
Theses, Dissertations, and Projects

2015

Understanding the obstacles and motivations of offering human sexuality coursework : an analysis of accredited MSW programs in the U.S.

Nicole M. Nelson
Smith College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.smith.edu/theses>



Part of the [Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Nelson, Nicole M., "Understanding the obstacles and motivations of offering human sexuality coursework : an analysis of accredited MSW programs in the U.S." (2015). Masters Thesis, Smith College, Northampton, MA.
<https://scholarworks.smith.edu/theses/693>

This Masters Thesis has been accepted for inclusion in Theses, Dissertations, and Projects by an authorized administrator of Smith ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@smith.edu.

Nicole Nelson
Understanding the Obstacles
and Motivations of Offering
Human Sexuality Coursework:
An Analysis of Accredited
MSW Programs in the U.S.

ABSTRACT

This mixed methods study aimed to examine the regional variation among MSW programs that offer human sexuality coursework, determine some of the personal obstacles faculty of human sexuality coursework face and the motivations faculty members have in teaching such coursework. After completing a content analysis of 140 accredited MSW programs in the U.S., a series of eight semi-structured qualitative interviews were conducted with faculty who teach human sexuality coursework. The content analysis surveyed a purposive sample of MSW programs from each of the five regions of the U.S.; the eight participants were also purposively sampled by region. Findings of this study concluded that the Northeast and Western regions offer the most human sexuality courses while the Southeast and Southwest offer the least. Common personal obstacles met by faculty include personal isolation, limited peer support and how students interact with faculty's identity. Motivations faculty have for teaching human sexuality courses included: feeling professionally and ethically responsible to teach these topics, enjoying teaching and learning from students, and enjoying being able to witness student's growth. This study suggests further research focus on organizational and institutional obstacles of teaching human sexuality to better determine how to overcome these barriers in order to offer human sexuality coursework to more MSW students.

**Understanding the Obstacles and Motivations of Offering Human Sexuality Coursework:
An Analysis of Accredited MSW Programs in the U.S.**

A project based upon an independent investigation, submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Social Work.

Nicole M. Nelson

Smith College School for Social Work
Northampton, Massachusetts 01063

2015

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, many thanks to my eight wonderful participants who donated their time to this project and shared so many enriching stories and experiences with me. Second, thank you so much to my thesis adviser; I am so appreciative of your patience and research wisdom you've bestowed on to me. And thank you for making sure I created a project I could actually finish! Third, I am so grateful to all of the loving people in my life who have sustained me through this intense process of grad school and summers at Smith; your support and understanding made grad school possible. Lastly, I would like to acknowledge all of the dedicated Smithies who went through this wild process with me and came out on the other side stronger and wiser. I am so proud of us all. We did it!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iii
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	4
III. METHODOLOGY.....	16
IV. FINDINGS.....	30
V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS.....	50
REFERENCES.....	59
APPENDICES	
Appendix A: HSR Approval Letter.....	64
Appendix B: Protocol Change Request Form.....	65
Appendix C: Protocol Change Approval Letter.....	67
Appendix D: Informed Consent Form	68
Appendix E: Recruitment Email.....	70
Appendix F: Interview Guide.....	71

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Sexuality is a dynamic and large part of the human experience and has many facets- from sexual orientation and gender expression to fetishes and the Bondage, Discipline, Dominance, Submission, Sadism and Masochism (BDSM) lifestyle. Since sexuality is a part of many individuals' lives it can often surface in mental health settings for social workers who work with clients in therapeutic relationships (Leiblum & Rosen, 2000). Clients may be struggling with their sexuality or they may not have any concerns about their sexuality but would still like it to be recognized as a part of their identity in the treatment room. It is this researcher's belief that clinicians should be adequately prepared to address client's concerns around human sexuality and clients' sexual identities. Even though sexuality can be a huge part of someone's symptomatology or identity, social workers and other mental health professionals are often taught very little about sexuality in graduate school and the topics of human sexuality are often ignored by the field in general (McCave, Shepard, & Ramseyer-Winter, 2014). The Council for Social Work Education (Council for Social Work Education [CSWE], 2012) notes large gaps in social work education around domestic violence and sexual assault, in addition to "general" human sexuality curricula. Although some topics of human sexuality are given limited attention in social work graduate studies, extant literature suggests that the future clinical practice of social work students may benefit from sexuality curriculum in graduate schools (Valentich & Grifton, 1975).

The current study investigates what types of human sexuality courses are offered nationally and examines the regional variation of Masters of Social Work (MSW) programs course offerings. In addition, the study aims to increase understanding about obstacles faculty

members face when teaching human sexuality coursework as well as faculty's rationale and motivation for teaching human sexuality courses in MSW programs. This research project intends to broaden the knowledge about human sexuality curricula within social work graduate programs. Through a mixed method design the following study has focused on answering the following research questions: (1) what are the regional variations nationally in human sexuality curricula in U.S MSW programs, (2) what are some of the personal and interpersonal obstacles faculty members face in teaching human sexuality curricula, and (3) what are the motivations and rationale faculty have for teaching human sexuality coursework in U.S MSW programs?

There has been little research done on the quality or frequency of human sexuality curricula taught to social work students while they are working toward receiving their MSW. However, there is research about specific topics that fall under the broad category of human sexuality such as gender/lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) issues, HIV/AIDS or sexual assault and trauma topics. The focus of this research may reflect that when social work students are taught about sexuality in their MSW programs they often learn about gender/LGBT topics, sexual orientation, HIV/AIDS issues and topics about sexual abuse usually through elective classes (Diaz & Kelly, 1991; Fredriksen-Goldsen, et al., 2011; Gochros, 1983; Martin, et al., 2010; Postmus, et al., 2011; Rowan & Shears, 2011; Trotter, et al., 2006). While these classes disseminate some human sexuality content, they may not give a broad enough overview of human sexuality topics and how to address client's sexual concerns clinically. In addition, there is some research on strategies for incorporating content and implementing human sexuality coursework, although there is limited research on obstacles and motivations for implementation of human sexuality coursework (Dunk-West & Hafford-Letchfield, 2011). Therefore, current research focuses on specific types of sexuality content (gender, HIV/AIDS, sexual abuse etc.)

and coursework strategies (how to conduct the class). This research project seeks to address the gaps in our understanding of regional variation in sexuality curriculum in MSW programs nationally, gaps in the literature regarding obstacles faculty face when teaching such courses and faculty's motivations and rationale for teaching human sexuality coursework to graduate social work students.

The above mentioned research questions will be examined through a mixed methods study design. The first phase of data collection will be through a content analysis of a purposive sample of MSW programs in the United States sampled by region (Northeast, Midwest, West, Southwest and Southeast). The second phase of data collection will be through qualitative interviews of a purposive sample of faculty of human sexuality courses. The participants of this study are faculty members who presently taught or had taught human sexuality courses in the past. The target audience of this study is faculty members of MSW programs that have interest in teaching human sexuality curricula; either those that would like to teach a human sexuality course or those faculty that already do. MSW students also may be a targeted audience for this study as they are directly impacted by the availability of human sexuality coursework.

This study aims to contribute to the growing body of literature around social work curricula and generate new understandings about the extent of human sexuality coursework nationally, the obstacles faculty face and the motivations of faculty in teaching sexuality courses. This study aims to add to the literature that focuses on regional variation and faculty's experiences of teaching human sexuality topics. It is hoped that this research study will illuminate new understandings about how faculty perceive human sexuality curriculum and the perceived challenges and benefits of teaching human sexuality in social work graduate programs.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

The following literature review first presents the significance of human sexuality education as an area of investigation. Next, it reviews the different types of curriculum that characterize human sexuality education and finally will review the gaps in literature that this study specifically intends to inform. The research presented in this chapter is relevant to the three central research questions of this study: (1) what are the regional variations nationally in human sexuality curricula in U.S MSW programs, (2) what are some of the personal and interpersonal obstacles faculty members face in teaching human sexuality curricula, and (3) what are the motivations and rationale faculty have for teaching human sexuality coursework in U.S MSW programs? The first portion of this chapter provides a general overview of the rationale for human sexuality education. The chapter next articulates what is known about the frequency of sexuality curriculum in US MSW programs; which is limited (CSWE, 2009). Then, the chapter reviews some objectives and obstacles to implementing human sexuality coursework, identifies different approaches to structuring for human sexuality courses and then finally discusses the different specific common types of human sexuality electives. The final section provides a summary of this literature and study objectives.

