provided. This chapter provided an overview of sex trafficking, including the components, risk factors, contexts, and mental health consequences. This chapter also discussed the tripartite attitudes theory and its relevance as the theoretical foundation of this current study, including a conceptualization of counselors’ cognitive, affective, and behavioral trafficking attitudes. This current study will use the STAS to measure counselors’ sex trafficking attitudes. Specifically, this current study will explore any influence on counselors’ attitudes by their gender and the gender of the survivor.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Introduction

This chapter includes an overview of the methods for researching the influence of a survivor's gender and a counselor's gender on counselors' attitudes toward sex trafficking and survivors of sex trafficking as observed using the STAS (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016). Chapter three will present the research questions, design, and procedures. Chapter three also includes instrumentation, adaptations, statistical analysis, and ethical considerations related to this current study.

Research Questions

This current study investigated whether the factors of a survivor's gender, a counselor's gender, or the interaction of a survivor's gender and a counselor's gender influenced counselors' attitudes toward sex trafficking and survivors as scaled using the STAS. The questions addressed are as follows:

Question 1

What influence does a survivor's gender have on counselors' attitudes toward sex trafficking as measured using the *Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (STAS)*?

Question 2

What influence does a counselor's gender have on their attitudes toward sex trafficking as measured using the *Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (STAS)*?

Question 3

Does the influence of a survivor's gender on attitudes toward sex trafficking as measured using the *Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (STAS)* depend upon the counselor's gender?

Research Design

This current study used an experimental 2 x 2 factorial design to examine whether gender (survivors' gender and counselor's gender) influenced counselors' attitudes toward sex trafficking and survivors. The original plan prescribed stratified random sampling to select participants from the population of counselors-in-training actively enrolled at the master's and doctoral level in one of the United States programs accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling Related Education Programs (CACREP). Participants responded to five preliminary demographic items, including age, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation. The gender of the counselor was the first factor of interest and the basis for the division into two strata (females and males). The original plan included drawing a random sample ($n = 74$) from each stratum and randomly assigning participants to complete one of the two versions of the STAS adapted for this current study. The gendered language used in the STAS versions varies such that each contains a factor of the survivor's gender (female and male). The first factor (Counselor_Gender) informed the stratification of two groups, and the second factor (Survivor_Gender) informed the random assignment, resulting in four groups. Participants completed the study using Qualtrics online survey software to facilitate data collection from a large population dispersed across the United States.

Population

The population of interest for this current study was counselors-in-training actively enrolled in the CACREP accredited programs in the United States, including the District of Colombia and Puerto Rico. As of September 12, 2021, CACREP (n.d.) listed 905 accredited master's or doctoral programs representing 434 institutions of higher learning. This list included programs with the following designated specialties: Addiction Counseling; Career Counseling;

Clinical Mental Health Counseling; Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling; Clinical Mental Health Counseling and Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling (combined); College Counseling and Student Affairs; Counselor Education and Supervision; Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling; Rehabilitation Counseling; School Counseling; and Student Affairs and College Counseling (CACREP, n.d.).

Sample Size

The power analysis used to determine the optimal sample size for this current study provided a size ($n = 145$), given the population of interest and desired alpha level, power, and effect size (Trochim, 2020). Using a *significance level* ($\alpha < .05$), *power* ($\beta = .8$), and *effect size* (partial eta squared = .0625), a *power analysis* provided a desired sample size ($n = 145$). Online surveys rely on self-selection and often present with low response rates (Heppner et al., 2008), so this current study invited all students enrolled in CACREP accredited master's and doctoral programs in the United States. A sample of ($n = 148$) respondents would have produced an effect size where partial eta squared = 0.0625 for four groups, two independent variables, and six response variables. Chapter 4 discusses the sampling results for this current study which included a total sample of ($n = 83$). The Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) used for this current study is robust to violations of multivariate normality when cell sizes are equal. This current study sought a sample ($n = 148$) with 37 participants in each cell.

Significance Level (α)

Significance sets the threshold for a Type I error (Ary et al., 2009). Cohen (1977) wrote that ($\alpha = .05$) is commonly used in social research. This alpha level sets a 95% probability that any observed variance in sex trafficking attitudes is true variance and limits the probability that

any observed variance occurs by chance to 5%. This current study used a significance level set at ($\alpha = .05$).

Power Level (β)

Power sets the threshold for a Type II error (Ary et al., 2009). According to Cohen (1977), social research often sets power ($\beta = .8$). Using a power ($\beta = .8$), set an 80% probability that no observed variance was present when the survivor's gender (Survivor_Gender), counselor's gender (Counselor_Gender), and the Survivor_Gender * Counselor_Gender (interaction) did not influence STAS-F or STAS-M scores. This power leaves a 20% probability that observed variance occurred by chance. This current study set the power ($\beta = .8$) for these reasons. Choosing a significance ($\alpha = .05$) and a power ($\beta = .8$) provided balanced protection against Type I and Type II errors.

Effect Size (Partial Eta Squared)

Effect size measures the strength of any identified relationship held with significance or how meaningful such a relationship is (Ary et al., 2009). Cohen (1977) provided a guide for effect sizes where .01 is small, .0625 is medium, and .14 is large. Social research commonly establishes a medium effect size to determine whether a relationship exists (Cohen, 1977). For this current study, a counselor's gender significantly influenced participants' attitudinal responses to sex trafficking (STAS-F and STAS-M) scores. Setting a medium effect (.0625) provided confidence that the relationship was present. In contrast, a small effect size (.01) would have indicated the need for more participants to further test for significance and effect. This current study uses a medium effect size (partial eta squared = .0625).

Power Analysis

This current study conducted a power analysis using G*power version 3.1.9.4 (Faul et al., 2009) software to calculate the desired sample size. The a priori analysis determined the minimum sample size for a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) with two independent variables (survivor's gender, counselor's gender) and one dependent variable (sex trafficking attitudes) with six dependent measures (Leaving, Knowledge, Efficacy, Empathy, Paternalism, and Awareness scores). The minimum desired sample size for this current study is (n=145) based on significance level ($\alpha < .05$), power ($\beta = .8$), and effect size (.0625). The MANOVA is robust to violations of multivariate normality when cell sizes are equal. This current study comprised four groups, indicating the desired sample of 148 participants to attain equal cell sizes. Each cell represented a group of 37 participants.

An email sent to all 431 contacts for the 905 CACREP accredited programs mitigated the low response rates expected when conducting online survey research (Heppner et al., 2008). These programs represented the United States, Puerto Rico, and Washington, D.C. This email included a request to forward the invitation to every master's and doctoral student currently enrolled.

Sampling

The design for this current study included a stratified random sampling procedure to select a sample of counselors-in-training. Stratified random sampling is a probability sampling procedure used when the interest of a study focuses on one or more groups or strata (i.e., female counselors and male counselors) within a population (Lund & Lund, 2018). Stratified random sampling requires defining the population of interest, identifying the relevant stratification, obtaining a complete list of the population, compiling stratified lists for the population,

determining the desired sample size, calculating proportionate stratification, and using simple random sampling from the stratified groups (Lund & Lund, 2018).

The population of interest for this current study included all students currently enrolled in CACREP accredited programs, with the relevant stratification being gender (female and male). According to the most recent statistics, the 871 CACREP (2018) accredited programs reported a total enrollment of ($N = 52,861$) students. The Council's website provided a current list of the 905 CACREP accredited programs and the listed liaisons. Current enrollment was not yet available to identify the size of the population. However, the distribution emailed every program a request to forward an invitation to all currently enrolled students. Qualtrics online survey software compiled a coded list of the respondents for each stratified group to protect participants' confidentiality. The desired sample size for this current study was ($n = 148$) students currently enrolled in CACREP accredited programs in the United States. However, only ($n = 83$) respondents participated in this study, requiring the inclusion of the entire sample without and discarding the use of random selection. This decision produced two sample groups where one ($n_f = 72$) represented female students, and one ($n_m = 11$) represented male students. Chapter 4 discusses the sampling results for this current study in more detail.

Recruitment and Selection

This current study used an online survey that consisted of email recruitment and web-based participation (Lehdonvirta et al., 2020). A program list provided on CACREP's (n.d.) website included all accredited master's and doctoral programs representing the United States, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico. The CACREP website provided contact information for each program. Qualtrics survey software distributed an email request to 905 CACREP accredited programs requesting that the contacts forward an invitation to participate in this current study to

all students enrolled in their program. This email recruitment approach aided in focusing on counselors-in-training that met the following criteria: (a) active enrollment in graduate school at the master's or doctoral level, (b) current CACREP accreditation of participants' programs, and (c) cis-gender identification as either female or male.

These program contacts received an email requesting that they forward the survey invitation to students actively enrolled in their program(s). The contacts decided whether to forward the invitation to participate in this online study. The forwarded email invitation informed students of the 20 minutes estimated for completion. Web-based surveys mitigate the expenses related to sample recruitment, survey administration, and data collection for populations dispersed geographically (Greenlaw & Brown-Welty, 2009). Recipients decided whether to follow the invitation link and complete the informed consent process. Potential participants followed the link to Qualtrics' online survey software with the opportunity to provide informed consent. The first step was to review the study information, a description of their role, risks of participation, and limits to confidentiality presented by an online survey platform. After reviewing this information, each counselor-in-training chose whether to consent to participate in this current study. Survey research commonly uses self-selection sampling, especially for samples representing a large geographic area, because it provides a time-efficient means to obtain a sample while preserving adequate external validity (Heppner et al., 2008).

The use of email for recruitment excluded counselors-in-training that do not have internet access or another way to access their email account. Other potential exclusions may have occurred in cases where program contacts or participants did not check their email, overlooked the invitation, or chose not to participate. The exclusive use of English in recruitment and survey administration excluded counselors that do not read English.

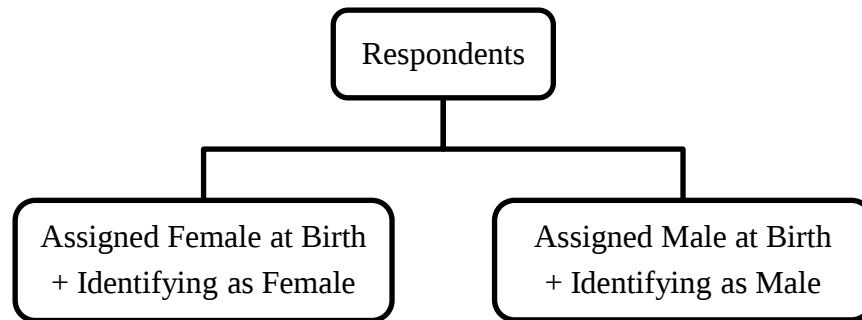
Qualtrics survey software provided participants with instructions to complete the consent process, as discussed earlier, along with the author-developed *Demographic Questionnaire* and one of two versions of the *Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (STAS)*. Emerging research specific to counselors' attitudes toward sex trafficking and survivors is limited and has not addressed the survivor's gender as a potential underlying factor of influence. The *STAS* measures attitudes toward the sex trafficking of women and girls and toward survivors who are women and girls (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016). The authors acknowledged that trafficking survivors include men, boys, and transgender individuals but focus on women and girls as those most prevalently trafficked. For this current study, the adaptations to the *STAS* provided specificity toward the sex trafficking of men and boys and survivors who are men and boys. Specific modifications are discussed later in the chapter.

Stratified Random Assignment

Upon completing the informed consent process, participants responded to six items from the *Demographic Questionnaire*, including age, race, ethnicity, sex assignment at birth, gender identity, and sexual orientation. For this current study, responding students were stratified into two groups based on their reported gender as assigned at birth (female and male) and gender identity (female and male), as shown in Figure 2 below. Respondents identifying as a different gender than assigned at birth or as "transgender" were stratified into a third group for future analysis.

Figure 2

Stratification by Counselor's Gender



The random assignment of participants in each group to complete one of two versions of the STAS made this an experimental study (Heppner et al., 2008). The two surveys differed only in survivor gender (female and male) levels. The survey version that assesses attitudes toward female survivors is the *STAS-F*, and the version that assesses those toward male survivors is the *STAS-M*. The specific modifications to the STAS are discussed later in this chapter. Below, Table 7 shows the resulting 2 x 2 factorial design.

Table 7

2 x 2 Experimental Study Design

Survivor Counselor	Female Survivor	Male Survivor
Female Counselor	A Female Survivor Female Counselor (STAS-F)	B Male Survivor Female Counselor (STAS-M)
Male Counselor	C Female Survivor Male Counselor (STAS-F)	D Male Survivor Male Counselor (STAS-M)

These four groups represent the independent factors: the counselor's gender (female and male) and the survivor's gender (female and male). Self-reported responses to the demographic survey developed for this current study provided observations of a counselor's gender. The

gendered language (i.e., feminine and masculine) used in the two forms of the STAS (STAS-F and STAS-M) provided the observations of the survivor's gender. Table 8 below provides the configuration of the four groups, including sample distribution in this current study's 2 x 2 design.

Table 8

2 x 2 Experimental Study Design and Distribution

Survivor Counselor	Female Survivor	Male Survivor	Totals
Female	A Female Survivor Female Counselor (STAS-F) ($n_A=41$)	B Male Survivor Female Counselor (STAS-M) ($n_B=31$)	(72)
Male	C Female Survivor Male Counselor (STAS-F) ($n_C=3$)	D Male Survivor Male Counselor (STAS-M) ($n_D=8$)	(11)
Totals	(44)	(39)	($n=83$)

As discussed earlier, the power G*power analysis conducted for this current study and consideration for a robust MANOVA analysis resulted in the desired sample size ($n = 148$). The goal was to continue using the self-selecting, availability sampling process described above until the sample size reached ($n = 148$). The sample size for this current study ($n = 83$) was less than the desired size ($n = 148$). Chapter 4 includes a more thorough discussion of the sampling results for this current study. Qualtrics online survey software randomly assigned participants from each identified stratum (female and male) to take one of two forms of the STAS.

Random assignment is a group assignment method used to attend to concerns about internal validity and the ability to attribute observed differences to the independent variables. The counselor's gender is the independent factor of interest as a potential influence on observed

differences in sex trafficking attitudes, but any individual characteristics can influence a participant's scores. Individual differences may result in the attribution of observed differences to chance rather than to the gender of participants. Random assignment distributes any individual differences equally among groups to ensure the similarity of those groups at the beginning of the study. This practice mitigates the challenges of interpreting any observed differences (Balkin & Kleist, 2016). The use of random sampling in this current study supports internal validity by reducing the likelihood that differences in STAS-F and STAS-M scores were due to chance. Mitigating this risk results in attributing observed differences to the counselor's gender (female and male) or the survivor's gender (female and male) rather than chance.

Instrumentation

This current study utilized the original *Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (STAS)*, an adapted version of the *STAS*, and a researcher-developed *Demographic Questionnaire*. Initially, participants responded to six items from the *Demographic Questionnaire*, then completed one form of the *STAS* as randomly assigned, and then the remaining eight items from the *Demographic Questionnaire*.

The original *Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (STAS)* (Appendix A) focused on the sex trafficking of females (i.e., women and girls), and the modified version of the *STAS* explicitly examined attitudes toward the sex trafficking of males (i.e., men and boys). For this current study, the *STAS-F* was the female version of the *STAS*, and the *STAS-M* was the male version. This current study used random assignment where each person completed either the *STAS-F* or *STAS-M*.

Qualtrics software provided six of the items of the *Demographic Questionnaire*. Stratification of participants resulted in two groups (female and male) based on their reported sex

assignment at birth (Item 4) and gender identity (Item 5). The original design used Qualtrics software to draw random samples ($n_x = 74$) from these two strata and randomly assign participants to complete the STAS-F or the STAS-M using a six-point Likert scale. The low response rate required the inclusion of all participants ($n = 83$), removing random selection from the procedures. Qualtrics software did randomly assign participants to complete the STAS-F or the STAS-M. Upon completion of the assigned STAS, the instructions to the participants were to complete the remaining eight demographic items. This current study conducted all aspects of this survey using Qualtrics online survey software. Access to participate was open for 30 days as the sample ($n = 83$) was smaller than the desired sample size ($n = 148$). The initial plan included scheduled reminder email distributions after the first seven days and fifteen days. The absence of informed consent excluded respondents from the study and prevented them from completing the survey. Chapter 4 includes a report of the subsequent distributions and incomplete survey responses.

Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (STAS)

Houston-Karcher et al. (2016) reported the *Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (STAS)* as the first known scale to assess sex trafficking attitudes. They extended Breckler's (1984) tripartite attitude theory to present the STAS to measure the multidimensional construct of sex trafficking attitudes toward women and girls. The STAS measures the cognitive, affective, and behavioral sex trafficking attitudes using 26 items that comprise six subscales: *Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking* (Leaving), *Knowledge About Sex Trafficking* (Knowledge), *Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking* (Efficacy), *Empathic Reactions Toward Sex Trafficking* (Empathy), *Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors* (Paternalism), and *Awareness of Sex Trafficking* (Awareness). The STAS assesses cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes towards the sex

trafficking of women and girls (Litam & Lam, 2021; McGrotty, 2020; Ellis, 2018). Psychometric validation of these six subscales supported the scaled measures of cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes toward sex trafficking and survivors (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016). Table 9 below provides a representation of the six STAS subscales.

Table 9

Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (STAS) Subscales

Subscale	Attitude Dimension	Item Qty	Example Item
<i>Knowledge About Sex Trafficking</i>	Cognitive	4	A prostitute can become trafficked if she is restrained from leaving her occupation.
<i>Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking</i>	Cognitive	5	Some women choose to be trafficked. (Reverse-scored)
<i>Awareness of Sex Trafficking</i>	Cognitive	5	I have heard about sex trafficking in the news.
<i>Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors</i>	Behavioral	3	If it is for the trafficked individual's own good, an outsider should do whatever is needed to make decisions for the trafficked person. (Reverse-scored)
<i>Empathic Reactions to Sex Trafficking</i>	Affective	5	I am angry about the issue of trafficking.
<i>Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking</i>	Behavioral	4	I can make a difference for trafficked persons.

