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Human Trafficking: An Exploratory Review of Awareness and Training Videos

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ABSTRACT

With the advent of a relatively newly recognized social phenomenon, human trafficking, there are dozens of agencies providing awareness and training materials on the subject. Many of these materials are available online through these agencies and are free to use. However, little is known about the effectiveness of these training and public-awareness materials, their pedagogical application, or if knowledge about human trafficking is increased because of these media. This study conducted a systematic review of publicly available online human-trafficking training and public-awareness videos using Bloom's (1956) pedagogical framework to assess the potential for knowledge transference. Findings from this study suggest that most of the videos did not appear to use Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning to convey knowledge, and as such the potential for knowledge transference is statistically significant. Authors provide potential practice and research implications.

KEYWORDS

Bloom's Taxonomy; human trafficking; systematic review; videos

Introduction

Although trafficking is not a new phenomenon, as human slavery has existed for centuries, its understanding in its modern context as human trafficking is relatively newly recognized. Human trafficking is the exploitation (sexually or any other form of labor) of another person for the financial benefit of a third party. To prove human trafficking occurred, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) established that at least one of three elements are required: force, fraud, or coercion (TVPA, 2000). The TVPA has been reauthorized three times since 2000, and was recently included as an addendum to the 2013 Violence against Women Act (VAWA; 2013) passed by Congress on February 28, 2013.

Finding that the clandestine nature of the crime and the lack of knowledge about it were far reaching, the TVPA established programming to provide service professionals and law-enforcement officials with

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the training necessary to be able to identify and appropriately handle these cases. Further, to maximize the importance of public knowledge in the identification of suspected trafficking cases, programming and monies were provided through the TVPA to raise public awareness about the phenomenon. This study seeks to understand how well media platforms (i.e., public awareness and training videos) transfer knowledge about human trafficking to the public in the United States.

Prevalence estimates

Reliable estimates concerning trafficking victims are difficult to find. Since the implementation of TVPA policies and programming, statistics have been more easily acquired, although some would argue that they are still ambiguous (Clawson, Dutch, Solomon, & Grace, 2009; Smith, Vardaman, & Snow, 2009; Texas Attorney General, 2011). In an effort to establish more accurate estimates of human trafficking, Farrell and colleagues (2010) conducted a review of available prevalence estimates. According to Fedina (2015) and Weitzer (2011), the Farrell et al. study provides a more rigorous accounting of estimates available concerning the scope of trafficking in the United States today, although Weitzer contends the analysis is still flawed and the estimates are still unclear.

Even so, using available data from national trafficking-reporting systems and economic forecasting models, Farrell et al. (2010) estimated between 5,166 and 60,467 victims of trafficking exist in the United States, but they advise that these estimates are cautionary and should not be used as statistical facts. Additionally, many victims are believed to be women and children (Chacon, 2006). Though Farrell et al. provide some perspective on the scope of human trafficking, inaccuracies about human trafficking continue to exist. For example, in the training/awareness presentation available to the public through the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the narrator states that anywhere from 12 to 27 million people are trafficked worldwide each year. Weitzer (2011; 2014) and Fedina (2015) offer strong criticism of these and other referenced estimates that are often stated as fact with little empirical evidence to support them.

Based on the estimates for the prevalence of human trafficking, the TVPA established three objectives this policy initiative was to achieve: prevention, protection, and prosecution. The training and public-awareness component of the TVPA objectives falls under the prevention arm. The Department of Justice (DOJ) Bureau of Justice Administration (BJA) reported that 85,685 law enforcement and other persons have been trained in the identification of trafficking victims (DOJ, BJA, 2014). In addition, the Polaris Project, which has operated the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) since 2008, reported a 64% increase in calls from 2010 to 2011 due to the increased promotion of the hotline number and awareness of the phenomenon of human trafficking (Polaris Project, 2012). As a result, since the establishment of the TVPA, public knowledge about trafficking has increased (Baker, 2013), but how well these efforts are informing the public about human trafficking is still not clear.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this exploratory study was, first, to determine whether publicly available videos purportedly focused on increasing public awareness of human trafficking and related issues promoted critical levels of thinking. The second goal was to understand the degree to which the videos incorporated evidence-informed knowledge or provided some insight into the experiences of those affected. A third goal was to investigate the degree to which the kind of agency producing the video promoted critical levels of thinking. Lastly, the authors wanted to investigate whether a single form of trafficking (e.g., sex or labor trafficking) was represented as opposed to a more holistic presentation of human-trafficking forms. The overrepresentation of a single form of trafficking would suggest a “genderization” of the phenomenon within public awareness and training videos and may falsely imply the seriousness or prevalence of one form over the other.

