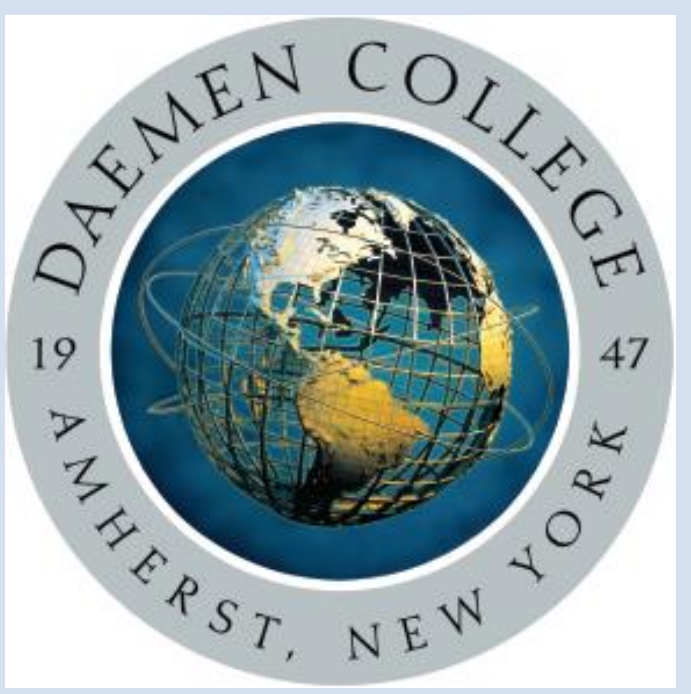


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Knowledge Assessment of Human Trafficking Awareness and Intervention among Registered Nurses at a Veteran's Hospital in the Northeastern United States

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INTRODUCTION

Human trafficking is the use of force, fraud, or coercion to force an individual to provide service to another (Department of Homeland Security, n.d.). It can be further classified as either labor or sex trafficking.

- Difficult to quantify (Department of Homeland Security, n.d.).
- Prevalent in areas near international borders (Department of Homeland Security, n.d.).
- Victims of human trafficking are subject to many mental and physical health concerns (Scannell et al., 2018).
- Estimated that 88% of trafficking victims have interactions with healthcare providers (WCMSSM, 2017).
- Registered nurses are typically first provider to interact with victims (Scannell et al., 2018).
- RNs are in a unique position to identify and assist victims (Scannell et al., 2018).
- Proper education and training necessary for RNs to fill this role (Scannell et al., 2018).

DEFINITIONS

Vulnerable Population: A group of people who are at risk for exploitation based on socioeconomic status, mental health status, and other factors that influence and affect self-protection and actualization (Polaris Project, 2020).

Veteran: A person who has served in the United States Military and has either retired or been medically discharged (Veteran's Benefits, 38 USC § 101.2 (1958))

Veterans Health Administration: A subset of the US Department of Defense that provides medical care and other services to Veterans. (Veterans Health Administration, 2019)

Registered Nurse: A nurse with a minimum of an Associates Degree who provides nursing care to patients utilizing the nursing process

Recognition: The process by which a nurse or other healthcare provider identifies the signs and symptoms of a specific process

Intervention: Specific actions carried out the RN to improve outcomes of a specific process

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Andragogy: Adult Learning Theory (Knowles, 1980)

1. Adult learners direct their own learning
2. Life experiences impact how adult learners respond to new information
3. Learning is closely related to changing roles
4. Learning is centered around finding solutions to problems
5. Adult learners are intrinsically motivated

Adults will learn better if they are invested in what is being taught.