Note: Excerpted from “Preliminary Validation of the Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale,” by J.D. Houston-Kolnik, N. R. Todd, and M. Wilson, 2016, *Violence Against Women*, 22(10), p. 1259–1281 (<https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801215621178>). Copyright 2016 by the Authors.

The current study explored how gendered language (i.e., feminine and masculine) influenced counselors' sex trafficking attitudes and how they differed based on counselors' gender. This current study used the STAS-F and STAS-M to measure these responses for

differences influenced by a survivor's gender. The STAS is open-source and free to use with proper attribution (i.e., Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016). The discussion later in this chapter includes the specific modifications to the STAS.

Knowledge About Sex Trafficking Subscale

The *Knowledge About Sex Trafficking* (Knowledge) scale assesses knowledge about the definition of sex trafficking (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016). The authors used the definition provided in the Trafficking Victim's Protection Act (2000), "when an individual engages in a commercial sex act as the result of force, fraud, or coercion or when someone under the age of 18 engages in a commercial sex act" (p. 1264). Higher scores are favorable as they represent greater knowledge about the roles of fraud, force, and coercion in sex trafficking, including how their introduction compromises initial consent (i.e., "A prostitute can become trafficked if she is restrained from leaving her occupation"). This scale consists of four items. No items are reverse coded. This current study assessed *Knowledge* as a cognitive sex trafficking attitude of a counselor-in-training using the *Knowledge About Sex Trafficking* subscale.

Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking Subscale

The *Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking* (Leaving) scale assesses beliefs about how much choice a person has in being sex trafficked and their ability to leave their trafficking situation (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016). Higher scores are favorable as they represent more accurate attitudes towards a survivor's autonomy in their trafficking. Specifically, recognition that survivors did not choose their trafficking, nor can they leave trafficking. This scale consists of five items. Four items are reverse coded: (5) "A trafficked person has the ability to leave her circumstances," (7) "Some women choose to be trafficked," (8) "Some girls choose to be trafficked," and (9) "A trafficked person could go to the police, but she chooses not to." This

current study assessed *Leaving* as a cognitive sex trafficking attitude of a counselor-in-training using the *Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking* subscale.

Awareness of Sex Trafficking Subscale

The *Awareness of Sex Trafficking* (Awareness) scale assesses a person's awareness of sex trafficking and the sources of any information they have about trafficking Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016). Higher scores are favorable as they represent a greater sex awareness of organizations working against trafficking and greater awareness through various sources (e.g., public awareness announcements, the news, and reading material). This scale includes five items. One item is reverse coded: (14) "I am not informed about sex trafficking." This current study assessed *Awareness* as a cognitive sex trafficking attitude of a counselor-in-training using the *Awareness of Sex Trafficking* subscale.

Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors Subscale

The *Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors* (Paternalism) scale assesses attitudes about helping survivors Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016). Specifically, higher scores are favorable as they represent greater confidence in a survivor's autonomy. In contrast, lower scores are unfavorable as they represent paternalistic attitudes that survivors need decisions made for them. This scale consists of three reverse-scored items: (15) "If it is for the trafficked individual's good, an outsider should do whatever is needed to make decisions for the trafficked person"; (16) "An outsider should make whatever decisions are needed about a trafficked person's daily living when the trafficked person doesn't seem to care what is done"; and (17) "Even if a trafficked person objects, an outsider should do whatever they think is best for the trafficked individual in the long run." This current study assessed *Paternalism* as a behavioral sex trafficking attitude of a counselor-in-training using the *Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors* subscale.

Empathic Reactions Toward Sex Trafficking Subscale

The *Empathic Reactions Toward Sex Trafficking* (Empathy) scale assesses visceral and emotional responses to sex trafficking Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016). Higher scores are favorable as they represent stronger empathic reactions toward sex trafficking (i.e., “I am angry about the issue of trafficking”). Lower scores are unfavorable as they indicate lower levels of empathy toward sex trafficking despite being recognized as human rights abuse and a modern form of slavery. This scale consists of five items. Two items are reverse coded: (21) “Trafficking does not upset me” and (22) “I do not care much about the issue of trafficking.” This current study assessed *Empathy* as an affective sex trafficking attitude of a counselor-in-training using the *Empathic Reactions to Sex Trafficking* subscale.

Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking Subscale

The *Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking* (Efficacy) scale assesses attitudes about one’s efficacy in reducing sex trafficking on a systemic level Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016). Higher scores are favorable as they represent a stronger self-reported ability to make a difference for survivors through political involvement, addressing structural inequalities and barriers survivors face, and raising public awareness (i.e., “I am able to raise public awareness about trafficking”). This scale consists of four items. No items are reverse coded. This current study assessed *Efficacy* as a behavioral sex trafficking attitude of a counselor-in-training using the *Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking* subscale.

Development

Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) conducted two studies with 601 student participants to explore psychometric evidence for the preliminary validation of the STAS. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses, estimates of internal consistency, and convergent validity

supported the final six subscales of the STAS: Knowledge About Sex Trafficking, Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking, Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors, Empathic Reactions Toward Sex Trafficking, and Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking. The authors acknowledged that the psychometric evidence did not support the seventh proposed subscale of the STAS (International Versus Domestic Recognition).

Study 1: Exploratory Factor Analysis. Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) used data from 301 students to conduct an EFA to determine which of the preliminary 55 items (STAS-P) across seven subscales to retain. The authors used a common factor analysis with principal factoring to distinguish variance attributable to common factors (i.e., common variance) from variance not attributable to common factors (i.e., unique variance; Preacher & MacCallum, 2003). Based on the assessment of the unrotated factor solution, the absence of highly correlated items ($r > .80$), the Kaiser-Meyer- Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy (.84) demonstrated adequacy, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($p < .001$) supported the suitability to conduct an EFA. Removing four items due to individual inadequacy ($r < .60$), a subsequent EFA resulted in improved adequacy (KMO = .86) and retained significance of sphericity (Bartlett's test of sphericity, $p < .001$). Parallel analysis, the scree plot of extracted eigenvalues, the percentage of factor variance explained, and the theoretical model of seven factors to identify the number of factors to request in the EFA.

Number of Factors. Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) decided to use parallel analysis, scree plot of eigenvalues, percentage of factor variance explained, and theoretical mode of seven factors as an appropriate strategy to determine how many factors (i.e., attitudinal subscales) to request in the EFA (Fabrigar et al., 1999; Hayton et al., 2004; O'Conner, 2000). The parallel analysis for their study suggested a nine-factor solution, lending support to the potential for over-

extraction of variables presented by parallel analysis (Hayton et al., 2004). Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) considered the suggested number of factors provided by the parallel analysis (nine factors), the scree plot (three factors) solution, and the amount of variance explained (six factors) along with the seven factors suggested by the theory to make their decision. The authors determined that a six-factor solution would protect against errors introduced by too many (i.e., overfactoring) and too few (i.e., underfactoring) factors.

Six-Factor Solution. Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) conducted an EFA requesting a six-factor solution from the 51 items retained in the initial analysis. The authors kept items with individual factor loadings greater than .45 and cross-loadings with other factors were below .35. The remaining 33 items represented six of the seven original dimensional subscales: *Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking* (18.15% variance explained), *Knowledge About Sex Trafficking* (4.58% variance explained), *Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking* (9.94% variance explained), *Empathic Reactions Toward Sex Trafficking* (4.05% variance explained), *Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors* (3.56% variance explained), and *Awareness of Sex Trafficking* (3.21% variance explained). The seventh proposed dimension (*International Versus Domestic Recognition of Sex Trafficking*) was not empirically supported and excluded from subsequent analyses. The six subscales representing the six-factor model demonstrated internal consistency with estimates ranging from .75 - .84 (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016).

Study 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis. Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) conducted a CFA and assessed convergent validity using data from a sample of 300 undergraduate students from an online participant pool. The participants responded to all 55 items included in the STAS-P, but the focus of Study 2 was on the 33 items from the EFA in Study 1. The 33 sex trafficking attitudes identified using in Study 1 represented these six subscales: Knowledge About Sex

Trafficking (five items), Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking (seven items), Awareness of Sex Trafficking (six items), Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors (three items), Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking (seven items), Empathic Reactions Toward Trafficking (five items). Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) examined the viability of the identified 33-item, six-factor structure of the STAS using a CFA.

Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) performed CFAs with the six-factor model (33 items), six-factor trimmed model (26-items), three-factor model, and unidimensional attitude models to examine the adequate fitness to the data. These analyses produced chi-square, comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) for evaluation of fitness (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016). The results supported internal consistency and intercorrelations, construct validity, and convergent validity for the six-factor trimmed model of the STAS as an assessment of multidimensional sex trafficking attitudes. The authors retained the trimmed 26-item STAS as the best model fit.

Internal Consistency and Intercorrelations. The 26-item STAS demonstrated internal consistency across the six subscales, with Cronbach alphas ranging from .75 to .82 (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016). As shown below in Table 10, the Cronbach alphas for these subscales are as follows: Knowledge About Sex Trafficking (four items; $\alpha = .79$), Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking (five items; $\alpha = .82$), Awareness of Sex Trafficking (five items; $\alpha = .75$), Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors (three items; $\alpha = .80$), Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking (four items; $\alpha = .77$), and Empathic Reactions Toward Trafficking (five items; $\alpha = .81$). The six subscales of the STAS demonstrated internal consistency. The authors determined that the moderate correlations of *Leaving* with *Empathy* ($r = .36$) and *Awareness* with *Efficacy* ($r = .33$)

were the strongest inter-scale correlations. *Knowledge* presented a small correlation with *Awareness* ($r = .14$) and small to moderate correlations with *Leaving* ($r = .29$) and *Paternalism* ($r = .26$). *Awareness* had a small correlation with *Paternalism* ($r = .13$), and *Empathy* had a small to moderate correlation to *Efficacy* ($r = .29$). Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) determined that despite a few scales presenting small to moderate intercorrelations, each subscale represents a distinct attitude toward sex trafficking.

Table 10

Intercorrelations of Study Scales and Convergent Validity

	Subscale	1	2	3	4	5	6	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	α
1	<i>Knowledge About Sex Trafficking</i>	—	.29*	.14*	.03	.26*	.09	5.24	0.85	.79
2	<i>Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking</i>		—	.03	.05	.36*	-.04	4.69	1.03	.82
3	<i>Awareness of Sex Trafficking</i>			—	.03	.13*	.33*	3.61	1.06	.75
4	<i>Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors</i>				—	.03	-.01	3.35	1.24	.80
5	<i>Empathic Reactions to Sex Trafficking</i>					—	.29*	4.87	0.94	.81
6	<i>Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking</i>						—	3.50	1.13	.77

Note: Excerpted from “Preliminary Validation of the Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale,” by J.D.

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* $p < .05$

Factorial Construct Validity. Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) assessed the goodness of fit for the 33-item, six-factor model identified in Study 1. A statistically non-significant χ^2 value ($\geq$

.95), SRMR values of .10 or less, and RMSEA values of .08 or less would support absolute goodness of fit. (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) acknowledged the potential for the sample size to influence the chi-square indicator (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The authors used the chi-square/degrees of freedom ratio (χ^2 / df) with values less than two to indicate a good stand-alone absolute fit model (Schermeleah-Engel et al., 2003). CFI and TLI values close to or greater than .95 support incremental goodness of fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The 33-item, six-factor model was an inadequate fit to the data with a significant χ^2 (1,022.38, $p < .001$) along with CFI (.84) and TLI (.82) values less than .95. Standardized factor loadings ranged from .41 to .90, but Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) trimmed the six items with loadings less than .50 for greater parsimony within the subscales resulting in a 26-item model.

The significant chi-square ($\chi^2 = 595.94$, $p < .001$) does not evidence goodness of fit for the 26-item, six-factor STAS, but the chi-square/degrees of freedom ratio ($\chi^2 / df = 1.93$) is less than 3 providing evidence of stand-alone or absolute goodness of fit (Schermeleah-Engel et al., 2003). The SRMR (.06) and consistent with a good absolute model fit. The RMSEA value (.06) supports a good model fit for parsimony. The comparative fit index (CFI = .90) and Tucker Lewis Index (TLI = .88) for the final STAS scale were less than .95. A chi-square difference test ($\Delta\chi^2 = 426.44$, $p < .001$) showed the 26-item STAS to be a significantly better fit than the 33-item STAS. This current study will use the 26-item STAT retained by the authors as the final model for its goodness of fit to the data and as used in subsequent research (Litam et al., 2020; Herrero-Villoria et al., 2021; Ellis, 2018; Sands, 2020; McGrotty, 2020).

Gender differences. Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) explored students' gender differences using a MANOVA with the independent variable was gender and the dependent variables were the STAS subscales. The analysis results revealed significant differences between genders ($\Lambda =$

.84, $F(6, 292) = 9.49, p < .05$). Preparing for six-preplanned comparisons, the authors controlled for Type 1 error using a Bonferroni corrected alpha level of .008. Follow-up tests indicated gender differences for two subscales where women had significantly higher scores on Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking ($M = 4.83, SD = 0.99$) than men ($M = 4.37, SD = 1.08$) and Empathic Reactions to Sex Trafficking ($M = 5.10, SD = 0.79$) than men ($M = 4.30, SD = 1.02$). Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) noted that women had numerically higher mean scores on the remaining for subscales, though no significant gender differences were present. Women's mean scores were higher on: Knowledge About Sex Trafficking ($M = 5.32, SD = 0.80$) than men ($M = 5.06, SD = 0.94$), (b) Awareness of Sex Trafficking ($M = 3.67, SD = 1.05$) than men ($M = 3.47, SD = 1.07$), (c) Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors ($M = 3.42, SD = 1.29$) than men ($M = 3.17, SD = 1.12$), and (d) Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking ($M = 3.56, SD = 1.13$) than men ($M = 3.34, SD = 1.10$).

Factorial convergent validity. Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) expected associations between the STAS subscales and the Rape Myth Acceptance, Modern Sexism, Attitudes Towards Prostitutes, and Social Desirability scales. The authors reported significant correlations toward convergent validity, following Cohen's (1977) suggested guidelines for interpreting small (0.1), moderate (0.3), and large (0.5) correlations. These correlations provided in Table 11 were consistent with the authors' expectations.

Table 11*Convergent Validity*

Subscale	Rape Myth Acceptance	Modern Sexism	Attitudes Toward Prostitutes	Social Desirability
<i>Knowledge About Sex Trafficking</i>	-.23*	-.26*	-.20*	-.13*
<i>Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking</i>	-.42*	-.41*	-.45*	-.17*
<i>Awareness of Sex Trafficking</i>	.07	-.09	-.05	.06
<i>Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors</i>	-.17*	-.14*	-.17*	-.05*
<i>Empathic Reactions to Sex Trafficking</i>	-.27*	-.49*	-.34*	-.06
<i>Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking</i>	.00	-.19*	-.05	.08

Note: Excerpted from “Preliminary Validation of the Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale,” by J.D.

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* $p < .05$

Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) reported that Knowledge About Sex Trafficking presented moderate, negative associations with Rape Myth Acceptance (-.23), Modern Sexism (-.26), and Attitudes Toward Prostitutes (-.20), but Social Desirability presented with a small, negative correlation (-.13). Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave presented with moderate to large, negative associations with Rape Myth Acceptance (-.42), Modern Sexism (-.41), and Attitudes Toward Prostitutes (-.45), but Social Desirability presented with a small, negative correlation (-.17). Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors presented with small, negative correlations with Rape Myth

Acceptance (-.17), Modern Sexism (-.14), and Attitudes Toward Prostitutes (-.17). However, this subscale has a weak, negative correlation with Social Desirability (-.05). Empathic Reactions Toward Sex Trafficking has negative associations with Modern Sexism (-.49), Attitudes Toward Prostitutes (-.34), and Rape Myth Acceptance (-.27). However, this subscale lacks a significant correlation with Social Desirability. Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking has a small, negative correlation with Modern Sexism (-.19) and has nonsignificant correlations with Rape Myth Acceptance, Attitudes Toward Prostitutes, and Social Desirability. Awareness of Sex Trafficking had no significant correlations with the Rape Myth Acceptance, Modern Sexism, Attitudes Towards Prostitutes, and Social Desirability scales. Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) concluded that the CFA produced moderate to large correlations among the STAS and the related measures. However, the correlations with Social Desirability were insignificant or weak. From the two studies, Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016), the 26-item, six-factor STAS has internal consistency and intercorrelations across the six subscales, factorial construct validity, and convergent validity, with women scoring significantly higher than men in two of the six subscales.

Test Administration

The STAS (Houston-Kolnik, 2016) instructed participants to self-scale the extent to which they agree with the 26 statements. A six-point Likert scale provided the following possible choices: (1) *strongly disagree*, (2) *disagree*, (3) *somewhat disagree*, (4) *somewhat agree*, (5) *agree*, (6) and *strongly agree*. Participants first responded to the Knowledge About Sex Trafficking and Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking. Participants reported on these attitudes before receiving a formal definition of what constitutes sex trafficking. Upon completing these subscales, the directions provided participants with the following definition of sex trafficking:

The U.S. government defines sex trafficking as a form of human trafficking where “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 of age.” (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016, p. 1266; TVPA, 2000, sec. 103(8)(a))

Directions prompt participants to complete the remaining subscales in the context of this definition. Participants responded to the remaining four subscales as presented in the following order: Awareness of Sex Trafficking, Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors, International Versus Domestic, Empathic Reactions to Sex Trafficking, Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking. Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) reported using randomized order of the items within each subscale. The final 26-item trimmed STAS model excluded the International Versus Domestic subscale due to a lack of psychometric evidence.

Scoring

The *Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale* included six subscales consisting of 26 items; scoring used original coding for 16 items and reverse coding for ten items. Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) reported average scores for each of the subscales with a possible range from 1 to 6, where higher scores represent favorable attitudes for specific dimensions of sex trafficking (e.g., Knowledge About Sex Trafficking). The potential total scores ranged from 6 to 156, where higher scores represent overall favorable sex trafficking attitudes (i.e., more desirable and well-informed). The authors acknowledged the risks of sex trafficking to men, boys, and transgender individuals but chose to develop the STAS to measure sex trafficking attitudes toward women and girls. This current study required some adaptations to the STAS to assess sex trafficking attitudes toward men and boys compared to women and girls.