This study presents several important implications about publicly available training and awareness videos, which are often used to train professionals in the field as well as the general public. One potential impact of this study may point to the need for more purposeful use of pedagogical guides

by which to transfer knowledge about trafficking to the intended audience and a more thoughtful use of available evidenced-based knowledge about the phenomenon. The results of this impact might suggest the level of quality of information transference about trafficking. Through a review of these videos, we will be able to understand the overall quality and the nature of publicly available videos on human trafficking. Additionally, through this investigation we may more clearly understand the degree to which these videos present singular forms (i.e., only sex trafficking) of trafficking or present a more full view of the phenomena (i.e., various forms of labor and sexual trafficking), thus encouraging officials and the public to more comprehensively understand the indications of and resources for human trafficking.

Review of the literature

On the outset of this literature review, it became clear that evaluations of current public-awareness campaigns of human trafficking are rare ([Nieuwenhuys & Pecoud, 2007](#); [Thainiyom, 2011](#)). The total number of human-trafficking training evaluations found was six. Of these six, one focused on Russian public-awareness campaigns ([Schatral, 2010](#)), another on MTV's EXIT Campaign ([Thainiyom, 2011](#)), two from a feminist critique ([Andrijasevic & Anderson, 2009](#); [Sharma, 2003](#)), another from a European migration perspective ([Nieuwenhuys & Pecoud, 2007](#)), and the sixth focused on the technologies that support countertrafficking activities ([Lindquist, 2009](#)). Though all six offered some method of evaluative criteria within the review, none of the reviews provided the academy with a systematic methodology by which to evaluate current human-trafficking-training and public-awareness videos for their empirical, pedagogical, or efficacious rigor. Further, these valuable critiques of human-trafficking awareness did not provide a holistic understanding of the strengths, weaknesses, or consistency of these media in reaching the intended audience. "Existing research unfortunately does not provide independent and reliable assessments of the success of these campaigns, yet one cannot help thinking that like many migration-control policies, they will have limited results" ([Nieuwenhuys & Pecoud, 2007](#), p. 1691).

Media campaigns

Media campaigns, in general, have been used to curtail emigration through the use of fear tactics ([Nieuwenhuys & Pecoud, 2007](#); [Schatral, 2010](#)) whether in the form of images of potential victims of trafficking or in words. Indeed, information campaigns are central in anti-trafficking programs as they are thought to "reduce the vulnerability of potential victims by raising their awareness regarding the risks of being caught in criminal networks" ([Pécoud, 2010](#), p. 189). However, there are several critiques of migration and anti-trafficking information campaigns as outlined in [Pécoud \(2010\)](#) and [Carling and Hernandez-Carretero \(2011\)](#) suggesting that these efforts attempt to deter migration through fear of the dangers of migration, do not inform prospective migrants of alternatives to migration or their rights during migration and imply that smart, hardworking people do not migrate. [Schatral \(2010\)](#) suggests that there is an inherent gendered messaging found in anti-trafficking public-awareness campaigns that does not provide the target audience with information relevant to their situation. [Nieuwenhuys and Pecoud \(2007\)](#) further suggest that these migration-focused countertrafficking awareness campaigns actually serve to limit exposure to potential trafficking vulnerability by preventing migration flows. In fact, the information appears to be placing blame on migrants for failing to prudently protect their well-being and focuses on the individual's decisions, not the possible root causes of vulnerability to exploitation ([Nieuwenhuys & Pecoud, 2007](#); [Pécoud, 2010](#); [Schatral, 2010](#)).

[Baker \(2013\)](#) analyzed stories and images of sex trafficking within U.S. public media outlets from an array of interest groups (e.g., celebrities, government agencies, nonprofit, religious, and political groups) attempting to inform the public about this issue. [Baker \(2013\)](#) suggests there are common narratives throughout awareness campaigns that frame the issue in simplistic,

paternalistic rescue and rescuer paradigms undermining the seriousness of the structural forces contributing to the trafficking of people. “[Activists] must be very conscious about articulating their activism in ways that do not reinforce disempowerment” that victims of trafficking have already suffered (Baker, 2013, p. 20). Additionally, Haynes (2010) suggested that celebrities ought to be better coached to offer more valuable messaging about human trafficking in general and ought not to offer policy suggestions but rather leave policy changing to the experts. Celebrities are not experts about human trafficking and will often disseminate false or outdated information, as well as offer policy solutions about something in which they have little expertise. They ultimately may be doing far more harm than good in terms of educating the public, and policy makers, about the issue (Haynes, 2010). This critique in media campaigns suggests perhaps the messaging about human trafficking to the public is confusing, lacking in actual knowledge transference, and ultimately undermining the objectives of the public-awareness goals established by the TVPA.

