RN NURSING STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE OF AND EXPOSURE TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING CONTENT IN UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULA

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DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

- Author has nothing to disclose

- No known conflicts of interest exist

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INTRODUCTION

- Human trafficking (HT) is a public health crisis infiltrating all cultures, demographics, societies, and geography (NUAHT, 2022; Toney–Butler et al., 2023)
- Form of modern-day slavery occurring at alarming rates
- Fastest-growing global criminal enterprise, grossing approximately $150 billion annually (U. S. Department of Homeland Security, 2022)
- Estimated 50 million individuals are trafficked worldwide (ILO, 2022)

INTRODUCTION

- Cases reported in all 50 states and U.S. territories (OTIP, 2020)
- Unlike an illicit drug or arms trade that once sold is gone, humans can be sold over and over again, leading to significant physical ailments and complex trauma
- Majority seen by healthcare professional (HCP) during trafficking, yet remain unidentified (Chisolm-Straker et al., 2016; Jones Day, 2022a; Lederer & Wetzel, 2014)

BACKGROUND

- *Intersection of HT in healthcare*
  - Retrospective studies show 70% - 90% of survivors reported being seen by HCP during trafficking life (Chisolm-Straker et al., 2016; Lederer & Wetzel, 2014)
- *HT knowledge in HCPs*
  - HCPs in an ED (n = 180): 97.8% never had training on clinical presentation; 95% never had training on appropriate treatment of victims; 4.8% reported confidence in identification of victims, and 7.7% reported confidence in treating victims (Chisolm-Straker et al., 2012).
- *Federal- and state-level legal regulations on anti-trafficking education for HCPs*
  - SOAR Training (U.S. Department of HHS, 2018)
  - Only10 states mandate continuing education (Jones Day, 2022b)

BACKGROUND

- *Nursing students' exposure to human trafficking content*
  - One study, by Raker (2022), examined academic nurse educators' knowledge, attitudes, instructional beliefs, and instructional practices of HT in undergraduate and graduate nursing programs.
  - With a total n = 332, 40% of participants (n = 132) indicated that the curriculum in which they taught did not include HT content and an n = 236, 71% reported having no personal experience teaching on HT (Raker, 2022)

Report of Findings from the
2021 RN Nursing Knowledge Survey

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Knowledge Statements	Newly Licensed RN			RN Educator			RN Supervisor			New vs. Educator	New vs. Supervisor	Educator vs. Supervisor
	N	Avg.	Std. Err.	N	Avg.	Std. Err.	N	Avg.	Std. Err.	Difference	Difference	Difference
Security Plan	217	3.49	0.07	159	3.59	0.08	68	3.56	0.11	-0.10	-0.07	0.03
Seizure Precautions	199	4.06	0.06	137	4.11	0.07	67	3.73	0.11	-0.05	0.33	0.38
Self-care	218	3.96	0.07	160	4.05	0.06	68	3.84	0.11	-0.09	0.12	0.21
Self-directed Learning	198	3.36	0.08	156	3.37	0.08	67	3.35	0.13	-0.01	0.21	0.22
Self-limitations	215	3.80	0.07	159	3.96	0.07	68	3.74	0.11	-0.16	0.06	0.22
Sensory Impairment	198	3.41	0.07	137	3.59	0.07	67	3.48	0.11	-0.18	-0.07	0.11
Signs and Symptoms of Complications	217	4.53	0.04	160	4.56	0.05	68	4.44	0.08	-0.03	0.09	0.12
Signs and Symptoms of Infection	197	4.42	0.05	137	4.51	0.05	67	4.58	0.07	-0.09	-0.16	-0.07
Signs of Abuse or Neglect	217	4.35	0.05	160	4.46	0.05	68	4.53	0.07	-0.11	-0.18	-0.07
Signs of Human Trafficking	197	3.80	0.08	137	3.73	0.08	67	3.66	0.13	0.07	0.14	0.07
Signs of Substance Abuse	215	4.13	0.06	159	4.30	0.05	68	4.24	0.10	-0.17	-0.11	0.06
Signs of Toxicity	199	4.24	0.06	137	4.42	0.06	67	4.04	0.11	-0.18	0.20	0.38
Signs of Substance Withdrawal	217	4.34	0.05	160	4.34	0.05	68	4.19	0.09	0.00	0.15	0.15
Skin Assessment	197	4.14	0.05	137	4.26	0.06	67	4.27	0.08	-0.12	-0.13	-0.01
Skin Integrity	218	4.21	0.05	159	4.26	0.05	68	4.19	0.10	-0.05	0.02	0.07
Sleep/Rest Patterns	199	3.27	0.07	138	3.60	0.07	67	3.36	0.11	-0.33	-0.09	0.24
Specimen Collection	217	3.71	0.07	159	3.64	0.07	68	3.62	0.11	0.07	0.09	0.02
Spiritual Considerations	199	3.23	0.07	137	3.61	0.07	67	3.40	0.11	-0.38	-0.17	0.21
Staff Accountability	217	3.82	0.06	159	4.03	0.07	68	4.04	0.10	-0.21	-0.22	-0.01