Adaptations

This current study extended the research of Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) by exploring the influence of a survivor's gender (female and male) on attitudes toward sex trafficking and survivors of sex trafficking. The STAS measures attitudes toward the sex trafficking of women and girls. Some studies have explored whether a counselor's reported gender (female and male) influenced their attitudes toward the sex trafficking of women and girls (Litam & Lam, 2021; McGrotty, 2020; Ellis, 2018). This current study required a way to measure the attitudes toward the sex trafficking of men and boys (male survivors). A review of the existing literature produced no study addressing these attitudes. For this current study, the STAS-F represented the original STAS as it measured the attitudes toward the sex trafficking of women and girls (female survivors). In contrast, a modified version (STAS-M) measured the attitudes toward the sex trafficking of men and boys (male survivors). The adaptations to the STAS included identifying female-gendered language and creating a modified form that used male-gendered language in its place.

A review of the STAS-F revealed 13 occasions of female-gendered language usage, including "women and girls" four times, "her" four times, "she" three times, "women" once, and "girls" once. Four items of the Knowledge About Sex Trafficking subscale included female-gendered language (e.g., "A trafficked person has the ability to leave her circumstances"; reverse-scored). Four items of the Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking subscale included female-gendered language (i.e., "A prostitute can become trafficked if she is restrained from leaving her occupation"). In addition to using female-gendered language in these items, the initial directions included three instances of "women and girls," and the directions for the Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking subscale included one occurrence of "her."

The directions following this same subscale instructed participants to complete the remainder of the survey using the provided definition of sex trafficking (i.e., “women and girls”). In two cases, “his” replaced “her” as a possessive adjective (e.g., “A trafficked person has the ability to leave her circumstances”). “Him” replaced “her” as a predicate pronoun in two cases where (e.g., “A person is trafficked when someone uses fraud to employ her in the sex industry”). All other items and directions remained the same as the STAS-F. For this current study, random assignment distributed participants to complete either the STAS-F or the STAS-M. The participants were students currently enrolled in CACREP accredited programs that seem similar to the normative group used to develop and validate the STAS developed by Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016).

Population Norms

Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) conducted a study to assess the use of the six subscales developed for the *Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale* compared to other established attitude measures. The authors reported seven demographic variables of interest: *Age*, *Gender*, *Ethnicity*, and *Education*. The normative group used for developing the STAS consisted of 300 students. The average age of participants was 20.26 ($SD = 3.55$), with 75.3% of the sample being women. The students identified as White (57.3%), (African American/Black (5.7%), Asian/Pacific Islander (7.3%), Hispanic/Latino/a (18.0%), Biracial or Multiracial (8.2%), and Other (3.0%). The students reported their college progress where 43% were in their first year, 25.7% in their second year, 18.3% in their third year, 8.3% in their fourth year, and 4.3% were in their fifth year or beyond.

Sample. Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) used an online participant pool system to obtain a sample of ($n=601$) DePaul University students. Students received and provided informed consent before completing the survey. Participants received course credit for their participation, with all

participants completing the survey. The total sample produced two study samples for Study 1 ($n = 301$) and Study 2 ($n = 300$). Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) excluded Study 1 participants from Study 2. The sample used for this current study included college students currently enrolled in CACREP accredited programs and will not receive any course credit.

Demographic Questionnaire

The *Demographic Questionnaire* (Appendix B) developed for this current study includes 14 items to gather descriptive data (age; ethnicity; race; sex assigned at birth; gender identity; sexuality; type/specialty of the program; education program level; program progress; personal and professional exposure to sex trafficking and sex abuse; and additional training specific to the topics of ethics, sex abuse/sex trafficking, and cultural diversity in counseling). This current study used counselors' responses to Items 4 and 5 to provide the observation of a counselor's gender (i.e., independent variable). The first six items of this questionnaire measured relevant demographic information.

In 2014, the Mental Health Research Panel revised The PhenX Measures for Mental Health Research, identifying age, ethnicity, race, and gender as relevant and essential measures. Age (Item 1) prompts respondents to enter their age in years. Respondents self-report Ethnicity and Race in Items 2 and 3, respectively. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB; 1997) revised the minimum standards on race and ethnicity to ensure the quality of collected data and provide flexibility for respondents. The revised standards include a two-item format, where ethnicity data collection occurs before race data. The OMB identified two categories for data on ethnicity (*Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin* and *Not Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin*) and a minimum of five designations for race (*American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White*). This current used the

same question (i.e., “Which of the following best describes you?”) to collect self-reported ethnicity and race data. Participants could choose one response for ethnicity (Item 2) and more than one race designation (Item 3) as they apply. Since these designations are not inclusive, the demographic questionnaire included an option of “Some other race,” with space provided for participants to self-identify. After participants self-reported age, ethnicity, and race, the questionnaire measured sex assigned at birth and current gender identity.

Item 4 measured Counselors’ sex assigned at birth, and Item 5 measured their self-reported gender identity. The GenIUSS Group (2014) recommended differentiating assigned sex at birth and current gender identity when collecting gender data. This current study adopted the two questions proposed by the group. Item 4 asked, “What sex were you assigned at birth on your original birth certificate?” Participants self-reported by responding either “Female” or “Male.” Item 5 asked, “How do you describe yourself now (check one)?” Participants self-reported choosing “Female,” “Male,” “Transgender,” or “I do not identify as female, male, or transgender.” This two-question approach supports high specificity and sensitivity with adults (GenIUSS Group, 2014). The Demographic Questionnaire designed for this study also measured sexual orientation.

The Sexual Minority Assessment Research Team (SMART; 2009) recommended measuring sexual orientation using self-identification that does not define terms and does not include “other,” “not sure,” or “prefer not to answer” response categories. A question promotes self-identification by using clear options generally recognized by adults and focusing on self-labels (SMART, 2009). The authors suggested that defining terms will present a limitation by introducing aspects of attraction, behavior, or both. According to SMART (2009), people who choose to use “other” rather than the conventional gay, lesbian, or bisexual labels to describe

their sexual orientation represent a small portion of the general population. The authors acknowledged that some people would not be comfortable answering questions about sexual orientation and would appreciate a “prefer not to answer” category. The common practice of discarding data collected from research using “other” and “prefer not to answer” categories can lower the power of a study by reducing the sample size. Data coding and interpretation are complicated when participants choose a “not sure” category. Participants may find the question unclear or be unsure of their sexual identity. For these reasons, SMART (2009) suggested not using “other,” “not sure,” or “prefer not to answer” as response categories. For this current study, Item 6 measured participants’ sexual orientation using the recommended question, “Do you consider yourself to be: (a) Heterosexual or straight; (b) Gay or lesbian; or (c) Bisexual?” Upon completing the six demographic items for this current study, the questionnaire prompted participants to respond to eight items regarding participants’ program status, subject-specific training and coursework, and exposure to sex abuse/sex trafficking in their personal and professional lives.

The remaining eight items measured participants’ program description and progress, topic-specific training, and sex abuse/sex trafficking exposure. Item 7 included a list of the nine CACREP specialties (e.g., Clinical Mental Health Counseling) with a prompt for participants to “select all that apply” to their program. Participants self-reported their enrollment in a master’s or doctoral level program in Item 8. Participants provided the number of credit hours required by their program and how many they have completed measuring progress in their program (Item 9). The remaining items measured education and training in topics related to sex trafficking and any personal or professional exposure participants’ may have had to sex abuse or sex trafficking.

The following three items measured credit hours in their program and training hours outside of their program they have completed in specific topics of ethics (Item 10), sex abuse/sex trafficking (Item 11), and cultural diversity in counseling (Item 12). The CACREP (2018) standards require that programs include ethics and cultural diversity in their curricula. The ACA Code of Ethics (2014) stipulates these as key aspects of counselors' responsibility in development and practice. Education and training in ethics, cultural diversity, and sex abuse and sex trafficking training may also influence sex trafficking attitudes. Item 10 measured how many credit hours of ethics they have completed in their program and how many ethics training hours outside their program (e.g., continuing education) they have completed. Items 11 and 12 used the same question structure to measure coursework and training hours specific to sex abuse/sex trafficking and cultural diversity in counseling. Participants reported how many people they have known in their personal lives (Item 13) and have seen in their professional/clinical practice (Item 14) that have been victims of sex trafficking or sex abuse. The 14 items comprising the Demographic Questionnaire designed for this current study measured participants' demographic, educational, subject-specific training, and exposure to sex abuse/sex trafficking.

This questionnaire prompted respondents to report subject-specific education/training (ethics, sex abuse/sex trafficking, and cultural diversity in counseling) and personal and professional exposure to sexual abuse or sex trafficking. This current study used the observed self-report of corresponding sex assigned at birth and gender identity as one of the dependent variables (Counselor_Gender). The remaining demographic data collected will be used for future research.

Procedures

The researcher obtained a list of the active CACREP accredited programs in the United States, including email contact information from the CACREP website. Email distribution included a request sent to each program contact requesting they forward the invitation to all enrolled students in their program(s). Recipients of this email decided whether to follow the invitation link and complete the informed consent process. Students who chose to accept the invitation followed the link to Qualtrics' online survey software with the opportunity to provide informed consent. Potential participants reviewed the information of this current study, including a description of this current study, their role in the study, and requirements for participants as provided in the informed consent statement (Appendix C). After reviewing this information, each student chose to provide informed consent. Students' consent represented their self-selection to participate in this current study. Upon providing consent, Qualtrics survey software presented six items from the *Demographic Questionnaire*, including age, race, ethnicity, birth-assigned gender, gender identity, and sexual orientation. Qualtrics software divided the participants into two stratified groups based on their reported gender. The original procedures tasked Qualtrics software with randomly assigning participants to complete either the STAS-F (Appendix D) or the STAS-M (Appendix E) until the desired cell sizes ($n_x = 37$) were satisfied. Strategic manipulation of the female gendered-language of the STAS provided a male gendered-language form (STAS-M) to provide instruments that measure sex trafficking attitudes toward women and girls (STAS-F) and men and boys (STAS-M).

Participants responded to their assigned 26-items reporting their level of agreement with statements that represent attitudes toward sex trafficking and survivors of sex trafficking using a six-point Likert scale. The self-reported responses included the following possible choices: (1)

strongly disagree, (2) *disagree*, (3) *somewhat disagree*, (4) *somewhat agree*, (5) *agree*, (6) and *strongly agree*. The subscales contained between three and five items, confounding comparisons using total subscale scores. Reporting for this current study included average scores ranging from 1 to 6, where higher scores represent more favorable attitudes than lower scores. Following the administration protocol used by Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016), participants completed the Knowledge About Sex Trafficking (four items) and Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking (five items) subscales before receiving the definition of sex trafficking established in the TVPA (2000). Next, participants responded to the remaining four subscales as presented in the following order: Awareness of Sex Trafficking (five items), Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors (three items), Empathic Reactions to Sex Trafficking (five items), Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking (five items). The survey presented the subscales in the same order. However, this current study followed the procedures used by Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) and randomized the order of the items in each subscale. Once participants completed the STAS-F or STAS-M, they responded to the remaining eight demographic items.

Web-based surveys provide an efficient way to collect data and mitigate the challenges of sampling across a wide geographical area (Trochim, 2006). They are widely used in social research and help discover and explore any differences in responses (Trochim, 2019). One study demonstrated a 40% higher response rate over paper-based surveys at less than 14% of the cost (Greenlaw & Brown-Welty, 2009). This current study used the Qualtrics online survey software to administer the survey and collect data from participants dispersed across the nation.

Data Collection and Storage

This current study used Qualtrics (<https://www.qualtrics.com/>) online survey and data management software for all data collection and storage until the study was closed. Participants

provided informed consent, answered the demographic questionnaire, and completed the STAS scales using the Qualtrics survey software. Storage of all data occurred using Qualtrics data management software until the conclusion of the study completion of the data collection. The study data was then downloaded to an external flash drive to secure the information with the necessary encryption protocols. The researcher used the data for analysis.

Statistical Analysis

Upon the conclusion of data collection, this current study used a 2 x 2 Factorial MANOVA to determine whether counselors' sex trafficking attitudes, as measured by the STAS-F and STAS-M, were influenced by two independent variables: counselors' gender (Counselor_Gender) and survivors' gender (Survivor_Gender). The first independent variable was the counselor's gender, where the two levels represented the genders (1 = female and 2 = male) as used in existing research. In the demographic survey, "female" and "male" represented a counselor's gender levels. For this current study, "transgender" did not represent either of these two levels as it introduced an additional factor that confounds attribution of attitudinal differences to gender alone. The second independent variable was the survivor's gender, where the two levels represent the genders (1 = Female and 2 = Male) as used in existing research. This current study used the STAS-F (Female) scores and STAS-M (Male) scores to observe the survivor's gender.

The single, complex analysis provided by the MANOVA benefited this study (Wuensch, n.d.). The MANOVA helped determine how much attribution of any observed variances in the STAS subscale scores to assign to a survivor's gender (Survivor_Gender), a counselor's gender (Counselor_Gender), and the influence of a survivor's gender as dependent on a counselor's gender when gender can be attributed (Survivor_Gender * Counselor_Gender). The author

conceded that using multiple univariate Analyses of Variance (ANOVAs) would provide the same information but added that each following analysis compounds the family pairwise significance alpha after the first analysis. A single MANOVA retains an alpha significance ($\alpha = 0.05$). In contrast, the resulting three ANOVAs will present an alpha level of ($\alpha = 0.15$), requiring a Bonferroni adjustment to mitigate this increased risk of Type I error. However, such an adjustment increases the probability of a Type II error (Wuensch, n.d.). This current study used a 2 x 2 Factorial MANOVA to determine whether a counselor's gender (Counselor_Gender), the survivor's gender (Survivor_Gender), or Survivor_Gender * Counselor_Gender (interaction) influenced counselors' attitudes toward sex trafficking, as measured using the STAS.

Design

MANOVA requires two continuous scaled dependent variables and two categorical independent variables (Lund & Lund, 2018). The dependent variables for this current study included six continuous scaled STAS subscales (Knowledge, Leaving, Awareness, Paternalism, Empathy, and Efficacy), and the independent variables included two categorical independent variables: Survivor_Gender (female and male) and Counselor_Gender (female and male). This current study satisfies the criteria for using MANOVA. Lund and Lund (2018) wrote that when the groups contain more observations than the number of dependent variables included in the study despite a less than desirable sample size. The sample size ($n = 83$) was less than the desired sample size sought for this current study. However, three groups contained more observations than the six dependent variables included in the analysis ($n_A = 41$, $n_B = 31$, $n_D = 8$) while one did not ($n_C = 3$).

Independent Observations

Independent observations required for MANOVA expect that observed behaviors do not influence other observed behaviors (Lund & Lund, 2018). When a participant has the potential to influence the observed behaviors of another participant or recruit, the observations may be associated. The online survey environment used for this current study did not allow participants to encounter each other or the researchers. Given this current study's online survey environment, this issue was most likely to occur in cases where multiple respondents represented the same CACREP accredited program. For example, a student who would otherwise not have responded may choose to participate in this current study upon hearing a classmate talking about it or observing their participation in a shared computer lab. Conducting all aspects of the study online reduced the likelihood that observations are associated, supporting the assumption of independent observations.

No Outliers

MANOVA is sensitive to outliers, meaning that an outlier can change the data analysis. If one participant scores extremely low on the Knowledge About Sex Trafficking scale when all other participants produce high scores, the MANOVA may not present with significance when it would in the absence of this outlier. Using a Box plot (univariate), Mahalanobis' Distance (MD; multivariate), or Cook's D (model specific) will determine whether identified outliers exceed the critical χ^2 value (Lund & Lund, 2018). Additional analyses with identified outliers removed can inform decisions about their exclusion for the final analysis. MANOVA is robust to outliers when cell sizes are equal. The original design was to populate groups using random assignment where each cell size would be the same ($n = 37$). Chapter 4 discusses the unequal cell sizes

requiring visual inspection for univariate outliers and Mahalanobis' Distance for multivariate outliers to uphold this assumption.

Multivariate Normality

Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests help determine whether data upholds the assumption of multivariate normality (Lund & Lund, 2018). According to Razali and Wah (2011), Shapiro-Wilk has greater power with the desired level of significance for alpha.

MANOVA is robust to violations of multivariate normality when cell sizes are equal. As stated earlier, cells in this current study were unequal. Chapter 4 discusses the use of Shapiro-Wilk's test to identify the violation of multivariate normal distribution for this current study and the decision to continue with this analysis.

Linearity

Using a scatterplot matrix between dependent variables helps determine whether the dependent variables are linearly related. (Lund & Lund, 2018). Four data sets represented the combinations of the four groups (A, B, C, and D) of the two independent variables for this current study. Analysis for linearity for each group included a check of each pair of dependent variables. Nonlinear dependent factors challenge the power of the test, increasing the probability that observed variance occurred by chance. Chapter 4 discusses the decision to accept the assumption of linearity for this current study.

Equal Variate-Covariate Matrices

Box's M test of equality of covariance analyzes whether the within-group differences are the same for each group (Lund & Lund, 2018). A non-significant Box's M ($\alpha > .005$) upholds this assumption. A significance of Box's M ($\alpha < .005$) indicates a severe distortion in significance alpha requiring the use of Levene's test to determine the source of the problem.

MANOVA is robust to violations of equal variate-covariate matrices when cell sizes are greater than 20 (Lund & Lund, 2018). Chapter 4 discusses the use of Box's M and Levine's test to explore for violations of this assumption given the unequal sizes in this current study.