Evaluations of human-trafficking media campaigns

In examining specific evaluations of awareness campaigns on human trafficking (Schatral, 2010; Thainiyom, 2011) the results are muddled. Schatral focused his examination on the “genderization” of the messaging the International Organization of Migration (IOM) was promoting in Russia—not the overall effectiveness of the campaign itself. Thainiyom took a different approach to measuring MTV’s EXIT campaign’s effectiveness. The study essentially conducted a pre- and posttest on respondents’ knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors using a questionnaire (Mind-Set Barometer; no Cronbach’s alpha reported) designed to measure such responses and then conducted focus groups with participants about what they had learned. The participants were shown one of two documentaries (*Sold* or *Traffic*) and posttested 2 weeks later. Results indicated moderate increases in awareness of the issue of human trafficking with barometer points ranging from an increase of 15 points to 19 points.

Sharma’s (2003) and Andrijasevic and Anderson (2009) critiques of human-trafficking-awareness campaigns from feminist perspectives challenged the nature in which target audiences are pursued. In the past, “anti-trafficking information campaigns [have] eroticize[d] and fetishize[d] women’s bodies” (p. 151), amassing stereotypes about gender, cultural identity, and embodied patriarchal assumptions that women are unsuspecting victims and should stay home (Andrijasevic & Anderson, 2009). Hence, how professionals and the general public are taught to identify a trafficking victim is such that they would fit an “administrative category” that “is notoriously difficult, the instrumentalising of these concepts has exercised lawyers, academics, and frontline officials alike” (Andrijasevic & Anderson, 2009, p. 153).

Sharma (2003) argues that countertrafficking-awareness campaigns have been hijacked by incorrectly focusing the debate on the problem of migration rather than the socially constructed conditions that create vulnerability to exploitation. This failure to correctly focus the overarching concern, according to Sharma, creates a duality in migration politics that favors more affluent migrants like tourists over less advantaged migrants who are seen as incapable of prudently protecting their well-being (Nieuwenhuys & Pecoud, 2007; Schatral, 2010). Andrijasevic and Anderson (2009) suggest these campaigns would be more effective if they moved beyond the “victim model” and removed the fear of deportation from migration policy by redirecting the responsibility of protecting immigrant labor rights from immigration authorities whose job is not to protect immigrants but to citizens of the nation. However, Sharma, Schatral, and Andrijasevic and Anderson offer more conceptual critiques of human-trafficking-awareness programs—not an empirical analysis of such programs.

Though studies specifically examining the effectiveness of human-trafficking-awareness campaigns are few, there have been several studies on world sporting events and the phenomenon of a surge in public concern about a massive uptick in human trafficking because of the events (it should be noted that this concern is arguably centered on sex trafficking exclusively). The notion that trafficking increases in

locations hosting super sporting events is suggested to be largely unfounded according to these studies (Gould, 2014; Haynes, 2010; Matheson & Finkel, 2013; Richter, Scorgie, Chersich, & Luchters, 2014). Even so, many of these studies suggest that these events provide a captive audience to be educated about human trafficking (i.e., What is trafficking? How can one identify trafficking? How to illicit a response to a suspected trafficking situation?) but caution that moral panic be discouraged (Gould, 2014; Haynes, 2010). These critiques suggest trafficking public-awareness campaigns may not be informing the public to critically evaluate their environments or motivating citizens to act against a suspected abuse. Further, these critiques perhaps support concerns raised by Pecoud, and others, that these campaigns dichotomize “good” and “bad” migration positioning trafficked individuals as inherently incapable of acting efficaciously on their own behalf.

Bloom’s Taxonomy of Learning and e-learning platforms

In an effort to identify a mechanism by which to evaluate human-trafficking public awareness and training videos published by anti-trafficking organizations, the authors looked to a well-known educational pedagogy: Bloom’s Taxonomy of Cognitive Learning. In 1956, Bloom created a learning taxonomy by which educators can better evaluate educational objectives being achieved and those objectives to be achieved (Halawi, McCarthy, & Pieres, 2009). This study focuses on the cognitive domain of Bloom’s Taxonomy because of its “applicability in secondary and postsecondary education”—or adult learning (Halawi et al., 2009). The cognitive taxonomy has six levels, which can be understood to exist on a continuum: knowledge (memorization and recall), comprehension (organization and interpretation of information), application (problem solving), analysis (identifying underlying organization of concepts), synthesis (combining ideas to create something new), and evaluation (making judgments about and creating resolutions for information) (Bloom, 1956; Halawi et al., 2009).