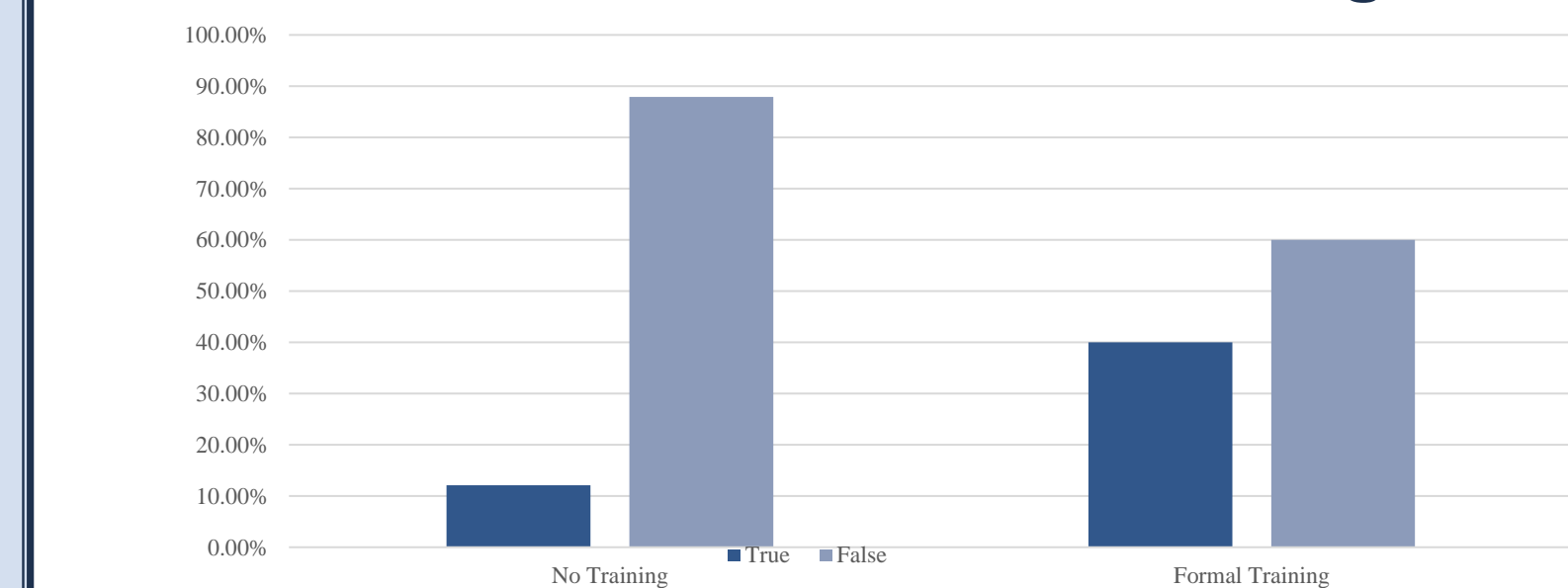
1. Education should be relevant to job
2. Comprehensive needs assessment
3. Assess baseline knowledge of RNs to identify areas of necessary education
4. Tailor education to busy schedule of a healthcare professional
5. Increase retention and application of knowledge to improve health outcomes

RESULTS:

Sample: 38 participants

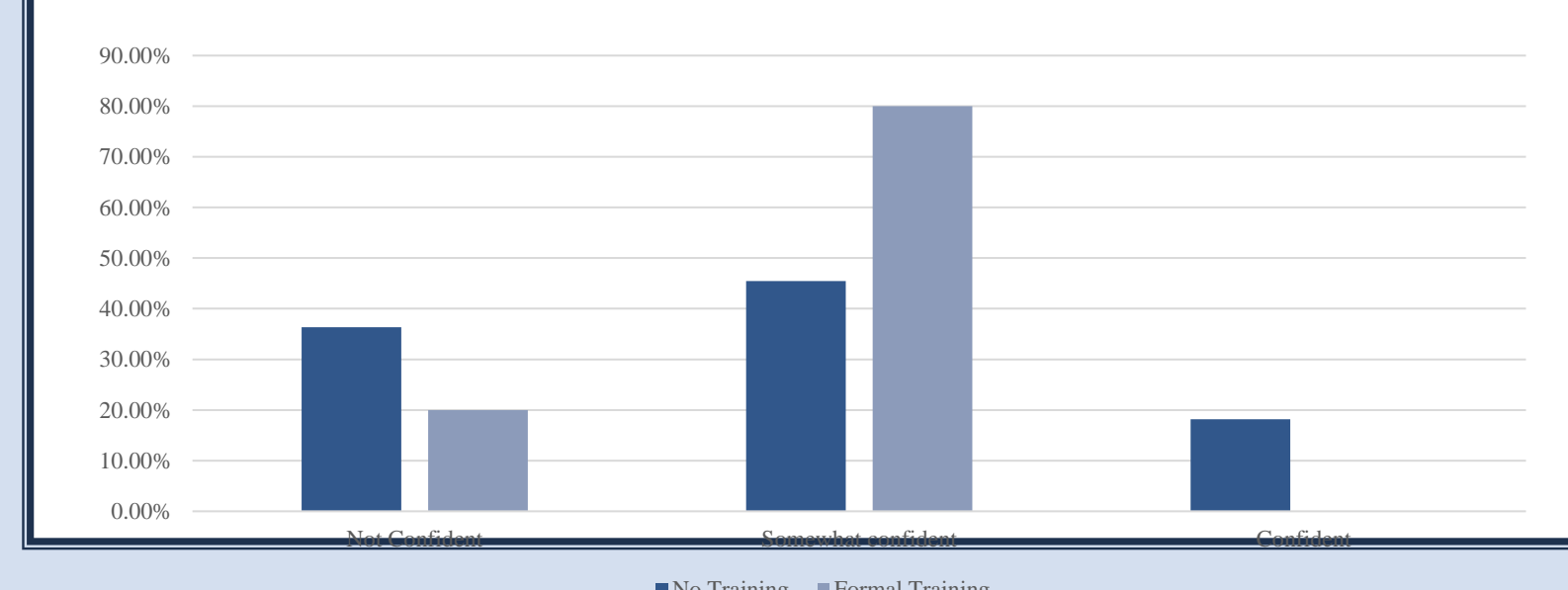
- 5% (n=2) Emergency Department
- 41% (n=15) Outpatient clinics
- 3% (n=1) Outpatient behavioral health
- 8% (n=3) Intensive care unit
- 8% (n=3) Inpatient behavior health;
- 35% (n=13) Inpatient medical/surgical