Rationale of Human Sexuality Education

Human sexuality curriculum in MSW programs in the United States is an understudied area, largely due to both the limited number of MSW programs that offer such curricula and the lack of evaluation of these curricula when they are available. Nonetheless, researchers and experts in the field have found a noticeable deficit in clinicians' knowledge and understanding of human sexuality; often submitting that social workers meet sexuality with silence or "outdated

views” based on heteronormative expectations (Tennille, Solomon & Bohrman, 2014). This lack of understanding of human sexuality may impede clinical work and progress with clients. Harris and Hays (2008) interviewed 175 clinical marriage and family therapists and found that those who had more sexuality education and those who had beneficial supervision felt more comfortable engaging in conversations of sexuality with their clients. Harris and Hays concluded that a clinician’s comfort with topics of sexuality stems from sexuality education, training and supervision. Berman’s (1997) dissertation research focused again on how crucial sexuality education is for social workers. Berman administered 353 quantitative mail surveys to social work clinicians who were National Association of Social Work (NASW) members. Berman reported that sexuality education exposes students and desensitizes them to human sexuality content which in turn increases their comfort level and makes them more likely to address sexual concerns their clients may have. Berman also reported that providing this desensitization in an educational setting may provide feelings of safety and also lead to increased self-awareness and value clarification for the social work students. Gochros (1971, 1984) finds that social workers are more likely to be faced with sexual concerns of clients than most other helping professionals. Moreover, Gochros submits that clients are more likely to suffer if their sexual concerns are met with discomfort or rejection by their social worker. Based on these prior studies, further research on implementation and evaluation of human sexuality curricula may be a critical to improving social workers’ clinical approaches to human sexuality.

Proponents of human sexuality education argue for social workers to have a good understanding about how to better serve their clients because sexuality appears to be making its way into the forefront of public discourse. Dunk (2007) argues that social workers need to have a better knowledge base about human sexuality because it is becoming a more salient part of

individuals' identities and social workers should be available to assist clients in better integrating their sexual identity. Dunk goes on to suggest that because of the rise of sexual politics, especially around the discourse of sex for pleasure not reproduction and new ways of engaging sexually, especially through technology, clinical social workers will need to keep up with the evolving ways within which individuals relate to each other sexually. By examining different pedagogical frameworks, Dunk's argument supports that a human rights and/or culture and identity frameworks would be most beneficial when addressing sexuality in social work education. In conjunction with Dunk's input about the changing socio-political sexual landscape in the U.S, Rowntree (2013) argues that there is a common cultural discourse of secrecy and shame around sexuality that likely influences why few social work programs offer human sexuality coursework; the cultural norm is insidious in the higher education system. Rowntree discusses how the long held cultural norms of sexual secrecy influence the shame and exclusion of human sexuality coursework in social work graduate programs. It seems that even with new perspectives on sexual identity in public discourse (Dunk, 2007); there is still room for improvement in how sexuality topics are discussed both broadly in the U.S and in MSW programs. In short, these social norms of silence and shame are not being addressed in MSW curricula and are leaving social work professionals in the dark about how to offer helpful support to their clients' sexuality needs (McCave et al., 2014).

In addition to Dunk (2007), Rowe and Savage (1985) also discuss the need for social workers to further develop their attitudes about sexuality and the social norms surrounding sexuality to better serve clients. Because social workers engage with their communities and clients in many different ways both in and out of a therapy session, it is important for them to have comfort in discussing these sometimes complicated sexual topics; "the comfort necessary to

respond effectively to sexual issues can only be gained through attitudes and values. Knowledge and attitudes must also be translated into practice skill,” (Rowe & Savage, 1985, p. 273). It is evident that because social workers are a part of so many institutions in society and are providers of mental health care to so many individuals, it seems reasonable that they would need to be comfortable with topics of human sexuality to better serve their clients that often have few other educated providers to go to for support.

Human sexuality curriculum in MSW programs can be responsive to the clinical needs described above; especially the need for social workers to expand their attitudes of sexuality. Roberts (2008) found that sexual functioning in a variety of different ways affects everyone within the population, whether an individual is sexually active or not, individuals have some kind of connection to a sexual identity. Roberts goes on to discuss that even though social workers may not specifically work in sex therapy or specialize in sexuality, and even if few of their clients ever disclose information about their sexuality, clients would benefit from their clinician having empathic and accepting attitudes and values about human sexuality in all of its forms.

Other providers such as medical staff also have limited human sexuality education; this stresses the urgency of addressing human sexuality curriculum among social work education. According to Rowe and Savage (1985), social work students are less informed and knowledgeable about sexuality than students of law, medicine and nursing. This could be damaging for clients since social workers are the largest providers of mental health care (CSWE, 2012) and are often the first providers to learn of sexual dysfunction from clients next to medical providers. Sexuality education for students of medicine and nursing has been understood as “reduced and medicalized,” especially regarding female sexuality (Tiefer, 2010). Tiefer describes the medicalization of sexuality as the process of creating treatments by medical experts

for “deviant” sexual problems. This medicalization of sexuality education ignores the multitude of social and cultural components of sexuality which social workers need to succeed in clinical treatment of clients.

National Variation in Human Sexuality Education Among U.S MSW Programs

As mentioned in the previous sections, there is a lack of literature that examines the course offerings of human sexuality coursework on a national scale. The CSWE and Lambda Legal (2009) national survey examined sexual orientation and gender topics in social work education. The findings of the national survey were gathered via online surveys sent out to program directors. One hundred-fifty seven program directors from various Bachelors of Social Work (BSW) and Masters of Social Work (MSW), private and public institutions completed the surveys. The survey reported that overall programs are more focused on sexual orientation than LGBTQ identities curriculum and that 68% of respondents to the survey reported that their programs offered “diversity” topics which included LGBT topics. It was also found that LGBT content was reportedly integrated into most curricula except most research courses. Evidently, gender topics are being covered fairly well around the U.S; however this national survey did not examine human sexuality content in social work education curricula.

Even though little research has been done on variations of human sexuality curricula in social work education in the U.S, there has been some research on the human sexuality curricula within the medical field. Cade and Jesse (1971) surveyed students from 53 medical schools to determine how sexuality education was addressed. They found that 37 of the 53 schools had no formal sexuality education and most of the sexuality education that was offered, was “introductory and reduced” into other classes. Few schools that did offer sexuality education did so with little discussion of sexuality through a cultural or holistic lens. It is appears that medical

students may also be ill prepared to work with sexual concerns from their patients much like social workers are not better prepared to address those concerns with their clients. There seems to be an overall lack of literature that has evaluated human sexuality education for not only social work programs but for medical programs as well; two professions that would likely benefit from a better understanding of sexuality topics.

Objectives and Obstacles for Including Human Sexuality Education

Including human sexuality education in social work curricula has been argued as crucial in order for clinical social workers to better understand sexuality and how its many facets may impact their clients. Gochros (1974) outlines three main objectives that human sexuality curricula should attempt to meet in order to best prepare social work students: enable students to approach sexuality related problems with empathy, comfort and objectivity, provide students with the knowledge about the range of sexual behaviors, problems, values and provide students with the skills and motivation to effectively assist in the treatment and prevention of sex related problems. These objectives intend to provide students with a better, well-rounded view of human sexuality. According to Myers (2008), the objective for sexuality education is not to have social workers be experts in a variety of fetishes or sexual dysfunctions or different relationship styles but rather to integrate professional practice skills with open-minded attitudes about sexuality.

Prior literature documents several obstacles to incorporating human sexuality coursework into MSW programs including limited number of faculty to teach such coursework (Satterly & Dyson, 1998). Satterly and Dyson (1998) discuss the limited number of professors that have the credentials or knowledge to accurately teach these courses and also discuss the importance of being comfortable with self-disclosure as a teaching strategy. Having qualified faculty is important because often in human sexuality electives there is a wide range of sexuality

experience, knowledge and values that can arise within a classroom. It often depends highly on the professor's skills and grasp of the sometimes emotionally charged content to create a healthy and valuable learning environment (Abramowitz, 1971). Faculty's competency and comfort with human sexuality is crucial to teaching such topics so as to not perpetuate the culturally common norms of shame and silence discussed above. In short, having the appropriate and qualified faculty to successfully teach the human sexuality coursework to the social work students is critical in the learning of the material.

Another obstacle of teaching human sexuality education is the lack of acknowledgement of the need for these topics and the negative value judgments placed on human sexuality curricula that may not be as heavily placed on other curricula. Individuals argue that because human sexuality education can be or is assumed to be more personal than professionalized, sometimes it is challenging to acquire support in creating these electives (Haskelhorn, 1970). It appears that values placed on sexuality in general are a large obstacle for human sexuality curricula in MSW programs. There also appears to be a lack of acknowledgement of the need for human sexuality curriculum; Valentich and Grifton (1975) surmised some faculty believed human sexuality is already covered adequately in human behavior courses and therefore additional classes were not needed. Because of the culture of shame and avoidance around sexuality as discussed previously, academic institutions do not know how to appropriately teach these topics and have limited faculty to do so. Blomberg (2009) discusses that the endeavor of questioning one's values is an intelligent act and submits that throughout an individuals' education, shaping and questioning one's values can help deepen one's intelligence. Therefore, perhaps it would be beneficial for social work students to be more deeply exposed to human sexuality curricula to expand upon and/or clarify their values and judgments. There seems to be

1

an overarching theme that the avoidant value judgments placed on sex and sexuality education is a common obstacle in implementing sexuality education in MSW programs. Sloane (2014) writes specifically about the lack of integration of pleasure into sexuality education for both social workers and medical professionals. Sloane suggests that it is because of the social norms of shame and avoidance around sexual pleasure and sexuality that it is talked about so infrequently in these educational settings. In short, programs have not been supportive of implementing sexuality focused curricula due common values of shame and silence around these sensitive topics of sexuality. In addition to this social avoidance of sexuality topics in MSW programs, it seems that having access to faculty that can competently teach this coursework is also a barrier. It is evident based on the present literature that there are several cultural, social and organizational obstacles that hinder the teaching of human sexuality coursework in MSW programs. This study aims to contribute additional explanations to the body of research as to the obstacles faculty have in teaching these courses and some administrative challenges that may arise.