Each of these levels, though on a continuum, should also build upon each other such that the higher levels of critical thinking (i.e., evaluation and synthesis) are not baseless opinions but rather are founded upon previously learned material surrounding the topic at hand. For example, in human-trafficking-awareness and training videos, we would expect a somewhat linear progression of learning from defining human trafficking (i.e., knowledge and comprehension), to an understanding of what trafficking entails or looks like (i.e., comprehension and application), how to identify trafficking (i.e., synthesis), and then how to act upon the learner’s suspicion about trafficking (i.e., evaluation).

In addition to the application of an evaluative tool, such as Bloom’s Taxonomy, researchers suggest several considerations when designing effective teaching media. Oud (2009) suggests that effective media includes creating interactive sections, giving the learner control over the learning process through pacing and interactive learning sections, promoting engagement, soliciting feedback from the students, promoting critical thinking, and knowing the student (audience).

It should be noted that other media-centric evaluative frameworks were considered but were found to be inappropriate for this study. For example, Goh’s (2002) framework required an assessment in the level of trust, collaboration, and leadership perception of the media consumer. In this study, the perception of the level of trust, collaboration, and leadership of the video viewer in general is nearly impossible to determine as only the researchers’ perception of trust could be evaluated. Another possible framework was that of Lavis, Robertson, Woodside, McLeod, and Abelson (2003), which evaluates the effectiveness of research institutions’ transference of knowledge to the public. Upon closer inspection of the agencies included in this study, none were research institutions; rather, all were social service, law-enforcement, or governmental organizations whose focus is not research and research dissemination but on service provision. Hence, we employed Bloom’s Taxonomy in this study for its ease of use, the specific criteria the Taxonomy includes, and its acceptance as a tool for adult learning.

Methods

Study criteria

Given the exploratory nature of this study, it was guided by three research questions: (a) Are current training videos on human trafficking using commonly accepted estimates and basic information to inform their intended audience?; (b) Do human-trafficking videos employ a commonly recognized teaching pedagogical framework to guide their training process?; and (c) How consistently are human-trafficking videos using the elements of Bloom's Taxonomy to inspire critical thinking about human trafficking?

To be included in this study, the media had to fit the following criteria: Only publically available video media accessible online; the videos had to have been produced by agencies based in the United States since 2008 to reflect the most recent Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 (TVPA, 2008); the videos had to be in English as English is the common language among the reviewers; the videos demonstrated all six elements of Bloom's Taxonomy; videos included at least one human-trafficking-victim testimonial or human-trafficking-investigation case study; and the videos demonstrated the use of evidence-informed material as indicated by the use of cited information.

The inclusion of a testimonial requirement sought to bridge the lower levels of cognitive learning to the higher levels of learning from informational to abstract. Further, the requirement of examining the evidenced-based material in the videos was an attempt to evaluate the kind of knowledge being transferred to the learner. Evidenced-based material was defined as any citation of fact (i.e., the example given above from the Department of Homeland Security training video cited in the introduction). We wanted to explore the kinds of facts in terms of providing credit or citations to factual information being disseminated to the viewership as there is a dearth of evidenced-based material available about human trafficking.

Data collection

Initial data collection was conducted with an extensive search of videos on youtube.com and google videos, which resulted in locating 470 information videos. After the initial screening, the researchers realized many of the videos would not fit the research criteria and were not suitable for this review (e.g., the video was a recorded opinion of a lay person about human trafficking). Therefore, the search and sample inclusion criteria were modified.

As a result, we refined our search to a more reputable list of agencies or human-trafficking-video sources that would enable us to more accurately conduct a review of available videos intended to promote critical thinking regarding the causes, sequelae, or impact of human trafficking. As a result, the Salvation Army's Human Trafficking resource list was selected and then used to obtain the names of organizations providing services to human-trafficking victims. Only U.S.-based agencies with English-language videos were included in this study. An initial list of 71 agencies with relevant available, or published video content, was generated from the Web site, and the set of available videos divided between the four researchers. Each researcher was thus assigned 18 agencies to search for available videos. Immediately, 39 of the agencies were removed from the research list because they did not have a video, the videos provided through these agency Web sites were not publically available, or the agencies were not based in the United States. A total of 44 videos from 33 agencies were included in the final review. Each researcher rated the video they had watched using the criteria provided above (see study criteria three research questions), and the researchers met to discuss their findings.