“Please answer the following statement as true or false: Veterans that access care at the VHA hospital are more likely than others to be at risk for human trafficking”.



“On a scale of 1 to 4, how confident are you in treating and caring for a victim of human trafficking?”

No nurses ranked themselves as extremely confident. No nurses with formal training marked themselves confident.



“Have you ever referred a suspected human trafficking victim to resources to help them?”

Only 5% of all participants reported referring a victim to services.

“Have you ever received any formal training on the identification of human trafficking?”

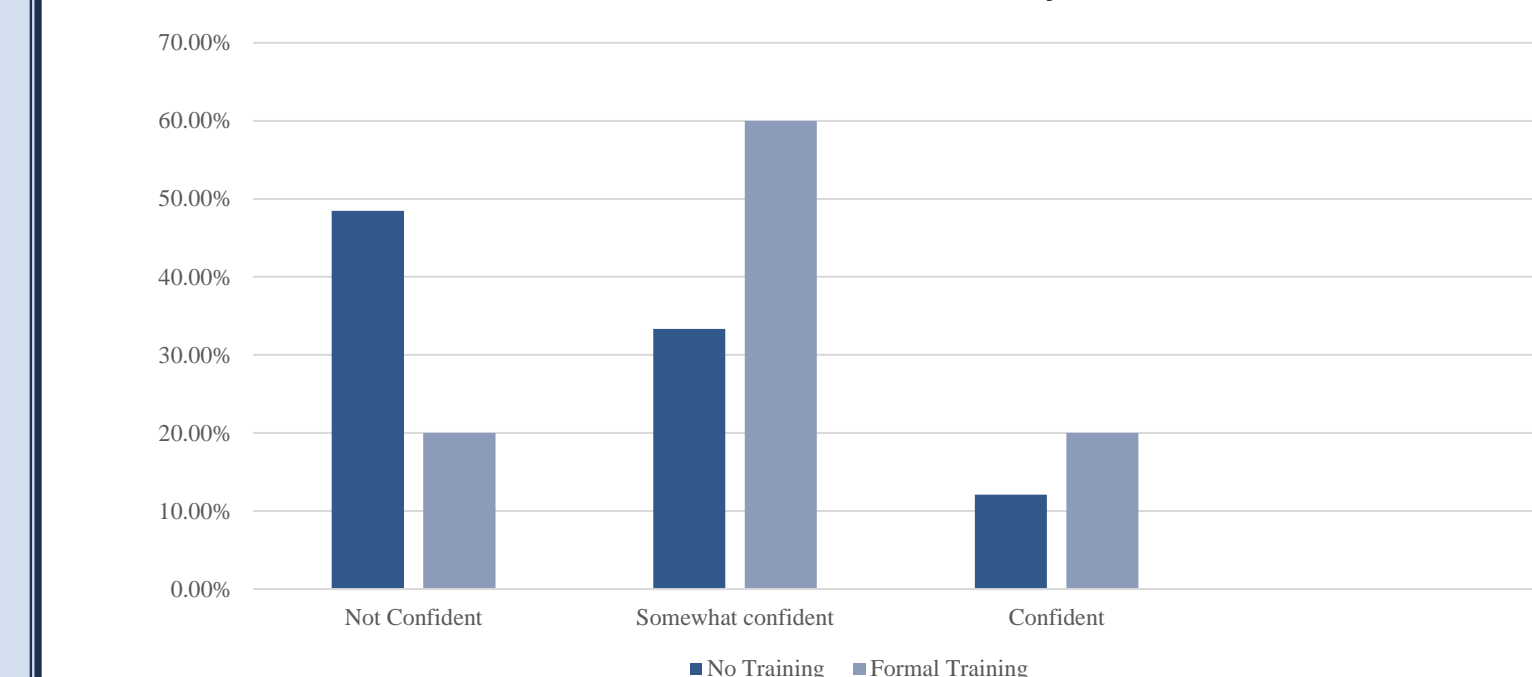
13% of survey participants had formal training.