Course Structure for Human Sexuality Curricula

Based on the literature there seem to be three primary approaches to human sexuality curricula within social work programs-having a separate human sexuality elective, having multiple human sexuality electives that build off of previously learned content, and integrating human sexuality curricula into preexisting practice courses (Gochros, 1983). There have been several pilot studies done since the 1970s on how to best facilitate human sexuality focused coursework. The general consensus seems to be that smaller groups of students, discussion groups, and variety in teaching tools (i.e. films, speakers, journals etc.) best enable learning (Tanner, 1974). Abramowitz (1971) recommends that human sexuality curricula be processed in

smaller seminar groups in order to better process the emotional transferences that arise while learning about the factual content. Abramowitz also offers a counter argument in opposition of including yet another course for MSW students to choose from the elective list. They suggest that this human sexuality content should be infused throughout other mandatory classes as to reach a larger majority of the students, instead of just students that opt to take a human sexuality elective course. Matek (1977) stresses that for best results the human sexuality content must be integrated and learned in conjunction with professional methodology and they both must be combined with empathic attitudes about sexuality to be successful. "Human sexuality curricula should not be held separate from social work professional skill building, for both need to be integrated for best results," (p.52). In summary, expert opinion in the field of social work seems to suggest that sexuality content should be paired with professional methodology (clinical skill building) in addition to attitude and value processing and reevaluating, while also incorporating a variety of perspectives as to not bias the curricula or the class. It seems unclear based on the literature if there is a preferred method of teaching human sexuality content. There appears to be disagreement about the two possible strategies: creating separate human sexuality electives versus integrating human sexuality content into pre-existing classes.

Sexuality Focused Electives

There are a variety of different sexuality topics that MSW program faculty could teach courses on such as HIV/AIDS, LGBT/sexual orientation, and sexual abuse/trauma. These examples of elective classes are separate topical areas of study under the larger umbrella of human sexuality. However, sometimes these electives do not cover a breadth of sexuality topics and some are not integrated well with practice skills, especially if these electives are policy electives which teach very few clinical skills (Diaz & Kelly, 1991). As discussed above, it seems

3

that students benefit when professional skills are integrated with attitude and value evaluating along with the sexuality content.

Sexual abuse and sexual violence curricula would be beneficial for social workers to learn more about; however there is little research surmising how frequently such curricula is offered. Postmus et al. (2011) discuss how MSW student's formal education and experiences influence their attitudes and beliefs, specifically around violence against women. Social workers often work with victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and need additional information about those sects of human sexuality to better serve their clients. They discuss experiential learning theory to support that social work students need to understand their own experiences (professionally and personally) as well as their formal and informal education around various topics to best understand how to better prepare them for clinical work. Postmus et al. (2011) also concluded that short-term or one-time held seminars around rape and sexual violence had little long-lasting impact on knowledge or attitude changes around rape and sexual violence; showing again that the more institutionalized, better evaluated curricula and semester long coursework may better serve student's human sexuality knowledge needs.

Much like how Postmus et al. (2011) discussed that sexual violence and domestic violence coursework is also important to include in social work curricula other researchers such as Diaz and Kelly (1991) and Rowan and Shears (2011) also discussed how important HIV/AIDS coursework is for students as well. Diaz and Kelly (1991) found that almost 30% of MSW programs do not offer any HIV/AIDS education at all and less than 15% offer an elective specifically about HIV/AIDS survivors. Rowan and Shears (2011) found that of the MSW programs they surveyed, few had a class specific to HIV/AIDS; however some programs seemed to have integrated HIV/AIDS content into other social work classes. Despite this integration, the

authors discussed that there needed to be more attention given to HIV/AIDS content and recommended creating an HIV/AIDS elective.

Finally, gender and sexual orientation curricula are also suggested in prior research to be an important piece of the human sexuality coursework. Researchers such as Fredriksen-Goldsen et al. (2011) and the CSWE (2012) have done research on the benefits of providing education on LGTB identities, gender expression and gender identity. Fredriksen-Goldsen et al. (2011) discovered that MSW programs were more likely to have LGBT identities course offerings if faculty were open-minded and had positive perceptions about LGBT individuals. In addition, they also found that students who participated in the LGBT/sexual orientation courses classes had more open-minded attitudes about LGBT individuals. Other research (Chondy et al. 2014) has offered that it is beneficial for LGBTQ topics to be taught to social work students for those students who may need value clarifications on their perceptions of the LGBTQ community. Again, there is a need for social work students to be taught about topics of gender and sexual orientation to evaluate and clarify their held values and judgments about the LGBTQ community. Despite the above researched need for LGBT courses, Logie et al. (2007) in a study sampling social work students found that nearly half of those surveyed did not feel prepared to work with LGBT populations and did not have adequate training on these communities.

In conclusion, the above mentioned types of human sexuality curricula are all largely important to offer to students because they all discuss working with sexually marginalized populations. Nonetheless, additional information is still necessary to determine if these isolated elective sexuality topics are inclusive enough of other sexuality topics to help social work students become comfortable with sexuality topics with their clients. Collectively, there is little research on the frequency of which the above mentioned sexuality focused electives are offered

by MSW programs around the United States; the present study hopes to fill that gap in that literature. Having a better understanding of how often such courses are offered is important to better support the evidence that these elective classes are beneficial to social work students.

This study aims to contribute to the extant literature by addressing the limited knowledge of: (1) the regional variations of offering human sexuality coursework in MSW programs across the U.S, (2) obstacles faculty face when teaching human sexuality courses and (3) faculty motivations for teaching such coursework. This study aims to provide more information about the types of human sexuality focused electives that are offered in a sampling of MSW programs, variation in these programs regionally, and the experiences of MSW program faculty in teaching human sexuality curricula. There is limited collective data about the frequency of human sexuality offerings around the United States and this study hopes to contribute to that gap in research. This study also hopes to contribute further knowledge about faculty motivation and personal and interpersonal obstacles faculty face when teaching human sexuality coursework, given that most literature discusses organizational and cultural obstacles (Haskelhorn, 1970; Valentich & Grifton, 1975). In addition, the present study hopes to increase knowledge on how valuable human sexuality curricula is to MSW students, to better support the rationale that human sexuality curricula is beneficial to MSW students. Perhaps having access to this information would be beneficial to MSW programs that may be considering adding human sexuality electives to the program.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Formulation

This study examined the regional differences among MSW programs offering of human sexuality curricula, possible reasons why those differences exist and motivations for teaching human sexuality curricula. In order to explore these topics this researcher focused on the following questions: (1) what are the regional variations nationally in human sexuality curricula in U.S MSW programs, (2) what are some of the personal and interpersonal obstacles faculty members face in teaching human sexuality curricula, and (3) what are the motivations and rationale faculty have for teaching human sexuality coursework in U.S MSW programs? To examine these questions this researcher employed a mixed methods sequential study design. This mixed methods research approach combined two phases of data collection; the first is a quantitative content analysis of MSW programs within the United States by the five primary regions of the U.S. The second phase of the mixed methods approach was conducted through qualitative semi-structured interviews with faculty of human sexuality curricula. The quantitative content analysis assisted in the identification of faculty members who taught human sexuality curricula by region, for potential participation in the semi-structured qualitative interviews in the second phase of data collection.

Prior research on human sexuality curricula in MSW programs, as reviewed in the prior chapter, predominantly employs a case study approach in which an experimental class was carried out during a semester and the methodology of the class or seminar was published (Abramowitz 1971, Matek 1977, Roe & Savage 1985, & Tanner 1974). This study analyzes curriculum across social work programs nationally and then the motivations of faculty within these institutions. Given the limited research that examines regional variation of human sexuality

curricula differences and potential reasons for those differences, the present study employs a mixed methods approach to provide a wider knowledge and understanding of human sexuality coursework taught to MSW students. By pairing the quantitative content analysis data along with the narrative data from qualitative interviews with faculty members, this study investigates the variations in human sexuality curricula across U.S regions and what some of the motivations faculty have and obstacles faculty face when teaching such coursework.

Phase 1: Examination of types and variation of human sexuality curriculum.