Though the study is exploratory in design, two overarching outcomes were sought. First, whether the publicly available videos purporting to be focused on increasing public awareness of human trafficking and related issues transferred knowledge of human trafficking through promoting critical levels of thinking by using Bloom's Taxonomy. Secondly, the study sought to identify the degree to

which the videos incorporated evidence-informed knowledge to provide some insight into the experiences of those affected.

Sample

A total of 44 videos from 33 agencies were included in the final sample. Of the 33 agencies, 38 (86.4%) were NGOs/social service and six (13.6%) were law-enforcement/governmental agencies. Of the 44 videos, 20% were intended as training and 80% as public-awareness videos. The four researchers observed a total of 8 hours, 9 minutes, and 32 seconds of videos, with an average video length of 11 minutes. The longest videos observed were 45 minutes, while the shortest were 30-second public-service announcements (PSAs). All videos were copyrighted in or after 2008 to reflect the most recent version of the TVPA at the time of data collection and were accessed through the video or training material located on the Web sites of the agencies described above. The number of times the videos were downloaded or viewed was not provided by the agencies.

Procedures

The researchers employed Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning to assess if audiences would possibly gain knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation skills pertaining to human trafficking based on the content of the videos. While coding, the team of four referenced a table of the taxonomy schema, upon which we agreed on interpretations of each level of the taxonomy prior to coding. The team also recorded direct observations on a spreadsheet to support the observer's code. Simultaneously, the team evenly divided all of the videos to analyze the presence of Bloom's Taxonomy levels, the type of video (i.e., public awareness or training video), use of testimonial and evidenced-informed material or citations of such information, type of trafficking presented (i.e., labor or sex), length of video, and type of agency (i.e., nonprofit or governmental). The research team initially made individual notes about each category for each video and then dichotomized whether the variable was present or not in present (yes = 0/no = 1).

To clearly identify each level of the Taxonomy, the research team met and agreed that the criteria of knowledge would be coded "present" whenever a video provided a definition of human trafficking and referenced evidence-based information about trafficking. Comprehension would be coded "present" whenever there was a case illustration of the definition or a quiz on the information given about trafficking in the video. Application would be coded "yes" whenever a video provided examples of how one can use knowledge and comprehension to be more aware of their environments and how trafficking can occur. Analysis would be coded "present" whenever a video demonstrated a deeper examination of given definitions of trafficking or testimonials. Synthesis would be coded "present" if the video synthesized presented information to help the viewer understand different ways interventions can occur and how the viewer can intervene. Finally, the evaluation would be coded "present" if the video presented information about how individuals could use the information provided in the video to identify potential victims of trafficking and to connect with appropriate agencies for help. Examples of evaluation could be common "red flags" of trafficking, exemplar questions to ask individuals who may be trafficked, and the presentation of the national human-trafficking hotline number.

Throughout the data collection process, the team regularly met to discuss findings and to ensure that the team was accurately entering the data and that the team was recording the information consistently on the type of video (i.e., public awareness or training video), use of testimonial and evidenced-informed material or citations of such information, type of trafficking presented (i.e., labor or sex), length of video, and type of agency (i.e., nonprofit or governmental).

Data analysis

Descriptive analyses were conducted using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.0 for Windows (IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, IBM Corp., Armonk, NY) to examine the sample characteristics of the set of videos. A p value of .05 was used to determine statistical significance and two-tailed tests were used for all statistical tests. The observational variables were coded into dichotomous variables such as adherence to the critical-thinking criteria in Bloom's Taxonomy or the use of references or evidenced-based approaches to conceptualizing or presenting information about human trafficking. Descriptive statistics were calculated to include frequencies and proportions for the agencies and videos. A Pearson chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the association between watching a training or public video and the four categorical variables of Bloom's Taxonomy (i.e., application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation), trafficking testimonial or case study, and the identifiable use of evidence-based (i.e., referenced studies, accurate demographical estimates) material.

Upon examining relationships within the data, a logistic regression was conducted to determine whether the type of video, use of testimonial, and use of evidenced-based information predicted the odds of adhering to knowledge-transference pedagogy, in this case Bloom's Taxonomy. The criterion variables were dichotomized into no = 0/yes = 1 responses for public or training videos, respectively; the use of evidence-based information (no = 0/yes = 1); and the use of a trafficking testimonial or case study (no = 0/yes = 1). The dependent variables were dichotomized into no = 1/ yes = 0 for the use of Bloom's Taxonomy of learning. The Forward-Stepwise (Wald) method was used for analysis. Reviewers did compare agreement of knowledge gain, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation; though an interrater reliability was not calculated. Items not closely agreed, or agreed, by the majority of raters were not included for analysis.