National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc. (NCSBN), 2022

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Knowledge Statements	Hospital			Long-term Care			Community-based Facility			Other		
	N	Avg.	Std. Err.	N	Avg.	Std. Err.	N	Avg.	Std. Err.	N	Avg.	Std. Err.
Risk Assessment	280	3.86	0.05	41	3.88	0.12	51	4.06	0.10	44	4.27	0.11
Risk Precautions	252	4.07	0.06	32	4.34	0.12	59	4.17	0.09	35	4.20	0.14
Safe Client Handling	281	4.21	0.05	41	4.05	0.10	51	4.20	0.11	44	4.45	0.11
Safety Reporting	251	3.93	0.06	32	4.16	0.15	59	4.00	0.11	35	4.14	0.11
School-age Care	280	3.05	0.06	41	3.00	0.17	51	3.31	0.15	44	3.77	0.13
Scope of Practice	251	4.43	0.05	32	4.59	0.12	54	4.47	0.10	35	4.51	0.10
Security Plan	280	3.90	0.06	41	3.46	0.16	51	3.71	0.13	44	3.93	0.12
Seizure Precautions	251	4.01	0.06	32	4.09	0.16	59	4.02	0.11	35	4.03	0.14
Self-care	282	3.99	0.06	41	3.68	0.14	51	4.02	0.12	44	4.16	0.10
Self-directed Learning	249	3.24	0.06	32	3.28	0.22	59	3.41	0.13	35	3.66	0.14
Self-limitations	279	3.86	0.06	41	3.66	0.14	51	3.86	0.13	44	4.11	0.11
Sensory Impairment	251	3.41	0.06	31	3.71	0.15	59	3.58	0.11	35	3.57	0.14
Signs and Symptoms of Complications	281	4.52	0.04	41	4.39	0.12	51	4.49	0.09	44	4.75	0.09
Signs and Symptoms of Infection	249	4.45	0.05	32	4.53	0.10	59	4.63	0.08	35	4.43	0.10
Signs of Abuse or Neglect	282	4.38	0.04	40	4.45	0.09	51	4.43	0.10	44	4.64	0.08
Signs of Human Trafficking	250	3.75	0.07	31	3.90	0.19	59	3.71	0.13	35	3.77	0.14
Signs of Substance Abuse	279	4.16	0.05	41	4.07	0.13	50	4.22	0.11	44	4.57	0.08
Signs of Toxicity	251	4.26	0.05	32	4.38	0.15	59	4.22	0.10	35	4.31	0.13
Signs of Substance Withdrawal	282	4.33	0.04	41	4.07	0.14	50	4.18	0.11	44	4.52	0.09
Skin Assessment	250	4.14	0.05	32	4.53	0.11	59	4.20	0.07	34	4.21	0.08
Skin Integrity	281	4.22	0.04	41	4.27	0.10	51	4.06	0.13	44	4.36	0.12

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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The intersection of HT in healthcare is significant and these missed opportunities are profound. HCPs have access to this population while they are being trafficked, as these victims can experience emergent healthcare conditions and needs. Studies consistently show that providers routinely fail to recognize these trafficked patients. With over 4 million nurses currently working in the U.S. in all facets along the healthcare continuum, they are ideally situated to identify and treat these individuals, if properly educated.