No Multicollinearity

This current study used correlations to analyze the data for multicollinearity among dependent variables. Lund & Lund (2018) suggested that moderate correlations among dependent variables are ideal. The authors stated that low correlations might indicate the use of separate one-way ANOVAs, and highly correlated ($r > .9$) dependent variables could represent a multicollinearity problem suggesting possible screening. Cohen (1977) provided suggestions guidelines for interpreting small (0.1), moderate (0.3), and large (0.5) correlations. Using these guidelines, correlations between *Leaving* and *Efficacy* ($r = .36$) and between *Awareness* and *Efficacy* ($r = .33$) are moderate. The correlations between *Knowledge* and *Leaving* ($r = .29$) and between *Knowledge* and *Empathy* ($r = .26$) are small to moderate. The correlation between *Empathy* and *Efficacy* ($r = .29$) is small to moderate. Correlations between *Paternalism* and the other subscales are small ($r \leq .05$). This current study and data analysis retained the *Paternalism* and *Empathy* subscales as components of the overall STAS despite failing to meet the moderate correlation standard.

Limitations

Interpretations and results of this current study must consider several limitations. These limitations include design, instrumentation, and other threats to internal validity, including social influence, history, maturation, mortality, and testing order.

Design

A standard limitation of online surveys is low response rates (Heppner et al., 2008). In cases where the CACREP directory did not reflect changes in program liaisons, the students in those programs may not receive an invitation to this current study. Other possible exclusions may result from students who decline participation, do not check or read their emails, or defer participation and forget to return to the invitation link. This current study included the liaisons from all 905 programs, indirectly increasing the number of potential invitees and mitigating low response rates expected for online surveys (Heppner et al., 2008). This strategy enhanced the external validity of this current study.

The use of email invitations also introduces self-selection bias as a limitation of this current study as it challenges the generalization of study findings (Wright, 2005). While invitation recipients may choose to participate, they may also choose to exclude themselves from this current study. Sex trafficking, as the subject matter of this current study, may directly influence students' participation. Some students may have personal or professional experience with sex trafficking that leads to participation because of invested interest in the subject. In contrast, others may avoid participation due to unobserved attitudinal responses to sex trafficking. The inability to compare characteristics and observations of participants to those of nonparticipants further confounds self-selection bias. The small sample size for this current study required the inclusion of all participants rather than the proposed stratified random sampling. This inclusion challenged the generalization of study findings to the students currently enrolled in CACREP accredited programs. Chapter 4 discusses the reliance on the highly representative sample of the population of interest to mitigate the absence of random selection.

Instrumentation

The use of six self-report subscales in both versions of the Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (i.e., STAS-F and STAS-M) presents concerns of social desirability bias. Participants' perceptions of social desirability may influence their responses to the survey. According to Heppner et al. (2008), participants may respond in a way that they believe is more socially appealing (Heppner et al., 2008). Random assignment populated the groups so that participants with this bias had an equal chance of being in each group.

The normative data for the Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016) reflected an undergraduate student pool rather than students enrolled in master's and doctoral level programs. The psychometric properties may not accurately reflect those for this current study, which could influence the external validity of this current study. A review of the psychometric tests for this current study examined any differences.

The adaptations to the STAS (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016) may influence the psychometric properties. The purpose of these adaptations (e.g., replacing "she" with "he") was to provide a way to measure sex trafficking attitudes toward males as the original STAS measured attitudes toward the sex trafficking of women and girls. The authors suggested that attitudes toward the sex trafficking of females may differ from those toward sex trafficking of other populations, including males and transgender individuals. They provided direction for future research to explore these potential differences. Verification of internal consistency of the altered form of the STAS (STAS-M) relied on calculated Cronbach's alphas.

Social Influence

Interaction among members of the population of interest may influence their study-related behaviors. Student discussions about sex trafficking may introduce some bias that

influences their STAS subscale scores. Influential bias confounds the attribution of observed differences to the independent variables (Counselor_Gender and Survivor_Gender). These same discussions may also encourage or dissuade a student's participation which may challenge the representation of the population and generalizability. The online environment used for all aspects of this current study mitigated the risk of social interaction among the study participants. However, CACREP accredited programs may produce multiple participants, providing an opportunity for interaction that threatens this current study's internal validity. The use of random assignment mitigates social influence by distributing personality characteristics (e.g., competitiveness) that might increase the risk of social influence on participants' behaviors in the study with the same chance of being assigned to take the STAS-F as the STAS-M.

History

Events that occurred outside this current study may have influenced participants' behaviors within the study representing a threat to its internal validity (Lund & Lund, 2013). The 20 minutes expected for an individual's participation provided little room for such history-related risks. While the 30-day period of data collection also mitigated this risk, some events that occurred during this time may have influenced counselors' attitudes toward sex trafficking and survivors of sex trafficking. For instance, national news outlets could have broken the story of an extensive sex trafficking sting during the third week of this current study. Researchers cannot prevent such events from happening. However, introducing a new variable (pre-event and post-event) could provide a way to analyze the event's influence on the observed variances in the STAS-F and STAS-M subscales.

Maturation

This current study placed a limited time demand for participation. It used a brief data collection window to mitigate against the personal changes like those related to aging and prolonged illness that influence participant behavior (i.e., STAS-F and STAS-M subscale scores) in longer-term studies (Lund & Lund, 2018). Random assignment distributed any individual characteristics related to short-term changes (e.g., hunger, tiredness, boredom) with the same chance of being assigned to each group (Lund & Lund, 2018).

Mortality

Longer-term studies and demanding interventions present more potential for participant dropout or *mortality* (Lund & Lund, 2018). The short time demand of this current study mitigated participant dropout.

Testing Order

The risk of participants learning from any retesting effect was minimal in this current study. Each participant received one of the two STAS forms (i.e., STAS-F or STAS-M) and only completed the test once. This current study followed the protocols Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) used in the initial validation of the STAS. The authors presented the *Knowledge About Sex Trafficking* and *Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking* subscales prior to introducing the definition of *sex trafficking* to participants. Administration of the remaining subscales used the same order for all participants. The participants responded to the items on each scale in randomized order within each subscale to mitigate the testing order effect (Strack, 1992) and reinforce internal validity.

Ethical Considerations

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed and determined that this current study addressed the ethical implications of this current study and required no additional action to protect participants' rights. A copy of the IRB approval letter will be in Appendix F. This current study took several steps to protect the participants' privacy and satisfy ethical considerations. The informed consent process assured participants were aware of their freedom to choose their participation and withdraw from the study. This current study used Qualtrics online survey software for all study components, including the informed consent process, survey completion, and data management. The secure website environment and the coding of response data protected identifying information. Moreover, group-level data analysis and reporting further reinforced participant confidentiality by removing any identifying information from the data.

A statement at the end of the survey acknowledged that the topic of sex trafficking might cause recollections of traumatic or distressing events, which may be uncomfortable or even harmful. Participants received suggested resources to help attend to any needs they were experiencing or may experience in the future. These resources included contact information for the National Mental Health Hotline (866-903-3787) and the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800-273-TALK or 800-273-8255; live online chat: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/>) in case they began to feel suicidal or emotionally distressed. This current study encouraged participants to consider ways to utilize local supports available to them, suggesting some examples, including campus counseling or mental health centers, individual counselors or therapists, their faith communities, or a trusted faculty member in their department.

Participants were also provided the contact information for resources specific to human trafficking. They can report information they believe they have about a trafficking situation to

the National Human Trafficking Hotline (Toll-free: 1-888-373-7888; TTY: 711; Text: 233733; Online Chat: <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/chat>). They can find social and legal services for victims and survivors and connect with training and volunteer opportunities by contacting the National Human Trafficking Referral Directory (www.humantraffickinghotline.org/training-resources/referral-directory; email: help@humantraffickinghotline.org). The list of resources included a reminder to call 9-1-1 should someone a participant knows be in immediate danger.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the methods for researching the influence of a survivor's gender and a counselor's gender on counselors' attitudes toward sex trafficking and survivors of sex trafficking as measured using the Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016). This chapter presented the research questions, research design, and procedures. Chapter three also included instrumentation, adaptations, statistical analysis, and ethical considerations related to this study.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Introduction

This current study aimed to measure the influence of gender on attitudes toward sex trafficking and survivors of sex trafficking. Specifically, this current study assessed the effects of gendered language (i.e., masculine and feminine) used in the Sex Trafficking Attitude Scale (STAS) on counselors' measured attitude responses. Additionally, this current study explored whether a counselor's gender further influenced their perceptions of sex trafficking and survivors of sex trafficking. Participants received a list of resources and contact information should they experience discomfort, distress, or painful experiences. This information provided ways to get help personally, report information about suspected trafficking situations, and connect with training and volunteer opportunities. The list included sources for mental, social, legal, and counseling services for victims and survivors of trafficking. This chapter discusses the data analysis, design threats, and a summary of results.

Sampling Procedures

The online survey collected data for 31 days, opening on January 25, 2022, and closing on February 25, 2022. Inclusion criteria required participants to be graduate students enrolled in CACREP accredited programs. This current study recruited potential participants through emails sent to the contacts identified for each CACREP accredited program in the United States. The CACREP website listed 905 accredited programs with 431 unique faculty contacts.

The initial email was sent to the 431 identified program faculty contacts using Qualtrics online survey software. This email included a request to forward the survey invitation to each student enrolled in their program. Eight of the initial 431 contacts included in the email distribution bounced back, indicating some problem with the email information. A review of the

CACREP program directory (four) and program websites (three) resulted in updated information for seven of the eight bounced contacts. Subsequent Qualtrics correspondence excluded these initial seven contacts. Future distributions retained the remaining bounced contact as the initial information was consistent with the available CACREP program directory and the represented program's departmental website. Adjustments to the distribution list occurred prior to subsequent emails.

Subsequent Qualtrics mailings for this current study excluded three of the initial contacts. One contact stated that their institution requires a complete IRB application and review process for external studies, which would take longer than the 31-day data collection window planned for this current study. This researcher manually opted this contact out of future distributions. Another contact informed this researcher that their institution required the original institutional IRB application and approval letter for review. This researcher sent an email with indicated documentation attached, received approval, and emailed this contact directly to notify them of the IRB approval. This contact reported that they forwarded the survey invitation to the students. While this contact opted out of future Qualtrics distributions for this study, this researcher sent subsequent email invitations directly to this contact based on their email correspondence. One other contact voluntarily opted out of future distributions. The second distribution of survey invitations included 428 program contacts.

The second email distribution occurred after three days of data collection to a revised list of 428 program contacts. One invitation was sent in reply to direct email correspondence with one contact. Removing the seven bounced contacts, adding the seven updated contacts that replaced them, and removing the three contacts excluded from future mailings resulted in a list of 428 contacts used for this distribution. The single-use survey link included in the initial emails

sent to each faculty limited student participation. Program contacts forwarded the invitation emails to multiple students, but only the first student using the link sent to each program contact could complete the survey. This researcher and committee chair collaborated to send the second email upon resolving this problem. The second email sent four days earlier than scheduled provided a multiple-use link to the survey.

The second distribution sent emails with the corrected survey link to 429 contacts. One email address bounced back following the second email distribution. As expected, the email address that bounced was the retained contact that bounced in the first distribution. One program contact explained the current suspension of the required abbreviated review process protocols for external studies due to the high volume of internal IRB requests. Another program contact stated that their institution prohibits using university email to recruit students to participate in research studies. This researcher manually removed these two contacts from the distribution list. One other contact voluntarily opted out of future distributions. After removing these three contacts, the third distribution included emailed survey invitations sent to 426 program contacts.

The third Qualtrics distribution included survey invitations to the revised list of 425 program contacts and a direct email for one contact. Sending these emails after 15 days of data collection followed the proposed schedule. One email bounced. The retained email that bounced back during the earlier distributions bounced again in the third distribution. No other email addresses bounced.

All participants received the 14-item Demographic Questionnaire and one of the two forms of the Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (STAS-F, STAS-M) used for this current study. This current study conducted recruitment, informed consent, survey administration, and data collection entirely using Qualtrics online survey software. The survey data was downloaded,

stored, and analyzed in IBM SPSS Statistics v.28. Initiation of 87 total records occurred through the survey in Qualtrics.

Data Cleaning

The 87 records collected represented the potential participants who consented to participate in this current study. One potential participant responded to the eligibility question of gender identity with, “I do not identify as female, male, or transgender.” Two potential participants did not respond to any of the questions, including assigned sex and gender identity eligibility questions. Exclusion of these three records for ineligibility resulted in the retention of 84 records.

Of the original 87 records, 84 (96.6%) represented responses to one form of the STAS by eligible participants. An error in the survey flow resulted in 24 participants who responded to both forms of the STAS. The SPSS data output provided the order in which these participants completed the STAS-F and STAS-M. Data cleaning retained the first responses and removed the subsequent responses. This cleaning removed unnecessary data to refine the 84 remaining records; it did not exclude any of those records.

The remaining 84 records included 77 records in which participants answered all 26 STAS items as presented, while seven contained missing values. Four participants completed the STAS-M Knowledge, Leaving, and Awareness subscales but did not respond to questions for Paternalism, Empathy, or Efficacy. The population of these missing values used the mean value of all participants’ responses to the STAS-M subscales. One participant responded to the STAS-F but did not provide answers for one Awareness question and one Empathy question. Another participant responded to the STAS-M but did not provide answers to two Efficacy questions. The missing values for these two records were populated using the mean value of each participant’s

observed scores within the identified subscales. One participant completed the STAS-F Knowledge subscale but did not respond to any of the questions for the other five scales. Removing this record from the analysis resulted in a final total of 83 records.

This current study initiated the sampling procedure to draw a stratified random sample of participants, as proposed in Chapter 3. The 83 participants with completed records were stratified into groups by gender. The variable of counselor gender (Counselor_Gender) was computed in SPSS v.28 using participants' reported gender identity (GenderID) on the condition that GenderID is the same as the sex assigned at birth (Sex_Assigned), where "1" represents "Female" and "2" represents "Male." Participants included 72 females and 11 males. Stratification populated Female_C with 72 participants based on their reported female sex assignment at birth and current identification as female and Male_C with 11 participants based on their reported male sex assignment at birth and current identification as male. As discussed in Chapter 3, the proposed stratified random sampling included the random selection of 79 participants from each stratum for a total sample size of ($n = 148$). The low response rate for this current study resulted in a sample size ($n = 83$) and inadequate female ($n = 72$) and male ($n = 11$) strata for the proposed random selection. Chapter 5 discusses the limitations of this convenience sampling. Group distribution used random assignment of all participants to complete either STAS-F or STAS-M, as shown in Table 12 below. This current study used IBM SPSS Statistics v.28 to complete statistical analyses of participants' demographics and responses.

Table 12*2 x 2 Experimental Study Design and Distribution*

Survivor Counselor	Female Survivor	Male Survivor	Totals
Female	A Female Survivor + Female Counselor (STAS-F) ($n_A=41$)	B Male Survivor + Female Counselor (STAS-M) ($n_B=31$)	(72)
Male	C Female Survivor + Male Counselor (STAS-F) ($n_C=3$)	D Male Survivor + Male Counselor (STAS-M) ($n_D=8$)	(11)
Totals	(44)	(39)	($n=83$)

Reliability

As discussed in Chapter 4, this current study relied on Pearson correlations to assess convergent and divergent validity and the Cronbach's α values for internal validity. The correlations ($.02 < |r| < .429$) indicate that the original STAS subscales represent distinct dimensions of the overarching construct of sex trafficking attributes. Table 13 below provides the Cronbach's α values for STAS-F ($.69 < \alpha < .84$), STAS-M ($.69 < \alpha < .83$), and the original STAS ($.75 < \alpha < .82$) support the internal validity of these instruments. These validity and reliability findings support the continued use of the STAS-M to assess sex trafficking attitudes toward male survivors. Below are the results of the MANOVA related to the three questions.

Table 13*Scoring Properties of Three Forms of the Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scales*

Subscale	Cronbach's α			Items (<i>n</i>)
	STAS-F	STAS-M	STAS	
Knowledge	.82	.77	.79	4
Leaving	.76	.80	.82	5
Awareness	.74	.71	.75	5
Paternalism	.84	.75	.80	3
Empathy	.69	.69	.81	5
Efficacy	.81	.83	.77	4

Descriptive Data Results

The sample consisted of 83 students enrolled in CACREP accredited programs in the United States. The participants ranged in age from 21 to 57 years old, with an average of 34.1 years. There were 66 master's students, nine doctoral students, and eight who did not report their level of study. The participants identified the specialties of their programs: Clinical Mental Health Counseling (50); School Counseling (10); Rehabilitation Counseling (8); Counselor Education and Supervision (6); Addiction Counseling (3); Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling (3); Career Counseling (2); and College Counseling and Student Affairs (2). Nine records included multiple specialties. Three listed both *Clinical Mental Health Counseling* and *Counselor Education and Supervision*. Two included *Clinical Mental Health Counseling* and *Addiction Counseling*. One included *Clinical Mental Health Counseling*, *Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling*, and *Career Counseling*. One included *Rehabilitation Counseling*, *Counselor Education and Supervision*, *Addiction Counseling*, and *College Counseling and Student Affairs*. Eight records were missing both the level of study and program specialty. In the absence of direct responses to the level of study and program specialty, this current study based the decision to retain these records on the recruitment procedures. CACREP accredits nine types of programs at either the master's or doctoral levels. Email distribution targeted the identified CACREP

contacts requesting that they forward the request to all students enrolled in their CACREP program(s). The demographic questionnaire also explored participants' sex, gender, and sexuality.

Sex, Gender, and Sexuality

Participants included those whose gender identity was the same as their sex assigned at birth. The participants included 72 females (86.7%) and 11 males (13.3%). Regarding the question about sexuality, 64 (77.1%) responded *heterosexual or straight*, three (3.6%) responded *gay or lesbian*, and 16 (19.3%) responded *bisexual*. The participants demonstrated some ethnic and racial diversity, but most were white (68.7%) and not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.