Results

Descriptive analyses

The frequency distribution in Table 1 indicates that a ratio of 80% of the videos were public awareness while 20% were training videos. In addition, 86% of the public-awareness videos came from nonprofit/ social service agencies while 13% of the videos were derived from government or law-enforcement agencies.

As seen in Table 2, the X^2 relationship between watching training or public videos relative to the application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (aspects of Bloom's Taxonomy) results indicate that

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Human-Trafficking Videos.

	Frequency	%
Type of Video		
Public awareness	35	79.5
Training video	9	20.5
Type of Agency		
Nongovernmental	38	86.4
Law enforcement/Government	6	13.6
Use of Evidenced-Based Material		
Yes	12	26.7
No	32	73.7
Use of Victim Testimonial or Case Study		
Yes	25	56.8
No	19	43.2
Type of Trafficking		
Sex trafficking	38	86.4
Labor trafficking	6	11.4

Note. $N = 44$.

Table 2. Chi-Square for Human-Trafficking Videos.

	χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Cramer's <i>V</i>
Type of Video				
Application	7.124	1	.008 (two-tailed)	.402*
Analysis	7.684	1	.006 (two-tailed)	.418*
Synthesis	4.490	1	.034 (two-tailed)	.319*
Evaluation	12.503	1	.001 (two-tailed)	.523**
Use of Evidence-Based Material				
Synthesis	4.714	1	.030 (two-tailed)	.327*
Use of Testimonial or Case Study				
Application	8.481	1	.004 (two-tailed)	.439*
Evaluation	7.362	1	.007 (two-tailed)	.409*

Note. *N* = 44.

p* < .05. *p* < .001.

significant relationships were found between application skills and the type of video, $X^2(1, 44) = 7.12$, $p = .008$ (two-tailed), Cramer's *V* = .40, analysis skills and type of video, $X^2(1, 44) = 7.68$, $p = .006$ (two-tailed), Cramer's *V* = .42, synthesis skills and type of video, $X^2(1, 44) = 4.49$, $p = .034$ (two-tailed), Cramer's *V* = .319, and evaluation skills and type of video, $X^2(1, 44) = 12.05$, $p = .001$ (two-tailed), Cramer's *V* = .523. In addition, it was found that there was also significant association between evidence-based material and use of synthesis, $X^2(1, 44) = 4.71$, $p = .030$ (two-tailed), Cramer's *V* = .33. There was also statistical significance among associations between the use of Bloom's Taxonomy and testimonials or case studies for the aspects of application, $X^2(1, 44) = 8.48$, $p = .004$ (two-tailed), Cramer's *V* = .44, and evaluation skills, $X^2(1, 44) = 7.36$, $p = .007$ (two-tailed), Cramer's *V* = .41. That is, all of the higher level critical-thinking or knowledge-transfer constructs represented by Bloom's Taxonomy were evident within the set of available videos reviewed.

Chi-square findings then confirmed that lower level cognitive skills for critical thinking (i.e., knowledge and comprehension) were not consistently used to achieve statistical significance. For these videos, the lack of knowledge transference and the lack of a comprehension function undermined the viewer's ability to grasp what human trafficking is. Moreover, videos were absent of substantial evidence and fact-based or data-driven conclusions, such that they could serve as model educational representations of human trafficking to promote understanding of the major construct issues. This critique is consistent with the criticisms of Weitzer (2011) and Fedina (2015) who argue that there is a general lack of clear understanding about the scope of the issue of human trafficking.

Binary logistic regression

When testing whether the use of Bloom's Taxonomy influenced the type of video produced (training or public awareness), the model correctly predicted the outcome 80% of the time, and was significant, Wald 13.21 (1, 44), Exp (β) = .26; $p < .000$. The only variable in Bloom's Taxonomy that was significant was evaluation, Exp (β) = 23.11; $p < .005$; in other words, training videos significantly increased the odds of achieving evaluative skills in human-trafficking understanding by 23.11 times. The results of the binary logistic regression (Table 3) to determine whether the use of Bloom's Taxonomy of learning influenced the use of evidenced-informed material was a significant model revealing that the presence of evidence-based material increased the likelihood of consistently achieving synthesizing skills by 0.21 times. In addition, videos with a testimonial or case study in them were nearly 0.15 times more likely to achieve consistent use of application skills than videos without a testimonial or case study.