Sampling Approach

For the first phase of data collection a purposive sample of MSW programs was gathered from each of the five primary regions of the continental United States. A total of 140 MSW programs were sampled of the 235 currently accredited MSW programs in the United States (CSWE, 2015). Thirty MSW programs were randomly selected from four of the regions of the United States (Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, and West) and twenty MSW programs were sampled from the Southeast region due to the fact that there are only twenty accredited MSW programs in that region (the five accredited MSW programs in Puerto Rico were not included). Purposive sampling was used for this research study to ensure that comparisons could be made across the regions of the U.S to answer the research question: what differences exist in the availability and types of human sexuality course offerings in different regions of the country? The content analysis of the course offerings of these MSW programs identified if there were either human sexuality electives and/or sexuality focused electives such as HIV/AIDS, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans (LGBT)/sexual orientation and/or sexual abuse and trauma courses. The sample of 140 accredited MSW programs assisted the researcher in obtaining a sample of participants for the second phase of data collection during the qualitative interviews phase.

Ethics and Safeguards

Given that there were no participants involved in data collection for the first phase of data there were few ethical concerns, particularly around confidentiality and anonymity. All data that was gathered in the first phase of collection is publically available through the MSW programs' websites therefore there was little concern about confidentiality. The primary ethical concern for the first phase of collection was that of ethical and accurate data recording and collecting. To ensure accurate data collection, all MSW program curricula was reviewed systematically using the same key word search terms and stored collectively in a spreadsheet. It was important to accurately document the data gathered through this content analysis as to appropriately represent the sampled MSW programs and to not unnecessarily criticize or misrepresent them or the regions of the U.S to which they belong.

Data Collection

The MSW program curriculum located on the programs' websites for each of the selected MSW programs was systematically searched to identify any course with a course title and/or course description that describes: "sex," "sexuality," "human sexuality," "HIV," "AIDS," "gender," "LGBT," "GLBT," and "abuse" These were the key search terms used throughout the content analysis. These key words were searched using the "Find" function on MSW programs' websites or in Adobe/Microsoft Word when the downloadable course catalogs were available. The initial analysis of the curriculum was done by examining course catalogs and course descriptions provided on the programs' websites. These course catalogs and course descriptions were mostly available via online descriptions or sometimes available via downloadable course catalogs in PDF/Word formats. If downloadable course descriptions and/or course catalogs were available, they were downloaded and saved to a folder with the corresponding name of the MSW

program on this researcher's computer. If only the descriptions provided on the website were available, the URL of the webpage was saved in the spreadsheet where all quantitative data was stored.

An Excel spreadsheet of all the sampled MSW programs was maintained to catalog the programs that offer human sexuality coursework. In addition to recording what human sexuality coursework the programs offer (if any), the following information was also recorded if it was available on the programs' website: state the program resides, year the program was founded, when the program was accredited by the CSWE, names and contact information of faculty as potential interview participants. If syllabi for the human sexuality courses were publically available, although there were few, they were also downloaded and saved along with the course descriptions.

In short, systematically all MSW programs sampled were categorized by the region of the United States they are located in. Each programs' website was searched using the above mentioned key search terms to determine if further analysis would be done. After determining if a program had any human sexuality electives using these search terms, the additional information outlined above, was also obtained and recorded in the spreadsheet and any available course descriptions, catalogs or syllabi were also downloaded and saved. This first phase of data collection was completed on March 1, 2015.

Data Analysis

The frequency of human sexuality electives and other sexuality focused elective courses was totaled for each of the sampled MSW programs by region of the U.S. Prevalence of human sexuality electives and other sexuality electives was also tabulated across the total sample and by MSW program. The total number of MSW programs in each region with human sexuality

0

curriculum and the variations in the type of human sexuality elective within these programs offered by region was also calculated. Lastly, characteristics of the human sexuality coursework such as total number of human sexuality electives compared to total number of other sexuality focused electives such as LGBT/sexual orientation, HIV/AIDS or sexual abuse/trauma electives were calculated in aggregate then by region in order to analyze regional variation.

Limitations

During the first phase of data collection, time was a considerable limitation. Since this research study was completed on a limited time schedule, both phases of data collection had to be completed in a timely manner as to complete other components of the project. Should this researcher have had additional time perhaps all 235 accredited MSW programs could have been sampled during the first phase of data collection, which may have afforded more possible participants during the second phase of data collection. Instead, this analysis includes a review of 140 accredited MSW programs. Secondly, since there is a lack of literature that has examined these topics before, there is little direction that can be taken from other research studies conducted in the past. Had other content analyses examining human sexuality curriculum in MSW programs across the country been completed previously, perhaps there would be more efficient or established search terms to assist in the content analysis described above. Lastly, researcher biases may also be a limitation of this study as this researcher's biases may have hindered research gathering or may have influenced how data was gathered. For example, perhaps the expectation that the Southwest region of the U.S has fewer human sexuality course offerings may have influenced researching those schools. This researcher has engaged in reflexivity about potential biases throughout the data collection process in hopes to address these concerns as they arose and potentially influenced analyses. Therefore, time, limited previous

1

research and methodology and researcher biases are possible limitations of the first phase of data collection.

Phase 2: Examination of motivations and obstacles faced by faculty teaching human sexuality curricula.

Sampling Approach

From the sampling described above for the first phase of data collection, a purposive sampling was then gathered for the second phase of data collection. Forty-five faculty members were sent recruitment emails using the names and contact information obtained during the first phase of data collection. This researcher submitted a protocol change form to include additional recruitment strategies since finding participants was challenging due to the small sampling population. Snowball sampling was implemented as a recruitment strategy and a request for participation was posted on a professional discussion board for social workers. Please see Appendix B and C for Protocol Change Request Form and Protocol Change Approval Letter. Faculty members were chosen as the sample demographic for the second phase of the current study because they were likely to have the most anecdotal information about teaching human sexuality curricula to social work students. Faculty could have been associate, assistant or adjunct professors, so long as they had taught some human sexuality coursework. Participants were purposively sampled from all five regions of the U.S to later analyze geographic diversity and variance. Participants had to be at least 18 years old, able to read, write, and speak English and must have taught human sexuality courses and/or sexuality focused elective courses.

Ethics and Safeguards

Confidentiality is assured in this study while anonymity is not because there is a small and unlikely possibility that the MSW programs, courses, and/or faculty may be identified through participant responses, specifically because there a limited number of MSW programs in

the country that offer human sexuality coursework. It may be possible for some readers to infer who the participants are, based on their narrative responses and demographic information. However, measures were taken by the researcher to address this anonymity concern by reporting data thematically and in aggregate way rather than providing in-depth narrative accounts of rationale and motivations of each specific participant. Identifying information about the participants such as the MSW programs they worked for, either at the time of the interview or previously, or titles of human sexuality courses they taught was removed from the transcripts and final analyses to attempt to maintain confidentiality.

Despite the unlikely possibility that a breach of anonymity could occur given the reasons described above, overall this study presented minimal risk to participants. Risks to participants included feelings of discomfort while answering certain questions about their work with human sexuality curricula or feelings of concern that their responses will be linked back to them personally or to the MSW program they work for. Again, participants were informed that they did not have to answer questions they felt uncomfortable responding to and were reassured at the end of the interviews that any information about the MSW program they work for, programs they have worked for in the past, or the institution through which they received their education would not be included in the final analysis.

This researcher collected names of participants by maintaining signed copies of informed consent forms and also collected email addresses and phone numbers of participants during the recruitment and interview processes. This information and other identifying information such as the name of the program the participant worked for or titles of courses they taught were only temporarily linked to participants' responses through a tracking sheet. All identifying information of participants along with the identifier (ID) number they were assigned, were stored

3

in a separate spreadsheet than the one maintained for the first phase of data collection. This spreadsheet for participants' information was the only location where participant's names were linked to their ID number. Once data collection was complete and thank you emails to participants were sent, the link was destroyed by removing the unique identifiers from the tracking sheet. Participants' signed informed consent forms were the only hard copy document with participants names attached. Participants were informed during the recruitment and informed consent process that participation in the study was voluntary and that they could choose not to answer any question and may withdraw from the study at any time. All research materials including signed consent forms, transcriptions, analyses and consent documents were stored in a secure password protected location to insure confidentiality of participants for three years. In the event that materials are needed beyond this period, they will be kept secured until no longer needed, and then destroyed. When materials are no longer needed, they will all be destroyed.

Measures

The interview guide used for the present study was generated by this researcher and has not been used in previous research designs. Open-ended questions illustrative of the core concepts for this study include:

- What have you seen, if any, as some of the benefits of teaching human sexuality coursework to MSW students?
- What are some of the challenges you have found overall in teaching human sexuality coursework to MSW students?
- What recommendations would you provide to faculty looking to offer a human sexuality elective at their respective MSW programs?

Please see Appendix F for full interview guide. For four of the participants "MSW" was left out of the questions as two of those participants taught a variety of students not just MSW students and the two other participants only taught BSW students. The final questions asked of

4

participants were demographic questions (age, gender, race, education level, sexual orientation etc.). The participants were then read a concluding statement about the project and were provided with contact information should they want to contact this researcher after the study.