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AACN ESSENTIALS

- **Domain 1: Knowledge for Nursing Practice**
  - 1.2 Apply theory and research-based knowledge from nursing, the arts, humanities, and other sciences
  - 1.3 Demonstrate clinical judgment founded on a broad knowledge base
    - 1.3a Demonstrate clinical reasoning
    - 1.3c Incorporate knowledge from nursing and other disciplines to support clinical judgment
- **Domain 2: Person-Centered Care**
  - 2.3f Apply nursing knowledge to gain a holistic perspective of the person, family, community, and population
  - 2.4a Synthesize assessment data in the context of the individual's current preferences, situation, and experience
  - 2.4d Understand and apply the results of social screening, psychological testing, laboratory data, imaging studies, and other diagnostic tests in actions and plans of care

(AACN, 2021)

AACN ESSENTIALS

- **Domain 3: Population Health**
  - 3.1a Define a target population including its functional and problem-solving capabilities (anywhere in the continuum of care)
  - 3.1f Develop an action plan to meet an identified need(s), including evaluation methods
- **Domain 5: Quality and Safety**
  - 5.1a Recognize nursing's essential role in improving healthcare quality and safety
  - 5.3a Identify actual and potential level of risks to providers within the workplace

(AACN, 2021)

DESIGN

- Cross-sectional quantitative study using the National Student Nurses' Association (NSNA) was conducted
- Data were collected electronically via email recruitment to $n = 40,000$ meeting inclusion criteria which were being a member of the NSNA, and being a current or recently graduated RN undergraduate nursing student (within past year)

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METHODS

- The researchers' developed tool, *Student Nurse Human Trafficking Education Assessment Tool* (Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.828), was sent via email
- Descriptive statistics, *t*-tests, one-way between groups ANOVA, correlation procedures, and multiple regressions were conducted using SPSS 27

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RESULTS

$n = 644$

Sample characteristics & demographics

*Nationwide representation

Table 1
Sample demographics: personal characteristics.

		n	Percent
Gender	Female	578	89.8
	Male	54	8.4
	Non-binary/third gender	6	0.9
	Prefer not to say	6	0.9
	Total	644	100
Age	18–24	234	36.3
	25–34	193	30
	35–44	137	21.3
	45–54	70	10.9
	55–64	8	1.2
	>65	2	0.3
	Total	644	100
Race/ethnicity	American Indian or Alaska Native	8	1.2
	Asian	26	4
	Black or African American	54	8.4
	Hispanic or Latino	89	13.8
	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	7	1.1
	White	430	66.8
	Other	30	4.7
	Total	644	100

RESULTS

Academic characteristics

Table 3
Sample demographics: academic characteristics.

		n	Percent
Degree attainment	Diploma	10	1.6
	Associate degree	190	29.5
	Baccalaureate degree	409	63.5
	Other	35	5.4
	Total	644	100
Academic standing (diploma)	First year student	2	20
	Second year student	4	40
	Third year student	1	10
	Fourth year student	1	10
	Newly graduated	2	20
	Other	0	0
	Total	10	100
Academic standing (associate)	First year student	66	34.7
	Second year student	63	33.2
	Third year student	16	8.4
	Fourth year student	16	8.4
	Newly graduated	21	11.1
	Other	8	4.2
	Total	190	100
Academic standing (baccalaureate)	First year student	64	15.6
	Second year student	47	11.5
	Third year student	90	22
	Fourth year student	130	31.8
	Newly graduated	43	10.5
	Other	35	8.6
	Total	409	100
Academic standing (other)	First year student	12	34.3
	Second year student	6	17.1
	Third year student	1	2.9
	Fourth year student	3	8.6
	Newly graduated	8	22.9
	Other	5	14.2
	Total	35	100

RESULTS

Warm greetings, dear NSNA member. Many heartfelt thanks for your time and dedication to your nursing studies. Thank you for following the link to this survey, which is short in nature and will only take approximately 3-5 minutes to complete. THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY IS TO COLLECT BASELINE DATA REGARDING HUMAN TRAFFICKING KNOWLEDGE AND EXPOSURE TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING CONTENT DURING YOUR UNDERGRADUATE NURSING STUDIES. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary and you may stop at any point and for any reason. If you agree to participate, please know that your responses will be completely anonymous, with no way of connecting your responses back to you. Please do not sign your name to the survey or include any information that makes you identifiable.
Thank you again for your time.