Ethnicity and Race

All 83 participants responded to the questions of ethnicity and race. Eight participants were of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin, and 75 participants were not. The questionnaire instructed participants to select all that apply from six possible race descriptions. Three participants (3.6%) selected multiple descriptions, and 80 (96.4%) selected a single race from the list provided. One participant selected white and some other race, specifying “Norge.” Another participant selected American Indian/Alaskan Native and white. The third selected black/African American and some other race without elaboration. Of the 80 that selected a single race, 57 were white (68.7%), 17 were black or African American (20.5%), two were Asian (2.4%), one was American Indian/Alaskan Native (1.2%), and three selected some other race (3.6%). One participant who selected *Some other race* specified “Chicana,” the other two did not elaborate. No participants selected Native Hawaiian. In addition to information about ethnicity and race, the questionnaire explored the education and training experience.

Education and Training

Participants answered questions about their program progress and education and training experience regarding topics related to sex trafficking. Participants reported their required program hours and completed program hours, as shown in Table 14 below.

Table 14

Education and Training Experience in Hours

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Program Hours Required	71	69.38	64.89
Completed Program Hours	71	35.79	50.08
Ethics Hours (Program)	71	3.16	3.20
Ethics Hours (Extra)	69	4.75	8.30
SA/ST Hours (Program)	72	.33	.98
SA/ST Hours (Extra)	73	2.71	7.65
Cultural Diversity Hours (Program)	74	4.03	5.67
Cultural Diversity Hours (Extra)	70	3.77	6.18
Valid N (listwise)	64		

Based on the means for completed hours (34.79) and required hours (69.38), participants averaged 50.1% completion of their programs. This current study was interested in the participants' completion percentage of required hours more than the actual hours completed or required by the programs. This current study retained one record containing extreme outliers for both required hours (600) and completed hours (415) because the percentage of completion (69.1%) was consistent with several other records. Participants reported they had completed an average of 3.16 credit hours of ethics for their programs and 4.75 extra training hours. They

reported .33 credit hours of sex abuse/sex trafficking and 2.71 training hours outside their programs.

Regarding cultural diversity in counseling, education experience averaged 4.03 program credit hours and 3.77 training hours outside of their programs. Of the 83 participants, 64 responded to all the questions about education/training, ten responded to some of these questions (see Table 14 above), and nine provided no education/training information. The final two demographic questions gathered data regarding participants' exposure to sex trafficking and sex abuse.

Exposure to Sex Trafficking and Sex Abuse

The questionnaire provided questions about personal and professional exposure to individuals who had been sexually trafficked or abused. Table 15 below provides participants' reported number of people known in their personal lives who have been sex trafficked or sexually abused. Of the 83 participants, 37 knew people in their personal lives who had been sex trafficked or sexually abused, 38 did not know any survivors in their personal lives, and eight records were missing responses to these questions. Overall, 11 participants had been trafficked or abused, 16 had significant others or family members who had been trafficked or abused, 25 had close friends who had been trafficked or abused, and 38 did not know any survivors in their personal lives. Nine participants reported knowing people in more than one of these relationships.

Table 15*Counselors' Personal Exposure to Sex Trafficking and Sex Abuse*

Exposure Domain	N	%
Self	11 ^a	13.3%
Significant Other(s) & Family Member(s)	16 ^a	19.3%
Close Friend	25 ^a	30.1%
None	38	45.8%
Missing	8	9.6%

^aParticipants could choose more than one domain of personal exposure.

Table 16 below provides the number of cases of sex trafficking or sexual abuse participants have seen in a professional capacity. Of the 83 participants, 35 have seen survivors of sex trafficking or sexual abuse, 40 have not, and eight records were missing responses to these questions. Overall, nine have seen survivors of sex trafficking, 33 have seen survivors of sex abuse, and 40 have not seen any survivors of trafficking or abuse. Seven participants reported they had seen survivors of both trafficking and abuse.

Table 16*Counselors' Professional Exposure to Cases of Sex Trafficking and Sex Abuse*

Exposure Type ^a	N	%
Sex Trafficking	9	10.8%
Sex Abuse	33	39.8%
None	40	48.2%
Missing	8	9.6%

^aParticipants could choose professional exposure to one or both of these exposure types.

Assumptions Testing for Two-Way MANOVA

This current study used a two-way factorial MANOVA to determine whether a counselor's gender or the survivor's gender influenced counselors' sex trafficking attitudes and any dependence the influence of a survivor's gender had on the counselor's gender. This section will review the assumptions of Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA), the statistical procedures used to test the assumptions for violations, and the decisions made to address any identified violations. The use of two categorical independent variables (Survivor_Gender and Counselor_Gender) and six continuous dependent variables (STAS subscales) satisfy the MANOVA design assumption. The assumption of independent observations holds with the 83 records representing the observed responses from 83 unique participants.

Linearity

The assumption of linearity requires that dependent variables are linearly related. Analyses for linearity included a scatterplot matrix and the Q-Q plots. Visual analysis of the scatterplot matrix for this current study was inconclusive. Examination of the sex trafficking attitude Q-Q plots demonstrated linearity for Leaving, Awareness, and Paternalism. Empathy, Knowledge, and Efficacy demonstrated some deviation from linearity. Knowledge scores presented the largest deviation. While the Empathy, Efficacy, and Knowledge scores demonstrated some deviation from linearity, the assumption of linearity appears to hold. This current study continued with the analysis accepting the reduced power resultant of any linearity violation (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). Next, the discussion of assumptions addresses that of no multicollinearity.

No Multicollinearity

This current study used Pearson correlations to analyze the data for multicollinearity. According to Lund and Lund (2018), significant ($p < .05$) correlations that are strong ($|r| > .9$) violate this assumption. The six significant correlations for this current study ranged between ($.02 < |r| < .429$). These subscale pairings were moderately correlated ($.2 < |r| < .7$) and do not demonstrate multicollinearity. The correlations of the remaining nine pairings were statistically non-significant. The assumption that no multicollinearity held. Another assumption of MANOVA is that the data contains no outliers.

No Outliers

MANOVA assumes the data contains no univariate or multivariate outliers. This current study used a visual inspection of subscale boxplots to identify univariate outliers. According to Lund and Lund (n.d.), an outlier is any data point that lies more than one and a half times the box length from the edge of the box. The authors further stipulated that any value more than three box lengths from the edge of the box indicates an extreme outlier. The boxplots displayed seven univariate outliers: Knowledge (two), Leaving (four), and Efficacy (one). None of these outliers presented as extreme. Lund and Lund (n.d.) recommend determining the type of a univariate outlier: data entry error, measurement error, or genuinely unusual values. Using Qualtrics online survey software for data collection, storage, and conversion to an SPSS data file mitigates the risk of entry outliers. A participant might have incorrectly entered a response, but this would become the observed measure. The values did not indicate measurement error outliers; they were within possible score ranges and did not present as extreme. The inability to classify these outliers as data entry or measurement errors suggests they represent genuinely unusual values. The sample size for this current study ($n = 83$) was already smaller than desired ($n = 148$), and

the removal of seven outliers would have reduced the sample further ($n = 76$). The unequal cell sizes in this current study compromised the robustness of MANOVA to violations of the no-outlier assumption requiring a decision about the removal or retention of these outliers (Lund & Lund, n.d.). This study mitigated entry and measurement error risks, supporting the expectation that these outliers represent genuine participant responses. Lund and Lund (n.d.) provided the common practice of retaining these outliers to analyze for multivariate outliers. This current study examined the data for any multivariate outliers.

Identification of multivariate outliers relied on using Mahalanobis' Distance. Any data point exceeding the critical χ^2 value (22.46, $p < .001$) for six dependent variables would indicate a multivariate outlier (Lund & Lund, n.d.). The greatest Mahalanobis' Distance ($MD = 17.24$) did not exceed the critical χ^2 value. The data included the identified univariate outliers, but there were no multivariate outliers. The univariate outliers were retained as genuinely unusual values and not removed to prevent further reducing the sample size. The assumption of no outliers held. Another assumption of MANOVA is that the data demonstrate multivariate normality.

Multivariate Normality

The unequal sizes compromised the robustness of MANOVA to violations of this assumption of multivariate normality. Table 17 below provides the results of the Shapiro-Wilk tests for normality. Assessment using Shapiro-Wilk's test ($p > .05$), subscale scores were normally distributed for Awareness ($p = .058$), Paternalism ($p = .301$), and Efficacy ($p = .077$). However, counselors' sex trafficking attitudes were not normally distributed for Knowledge ($p < .001$), Leaving ($p < .001$), and Empathy ($p < .001$). The data violated the assumption of multivariate normality. This current study followed the common practice of continuing with the

analysis, given the robustness of MANOVA to violations of normal distribution (Brey & Maxwell, 1985; Weinfurt, 1995).

Table 17

Shapiro-Wilk Tests of Normality for Sex Trafficking Attitudes

Subscale	Statistic	df	Sig.
Knowledge	.76	41	< .001*
Leaving	.90	41	< .001*
Awareness	.97	41	.058
Paternalism	.98	41	.301
Empathy	.87	41	< .001*
Efficacy	.97	41	.077

Note: Wilks' Lambda statistics were non-significant ($p < .05$) for the Awareness, Paternalism, and Efficacy subscales. However, they were significant for the Knowledge, Leaving, and Empathy subscales.

* $p < .05$

Sample Size Adequacy

A MANOVA requires that each cell contains at least as many records as there are dependent variables. This current study used the six STAS subscales as the dependent variables. Cells A (41), B (31), and D (8) contain adequate cases, but Cell C only contains three cases which is less than the required six. Understanding the inadequate cell size for Group C, the analysis continued to run the whole model. Chapter 5 discusses the limitations of the results. The assumption addressed was of equal variate-covariate matrices.

Equal Variate-Covariate Matrices

This current study used Box's M and Levene's tests to assess the assumption of equal variate-covariate matrices. A significant Box's M ($p < .001$) indicates a violation of this assumption. The Box's M ($p = .281$) for this current study, as shown below in Table 18, was statistically non-significant. This non-significance indicates that within-group differences are the same for each group for this current study. This current study conducted Levene's tests based on means to analyze the variance of dependent variables was equal across groups. Levene's tests in Table 19 below were non-significant for all six subscales: Knowledge (1.17, $p = .33$), Leaving (1.24, $p = .30$), Awareness (.93, $p = .43$), Paternalism (1.50, $p = .22$), Empathy(1.84, $p = .15$), and Efficacy (.49, $p = .69$). The non-significant Levene statistics for each subscale indicated similar within-group variances between groups. This non-significance upholds the assumption of equal variate-covariate matrices. This current study continued with data analysis, having explored and addressed the assumptions of MANOVA.

Table 18

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices

Box's M	61.10
F	1.12
df1	42
df2	1313.85
Sig.	.281*

Note: Box's M statistic was non-significant ($p > .05$).

* $p < .05$

Table 19*Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances*

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Knowledge	1.17	3	79	.328
Leaving	1.24	3	79	.300
Awareness	.93	3	79	.432
Paternalism	1.49	3	79	.223
Empathy	1.83	3	79	.148
Efficacy	.49	3	79	.691

Note: Levene statistics were non-significant ($p < .05$) for all STAS subscales.

* $p < .05$

Data Analysis

This section reviews the outcomes of the Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) used to answer the three research questions. These research questions assessed the influence of gender on the sex trafficking attitudes of counselors. Qualtrics survey software stratified participants by gender to explore the influence of a counselor's gender. This current study randomly assigned participants to a STAS that assessed the sex trafficking attitudes toward women and girls (STAS-F) or men and boys (STAS-M) to explore the influence of a survivor's gender. The two-way MANOVA conducted included six dependent variables (i.e., STAS subscale scores) and two independent variables (Survivor's Gender and Counselor's Gender). The STAS subscales assessed different domains of counselors' sex trafficking attitudes (Knowledge, Leaving, Awareness, Paternalism, Empathy, and Efficacy).

Prior to data analysis, specific questions for the STAS required recoding. Participants responded to all STAS questions using a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). Higher STAS scores represent more favorable sex trafficking attitudes. However, some items (e.g., “I do not care much about the issue of sex trafficking”) represent a less favorable attitude requiring that ten items be reverse coded as “strongly agree.” Reverse coding occurred for the following STAS: 5, 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 17, 21, and 22.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: *What influence does a survivor’s gender have on counselors’ attitudes toward sex trafficking as measured using the Sex Trafficking Attitude Scale (STAS)?*

Participants responded to the STAS-F or STAS-M with the following possible choices: (1) *strongly disagree*, (2) *disagree*, (3) *somewhat disagree*, (4) *somewhat agree*, (5) *agree*, (6) and *strongly agree*. Table 20 below provides the mean subscale scores where higher scores reflect more favorable sex trafficking attitudes and lower scores reflect less favorable sex trafficking attitudes, with the margin being a 3.5. The marginal means scores for STAS subscales for female survivors were higher for Awareness, Paternalism, and Efficacy, with those for male survivors being higher for Knowledge, Leaving, and Empathy. All mean subscale scores trended in the same order for female and male counselors from lowest to highest: Paternalism, Efficacy, Awareness, Leaving, Empathy, and Knowledge.

Table 20*Survivor's Gender (Survivor_Gender) – Mean Subscale Scores*

STAS Subscales	Female Survivor (<i>n</i> = 44)	Male Survivor (<i>n</i> = 39)
Knowledge	5.47 (.10)	5.49 (.11)
Leaving	4.95 (.14)	5.19 (.12)
Awareness	4.62 (.14)	4.49 (.15)
Paternalism	3.58 (.19)	3.51 (.17)
Empathy	5.39 (.09)	5.44 (.09)
Efficacy	4.49 (.13)	4.28 (.14)

This current study used a 2 x 2 factorial MANOVA to determine whether a survivor's gender (female and male) influenced counselors' STAS scores. Three mean subscale scores were higher for female survivors than for male survivors. As shown below in Table 21, a factorial MANOVA revealed that the main effect of a survivor's gender (Survivor_Gender) on sex trafficking attitudes was statistically non-significant, $F(6, 74) = 1.07$; $p = .389$; Wilk's $\Lambda = .92$, $\eta_p^2 = .08$. The influence of a survivor's gender on counselors' attitudes toward sex trafficking as measured using the STAS was non-significant. Thus, chance may have influenced the observed differences in mean subscales scores preventing attribution to the survivor's gender. Although the main effect of Survivor_Gender was not statistically significant, conducting the follow-up univariate tests helped explore possible trends that could inform future studies.

Table 21*MANOVA (Survivor_Gender)*

Independent Variable	Wilks' Lambda	F	df 1	df 2	<i>p</i>	Partial Eta Squared	Observed Power ^a
Survivor's Gender	.92	1.07	6	74	.389	.08	.40

Note: Wilks' Lambda statistic for Survivor_Gender was non-significant ($p < .05$).

* $p < .05$

Univariate F-tests analyzed the main effect of a survivor's gender on each subscale of counselors' STAS scores, as shown below in Table 22. The main effect of Survivor_Gender on sex trafficking attitudes was statistically non-significant. This current study proceeded to explore Research Question 2.

Table 22*Univariate Tests – Survivor_Gender*

Subscale		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Observed Power ^a
Knowledge	Contrast	.84	1	.84	.11	.736	.00	.06
	Error	582.01	79	7.37				
Leaving	Contrast	73.77	1	73.77	4.40*	.039	.05	.54
	Error	1325.06	79	16.77				
Awareness	Contrast	9.80	1	9.80	.47	.495	.01	.10
	Error	1647.14	79	20.85				
Paternalism	Contrast	.09	1	.09	.01	.933	.00	.05
	Error	996.64	79	12.62				
Empathy	Contrast	.40	1	.40	.05	.828	.00	.06
	Error	661.71	79	8.38				
Efficacy	Contrast	.71	1	.71	.06	.806	.00	.06
	Error	929.52	79	11.77				

Note: Univariate statistic was significant ($p < .05$) for Leaving; Knowledge, Awareness, Paternalism, Empathy, and Efficacy were non-significant.

* $p < .05$

Question 2: *What influence does a counselor's gender have on their attitudes toward sex trafficking as measured using the Sex Trafficking Attitude Scale (STAS)?*

Participants responded to the STAS-F or STAS-M with the following possible choices: (1) *strongly disagree*, (2) *disagree*, (3) *somewhat disagree*, (4) *somewhat agree*, (5) *agree*, (6) *and strongly agree*. Table 23 below provides the mean subscale scores where higher scores reflect more favorable sex trafficking attitudes and lower scores reflect less favorable sex trafficking attitudes with a margin of 3.5. The marginal means scores for STAS subscales trend

in the same order for female and male counselors from lowest to highest: Paternalism, Efficacy, Awareness, Leaving, Empathy, and Knowledge.

Table 23

Counselor's Gender (Counselor_Gender) – Mean Subscale Scores

STAS Subscales	Female Counselor (<i>n</i> = 72)	Male Counselor (<i>n</i> = 11)
Knowledge	5.46 (.08)	5.66 (.23)
Leaving	5.17 (.10)	4.29 (.28)
Awareness	4.59 (.11)	4.40 (.31)
Paternalism	3.59 (.14)	3.31 (.40)
Empathy	5.48 (.07)	5.05 (.20)
Efficacy	4.43 (.10)	3.94 (.29)

Possible score means ranged from 1 to 6 for the STAS subscales. The Female_Counselor group mean score for Leaving was 0.64, 95 % CI [0.10, 1.18] higher than the Male_Counselor group mean score. The Female_Counselor group mean score for Empathy was 0.44, 95 % CI [0.07, 0.81] higher than the Male_Counselor group mean score. For the main effect of Counselor_Gender, the mean for female counselors was significantly higher ($p < .05$) than the mean for male counselors. Table 24 provides the estimated differences in counselors' gender on mean attitude subscales scores. The mean for the Female_Counselor group is greater than the mean for the Male_Counselor group with statistical significance. The observed differences in Leaving and Empathy STAS subscales scores are not due to chance.