Data Collection

The second phase of data collection took place from March 1, 2015-April 10, 2015 using the semi-structured interviews that included thirteen open-ended narrative questions and seven demographic close-ended questions (see Measures in previous section). All eight interviews conducted were held over the phone and took from 25-60 minutes to complete; the shortest interview took 25 minutes to complete. The contact information gathered in phase one (through course catalogs and online faculty directories on MSW websites) was used to contact faculty via email who have taught human sexuality courses to ask if they would be willing to participate in a phone interview. Recruitment emails were sent to faculty who were in the current semester teaching a human sexuality elective, or who have previously taught a human sexuality. The criteria for participation, (must be over the age of 18, able to read and understand English and must have taught human sexuality coursework) were also included in the recruitment emails. Unfortunately, due to some mislabeled and/or outdated information on MSW programs' websites, some faculty were contacted in error, meaning that those faculty members had never taught human sexuality coursework, only did research in those areas but never taught on the subject matter, or had taught human sexuality coursework, just never to social work students. Once identified, these professors were removed from all future recruitment efforts. If respondents did not reply to the first email within one week, a second recruitment email was sent; if after another week there was no response, a third and final email was sent. Each recruitment email sent was tracked in the spreadsheet and final reports included a summary of

5

the response rate and reasons for exclusion (e.g. no response after three emails, respondent did not meet participation criteria, etc.). Once respondents consented to participate in the study via email and were deemed appropriate, this researcher obtained participant's mailing addresses in order to send two copies of the informed consent document—one for participants' records and one to be returned to me via mail.

Once informed consent forms were returned to the researcher a date and time for the estimated hour long phone interview was set up via email. On the day of the interview this researcher contacted the participant using the phone number that was provided via email to conduct the interview. Participants were read a brief overview of the project and have the opportunity to ask any questions. Participants answered questions about their experiences teaching human sexuality curricula to MSW students. This research took extensive notes during all of the interviews; the researcher then listened to the digital recordings to add additional detail to these notes. Whenever direct quotes are provided, they are extracted from the digital recording.

The interview questions that were included and the order in which they were asked are aimed to obtain additional information about challenges and success of human sexuality coursework, benefits of such curricula to faculty and students, implementation of human sexuality curricula, and any recommendations participants have for other MSW programs looking to implement such coursework. Because all of the core questions were asked in the same order and none were excluded, data collection was systematic among interview respondents; the interview guide remained consistent. Probes were included to explore emergent themes that arose within the context of the interview and/or to keep participants on track during the interview. The open-ended questions asked during interviews are designed to draw out subjective

6

information about the experiences, challenges and motivations for teaching human sexuality coursework.

Data Analysis

After data collection completion, all written notes and documentation of the interviews were transcribed and coded. All participants' names and any identifying information were removed from the transcribed interviews. Interview transcripts reviewed for accuracy and assigned the appropriate identifier number. The demographic data of participants was labeled according to the corresponding identifier number assigned to each participant's transcript. The interviews were coded using a thematic approach while analyzing the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). A thematic approach was chosen for analysis to highlight the relevant themes that emerged from the data to best answer the research questions of the present study. The data was coded and categorized based on recurrent themes or patterns that were represented within the data (i.e., emergent codes) and codes based upon extant literature (i.e., *a priori* codes). A codebook was compiled outlining and describing all of the themes and patterns across all of the interviews. Data was analyzed both by reviewing responses to questions across all of the participants and by extracting universal themes collectively from all interviews. Descriptive statistical information was calculated using the demographic data, such as average age, average number of years teaching, in addition to other descriptive information such as education level, race, orientation, etc.

Sample

Of the forty-five faculty members emailed, eight faculty members were interviewed via phone interviews (17% response rate). Most participants had other professional roles in addition to their faculty role at their respective programs, such as having their own private practice or

7

Director roles within the administration. Thirty eight percent (n=3) of the participants taught human sexuality and/or gender coursework to graduate MSW students, 38% (n=3) taught human sexuality coursework to undergraduate social work students, some of whom were earning BSWs one of whom taught independent lectures and workshops both in and outside their respective MSW program, and 25% (n=2) taught human sexuality coursework to both MSW and BSW students. In addition to the anecdotal evidence gathered, demographic characteristics of the sample (e.g., age, gender, education level, years in practice, sexual orientation etc.) were also collected. See Table 1 below. The average age of participants was 54 years old and the average number of years that participants had been a faculty member at the respective MSW programs for 9.8 years.

Table 1

Socio-Demographic Data

Demographic Data	% (n)
Gender	
Female	63 (5)
Male	38 (3)
Age	
30-39	25 (2)
40-49	13 (1)
50-59	13 (1)
60-69	50 (4)
Race	
White	100 (8)
Sexual Orientation	
Straight	63 (5)
Lesbian	13 (1)
Gay	25 (2)
Education Level	
MSW	38 (3)
PhD	63 (5)
Years in Current Position	
1-4	25 (2)
5-9	13 (1)
10-14	50 (4)
15-19	13 (1)
Regions Represented	
Northeast	38 (3)
Southeast	25 (2)
Southwest	13 (1)
West	13 (1)
Midwest	13 (1)

Limitations

Sample size, generalizability and limited diversity were the most prominent limitations of the current study. Given that participants were chosen from such a specific and small population: faculty members at MSW programs that teach human sexuality coursework, it was an anticipated challenge that there would be limitations on recruitment and therefore a smaller sample size. This limited sample size also makes generalizability difficult, especially in the U.S geographic regions where only one participant was recruited. Secondly, because sample size was a

challenge, it was also expected that there would be limited geographic diversity among the sample. It was hoped that at least two participants could be recruited from each of the five primary regions of the U.S. Recruitment resulted in one participant being recruited from each of the five regions with two additional participants interviewed from the Northeast and one additional participant from the Southeast. Thus, this researcher was able to compare participant responses from all five regions; however given that three of the five regions only are represented by one participant, there is not the ability to reach thematic saturation by region and therefore analyses are presented in aggregate (and not disaggregated by region). Thirdly, demographically the sample is not racially diverse; all participants identified as White. Due to the lack of racial diversity, findings do not address the experiences of faculty of color around the U.S who's experience as faculty members teaching human sexuality coursework are likely different than their White counterparts. No racial diversity within the sample also severely limits generalizability. Fortunately however, the sample was fairly diverse in other ways (age, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) In short, small sample size, limited geographic diversity and limited racial diversity were some of the most primary limitations to the study.

CHAPTER IV

Findings

This chapter will present the findings of the (1) regional variation of human sexuality course offerings, drawing on the content analysis of human sexuality coursework from MSW programs across the U.S and qualitative data, and (2) description of personal obstacles and motivations for teaching human sexuality coursework, drawing upon qualitative data. As discussed in Chapter III (Methodology), the content analysis consisted of data collection across a sample of 140 MSW programs across the five regions of the continental United States followed by qualitative interviews with faculty members, eight in total. This chapter will first discuss the regional variation among MSW programs offering human sexuality coursework. Next, the personal obstacles faculty face when teaching human sexuality coursework will be discussed, followed by the motivations faculty have for teaching human sexuality coursework. The chapter will conclude with summary and participant's recommendations for other faculty members interested in implementing human sexuality coursework into their respective MSW programs.

Regional Variation of Human Sexuality Course Offerings

Of the 235 accredited MSW programs in the United States, 140 programs were sampled during the content analysis of the present study. Thirty programs were sampled from the Northeast, Southeast, Midwest and Western regions of the U.S while only 20 programs were sampled from the Southwest region because there were only 20 MSW programs in Southwest region in total. There currently are 67 accredited programs in the Southeast, 54 programs in the Northeast, 43 programs in the West and 57 programs in the Midwest. The average number of MSW programs that offer human sexuality coursework in each region of the United States was twelve programs; while the median number of MSW programs was ten programs and the range

1

is 18 (max=22, min=4). Of the total 140 MSW programs that were sampled, only 43% offered human sexuality coursework; thus suggesting greater than half of the MSW programs nationally lack human sexuality coursework.

As hypothesized, there were several regional variations found from both the content analysis data and the qualitative data gathered from participant interviews. First, as seen in Table 2 below, the MSW programs in the Northeast region and the Western region of the United States offered the most human sexuality coursework to students. Seventy three percent of the Northeast sample (n= 22 of 30) and 46% of the Western region sample (n=14 of 30) offered some form of human sexuality coursework including, human sexuality, gender/LGBT, HIV/AIDS and sexual abuse electives. Only 20-33% of the MSW programs in the other three regions, Southeast (n=10 of 30), Southwest (n=4 of 20) and Midwest (n=10 of 30) offered human sexuality coursework. The Southwest region of the U.S offered the fewest human sexuality programs. Clearly, there was considerable regional variation among the five regions of the United States; as expected the Northeast and Western regions (which includes California) which are two of the more liberal areas of the U.S offered the most human sexuality coursework.