I understand that my participation in this survey is completely voluntary and I may stop at any time and for any reason. To ensure privacy, I understand that my information and identity will be completely anonymous, as there is no way to connect my responses to my name or contact information.
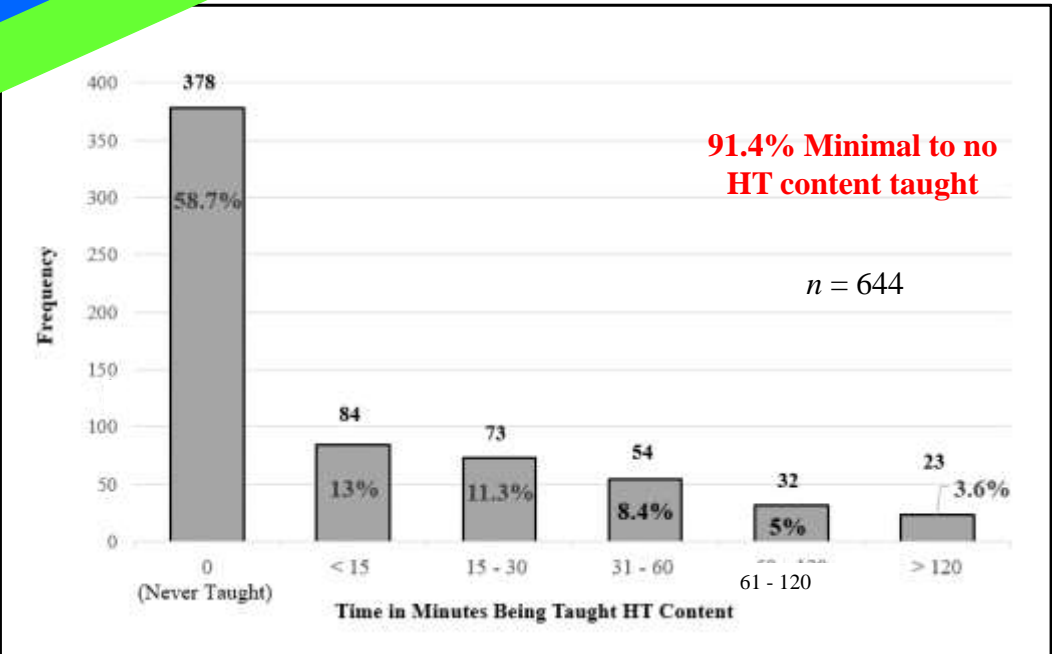By selecting yes, you agree to participate in this survey.
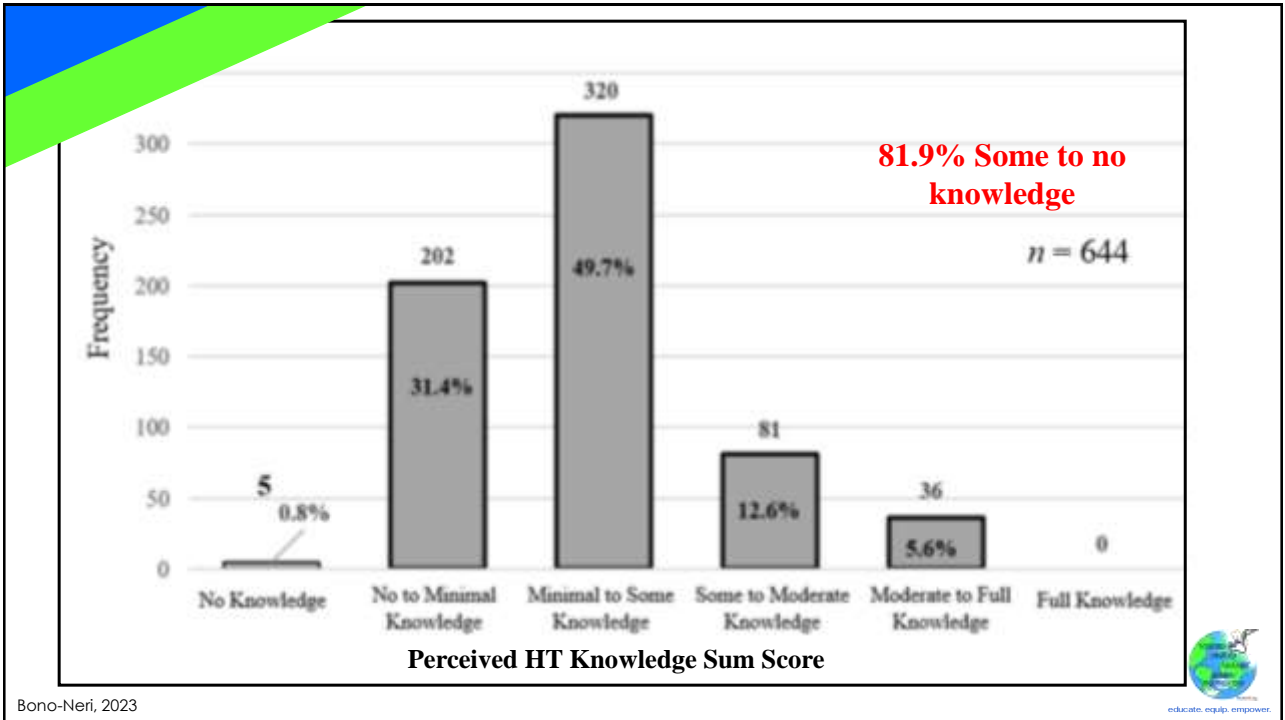
Yes