Table 24*Estimated Mean Differences for Counselor's Gender (Counselor_Gender)*

Dependent Variable	(I) Gender of Counselor	(J) Gender of Counselor	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Leaving	Female	Male	.64	0.27	0.020*	0.64	1.18
Empathy	Female	Male	.44	0.19	0.022*	0.07	0.81

Note: Mean differences were significant ($p < .05$) for Leaving and Empathy subscales. The Female_Counselor group scored higher than the Male_Counselor group for both Leaving (.36) and Empathy (.53) subscales.

* $p < .05$

This current study used a 2 x 2 factorial MANOVA to determine whether a counselor's gender (female and male) influenced their STAS scores. As shown below in Table 25, a factorial MANOVA revealed that the main effect of a counselor's gender (Counselor_Gender) on sex trafficking attitudes was statistically significant, $F(6, 74) = 2.38$; $p = .037$; Wilk's $\Lambda = .84$. This analysis supports attributing observed differences in STAS subscales scores to a counselor's gender.

Table 25*MANOVA (Counselor_Gender)*

Independent Variable	Wilks' Lambda	F	df 1	df 2	<i>p</i>	Partial Eta Squared	Observed Power ^a
Counselor's Gender	.84	2.38*	6	74	.037	.16	.78

Note: Wilks' Lambda statistic for Counselor_Gender was significant ($p < .05$). The mean for the Female_Counselor group was greater than the mean for the Male_Counselor group with statistical significance.

* $p < .05$

Table 26 below shows the univariate F-tests used to examine the main effect of a survivor's gender on each subscale of counselors' STAS scores as shown below in Table 26. There were statistically significant differences between female and male counselors' STAS subscales scores for Leaving, $F(1,79) = 8.97$, $p = .004$, $\eta_p^2 = .10$, and for Empathy, $F(1,79) = 4.39$, $p = .039$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$. The differences in the remaining subscales were non-significant: Knowledge, $F(1,79) = .67$, $p = .414$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$; Awareness, $F(1,79) = .34$, $p = .559$, $\eta_p^2 = .00$; Paternalism, $F(1,79) = .42$, $p = .521$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$; and Efficacy, $F(1,79) = 2.57$, $p = .113$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$.

Table 26*Univariate Tests – Counselor_Gender*

Subscale		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta	
							Squared	Observed Power ^a
Knowledge	Contrast	4.96	1	4.96	.67	.414	.01	.13
	Error	582.01	79	7.37				
Leaving	Contrast	150.51	1	150.51	8.97*	.004	.10	.84
	Error	1325.06	79	16.77				
Awareness	Contrast	7.19	1	7.19	.34	.559	<.01	.09
	Error	1647.14	79	20.85				
Paternalism	Contrast	5.25	1	5.25	.42	.521	.01	.10
	Error	996.64	79	12.62				
Empathy	Contrast	36.75	1	36.75	4.39*	.039	.05	.54
	Error	661.71	79	8.38				
Efficacy	Contrast	30.25	1	30.25	2.57	.113	.03	.35
	Error	929.52	79	11.77				

Note: Univariate statistics were significant ($p < .05$) for Leaving and Empathy subscales.

Univariate statistics were non-significant for the Knowledge, Awareness, Paternalism, and Efficacy subscales.

a. Computed using alpha = .05

* $p < .05$

Follow-up univariate tests conducted on the STAS subscales indicated a statistically significant difference between female and male counselors. Specifically, the mean scores of the Female_Counselor group were significantly higher than Male_Counselor mean scores on the Leaving and Empathy subscales. This current study proceeded to explore Research Question 3.

Question 3: *Does the influence of a survivor's gender on attitudes toward sex trafficking as measured using the Sex Trafficking Attitude Scale (STAS) depend on the counselor's gender?*

Table 27 below provides the STAS subscale means and standard deviations.

Table 27

Estimated Marginal Means - Counselor's Gender and Survivor's Gender

Sex Trafficking Attitudes STAS Subscales	Female Counselor		Male Counselor	
	Female Survivor	Male Survivor	Female Survivor	Male Survivor
Knowledge	5.45 (.65)	5.47 (.78)	5.75 (.43)	5.56 (.37)
Leaving	5.04 (.84)	5.30 (.71)	3.80 (.1.40)	4.78 (.73)
Awareness	4.62 (.93)	4.57 (.92)	4.60 (.40)	4.20 (.89)
Paternalism	3.60 (1.30)	3.57 (1.13)	3.33 (.58)	3.29 (.77)
Empathy	5.41 (.61)	5.55 (.51)	5.07 (.95)	5.03 (.57)
Efficacy	4.54 (.83)	4.32 (.81)	3.75 (1.09)	4.13 (1.09)

Note: Mean subscales scores reported with standard deviation in parentheses.

This current study used a two-way factorial MANOVA to determine whether a survivor's gender (female and male) on counselors' STAS scores depends on the counselors' gender (female and male). As shown below in Table 28, a factorial MANOVA revealed that the interaction effect between a counselor's gender and a survivor's gender on sex trafficking attitudes was statistically non-significant, $F(6, 74) = .89$; $p = .508$; Wilk's $\Lambda = .93$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$. Thus, observed differences may have occurred by chance.

Table 28

*MANOVA (Counselor_Gender * Survivor_Gender)*

Independent Variable	Wilks' Lambda	F	df 1	df 2	<i>p</i>	Partial Eta Squared	Observed Power ^a
Counselor_Gender * Survivor_Gender	.93	.89	6	74	.508	.07	.33

Note: Wilks' Lambda statistic for Survivor_Gender * Counselor_Gender was non-significant ($p < .05$).

Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the sampling procedures, data cleaning, and statistical analysis used in this current study. A data analysis review explored the answers to each of the three research questions. This current study conducted a 2 x 2 factorial MANOVA to assess the influence of a counselor's gender (female and male) and survivor's gender (female and male) on counselors' sex trafficking attitudes across six attitudinal subscales. Findings revealed a statistically significant influence of a counselor's gender on their sex trafficking attitudes. Specifically, female counselors scored higher (i.e., more favorable) on scaled attitudes toward the ability to leave and empathy responses to sex trafficking. Findings revealed that any influence of a counselor's gender on the remaining four subscales (Knowledge, Awareness, Paternalism, or Efficacy) was statistically non-significant. Chapter five includes a discussion of the implications, limitations, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter reviews the results and discusses the interpretations and limitations of this current study. This chapter reviews the implications for counselors' practice, supervision, and education. The discussion then focuses on recommendations for future research. The following interpretations of this current study review the findings as they addressed three research questions.

Interpretation of Results

This section includes a review of the results of this current study as they relate to the three research questions. Steven Breckler's (1984) tripartite attitude theory and past research provide the lens used to review these results. The sex trafficking attitudes measured using the STAS include three cognitive scales (Knowledge About Sex Trafficking, Awareness of Sex Trafficking, and Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking). The two behavioral scales of the STAS are Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors and Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking. Empathic Reactions to Sex Trafficking represents the affective sex trafficking scale. The research questions explored the influence of gender on counselors' attitudes toward sex trafficking and survivors of sex trafficking.

Question 1: *What influence does a survivor's gender have on counselors' attitudes toward sex trafficking as measured using the Sex Trafficking Attitude Scale (STAS)?*

As reported in Chapter 4, the influence of a survivor's gender on a counselor's sex trafficking attitudes was non-significant, $F(6, 74) = 1.07$; $p = .389$; Wilk's $\Lambda = .92$, $\eta_p^2 = .08$. The statistical analysis indicated that the survivor's gender does not influence counselors' cognitive, affective, or behavioral sex trafficking attitudes with statistical significance. The absence of

research specific to sex trafficking attitudes toward female and male survivors challenges comparing these findings to prior studies. As discussed in Chapter 2, prior research did frame the expectation that the gender of a survivor would influence sex trafficking attitudes.

Findings from Cole (2018) suggest that a survivor's gender influences professionals' attitudes toward survivors. Findings from this current study may differ from Cole's (2018) study due to the different populations and measurements used. This current study included students enrolled in CACREP accredited programs and their self-scaled responses to questions that specifically addressed sex trafficking attitudes. The earlier study included legal, welfare, behavioral health, medical, and school professionals who worked in agencies providing services to youth deemed at-risk or crime victims and reports regarding those youth (Cole, 2018).

While earlier research by Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) had specifically explored the attitudes toward the trafficking of women and girls, this current study extends the findings with similar attitudes found toward the trafficking of women and girls compared with those toward the trafficking of men and boys. The cognitive, affective, and behavioral sex trafficking attitudes provide the framework for the STAS and its subscales (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016). The authors found a relationship between discriminatory cognitive attitudes (e.g., modern sexism and rape myth acceptance) and unfavorable sex trafficking attitudes. They suggested that sex trafficking attitudes toward women and girls could differ from those toward men and boys. Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016) intentionally developed the STAS as an instrument to measure the sex trafficking attitudes toward women and girls. The STAS used exclusively female-gendered language, comprised items developed to assess attitudes toward female survivors, and drew the normative sample from undergraduate students. This current study recruited graduate students for participation after modifying the STAS by replacing the female-gendered language of the

STAS with the corresponding male-gendered language. The instrument modifications and the different demography may have accounted for observed differences in this current study, requiring additional validity and reliability information. As discussed in Chapter 4, this current study relied on Pearson correlations to assess convergent and divergent validity and the Cronbach's α values for internal validity. The correlations ($.02 < |r| < .43$) indicate that the STAS subscales represent distinct dimensions of the overarching construct of sex trafficking attributes. The Cronbach's α values for STAS-F ($.69 < \alpha < .84$) and STAS-M ($.69 < \alpha < .83$) support the internal validity of these instruments. These validity and reliability findings support the continued use of the STAS-M to assess sex trafficking attitudes toward male survivors.

Another possible interpretation of these findings is that the ACA (2014) code of ethics, CACREP (2016) standards, and professional experience as counselors may influence counselors' cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes to mitigate any influence from a survivor's gender. Additional research could explore these possible reasons for the similar sex trafficking attitudes toward female and male survivors.

In the absence of significant differences, the counselors' Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors scores averaged on the threshold of favorability (3.50). The mean scaled score for female survivors was 3.58, and the mean scaled score for male survivors was 3.51. These similar scores support prior research indicating that gender attitudes and rape myth beliefs influence sex trafficking attitudes (Weiss, 2010; Turchik & Edwards, 2012) while contradicting the suggestion of a possible influence from the survivors' gender. While a survivor's gender did not significantly influence counselors' sex trafficking attitudes, Question 2 explored what influence a counselor's gender may have on their sex trafficking attitudes.

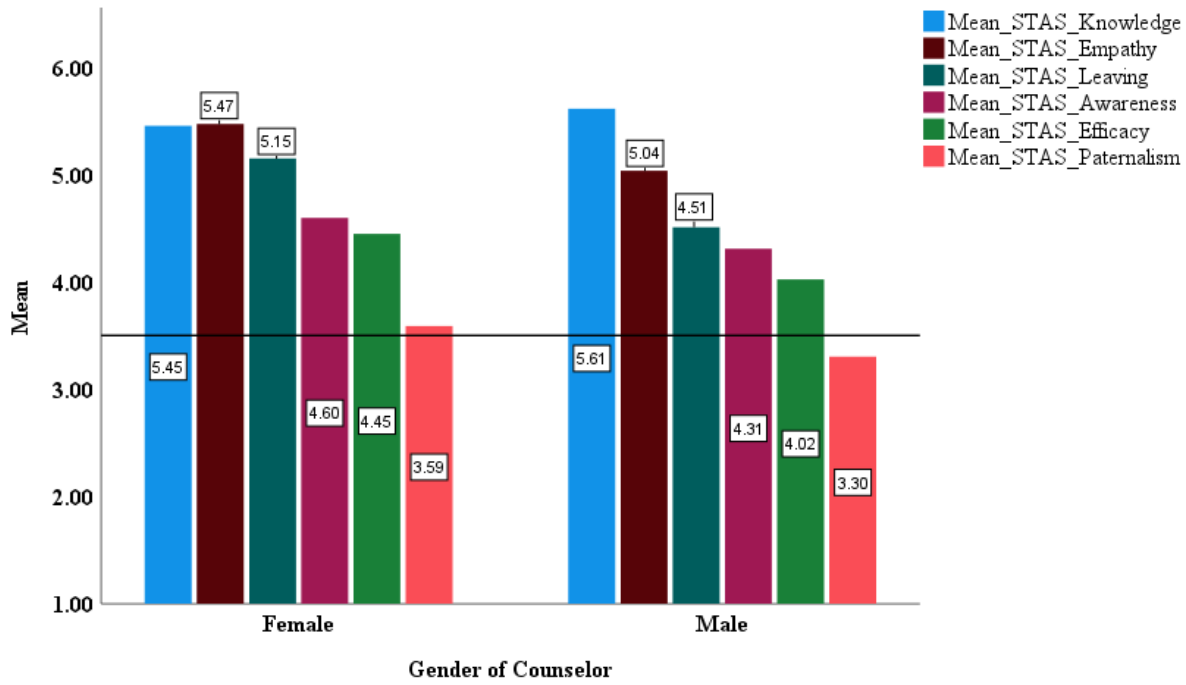
Question 2: *What influence does a counselor's gender have on their attitudes toward sex trafficking as measured using the Sex Trafficking Attitude Scale (STAS)?*

As noted in Chapter 4, the influence of a counselor's gender on their sex trafficking attitudes was significant. The current results reveal that the counselor's gender influences counselors' sex trafficking attitudes. Specifically, female counselors' scores were higher than male counselors' scores for Empathic Reactions to Sex Trafficking [$F(1,81) = 5.47, p = .022, \eta_p^2 = .06$] and Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking [$F(1,81) = 5.64, p = .020, \eta_p^2 = .07$]. Differences in counselors' Knowledge About Sex Trafficking, Awareness of Sex Trafficking, Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors, and Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking were non-significant. These findings related to Question 2 support several possible interpretations.

This current study found that female counselors had significantly higher (i.e., favorable) cognitive and affective sex trafficking attitudes than their male counterparts. The findings demonstrated that female participants' mean scores were significantly higher (i.e., favorable) than male participants' mean scores in their empathic reactions to sex trafficking and their attitudes toward a survivor's ability to leave sex trafficking (see Figure 3 below). The remaining differences in mean scores were non-significant. These findings support those from the earlier study conducted by Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016).

Figure 3

Clustered Bar Mean STAS Subscale Scores by Counselor's Gender



One possible interpretation is that female counselors present with more favorable sex trafficking beliefs when compared to their male counterparts (Litam & Litam, 2021). Another interpretation is that male counseling students are more likely than female students to accept trafficking myths and blame the victim, extending the prior research of undergraduate students (Cunningham & Cromer, 2016). Another way to interpret the findings of this study is that male counselors' behavioral sex trafficking attitudes are not significantly different from female counselors, even with the differences in cognitive and affective attitudes. This interpretation aligns with Breckler's (1984) assertion that cognitive or affective processes do not always frame behavioral responses. As discussed above in Question 1, despite significant differences in counselors' Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors scores, they averaged on the threshold of favorability (3.50). The mean scaled score for female counselors was 3.59, and the mean scaled

score for male counselors was 3.31. These findings support prior research indicating that gender attitudes and rape myth beliefs influence sex trafficking attitudes (Weiss, 2010; Turchik and Edwards, 2012) without finding an influence of a counselor's gender on their Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors. Having found that a counselor's gender influences two of their sex trafficking attitudes, Question 3 explored whether the influence a survivor's gender has on a counselor's sex trafficking attitudes is dependent on the counselor's gender.

Question 3: *Does the influence of a survivor's gender on attitudes toward sex trafficking as measured using the Sex Trafficking Attitude Scale (STAS) depend on the counselor's gender?*

As noted in Chapter 4, the interaction of the influence of a survivor's gender on counselors' sex trafficking attitudes and a counselor's gender was non-significant, $F(6, 74) = .89$; $p = .508$; Wilk's $\Lambda = .93$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$. The current results reveal that any influence a survivor's gender has on counselors' sex trafficking attitudes was not significantly dependent on the counselor's gender.

The findings of this current study suggest several possible interpretations related to Question 3. One interpretation is that the STAS-F and STAS-M used for this current study did not adequately differentiate between survivors' genders to assess dependence on a counselor's gender. As discussed in the interpretations of Question 1, the gendered language was modified to provide a way to compare attitudes toward female and male survivors but revisiting the STAS development to include attitudes toward the sex trafficking of men and boys may influence the items included retained. The resultant instrument could provide a more effective measurement to assess differences between sex trafficking attitudes toward female and male survivors and the influence of a counselor's gender on these differences.

Another possible interpretation is that female and male counselors' sex trafficking attitudes are similar and favorable towards female and male survivors. All the observed STAS (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016) scores were in the upper half of the possible scores except two (i.e., male counselor*female survivor on Paternalism and male counselor*male survivor on Paternalism). As discussed in Questions 1 and 2, despite the absence of significant differences in counselors' Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors scores, they averaged on the threshold of favorability (3.50), where the mean scaled scores ranged from 3.29 and 3.60. These findings support prior research indicating that gender attitudes and rape myth beliefs influence sex trafficking attitudes (Weiss, 2010; Turchik and Edwards, 2012). However, they did not reveal a significant dependence on a counselor's gender from any influence of a survivor's gender on their Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors. Having explored the interpretation of the findings as applied to the research questions, exploring the limitations of this current study is needed.

Limitations

This section discusses the limitations of this current study, including sampling, design, instrumentation, and other threats to internal validity. Design limitations involve issues of self-reporting, low response rate, inadequate cell size, and unequal cell sizes. These limitations can threaten internal and external validity. The internal validity of this current study refers to the accurate attribution of observed differences in sex trafficking attitudes to a counselor's gender or a survivor's gender. External validity is the degree to which study findings generalize to the population of students enrolled in CACREP accredited programs. Instrumentation limitations can decrease how this study measures counselors' sex trafficking attitudes. Other threats to internal validity include social influence, history, maturation, and mortality. A data review revealed a sampling limitation unaddressed in Chapter 3.