Table 2

Percentage of MSW Programs that Offer Human Sexuality Coursework by Region

<u>Region</u> (n)	<u>% MSW Programs by Region offering Human Sexuality Coursework</u> % (n)
Northeast (30)	73% (22)
Southeast (30)	33% (10)
Southwest (20)	20% (4)
West (30)	46% (14)
Midwest (30)	33% (10)
Total: (N=140)	43% (60)

Secondly, there was variation among the types of human sexuality coursework. The types of human sexuality coursework are as follows: human sexuality courses, gender/LGBT topics

2

courses, HIV/AIDS courses and sexual abuse and trauma courses. The gender, HIV and sexual trauma courses could fall under the human sexuality category but are separated out for maximum analysis of human sexuality coursework. The average number of human sexuality courses offered in each region was 13.6, average number of gender/LGBT courses was 6.6 and both HIV/AIDS and sexual abuse courses slightly more than one course per region. There were a total of 115 human sexuality, gender/LGBT, HIV/AIDS, and sexual abuse courses that were offered from the 140 MSW programs across the United States collectively. Across regions, human sexuality courses were offered almost twice as often as gender/LGBT courses, eleven times more often than HIV/AIDS courses and over eight times more often than sexual abuse coursework. In summary, there was variation in the types of coursework that was offered across the five regions of the U.S with primarily human sexuality and gender/LGBT coursework being offered the most frequently.

Finally, there was regional variation in the type of human sexuality coursework that MSW programs offered in each region. Table 3 shows a breakdown of each type of human sexuality coursework and how many of those courses were offered by each region and Table 4 shows the mean, median and range for each type of human sexuality coursework. Similarly to the data described above, the Northeast and Western regions offered the most human sexuality coursework, although interestingly the Midwestern region only offered on average three courses less than the Western region. It appears from the findings that often human sexuality coursework and gender/LGBT coursework are offered more frequently than HIV/AIDS and sexual abuse coursework which may be beneficial to MSW students hoping to receive a generalized overview of human sexuality and/or gender topics.

Table 3

Percentage of Types of Human Sexuality Coursework Offered by Region

<u>Region</u>	<u>Human Sexuality Courses</u> % (n)	<u>Gender/LGBTQ Courses</u> % (n)	<u>HIV/AIDS Courses</u> % (n)	<u>Sexual Abuse Courses</u> % (n)	<u>Total</u> % (n)
Northeast	44% (30)	54% (18)	33% (2)	50% (4)	47% (54)
Southeast	13% (9)	6% (2)	33% (2)	12% (1)	12% (14)
Southwest	4% (3)	12% (4)	--	12% (1)	7% (8)
West	19% (13)	15% (5)	16% (1)	25% (2)	18% (21)
Midwest	19% (13)	12% (4)	16% (1)	--	15% (18)
Totals	59% (68)	29% (33)	5% (6)	7% (8)	99% (115)

Table 4

Median, Mean and Range

<u>Type of Elective</u>	<u>Median</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Range</u>
Human Sexuality Courses	13	13.6	27
Gender/LGBT Courses	4	6.6	16
HIV/AIDS Courses	1	1.2	2
Sexual Abuse Courses	1	1.6	4
Total of All Electives	18	23	46

Participant Understandings of the Reasons for Geographic Variation

Regional Conservatism. In the interviews, the most salient explanation for geographic variations noted above was regional conservatism. Some interview participants¹ discussed how they struggled with the conservatism in the state or region in which they worked impacted their ability to teach human sexuality coursework. Most participants did not discuss the challenges with conservatism within their region specifically, but rather discussed the conservatism that existed within the program and students themselves. In addition, some participants reported

¹ The following scale will be used to discuss the qualitative data findings: some participants (n=1-2), many participants (n=3-5), most participants (n=6-8).

being in a “liberal bubble” on campus within a region that was conservative and even still conservatism was felt on campus. Some participants did discuss how the conservatism of the

4

students and/or the administration of the MSW program in which they worked made it challenging to teach human sexuality content. The participants that did discuss conservatism in some way, either regionally or conservatism they experienced within the student body, were from Southern regions of the U.S. For example, Participant 8 from a Southern state discussed how she was cautious about the type of content she included in her syllabus for fear of getting fired; an example of conservatism from the students.

I don't do a SAR (Sexual Attitude Reassessment) with my students and I don't include any erotica either. I'm a little gun shy and nervous of getting fired for various content. There was a professor who used to work here; she was fired for taking students on an "inappropriate" field trip. I don't know, maybe it was inappropriate, but I'm cautious. A third of the group of students I teach is somewhat conservative.

Participant 6 from a Southeastern state discussed the juxtaposition of the mostly liberal college campus mixed with the conservatism of the state. This participant was the only participant to provide insight about regional culture and how that culture can negatively impact teaching and even student's growth.

We are a university town in [participant's state]. On campus we are in a liberal bubble, but we are a very conservative state and so sometimes I get negative feedback from conservative students...it can be challenging in [participant's state]. I once received a tape in my mailbox from a student about conversion therapy and how to stop being a sinner...Appalachian culture can be very different.

The two above participants struggled with the differing conservative views both of students and of administration which impacted the teaching of the course content due to fears of being fired or concerns about student criticism. In contrast to the two participants highlighted

5

above, Participant 4 seemed to use his regional location in a Northeastern city to propel his teaching of human sexuality coursework. He responded:

I often use my location at this school and being in [urban city in Northeast] to my advantage. I am able to bring in many guest speakers from many local and national LGBT agencies and organizations to my classes because of where I am located.

Both of Participants 6 and 8 discussed overall concerns with the political conservatism of the state in which they work in and how that conservatism influences the administration they work for and sometimes the students whom they teach. While, Participant 4 seemed to be able to utilize the resources in the city and state he was located in to advance his teaching.

It is evident that the regions in which participants were located impacted their ability to teach human sexuality coursework, either positively or negatively. Some participants struggled due to the regional conservatism of their region, while other participants used their location to their advantage while teaching human sexuality coursework. The regional differences among these participant's experiences strengthens the finding for regional variation and a potential mechanism for it, specifically the conservatism that may typify the state, university administration, and student body.

Personal Challenges to Teaching Human Sexuality Coursework

Participants most frequently highlighted two obstacles and challenges to teaching human sexuality coursework to MSW and BSW students. First, faculty participants discussed feeling professionally isolated as many of the participants were one of the only, if not the only faculty within their program that taught human sexuality coursework. Feeling alone in the work did not appear to hinder participant's teaching; however did appear to weigh on participants personally as some felt discouraged by the lack of professional support of the importance of human

6

sexuality topics. Second, some participants discussed how their own identity has influenced their teaching of human sexuality coursework and for some was a barrier to getting through to and teaching students. Both of these thematic areas, professional isolation and faculty identity presented personal challenges to participants who teach students human sexuality coursework.

Professional Isolation and Limited Peer Support². Many participants discussed feelings of “being the only one” who taught human sexuality coursework. Many of the participants discussed their ambivalence about being the only faculty member at their program that teaches this coursework. Many felt isolated while some felt appreciated because they were the only faculty frequently called upon to teach such courses or do guest lectures. It appears that this professional isolation or lack of peer support or involvement did not directly inhibit participant’s ability to teach this coursework, but rather participants felt discouraged because so few of their fellow social workers seemed to value the work that the participants do in the subfields of human sexuality.

Participants emphasized the challenge of being isolated potentially from colleagues as well as administrative or institutional supports. Participant 6 explained his disappointment with other faculty for not wanting to teach human sexuality courses and commented that he would like to be able to pass on his teachings to other faculty someday to continue to educate students.

I would like to pass the torch on someday; more people need to talk about this stuff [human sexuality]. I sometimes am disappointed by how few faculty members want to teach these courses. I want to tell them, you don’t have to be LGBT to teach these types of courses, or have a phenomenal sex life (laughs)! But I think that’s what people think they need to teach this stuff, but anyone could teach it.

² Professional isolation and limited peer support refers to the lack of professional support faculty receive both collegial and/or institutionally.

7

This participant postulated that faculty may be apprehensive to teach human sexuality because they are not a part of an in group (i.e. LGBT community) and felt that being a part of the in group was unnecessary to teach these courses. Other participants emphasized the challenge of the institutional or administrative supports being adequately in place to support teaching these courses. For example, Participant 2 voiced:

I never have to compete to teach human sexuality coursework; no one else wants to teach it (laughs), although I wish more people would teach it. Also another challenge is that it's hard to feel out an institution to see if these [human sexuality] topics are well received at the school at all, you don't know if you'll be supported in what you want to teach...I felt isolated in teaching these topics because sometimes I'm the only one who teaches it.

This participant felt isolated both by colleagues and the institution because it was at first unclear (prior to her being hired) if the institution supported teaching human sexuality coursework. Secondly, the collegial isolation was not necessarily due to colleagues shaming the participant, but rather because she was the only professor who taught these courses and did not have that shared experience with other faculty members. Feeling alone in her teaching of human sexuality coursework was a personal obstacle for this participant. In addition, Participant 3 discusses how this professional isolation is unnecessary and avoidable:

I think no one wants to teach the [human sexuality] course, which is sad. Our sexual selves are a part of who we are. Any of these professors could teach this class, I know they could, although I don't know their experiences and don't know what their concerns are about teaching the class.