No

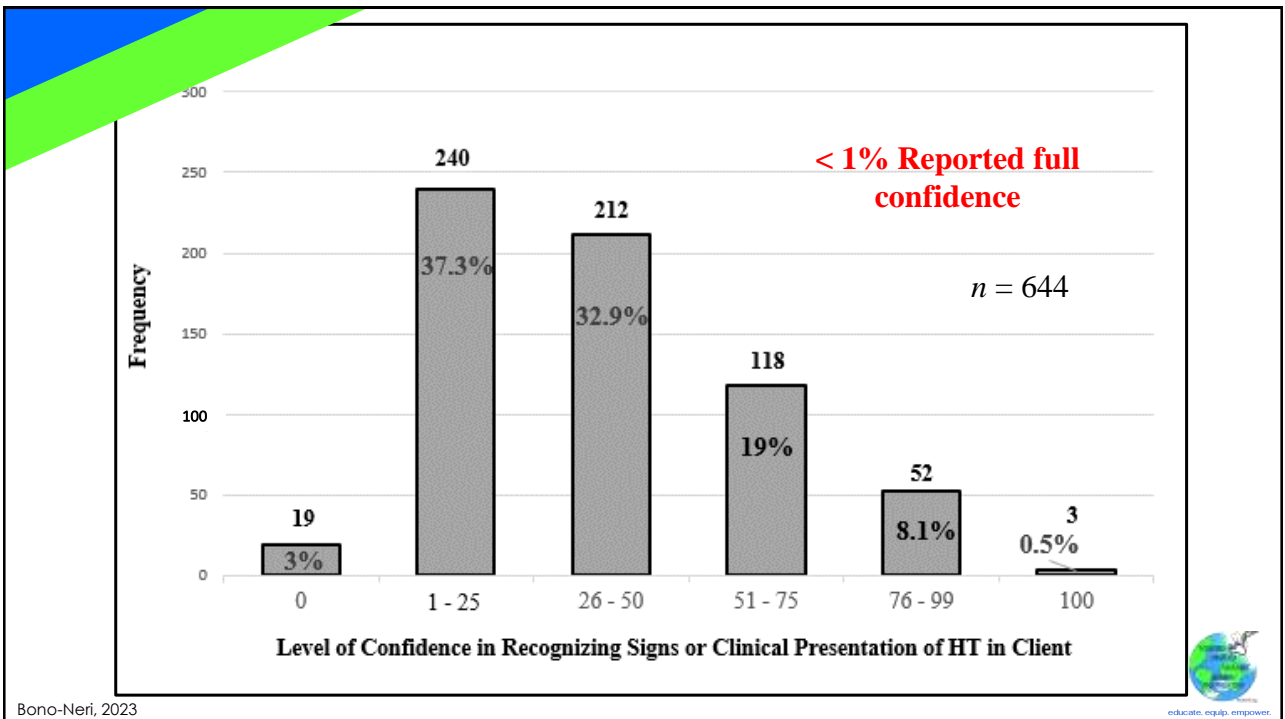**Student Nurse Human Trafficking Education Assessment Tool (SNHTEAT)**