The results of the logistic regression were not significant for prediction of the odds of having critical thinking across Bloom's Taxonomy of indicators for either videos with or without testimony, or for those identified as having or not having an evidence-based orientation to scholarly or research literature. However, when the indicators were loaded as control variables, the potential contribution

Table 3. Binary Logistic Regression for Human-Trafficking Videos.

	Wald	Exp (β)	<i>p</i>
Type of Video			
Evaluation (1)	7.737	23.111	.005
Use of Testimonial or Case Study			
Application (1)	7.784	0.146	.005
Evidence-Based Material			
Synthesis (1)	4.349	0.214	.037

Note. *N* = 44.

of each could be determined, though the result was not significant for either of the conditions. Though some variables related to critical-thinking criteria occur (application and evaluation) such that a significant contribution is evident, they (in aggregate with other Bloom's Taxonomy variables) do not affect the overall nonsignificant logistic finding. Therefore, there is no predictable evidence or odds ratio for predicting critical-thinking content in the outcome results. This finding is important as it confirms that human-trafficking videos posted online do not generally contribute to critical understanding of the social phenomenon.

The review of videos revealed to the reviewers that little evidence-based content were included in the videos. Videos were determined to be largely emotional appeals, of which many were appeals for resources, or role-played situational examples; however, few videos referred to evidence such as statistics of incidence, or demographic trends, or directed the viewer to fact finding resources.

Discussion

This study is unique and valuable to the growing body of human-trafficking literature, in the evaluation of the current capacity of publicly available video content to inform, to educate, and to elucidate (via critical thinking) the plight, and possible solution to, the internationally condemned phenomenon of human sexual trafficking. The results of the study suggest most publically available videos do not provide audiences with even the most basic critical understanding of human trafficking. However, the study did find a significant association between evaluation, application, and synthesis skills of Bloom's Taxonomy. These skills are considered higher level learning skills that require understanding and comprehension of the phenomenon. One hypothesis for the lack of knowledge and comprehension presence among the sampled videos is that these videos may heavily rely on inferred knowledge transference of lower level critical-thinking skills through visual representations or testimonials. This reliance may be due, in part, to the relative shortness of these videos in that they did not have much time to convey basic concepts about trafficking. More study on these hypotheses is needed.

In the current study, no statistically significant relationships were found between the use of evidenced-based information and the type of video, or the use of testimonials and the type of video. Videos were not using a statistically significant, or a meaningful and measureable, level of evidenced-informed material to convey information about the phenomenon of human trafficking. These results appear to contradict the findings in Thainiyom (2011) who saw moderate increases in learning about human trafficking after watching video media. The current study can make no such case; however, further research is needed to examine these relationships.

These results suggest that the amount of time and resources devoted to such outreach endeavors are, perhaps, not producing the desired effects. The lack of basic knowledge transference about human trafficking among the videos included in this study may also be limiting the success of the anti-trafficking movement (Andrijasevic & Anderson, 2009; Nieuwenhuys & Pecoud, 2007) by not informing the public of basic concepts surrounding trafficking, of the methods to use to identify trafficking in persons, or of the resources available to report a suspected trafficking incident. In spite of these findings, there has been a 64% increase in reports of trafficking to the NHTRC hotline

between 2010 and 2011 (Polaris Project, 2012), suggesting that people are clearly understanding and applying the information they are learning about trafficking. These authors suspect the increase in media attention (e.g., movies, documentaries, news articles) has had an impact as much or more than the public-awareness and training videos included in this study. There may be an untested association between viewing the publicly available video content and the generation of public interest, of which either critical thinking or evidence-based knowledge transfer, occurs through some other means (i.e., continuing study, or the spurring of critical interest or knowledge transfer). This hypothesis needs further examination.

An examination of the proportion of videos focused on sex trafficking (predominantly associated with females) versus labor trafficking of U.S.-based human-trafficking public-awareness and training videos seems to support the position of Sharma (2003) and Andrijasevic and Anderson (2009) that public messaging about human trafficking is highly genderized. About 86% of the videos in this study focused on sex trafficking while 11% focused on labor trafficking; the remaining 2.2% discussed both labor and sex trafficking. Many media outlets available to the public focus on sex trafficking, running the risk of “genderizing” the trafficking of persons to include only females. Sex trafficking is more commonly associated with female victimization, while labor trafficking typically embodies both males and females; however, it is argued that many still associate labor trafficking as victimizing mostly females (Sharma, 2003).