Clearly there is disappointment being voiced about the lack of initiative or desire other faculty have to teach human sexuality coursework. It appears that these participants believe that anyone could teach human sexuality coursework and that there are no strict requirements in order to do so. The above participants speculated that faculty may have anxiety about teaching these courses and/or feel that they are not qualified because they are not a part of various LGBT or sexual communities. In contrast with the above participants, Participant 5 worked in a program that offered several human sexuality and gender electives in multiple programs within the school and was largely involved with creating some of that curriculum; therefore he did not experience the lack of professional support that some of the other participants felt.

In summary, three of the eight participants appeared to be impacted by the limited number of other faculty members at their respective programs that taught human sexuality coursework. Again, it appears that this was not an obstacle to participant's teaching these courses or inhibited their teaching; however seemed to leave participants feeling discouraged or disappointed that there were not more faculty members who wanted to teach human sexuality coursework; some participants were concerned about who would continue teaching human sexuality courses in the future at their respective programs if there were no other faculty who felt passionately about human sexuality education.

Faculty Identity. Second, some participants also discussed how their identities sometimes posed as a barrier to teaching students; although some other participants were able to use their identity to their advantage while teaching. Based on the data, it appeared that some participants felt that their identity, specifically their sexual orientation and gender identity, would influence their students and how their students engaged with the topics discussed in the class. For example, Participant 7 explained that she was conscious of how her identity as a straight woman

talking about issues that impact the LGBT community, particularly trans individuals, would be received by students who were a part of that community.

Being a straight female teaching about homosexuality can be challenging sometimes for me. Many of the students in my class are a part of the LGBT community and I don't want to teach from the outside looking in. I want to be abreast with how they view sexuality; it changes so quickly day to day...I am definitely very mindful of being a straight woman teaching about these issues to many students who identify as LGBT.

Faculty's identities appear to sometimes act as a distraction to student's learning, both implicitly and explicitly. The above participant was concerned how her teaching would come across to students as she is not a part of the LGBT "in group" while the next participant shared that her identity as a lesbian often causes students to question both the content she teaches and her motives behind teaching, which Participant 7 did not experience as a straight woman. Participant 2 voiced:

I tell my students it's not about what I think. They will often, I think to be dismissive or to distance themselves from these subjects, say things like "well this is just what Dr. [participant] thinks, she's gay, she's liberal. I'll focus the conversation back to the Code of Ethics. I'll say well I didn't write this so how these topics relate to the ethics of our field. Talking about ethics and how to treat clients forces them [students] to not be dismissive of the topics and it takes me out of the equation as a focal point.

Here it appears that Participant 2 struggled with students becoming distracted from the sometimes personal and/or contentious sexuality topics discussed in class by putting their discomfort on her identity as a lesbian. By talking about the Code of Ethics, this participant was able to redirect the student's attention away from her identity and focus them on clinical work

0

with clients. Participant 7 also was concerned that her identity as a straight woman would also distract students from learning the content because she would be seen as an “outsider” teaching the in-group.

In contrast, two other participants were able to positively utilize their identities and some of their experiences as a sexual minority to teach students about some of the emotionally challenging content in human sexuality courses. Participant 6 appeared to use his identity as a gay man to his advantage with his work with his students. While discussing the challenges he faced in determining his curriculum for the class, Participant 6 stated:

I work in collaboration with my colleagues, using evidence based practice and research in my classes. I’m an out, proud gay man; I use my drama-queenness (laughs) in class and my high energy helps in my class too I think. Dyadic learning is insufficient learning as far as I’m concerned; I am all about experiential learning in my classroom.

Participant 6 stated:

When I talk about trans topics, I do a case study that starts at age 3 and then ends at age 56 and it turns out to be me. The students are blown away. They often say, “wow, I’ve never known anyone like that...sometimes I decide if I am going to include my self-disclosure case study or not; it depends on where I am teaching and who the students are.

Here is an example of a participant who uses his identity and experiences as a trans man to educate his students; although it is evident that sometimes depending on his audience, he chooses not to use his identity as a teaching tool. It appears that this participant assesses each classroom of students to determine if it would be appropriate or safe to use his case study about himself. Depending on his audience of students, being vulnerable and sharing his case study

1

about his experience as a trans man can either be both a challenge and a rewarding teaching experience.

It appears that participants were conscious of how their identities shaped the student's classroom experience; some using it to their advantage, while others seemed to have to frequently be mindful of how their identity was influencing learning. Some felt that it may distract from learning because students may feel these human sexuality topics are being pushed upon them by an "agenda"; while it appears that for other participants they used their identities and experiences to their advantage to engage their students, when it felt appropriate to do so.

Faculty Motivation for Teaching Human Sexuality Coursework

In addition to discussing challenges to teaching human sexuality coursework, many participants discussed several motivating factors and positive experiences they have had through teaching their students. First, many participants discussed the need to limit professional negligence and felt professionally responsible to teach MSW students, soon to be clinicians, how to be open and receptive to the sexual identity needs of their clients. Secondly, many participants shared that they enjoy teaching in general and more specifically, enjoyed teaching about sexuality topics as that is what most participants were passionate about. Participants also enjoyed learning from their students as well; a reciprocal learning process. Finally, most participants, in conjunction with learning from their students, seemed to enjoy witnessing student's growth throughout the course and cited that as a "highlight" of their experiences.

Professional Responsibility. Many participants seemed driven to teach human sexuality because they had an ethical or professional responsibility to do so. There were many participants who seemed to have an "if I don't do it, no one else will" attitude toward teaching this coursework. There is a theme throughout participant's responses about changing the value

2

judgments some social workers place on human sexuality and changing those value judgments begins with depathologizing human sexuality. For instance, Participant 6 talked about the need to normalize sexuality for both students and faculty members and that there is a need to depathologize sexuality through education:

As social workers we need to educate ourselves, it's [sexuality] a normal part of life that can be amazing. Our attitudes need to change, not the clients...I see it as a cultural competency issue. The students need to read the code of ethics, they can't put their values on to their clients; we are taught not to do that, it's unethical. I am preparing providers (social workers) because so many of them aren't prepared.

The above participant discusses the need for cultural competence and open-minded attitudes social workers should have to better serve their clients as it pertains to the social work code of ethics. He appears to feel a personal responsibility to both educate himself and social work students. The following participant discusses his professional and career commitment to depathologizing sexuality to both fellow colleagues and students. Participant 5 shared:

I struggle with some of my colleagues who pathologize sex and sexuality. In fact, if I'm being honest I think how some of them treat sexuality is borderline unethical. It's interesting how as soon as sex is brought up, immediately it is turned into pathology. I want to devote my career to teaching clinicians so they don't get "Judgy-McJudgerson" with their clients and you can quote me on that (laughs).

Here, this participant talks explicitly about devoting his professional career to depathologizing sexuality for professional social workers and social work students. This participant highlights that he has a professional responsibility to change attitudes about human sexuality. Social workers have professional responsibility to be competent providers and to not

3

pass judgment on to clients; for the above participants, teaching human sexuality helps to accomplish both of those professional responsibilities.

In further discussing professional responsibility, participant 7 discussed competency as one of the profession's core values and articulated that collectively, both as social work clinicians and as educators, there is a necessity to have particular competencies including in sexuality:

I think it's important to stay competent as social work providers; competency is one of the core values, right? We [social workers] have a responsibility to know at least a little bit about all of the human diversity, sexuality included.

Throughout the above participant's responses there are themes of depathologizing sexuality, maintaining cultural competence and discussion of the ethical responsibility to uphold them both. These faculty members seem to feel they have an ethical responsibility to do the work that they do so clients of these future clinicians will be better served by better informed and competent social work clinicians. Upholding ethical standards of social work is a professional responsibility and teaching social work students about human sexuality appears to many of the participants to be a part of that ethical standard.

Enjoyment of Teaching and Reciprocal Learning. Secondly, many participants shared about their enjoyment for teaching and how rewarding teaching human sexuality courses can be; in conjunction there is also an enjoyment participants get from learning from each class of students. It appears that perhaps the passion for teaching sexuality coursework and having the opportunity to learn something new from students in each human sexuality course they teach is a motivator for many participants; thus having a shared reciprocity in the learning. For instance, Participant 1 and Participant 5 shared statements such as:

“I have always enjoyed educating people, especially post-graduate students. I do supervision as well which is rewarding.”

“They pay me to talk about sex all day, come on it’s a great job...I get to teach about this forever, I get to live this. It’s great!”

In addition, Participant 2 discussed how her students influence her own growth and learning and how she values the process of learning reciprocally together. She states:

We have to struggle with some of the subject matter together. For example, after watching a film about anatomically correct female dolls, students starting asking if there are male anatomical dolls, not just female. I don’t have all the answers, so we looked up information together. They teach me a lot...Personally, I learn a lot from these classes. I am learning more about the sexual culture of youth. I learn a lot about my own perspective from the students.