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.828	.760	18

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91.4% Minimal to no HT content taught

$n = 644$

Time in Minutes Being Taught HT Content

- 0 (Never Taught): 378 — 58.7%
- < 15: 84 — 13%
- 15 - 30: 73 — 11.3%
- 31 - 60: 54 — 8.4%
- 61 - 120: 32 — 5%
- > 120: 23 — 3.6%

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81.9% Some to no knowledge

$n = 644$

Perceived HT Knowledge Sum Score

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< 1% Reported full confidence

$n = 644$

Level of Confidence in Recognizing Signs or Clinical Presentation of HT in Client
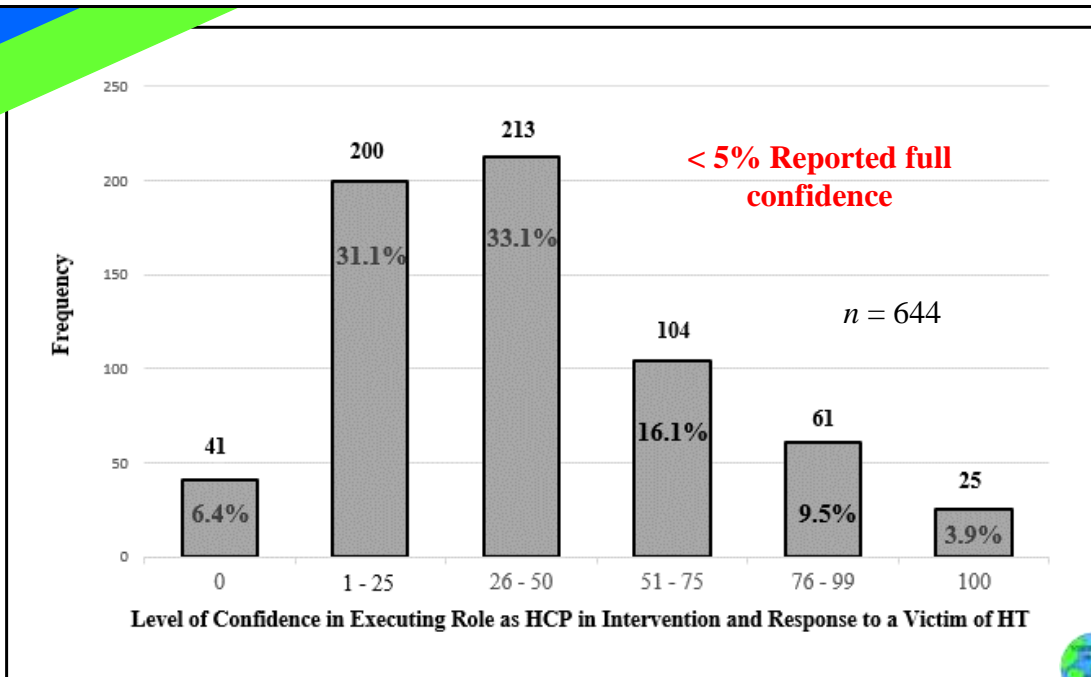
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MULTIPLE REGRESSION

$n = 643$

- DV: Level of confidence recognizing signs/clinical presentations of HT in a client (VAS: 0 – 100)
    - IV: Minutes being taught HT content, minutes self-taught on HT, perceived knowledge, formal training, mandated states
    - $R = .777, R^2 = .604$

- DV: Level of confidence in executing role as current/future HCP with victim of HT (VAS: 0 – 100)
    - IV: Minutes being taught HT content, minutes self-taught on HT, perceived knowledge, formal training, mandated states
    - $R = .662, R^2 = .438$

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CONCLUSION

- Nurses play a critical role in identifying, assisting, and advocating for victims of HT
- Unfortunately, this population of victims too often remains unrecognized due to HCPs' lack of education on HT
- Undergraduate nursing programs are uniquely positioned to address this problem by educating nursing students on HT which will yield improved abilities to identify and care for this population
- These victims need to be promptly identified and treated appropriately with trauma-informed care, but without proper education of HCPs, these victims go unidentified and remain hidden ⟶ MISSED OPPORTUNITY

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