Sampling

Sampling limitations challenge the determination that a sample represents the population. These limitations threaten external validity. Eight of the 83 records in this current study did not include responses to the question about the level of their graduate program. The program liaisons received the invitation emails. They might have forwarded them to all students enrolled in their department rather than only those enrolled in a CACREP accredited program. In such a case, some participants may have been undergraduates. These missing values could also represent overlooked or skipped questions. Sampling limitations can threaten external validity as the observations do not represent those of the population of interest. The limitations confound generalizability, and design limitations also threaten validity.

Design

As discussed in Chapter 3, self-selection and low response rates of online surveys challenge the generalization of study findings. Students were able to choose to accept, decline, or ignore the invitation to participate. The opportunity for program liaisons to choose whether to accept, decline, or ignore the request to forward the survey invitation to students confounds this self-selection bias. Given the subject of this current study, personal or professional experience with sex trafficking or unobserved sex trafficking attitudes may directly influence these decisions. Another limitation of self-selection is the inability to compare participants with non-participants. Observations in this current study may exclude factors that influenced self-selection, challenging the representation of the population of students in CACREP accredited programs.

The low response rate for this study presented several challenges for this current study. This current study mitigated expected low response rates by sending emails to 431 contacts

representing 905 CACREP accredited programs and a population of an estimated 53,000 students (CACREP, 2018). However, the response rate was further confounded by institutional policies preventing research recruitment of students by university email, time prohibitive IRB protocols for external research studies, and demands from internal research studies resulting in suspension of external review protocols. As discussed in Chapter 3, stratified random sampling using a highly representative sample would have helped support the generalization of the findings of this current study to students enrolled in CACREP accredited programs. The inadequate sample size ($n = 83$) prevented the planned stratified random sampling. The absence of random sampling compromised this generalization. The low response rates also resulted in small, unequal cell sizes.

Small cell sizes ($n < 20$) compromised the MANOVA's robustness to violations of the assumption of equal variate-covariate matrices. The non-significant Box's M and Levene statistics upheld the assumption of equal variate-covariate. Despite the absence of violation of this assumption, one cell had an insufficient number of records ($n_x < 6$). The MANOVA for the six subscales used as the dependent variables for this current study requires that each cell contain more records than the number of dependent variables ($n_x > 6$; Lund & Lund, n.d.). The inadequate cell size increased the potential that observed differences within this cell to have occurred by chance, thus challenging statistical significance. The effect of a survivor's gender on a counselor's sex trafficking attitudes influenced by the counselor's gender was non-significant. The analysis for Question 2 used the two stratified groups based on the counselor's gender. Both strata had sufficient records ($n_x > 6$) to continue exploring the influence of a counselor's gender on attitudes toward the ability to leave and empathic reactions to sex trafficking.

Unequal cell sizes compromised the statistical significance of the effect a survivor's gender has on counselors' sex trafficking attitudes as dependent on the counselor's gender. For this current study, the interaction effect (i.e., survivor's gender as dependent on counselor's gender) was non-significant, thus removing the need to mitigate for unequal cell sizes. A larger sample may have increased the cell sizes and provided a greater representation of male counselors and equal cell sizes.

As discussed in Chapter 3, unequal cell sizes weaken a MANOVA's robustness to violations of multivariate normality and the absence of outliers assumptions. The unequal cell sizes in this current study result in MANOVA's exposure to its sensitivity to outliers. The data from this current study included several univariate outliers that could have influenced the analysis results. These outliers were not concerning because they represented genuinely unusual values rather than data entry or measurement errors. This current study retained these outliers. While these design limitations may threaten internal and external validity, instrumentation limitations were also present in this current study.

Instrumentation

As discussed in Chapter 3, the use of the STAS in this current study presents concerns of self-reporting, normative suitability for graduate students, and the adaptations made to produce the STAS-M. The self-reported STAS lends to social desirability bias. Participants may have scaled their responses based on what they believe is more appealing to the counseling field or the greater society. For example, a participant may respond based on the ethical principle of autonomy (ACA, 2014) when they believe they should be more paternalistic when working with survivors. Conversely, they may align with the ACA Code of Ethics (2014) and believe that society expects them to be more paternalistic toward survivors. Participants in each stratus were

randomly assigned to two groups, providing an equal chance of participants being in either group. The initial validation of the STAS used a sample of undergraduate students may not apply to the graduate students observed in this current study. The adaptations made to develop the STAS-M may influence the psychometric properties of the STAS, which was named STAS-F for this current study.

This current study assessed the convergent and divergent validity using the Pearson correlations from fifteen pairings of subscales and the Cronbach's α values for internal validity. The correlations ($.02 < |r| < .429$) indicate that the original STAS subscales represent distinct dimensions of the overarching construct of sex trafficking attributes. Six pairings presented significant moderate correlations, and the remaining were statistically non-significant. This current study used Cronbach's alphas to examine the internal consistency of the two STAS forms. The STAS-M and STAS-F demonstrated internal consistency across the six subscales. Like the findings in the initial validation of the STAS (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016), a few small to moderate intercorrelations among the STAS-M and STAS-F supported each subscale as a distinct dimension of an overarching construct of sex trafficking attitudes in this current study. Having addressed the instrumentation limitations to this study, discussion of further threats to internal validity include those from social influence bias.

Social Influence

As discussed in Chapter 3, one participant's influence on another may produce observed differences in STAS scores. The online survey environment mitigated interaction between participants because of this current study. However, interactions between participants enrolled in the same program may have influenced their decisions to participate or their sex trafficking attitudes as measured using the STAS. Such influence could result in a disproportionate

representation of a program and present a new factor confounding interpretations of attribution to a counselor's gender or a survivor's gender. Random assignment mitigated social influence by distributing the potential for such interaction with the same chance of being assigned to take the STAS-F as the STAS-M. Other threats to the internal validity of this current study include history, maturation, mortality, and testing order.

Other Threats to Internal Validity

As discussed in Chapter 3, history, maturation, mortality, and testing order may threaten the internal validity of this current study. A participant's exposure to national news coverage of a major trafficking sting during data collection would introduce the threat of history to the internal validity of this study. Such exposure would introduce a confounding factor that could influence decisions of self-selection or observed behaviors in the study. This influence could challenge the attribution of observed STAS differences to a counselor's gender or survivor's gender. This researcher did not see any such news during data collection, but local news coverage may have influenced some participants' responses in this national survey.

This current study used a short estimated 20 minutes for survey completion to mitigate threats from personal changes during participation and mortality. However, mortality was present in seven records. One participant only responded to the questions for one subscale. Two participants provided consent to participate and did not respond to any of the survey questions. Data cleaning removed these three records. The remaining four records demonstrating mortality included responses to the first three subscales and did not complete the remaining three. A discussion of missing data from these records and two others follows below.

In addition to the four missing data for three entire subscales, two additional records were missing data for two questions each. This current study populated the missing values and

retained these six records. The response averages from the other participants provided the data to populate records missing responses to more than two items in a subscale. The data population where two or fewer observations were missing from a subscale resulted from the average participant's responses in the same subscale. These decisions to remove or retain and populate are acceptable practices. However, they can threaten internal validity when participants' responses are not included or do not correspond with mean scores (Tabachnick et al., 2007). These limitations and their threats to validity present several implications for future research regarding the sex trafficking attitudes of counselors.

Implications

This current study aimed to assess counselors' sex trafficking attitudes for influence from a survivor's gender or a counselor's gender. This experimental study used two instruments, a factorial design with an additional demographic questionnaire. Eighty-three participants who are students enrolled in CACREP accredited programs (i.e., master's or doctoral level) responded to all portions of the study. The purpose of this current study included a threefold assessment of: (1) the influence a survivor's gender had on a counselor's sex trafficking attitudes; (2) the influence of a counselor's gender had on their sex trafficking attitudes; and (3) whether any influence a survivor's gender had on a counselor's sex trafficking attitudes is dependent on a counselor's gender. This assessment included six distinct subscales representing cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes across an overarching construct of sex trafficking attitudes. This current study did find that a counselor's gender influences two of their sex trafficking attitudes: *Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave* (cognitive) and *Empathic Reaction to Sex Trafficking* (affective). The findings produced several implications for counselors' practice, supervision, and education, along with suggestions for future research.

Counselor Practice and Professional Development

In this current study, female counselors demonstrated more favorable cognitive (i.e., Attitudes Toward the Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking) and affective (i.e., Empathic Reactions to Sex Trafficking) sex trafficking attitudes than male counselors. All counselors in this current study demonstrated marginally favorable Attitudes About Helping Survivors (behavioral) despite any influences from gender being non-significant. The findings of this current study present implications for counselors' practice and professional development.

The ACA (2014) code of ethics requires that counselors acknowledge and engage in continuing education to maintain their current competence, remain open to new approaches, and remain current on best practices related to working with diverse populations. The Code also charges counselors with the ongoing development of multicultural counseling competency by gaining knowledge, personal awareness, compassion, attitudes, and skills appropriate for working with a diverse population of clients. Counselors can enhance their cognitive attitudes by seeking opportunities for specialized education about sex trafficking, including how fraud, force, and coercion compromise the ability of a person to consent to participate in or leave sex trafficking (TVPA, 2000). This focused training can help develop more favorable Attitudes Toward the Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking.

This study provides paternalistic thinking (behavioral) as an area for counselors to explore and self-assess. This thinking represents unfavorable counseling decisions that compromise survivors' autonomy. Lower subscale scores of male counselors than female counselors in Empathy (affective) and Leaving (cognitive) provide another lens through which they self-assess to discover attitudes that compromise the ethical principles of justice and nonmaleficence.

Research has indicated that pervasive unfavorable Gender Attitudes and Rape Myth Acceptance influence sex trafficking attitudes (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016; Turchik and Edwards, 2012; Weiss, 2010). Counselors can seek supervision and explore ways to improve less favorable sex trafficking attitudes toward providing treatment to survivors that best serve survivors. The implications for counselors' practice and professional development inform the implications for counselor supervisors.

Counselor Supervision

The findings of this current study and the implications identified for counselors frame the implications for counselor supervisors. Clinical supervisors could explore supervisees' sex trafficking attitudes for gender-influenced differences. Supervisors could also employ interventions to improve cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes. They might develop discrepancies (cognitive) between commitment to *justice* and verbalized statements like, "A girl under the age of 18 who works in the sex industry is trafficked, whereas a boy under the age of 18 who works in the sex industry is *not* trafficked." Supervisors can use survivor testimonials, role-playing, and case vignettes to help supervisees connect with the emotional experience of survivors (affective). A supervisor might facilitate the processing and conceptualization of a sex trafficking case to attend to a supervisee's intentions and statements about their actions as a counselor (behavioral).

Counselor supervisors could benefit from knowing where to access information about sex trafficking resources, including opportunities for specialized training, services available to support survivors and counselors working with survivors, and organizations that work to end trafficking and help survivors. They can help supervisees integrate material from specialized trafficking training into their sex trafficking attitudes (cognitive). Supervisors may also facilitate

a supervisee's exploration of ways to process their experiences toward increased understanding of survivors' emotional experiences (affective). Supervisors can explore and facilitate the discovery of any gender bias or paternalistic intentions they have. They can assist supervisees' self-growth (behavioral) practices toward increased efficacy in working with survivors by mitigating identified bias or paternalistic intentions. The findings of this current study provide implications for counselors, supervisors, and counselor educators.

Counselor Education

The current study revealed that male counselors' sex trafficking attitudes differ from female counselors. These results inform counselor educators of a need to explore ways to attend to this attitudinal bias. Educators could incorporate lessons and exercises to address all three attitudinal dimensions without research-supported education approaches to improve sex trafficking attitudes.

Educators could assign class presentations on sex trafficking that engage attitude's cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects. Background information and current data about trafficking could increase knowledge, promote awareness, and identify the resultant needs of survivors (cognitive). The assignment could challenge presenters to provide an opportunity for classmates to connect with the emotional experiences of survivors by including an interview or testimonial video (affective). Educators could also require a case conceptualization exercise where students assess, diagnose, and develop a treatment plan (behavioral).

There are several implications for counselor educators to incorporate the findings of this current study into some of the curriculum standards required for accreditation by CACREP (2016). Some of these standards include instruction of (1) multicultural characteristics within diverse groups; (2) the characteristics and behaviors of counselors that influence the counseling

process; (3) the impact of a person's heritage, cognitive attitudes, and acculturative experiences on their perceptions of others; and (4) strategies for self-growth including self-evaluation of personal assumptions and implications for practice.

One implication of this current study is that counselor educators can introduce the characteristics of the sex trafficking culture. These characteristics include those present before, during, and after a survivor's sex trafficking experience. Factors like homelessness and foster care placement increased the risk of sex trafficking (Sprang & Cole, 2018; Polaris Project, 2019). Sex trafficking experiences introduce other characteristics, like consent compromised by fraud, force, or coercion (TVPA, 2000). Treatment and recovery from trafficking present some characteristics, including suicidality, substance use, and difficulty developing attachments (Kaplan et al., 2018).

As discussed in Chapter 4, while the differences in Paternalism (behavioral) scores were non-significant, they similarly presented with borderline favorability. Counselor educators can also include the findings of this current study in lessons about the characteristics and behaviors of counselors as they influence the counseling process. Counselor educators can facilitate self-growth opportunities to explore potential personal gender biases, perceptions about sex trafficking, or beliefs in common rape myths (cognitive) intention to act paternalistically, which compromises the survivor's autonomy. Specifically, they can discuss the influence of these cognitive attitudes on their screening, assessment, and conceptualization of sex trafficking cases. These self-growth experiences can include discussions about ways these attitudes may influence their actions or plans to act (behavioral) and strategies to mitigate these unfavorable attitudes. The counselor educator can also discuss the cultural influence on a person's cognitive attitudes

related to their acceptance of rape and sex trafficking myths and other attitudes toward survivors of sex trafficking.

Like supervisors, counselor educators can benefit from knowing about opportunities for specialized training, resources for counselors working with survivors or suspected survivors, and organizations committed to ending trafficking and helping survivors, especially those appropriate for practicum or internship placement. In addition to these implications for counseling professionals, future research may improve counselors' sex trafficking attitudes and treatment of survivors.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research can benefit from several recommendations, a different approach to national recruitment, including larger sample sizes, and further development and validation of the STAS instrument to measure attitudes toward female, male, transgender, and nonbinary survivors.

Future research may benefit from changing the population of interest and refining the recruitment method. A more thorough national recruitment approach would identify states from each region of the United States and the professional boards that represent program specialties accredited by CACREP. For example, researchers could contact the North Carolina Addictions Specialist Professional Practice Board, North Carolina Board of Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors, North Carolina Marriage and Family Therapy Licensure Board, and the Commission of Rehabilitation Counselor Certification for North Carolina (national) counselor contact information. Repeating this process for multiple states would provide the basis for a national study and potentially a more accessible population of interest. This sampling would allow direct email distribution of survey invitations to mitigate the institutional and self-selection barriers

presented by the sampling procedures used for this current study. This type of recruitment could produce more robust sex trafficking attitude data for analysis for influences from counseling specialties and years of experience and national and regional influences.

A larger participant pool could provide the ability to use stratified random sampling as originally proposed, which supports the generalization to the national population of counselors. The larger pool may also help reach the desired sample size ($n = 148$), strata sizes ($n_x = 74$), and populate cells equally ($n_x = 37$). The desired sample size increases the ability to attribute observed differences to a survivor's gender or a counselor's gender. Larger cell sizes ($n > 20$) would reinforce MANOVA's robustness to violations of equal variate-covariate matrices, and equal cell sizes would reinforce the robustness of MANOVA to violations of no outliers and multivariate normality.

As suggested by Houston-Kolnik et al. (2016), future research could explore sex trafficking attitudes of different populations toward different forms of trafficking and toward different populations of survivors. Researchers could explore the sex trafficking attitudes of professionals in the legal, medical, and social service fields. Using the STAS with lawyers, doctors, and social workers could extend the validity to these populations. This current study is limited to exploring survivors identified as being either male (i.e., men and boys) or female (i.e., women and girls). Future research would also benefit from exploring attitudes toward survivors, including factors of cis-gender, transgender, and nonbinary gender identities. The following list of terms and definitions provide a framework for this current study.

Future research could explore how participants' demographic characteristics influence their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors about sex trafficking. Possible factors include those in the demographic questionnaire used in this current study (e.g., self-report as a survivor of sex

trafficking or sex abuse). This researcher did not find any studies that included self-reports of sex trafficking or exposure to sex trafficking compared with the general population. One study provided self-reports of sexual violence from respondents representing the general population. The study found that 43.6% of the women and 24.% of the men reported they experienced sexual violence involving physical contact in their lifetime (Smith et al., 2018). The participants in this current study self-reported sex trafficking or sex trafficking at 13.3%. Counselors' personal experiences of sex trafficking or sexual abuse may present another factor that influences their sex trafficking attitudes. Researchers could extend the findings of this current study to explore the influence of personal experiences and exposure to survivors of trafficking and sexual abuse. A comparative study can explore the sex trafficking attitudes of counselors with those of the general public and other populations.

Counselors' attitudes toward specific types of sex trafficking (e.g., survival sex, familial sex trafficking) and other types of human trafficking (e.g., forced labor, involuntary servitude) could further expand the current literature about sex trafficking attitudes. Sex trafficking literature would benefit from further research about sex trafficking attitudes toward male survivors and including attitudes toward transgender and nonbinary survivors. The STAS could also provide a way to explore the influence of sex-trafficking training modules on sex trafficking attitudes using pre-test/post-test studies to explore.

Conclusions

This chapter reviewed the results and discussed this current study's interpretations, limitations, and implications. While limitations of low response rate, inadequate cell size, and unequal cell sizes were present, this current study resulted in statistically significant outcomes and implications for the counseling field. Female counselors had more favorable empathic

reactions to sex trafficking and more favorable attitudes toward a survivors' ability to leave sex trafficking than male counselors. According to this current study, the survivor's gender did not significantly influence counselors' sex trafficking attitudes, nor did any influence from a survivor's gender significantly depend on the counselor's gender.