“Please answer the following statement as true or false: I am likely to encounter a victim of human trafficking in the normal course of my job”.



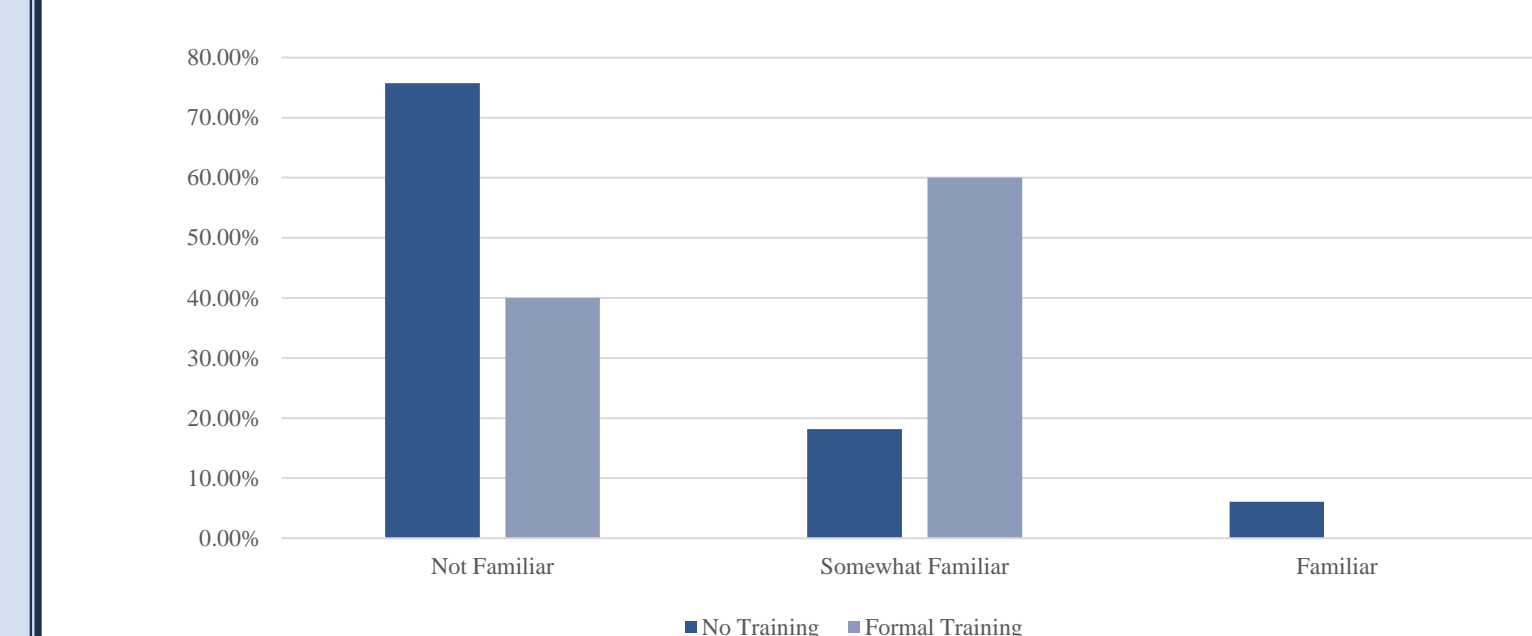
“On a scale of 1 to 4, how confident are you in your ability to identify a victim of human trafficking?”

No nurses ranked themselves as extremely confident.



“On a scale of 1-4, how familiar are you with the resources available to victims of human trafficking?”.

No nurses ranked themselves as extremely familiar. No nurses with formal training marked themselves familiar.



METHODOLOGY

Problem Statement: Human trafficking can have devastating consequences on the health and well-being of victims . Despite having contact with registered nurses. RNs while in captivity, there is evidence that the victims are not being identified and no interventions are pursued to assist them.

Method: Needs assessment as basis for educational intervention
Human Subject Protection: IRB Approval from Daemen College received

Sample: Registered nurses (n=38) who self-enrolled by clicking a link emailed to their work email address by the education department

Data Collection: Online survey with Likert Scale choices and closed ended questions

Data Analysis: Measures of frequency, comparisons across subject groups

CONCLUSIONS

1. Registered nurses report a lack of formal education on human trafficking.
2. Education of health care providers can increase the number of victims identified and helped
3. It is appropriate to use the adult learning theory.
4. RNs retain material best when training is tailored to their schedules and knowledge priorities.
5. By assessing the needs of the registered nurse, educational activities can be prepared and delivered that can save lives.

FUTURE RESEARCH

1. Expand to other healthcare settings
2. Query nurses as to preferred method of learning
3. Include questions about basic definitions and nomenclature of human trafficking

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