Limitations and strengths

Most videos from the agencies were relatively short in duration and, therefore, it is possible that statistical outcomes may have been different had they been longer or more in depth. Moreover, the researchers did not score each video independently, which would have resulted in four observations for each video, thus allowing researchers to conduct an interrater reliability test. As this study stands, we do not have enough power to conduct the logistic regression due to the small sample size. Logically, with a more representative sample the results of future studies examining the consistency by which human-trafficking knowledge is transferred to the public may yield different results. However, because of the exploratory nature of the study, it was decided to test the probability of the data to determine possible associations for further study.

The reliance of only U.S.-based and publicly available videos is also a limitation to this study, as not all videos available for review were included and, certainly, not all publicly available videos are only produced by U.S.-based agencies. It is possible that privately available videos would have higher content quality leading to higher ratings for Bloom’s Taxonomy and the use or incorporation of evidence-based material. This research also is limited to the language assessed as only English-language videos were included.

Further, the use of Bloom’s Taxonomy in this e-learning platform is a limitation, as it was not developed for media learning. Despite the usefulness of the Bloom’s Taxonomy in assisting educators at any level to develop engaging and informative educational media, Bloom’s Taxonomy has not been used extensively in studies surrounding electronic learning platforms (e.g., e-learning settings) (Halawi et al., 2009). According to Oud (2009), Bloom’s Taxonomy may be more useful in evaluating longer media pieces than shorter segments. Oud (2009) suggests that it may be more useful to focus on Bloom’s higher levels of abstract learning (analyzing, evaluating, and understanding) to promote critical thinking when using shorter e-learning platforms. It appears the results from this study support Oud’s position.

Finally, the authors did not evaluate the quality of the cited information used in the videos (a proxy measure to indicate the presence of evidence-informed material in the videos). Given the aforementioned criticism about, and accuracy of, our limited knowledge about trafficking and the misuse of estimates as facts throughout the discourse concerning the phenomenon, it is important to note the presence of this information does not equate with the quality of information transference.

Despite these limitations, the study has several strengths. To our knowledge, this is the first study that has assessed the consistent use of a teaching pedagogy in publically available human-trafficking-awareness videos found online. This exploration of the use of pedagogy in trafficking-awareness videos may serve to provide additional insight for the production of future public-service video content. An additional strength is that the data used are representative of government, law-enforcement, nongovernmental, and/or social service agencies. These agencies play a significant role of training and creating public awareness on different forms of trafficking in the United States and abroad. Lastly, we identified the best goodness of fit that captured association with application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation for public and training videos.

Implications for future research

The implication for future research arising from this study is the need to better understand what the audience does or does not comprehend and what they are applying and evaluating. Additionally, exploring how the audience synthesizes material from media outlets would assist programs in tailoring their messages. In order to determine if agencies are meeting their desired efforts, conducting a survey among agencies to determine the purpose of the video and their intended audience prior to showing public-awareness messages may assist researchers to better understand the intent of the video.

The purpose of public-awareness campaigns is to increase knowledge and to promote action on the part of the general public. Currently, in human-trafficking-information campaigns, data do not exist to determine whether these campaigns prompt more reporting by the general public. Conducting focus groups with the public about which kinds of awareness campaigns are most effective in motivating bystander response against trafficking may assist in creating a message that leads to not only knowledge transference but also to action on the part of the general public. Video-production tasks, such as scripting, taping, and editing, may not provide the best approach to conveying sustainable interests and social action, or advocacy, without greater consideration for the use of a pedagogical guide to ensure critical thinking and knowledge transference. Additionally, the use of pedagogy in trafficking awareness and training videos may assist in improving a clearer understanding of how to critically engage in solutions concerning human trafficking.

Conclusion

Agencies tasked with educating the public about human trafficking should recognize the importance of developing information campaigns with a pedagogical framework and evidence-based material to guide knowledge transference about the issue and to engage critical thinking about the subject. More clearly disseminating information about the phenomenon will serve to increase the motivation of the target audience to act upon what they have learned. This is especially important when considering the costs associated with video production and distribution. The use of evidence-based materials while creating videos should be an integral part of the solution in educating the public about different forms of trafficking in the United States. However, particular emphasis should be placed on using the most current information about trafficking and presenting this information as accurately as possible to ensure quality-information transference. More study is needed to fully understand the scope of these videos and their potential impact on increasing public understanding of and awareness about the phenomenon of human trafficking. Moreover, increased emphasis should be placed on creating actionable outcomes through these campaigns to increase sustained public engagement and investment in the anti-trafficking movement.

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