Title: Understanding the Mindset of Mental Health Professionals Towards Human Trafficking

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I. Abstract

Statement of the Problem

Abstract: Human Sex Trafficking is an every growing problem affecting every country. Who is going to meet the emotional needs of this population ranging from children to adults?
This proposal suggests that mental health therapists can and should be ready to meet those multiple needs, but few therapists are involved. Why is this? Perhaps if we had a better understanding of the therapist's mindset towards sex trafficking, we could better understand how to involve them to meet these needs.

Methodology and Theoretical Orientation: My theoretical orientation can best be described as cognitive-behavioral.
My research design is descriptive. I want to understand what mental health therapists think about providing therapy for victims of human sex trafficking.
By incorporating a syllogism, I state the following:

Human Sex Trafficking is growing unabated exponentially- First Premise
The successful therapeutic treatment of Human Sex Trafficking victims requires an understanding of the therapist's mindset for mental health professionals to provide effective therapy.
Second Premise- an understanding of the mindset of mental health professionals toward Human Sex Trafficking victims will result in an increasing body of well-trained mental health therapists to effectively meet the needs of victims of Human Sex Trafficking.

Hypothesis: My hypothesis is that mental health therapists have (1) treated few if any victims of Human Sex Trafficking due to a lack of awareness of the problem in their area, a lack of request for therapy, and a lack of sufficient training to provide therapy or, (2) would provide therapy if afforded the opportunity to receive proper training, and (3) are unaware of training opportunities.

In consultation with colleagues who are mental health therapists, a brief twelve question cross sectional survey was developed to determine therapist's awareness of Human Sex Trafficking, their experience or lack thereof in treating sex trafficking victims, their attitude toward treating sex trafficking victims, and their interest or lack thereof in receiving further education.

Ten different agencies across the USA which specialize in treatment of sex trafficking victims were identified and invited to disseminate this survey to mental health professionals online. Results will then be tabulated in May.

Findings

Findings will be projected from the results of the survey tabulation.
In addition, session participants will be able to take the brief survey at the beginning of the session with immediate tabulation resulting in a global conclusion, which will be discussed in the session.

Conclusion and Significance

Findings from the survey will then be shared with agencies and individuals requesting the results. These findings will lead to creation of better training to equip mental health professionals resulting in a broader base of mental health professionals to treat victims of Human Sex Trafficking.

II. Biography



William C. Viser is a tenured full time professor having taught on the collegiate level for over fifty years in Texas, Arkansas, and Rio de Janeiro Brazil where he lived for 10 years. He has been invited to present in conferences in Istanbul, Turkey; Harare, Zimbabwe; Edinburg, Scotland and at the international conference on psychiatry in Bucharest, Romania. He holds two masters degrees and a Ph.D. in family therapy. He is the author of two books, It's ok to be an MK(1982), and The Darkness Among Us (1994).

He is in private practice in Arkadelphia, Arkansas and founded the Safe Harbour Christian Counseling Center in 1994. He is licensed as a Professional Counselor (LPC), a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT), and a licensed Drug and Alcohol Abuse Counselor (LADAC), and is Board Certified in Hypnosis.

He has worked with Human Trafficking Agencies in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas as well as in Romania.

III. Presenting Author Details

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