This current study noted several implications for counseling practice and professional development, supervision, and education. Clinical supervisors can utilize interventions that help supervisees: (1) recognize unfavorable sex trafficking attitudes; (2) explore resources and opportunities to increase knowledge, awareness, understanding, and empathy; and (3) integrate their cognitive growth into their behavioral attitudes. Counselor educators can include discussions about the sex trafficking culture and counselors' borderline paternalistic sex trafficking attitudes. They can also facilitate self-growth opportunities to explore and process assumptions about the sex trafficking cultures, paternalistic intentions toward helping survivors, and cultural influences on their sex trafficking attitudes.

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APPENDIX A: Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale (STAS)
(Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016)

Directions:

Please respond to the following survey regarding sex trafficking of women and girls. Although men, boys, and transgender individuals may also be trafficked, the present survey focuses on the sex trafficking of women and girls.

In this survey we ask questions about your knowledge and awareness of sex trafficking of women and girls. Please answer honestly and know that your responses are anonymous and that we have no way to link your responses to you personally.

Directions:

For the following questions, please indicate your agreement with the statements about what trafficking is. There are no right or wrong answers. Even if you are not sure please indicate your level of agreement.

Knowledge About Sex Trafficking

1. A person is trafficked if she is kidnapped and employed in the sex industry.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

2. A person is trafficked when someone uses fraud to employ her in the sex industry.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

3. A person is trafficked when someone uses coercion to employ her in the sex industry.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

4. A prostitute can become trafficked if she is restrained from leaving her occupation.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

5. Someone under the age of 18 who works in the sex industry is trafficked.*

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

*Included in the 6-factor model but excluded from the final 6-factor, trimmed model.

Directions:

Please think of a trafficked individual's ability to leave her circumstances and indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking

6. A trafficked person has the ability to leave her circumstances. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

7. It is not a person's choice to be trafficked.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

8. Some women choose to be trafficked. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

9. Some girls choose to be trafficked. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

10. A trafficked person could go to the police, but she chooses not to. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

11. If a trafficked person chose to leave, her problem would be over. (R)*

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

12. A person who is trafficked has been deceived or forced into her situation.*

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

(R) indicates the item is reverse coded.

*Included in the 6-factor model but excluded from the final 6-factor, trimmed model.

There are many definitions of sex trafficking. For the rest of this study, we would like you to think of trafficking as it is defined by the U.S. governors:

The U.S. government defines sex trafficking as a form of human trafficking where ‘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 of age.’

Please keep this definition in mind as you respond to the rest of the survey about sex trafficking of women and girls.

Directions:

For the following set of questions, please indicate how much you agree with the following statements.

Awareness of Sex Trafficking

13. I am aware of organizations that work against trafficking.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

14. I have heard about sex trafficking in the news.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

15. I have read about sex trafficking.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

16. I have seen public awareness announcements about sex trafficking.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

17. I am not informed about sex trafficking. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

18. I do not understand the issues surrounding sex trafficking. (R)*

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

(R) indicates the item is reverse coded.

*Included in the 6-factor model but excluded from the final 6-factor, trimmed model.

Directions:

For the following questions think of someone who desires to help and how they should assist individuals who have been trafficked.

Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors

19. If it is for the trafficked individual's good, an outsider should do whatever is needed to make decisions for the trafficked person. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

20. An outsider should make whatever decisions are needed about a trafficked person's daily living when the trafficked person doesn't seem to care what is done. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

21. Even if a trafficked person objects, an outsider should do whatever they think is best for the trafficked individual in the long run. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Directions:

For the following questions, consider your feelings about sex trafficking and indicate how much you agree with each statement:

Empathic Reactions Toward Sex Trafficking

22. I am angry about the issue of trafficking.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

23. I empathize with trafficked persons.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

24. I become emotional thinking about trafficking.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

25. Trafficking does not upset me. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

26. I do not care much about the issue of trafficking. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Directions:

For the following questions, think of how you feel regarding your ability to assist those who have been trafficked.

Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking

27. I can make a difference for trafficked persons.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

28. I have the ability to work against trafficking through political involvement.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

29. I am able to raise public awareness about trafficking.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

30. I can address structural inequalities and barriers facing trafficked persons.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

31. I feel inadequate to help trafficked persons. (R)*

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

32. I feel helpless to assist trafficked persons. (R)*

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

33. I feel powerless to help people who have been trafficked. (R)*

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

(R) indicates the item is reverse coded.

*Included in the 6-factor model but excluded from the final 6-factor, trimmed model.

APPENDIX B: Demographic Questionnaire

Demographic Questionnaire

1. What is your age in years? _____
2. Which of the following best describes you?
 - ☐ Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin
 - ☐ Not Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin
3. Which of the following best describes you? (select all that apply)
 - ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
 - ☐ Asian
 - ☐ Black or African American
 - ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - ☐ White
 - ☐ Some other race: _____
4. What sex were you assigned at birth, on your original birth certificate?
 - ☐ Female
 - ☐ Male
5. How do you describe yourself now (check one)?
 - ☐ Female
 - ☐ Male
 - ☐ Transgender
 - ☐ I do not identify as female, male, or transgender
6. Do you consider yourself to be:
 - ☐ Heterosexual or straight,

- ☐ Gay or lesbian, or
- ☐ Bisexual?

7. Which of the specialties below best describes your program: (select all that apply)

- ☐ Addiction Counseling
- ☐ Career Counseling
- ☐ Clinical Mental Health Counseling
- ☐ Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling
- ☐ College Counseling and Student Affairs
- ☐ Counselor Education and Supervision
- ☐ Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling
- ☐ Rehabilitation Counseling
- ☐ School Counseling

8. Please choose your program level:

- ☐ Master's level
- ☐ Doctoral level

9. Please answer the following regarding your program.

How many credit hours does your program require? _____

How many credit hours of your program have you completed? _____

10. How many credit hours of ETHICS have you completed as part of your program? _____

How many training hours of ETHICS have you completed outside of your program (e.g., continuing education)? _____

11. How many credit hours of SEX ABUSE/SEX TRAFFICKING have you completed as part of your program? _____

How many training hours of SEX ABUSE/SEX TRAFFICKING have you completed outside of your program (e.g., continuing education or sex trafficking awareness)? _____

12. How many credit hours of CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN COUNSELING have you completed as part of your program? _____

How many training hours of CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN COUNSELING have you completed outside of your program (e.g., continuing education)? _____

13. How many people have you known in your personal life that have been victims of sex trafficking or sex abuse?

- ☐ Self (1)
- ☐ Significant Other(s)/Family Member(s): ____
- ☐ Close friend(s): ____
- ☐ None

14. How many people have you seen in your professional/clinical practice have been victims of sex trafficking or sex abuse?

- ☐ Sex trafficking: ____
- ☐ Sex abuse: ____
- ☐ None

APPENDIX C: Participant Informed Consent

You are being invited to participate in a research study titled “Counselors’ Attitudes Toward Sex Trafficking: A Quantitative, National Analysis” being conducted by Kenn S. Pritchard, a Doctoral Student in the Department of Addictions and Rehabilitation Studies at East Carolina University. You are asked to participate in this study because of your current enrollment in a CACREP accredited program. The goal is to draw a sample of approximately 150 from the respondents. The survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete and involves a demographic questionnaire and a survey to explore attitudes toward sex trafficking and survivors of sex trafficking. Through your participation, the hope is to extend existing literature with a focus on factors that influence sex trafficking attitudes.

Your responses will be kept confidential, and no data will be released or used with your identification attached. Your participation in the research is voluntary. You may choose not to answer any or all questions, and you may stop at any time. There is no penalty for not taking part in this research study. Please call Kenn S. Pritchard at 252-744-6300 for any research related questions or the University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board (UMCIRB) at 252-744-2914 for questions about your rights as a research participant.

APPENDIX D: Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale – Trafficking of Females (STAS-F)

Adapted from STAS (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016).

Directions:

Please respond to the following survey regarding sex trafficking of women and girls. Although men, boys, and transgender individuals may also be trafficked, the present survey focuses on the sex trafficking of women and girls.

In this survey we ask questions about your knowledge and awareness of sex trafficking of women and girls. Please answer honestly and know that your responses are anonymous and that we have no way to link your responses to you personally.

Directions:

Please think of a trafficked individual's ability to leave her circumstances and indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

Knowledge About Sex Trafficking

1. A person is trafficked if she is kidnapped and employed in the sex industry.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

2. A person is trafficked when someone uses fraud to employ her in the sex industry.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

3. A person is trafficked when someone uses coercion to employ her in the sex industry.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

4. A prostitute can become trafficked if she is restrained from leaving her occupation.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Directions:

Please think of a trafficked individual's ability to leave his circumstances and indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking

5. A trafficked person has the ability to leave her circumstances. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

6. It is not a person's choice to be trafficked.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

7. Some women choose to be trafficked. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

8. Some girls choose to be trafficked. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

9. A trafficked person could go to the police, but she chooses not to. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Directions:

For the following questions, please indicate your agreement with the statements about what trafficking is. There are no right or wrong answers. Even if you are not sure please indicate your level of agreement.

There are many definitions of sex trafficking. For the rest of this study, we would like you to think of trafficking as it is defined by the U.S. governors:

The U.S. government defines sex trafficking as a form of human trafficking where '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 of age.'

Please keep this definition in mind as you respond to the rest of the survey about sex trafficking of women and girls.

Directions:

For the following set of questions, please indicate how much you agree with the following statements.

Awareness of Sex Trafficking

10. I am aware of organizations that work against trafficking.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

11. I have heard about sex trafficking in the news.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

12. I have read about sex trafficking.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

13. I have seen public awareness announcements about sex trafficking.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

14. I am not informed about sex trafficking. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

(R) indicates the item is reverse coded.

Directions:

For the following questions think of someone who desires to help and how they should assist individuals who have been trafficked.

Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors

15. If it is for the trafficked individual's good, an outsider should do whatever is needed to make decisions for the trafficked person. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

16. An outsider should make whatever decisions are needed about a trafficked person's daily living when the trafficked person doesn't seem to care what is done. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

17. Even if a trafficked person objects, an outsider should do whatever they think is best for the trafficked individual in the long run. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Directions:

For the following questions, consider your feelings about sex trafficking and indicate how much you agree with each statement:

Empathic Reactions Toward Sex Trafficking

18. I am angry about the issue of trafficking.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

19. I empathize with trafficked persons.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

20. I become emotional thinking about trafficking.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

21. Trafficking does not upset me. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

22. I do not care much about the issue of trafficking. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Directions:

For the following questions, think of how you feel regarding your ability to assist those who have been trafficked.

Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking

23. I can make a difference for trafficked persons.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

24. I have the ability to work against trafficking through political involvement.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

25. I am able to raise public awareness about trafficking.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

26. I can address structural inequalities and barriers facing trafficked persons.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

In this survey, we have asked about some sensitive topics. We understand that thinking about sex trafficking and other issues regarding violence against women may have brought up some feelings of discomfort, distress, or painful experiences. If you would like to talk with someone, trained crisis counselors are available 24/7 by calling the ***National Mental Health Hotline*** or the ***National Suicide Prevention Lifeline***. Below is a list of contact information for these and other resources. Remember to call **9-1-1** if you or someone you know is in immediate danger.

National Mental Health Hotline (available 24/7)

Toll Free Phone: 1-866-903-3787 [TALK]

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (available 24/7):

Toll Free Phone: 1-800-273-TALK[8255]

Online chat line: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat>

National Human Trafficking Hotline (available 24/7):

If you believe you may have information about a trafficking situation:

Toll Free Phone: 1-888-373-7888 *Text:* 233733 *TTY:* 711

Online Chat: <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/chat>

National Human Trafficking Referral Directory

Find social and legal services for victims and survivors of human trafficking and connect with training and volunteer opportunities across the U.S. and its territories.

Website: www.humantraffickinghotline.org/training-resources/referral-directory

Email: help@humantraffickinghotline.org (may not provide immediate response)

APPENDIX E: Sex Trafficking Attitudes Scale – Trafficking of Males (STAS-M)

Adapted from STAS (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2016).

Directions:

Please respond to the following survey regarding sex trafficking of men and boys. Although women, girls, and transgender individuals may also be trafficked, the present survey focuses on the sex trafficking of men and boys.

In this survey we ask questions about your knowledge and awareness of sex trafficking of men and boys. Please answer honestly and know that your responses are anonymous and that we have no way to link your responses to you personally.

Directions:

For the following questions, please indicate your agreement with the statements about what trafficking is. There are no right or wrong answers. Even if you are not sure please indicate your level of agreement.

Knowledge About Sex Trafficking

1. A person is trafficked if he is kidnapped and employed in the sex industry.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

2. A person is trafficked when someone uses fraud to employ him in the sex industry.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

3. A person is trafficked when someone uses coercion to employ him in the sex industry.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

4. A prostitute can become trafficked if he is restrained from leaving his occupation.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Directions:

Please think of a trafficked individual's ability to leave his circumstances and indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

Attitudes Toward Ability to Leave Sex Trafficking

5. A trafficked person has the ability to leave his circumstances. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

6. It is not a person's choice to be trafficked.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

7. Some men choose to be trafficked. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

8. Some boys choose to be trafficked. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

9. A trafficked person could go to the police, but he chooses not to. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

There are many definitions of sex trafficking. For the rest of this study, we would like you to think of trafficking as it is defined by the U.S. governors:

The U.S. government defines a form of human trafficking where '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 of age.'

Please keep this definition in mind as you respond to the rest of the survey about sex trafficking of men and boys.

Directions:

For the following set of questions, please indicate how much you agree with the following statements.

Awareness of Sex Trafficking

10. I am aware of organizations that work against trafficking.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

11. I have heard about sex trafficking in the news.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

12. I have read about sex trafficking.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

13. I have seen public awareness announcements about sex trafficking.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

14. I am not informed about sex trafficking. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

(R) indicates the item is reverse coded.

Directions:

For the following questions think of someone who desires to help and how they should assist individuals who have been trafficked.

Attitudes Toward Helping Survivors

15. If it is for the trafficked individual's good, an outsider should do whatever is needed to make decisions for the trafficked person. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

16. An outsider should make whatever decisions are needed about a trafficked person's daily living when the trafficked person doesn't seem to care what is done. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

17. Even if a trafficked person objects, an outsider should do whatever they think is best for the trafficked individual in the long run. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Directions:

For the following questions, consider your feelings about sex trafficking and indicate how much you agree with each statement:

Empathic Reactions Toward Sex Trafficking

18. I am angry about the issue of trafficking.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

19. I empathize with trafficked persons.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

20. I become emotional thinking about trafficking.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

21. Trafficking does not upset me. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

22. I do not care much about the issue of trafficking. (R)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Directions:

For the following questions, think of how you feel regarding your ability to assist those who have been trafficked.

Efficacy to Reduce Sex Trafficking

23. I can make a difference for trafficked persons.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

24. I have the ability to work against trafficking through political involvement.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

25. I am able to raise public awareness about trafficking.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

26. I can address structural inequalities and barriers facing trafficked persons.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

In this survey, we have asked about some sensitive topics. We understand that thinking about sex trafficking and other issues regarding violence against women may have brought up some feelings of discomfort, distress, or painful experiences. If you would like to talk with someone, trained crisis counselors are available 24/7 by calling the **National Mental Health Hotline** or the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**. Below is a list of contact information for these and other resources. Remember to call **9-1-1** if you or someone you know is in immediate danger.

National Mental Health Hotline (available 24/7)

Toll Free Phone: 1-866-903-3787 [TALK]

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (available 24/7):

Toll Free Phone: 1-800-273-TALK[8255]

Online chat line: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat>

National Human Trafficking Hotline (available 24/7):

If you believe you may have information about a trafficking situation:

Toll Free Phone: 1-888-373-7888 *Text:* 233733 *TTY:* 711

Online Chat: <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/chat>

National Human Trafficking Referral Directory

Find social and legal services for victims and survivors of human trafficking and connect with training and volunteer opportunities across the U.S. and its territories.

Website: www.humantraffickinghotline.org/training-resources/referral-directory

Email: help@humantraffickinghotline.org (may not provide immediate response)

APPENDIX F: Institutional Review Board Approval Letter



EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board

4N-64 Brody Medical Sciences Building · Mail Stop 682

600 Moye Boulevard · Greenville, NC 27834

Office 252-744-2914 · Fax 252-744-2284

rede.ecu.edu/umcirb/

Notification of Exempt Certification

From: Social/Behavioral IRB
To: [Kenneth Pritchard](#)
CC: [Paul Toriello](#)
Date: 1/24/2022
Re: [UMCIRB 21-002641](#)
Counselors' Attitudes Toward Sex Trafficking: A Quantitative, National Analysis

I am pleased to inform you that your research submission has been certified as exempt on 1/24/2022. This study is eligible for Exempt Certification under category # 2a.

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.

Document	Description
Demographic Questionnaire.docx(0.01)	Surveys and Questionnaires
Email Invitation Letter (16Dec21).docx(0.01)	Recruitment Documents/Scripts
Email Invitation Letter (16Dec21).docx(0.01)	Consent Forms
Email Invitation Letter.docx(0.01)	Recruitment Documents/Scripts
Invitation Letter-Informed Consent.docx(0.01)	Consent Forms
Kenn Pritchard - Dissertation Proposal Document for IRB (13 Jan).docx(0.01)	Study Protocol or Grant Application
STAS-F.docx(0.01)	Surveys and Questionnaires
STAS-M.docx(0.01)	Surveys and Questionnaires

For research studies where a waiver or alteration of HIPAA Authorization has been approved, the IRB states that each of the waiver criteria in 45 CFR 164.512(i)(1)(i)(A) and (2)(i) through (v) have been met. Additionally, the elements of PHI to be collected as described in items 1 and 2 of the Application for Waiver of Authorization have been determined to be the minimal necessary for the specified research.

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

ProQuest Number: (To Be Provided)