Here is an example of an enjoyment of the process of learning and teaching together. This participant is motivated to continue teaching this coursework because it’s rewarding; both because she sees the students grow and learn and she herself grows and learns from the experiences in the classroom. Additionally, Participant 3 voiced:

I learn so much from my students; that’s why I do this every year. Even though it’s a lot of work for me, I learn so much from them...I also like being able to offer to them that despite the [sexual] violence and trauma and pathology, we can overcome, we can create healthy sexuality.

These two participants offer that despite challenges with pathology or challenges in simply keeping up with the upkeep of the course, the mutual growth and learning between students and faculty and enjoyment of teaching overall are strong motivators. Based on

5

participant's response, enjoying the act of teaching to further student's knowledge and attitudes about human sexuality is closely related to participant's gaining their own new knowledge and changing attitudes from their students; this seems to be a reciprocal process for both faculty and students.

Witnessing Student's Growth. In close connection to enjoyment of teaching and reciprocal learning, many participants also reported an enjoyment of bearing witness to student's growth and noticing changes in student comfort level with human sexuality also as a motivator for teaching. For example, Participant 1 and Participant 6 shared experiences such as:

"Seeing the growing comfort level within the students is a benefit to me as a professor."

"Watching the faces of students...watching them relax and watching them get that "ohhh" moment...I get the feedback that I really challenged their views, some of the first time. That's the most rewarding piece."

For most participants, knowing they are teaching students to think more openly and critically about human sexuality topics, perhaps even change their attitudes about some aspects of human sexuality they may not have understood, and being to witness that growth is a strong motivator for most participants. Participant 2 and Participant 4 voiced:

"Seeing the student's progression is huge! Seeing them come into their own and talk about these topics, not even professionally but in their personal lives alone, seeing them become more open to ideas that are different from their own, it's a great experience."

"Every once in a while I get comments and feedback that any faculty would want to hear, like; "I've never learned about this anywhere else," or "this class really got me thinking." Some of my students have gone on to become leaders and activists which is great to see. That feedback motivates me."

Evidently, observing growth among their students and receiving positive direct feedback about how their classes impacted the students inspired and motivated participants to continue to teach human sexuality courses. It appears that bearing witness to growth and facilitating rich discussions about human sexuality topics influences and motivates participants to teach; as seeing changes in attitudes among students is a powerful experience for many participants.

Recommendations of Participants

Finally, participants provided recommendations to other faculty around the U.S who might be interested in implementing human sexuality coursework into their respective MSW programs. Overall participants stressed the need for human sexuality topics to be integrated into all classes and encouraged faculty to stay up to date with human sexuality research. Most participants discussed the need for integrating human sexuality topics into all classes and emphasized that even if a specific human sexuality elective is not created, there are still ways to teach MSW students about human sexuality by better integrating these topics into required courses. Lastly, many participants also discussed the need for faculty members to stay up to date with the ever growing body of literature about human sexuality. Many participants encouraged that “staying current” was crucial to successfully teaching these courses. Each of these themes are described in greater detail, in turn, below.

Integration of Human Sexuality Content into MSW Curriculum. Most participants discussed the dual need for implementation of separate human sexuality electives and also the need to begin better integrating human sexuality topics into all required courses from clinical courses to research to policy courses. Many participants grappled with the understanding that individual human sexuality electives only reach the students that *choose* to take those classes, which is why participants encouraged better integration of these topics into all classes to reach

more students. There were two reoccurring recommendations: create and implement human sexuality electives at MSW programs that do not have them and participants also recommended better integration of human sexuality content in classes that are already being taught, like human behavior and clinical practice classes. Participant 6 voiced:

At the very least these sexuality topics can be better integrated more deeply into some of the human diversity or human behavior classes; sexuality is a human behavior after all. As professors look at their syllabi for the classes they already teach, if they teach policy or research or clinical classes, integrate this topic into the class they already teach, the best they can. Let's infuse these topics into all classes *and* also have human sexuality electives.

In summary, participants encouraged professors and faculty to incorporate human sexuality topics into the classes they already teach, if creating a new elective is not something that professors feel comfortable doing. One participant suggested talking about reproductive health and abortion issues or sex work policies in policy classes or talking about sexual trauma in clinical classes; specifically talking about incest and rape, or finally in sociocultural classes, talking about how technology impacts sexuality or how sexuality changes with age. Most of the participants encouraged the integration of sexuality topics because they see the need for students to learn how sexuality impacts all facets of a person's identity. Many participants believed that sexuality cannot only be taught separate from other human behavior topics because sexuality is not separated from a client's identity and therefore should be taught along with other human behavior and diversity topics.

Staying Current with the Research. Lastly, most participants spoke generally about feeling overwhelmed by how frequently human sexuality research and literature changes as more

and more research is done on these topics. Participants recommended that other faculty interested in teaching these types of courses need to stay updated on the “moving target” that is human sexuality research. Mostly this recommendation came up in interviews when participants were discussing how they created their syllabi and how their syllabus is a live document that often needs to be revised as research changes. Participant 7 reported:

Make sure you have the most up to date research. The thing about research in this area is that there isn't a lot of it. So finding the most important and up to date research is really challenging. The field changes so quickly so when I present 2012 data it's already so outdated now in 2015. Some other professors who teach other content can maybe get away with using research that is a bit older because maybe it's still relevant, but that's not the case with gender and sexuality topics.

Summary of Findings

In summary, the data from the current study found several regional variations of offerings of human sexuality coursework across the U.S, particularly more offerings in the Northeast and West and fewer offerings in the Southwest. Participants cited, on some occasions, that these variations might be explained by a regional or institutional conservatism that affected the administrative and faculty priorities, as well as the interests and responsiveness of the student body to sexuality curriculum. In addition, findings showed that participants were met with several challenges and barriers to teaching human sexuality coursework including professional isolation and limited professional peer support, and how their identities influenced classroom learning. On the other hand, data also found that participants had several motivators for teaching coursework including feelings of professional responsibility, enjoyment of teaching and learning from students, and bearing witness to student's growth. Finally, participants offered two primary

recommendations for other faculty interested in teaching human sexuality coursework: integrate sexuality into preexisting classes and stay up to date with the quickly changing research within the subfield of human sexuality. The next chapter will discuss how these findings support and differ from previous literature and research findings and discuss the future implications these findings have on social work education.

CHAPTER V

Discussion

Summary of Findings

This study addressed regional variation among MSW programs offerings of human sexuality coursework; obstacles to teaching faculty face and motivations faculty have for teaching human sexuality coursework. Through the content analysis of 140 MSW programs and the eight qualitative interviews with faculty who teach human sexuality coursework, it was found that there is substantial regional variation of course offerings. Northeastern and Western schools, largely in California offered the most human sexuality coursework while programs in the Southwest offered the least. It was also found that faculty face many obstacles while teaching human sexuality coursework. The most prominent obstacles were the conservatism of the region they work in, professional isolation combined with limited peer support, and how students engage with the faculty's identities and how their identities impact learning. Data also found several factors that motivated faculty to teach these courses, including a sense of professional responsibility, enjoyment of teaching and learning from students, and lastly witnessing student's growth was a motivating factor. The following sections will connect these findings back to the preexisting literature discussed in Chapter II (Literature Review). Then the implications for social work practice and education will be discussed, followed by the limitations and strengths of the study and will conclude with overall conclusions and recommendations for further research.

Connections to Literature

Much of the previous literature focuses on the obstacles to offering human sexuality coursework which the findings of this study build upon. For example, Rowntree (2013) discusses how in both Australia and abroad, the U.S included; there is an insidious cultural discourse of

1

secrecy and shame around sexuality that likely influences why few social work programs offer human sexuality coursework. Through a sociocultural theoretical lens, while also comparing modernist and postmodernist approaches, Rowntree discusses how most sexuality education can be othering to non-heteronormative groups and is therefore shaming many types of human sexuality. The findings of this study further this argument. Specifically, this study finds that faculty that teach sexuality curriculum also perceive that the cultural norms of sexual shame influence the limited number professional and peer support for teaching these classes. Faculty who participated in this study understood that these cultural norms and their consequences (limited professional and peer support) provided a substantive barrier to teaching sexuality courses.

Second, the present study also supports the literature by Satterly and Dyson (1998) that reported that there are a limited number of professors at many MSW programs that have the credentials or knowledge to accurately teach human sexuality courses. Many participants of this study reported that they felt that they were the only faculty that wanted to teach these courses, or who could teach these courses and therefore were always the ones called upon to teach human sexuality and/or gender classes. In addition, the small population that was sampled for this study may also support this previous literature that suggests experienced and qualified faculty are difficult to come by to teach human sexuality coursework. Of the 140 MSW programs that were included in the content analysis, only 44 faculty members' were identified for potential participation which is considerably low given the number of programs analyzed across the entire U.S.

Another obstacle addressed in the previous literature was regarding faculty's beliefs that human sexuality topics were already covered in other classes and therefore electives were not

needed. Valentich and Grifton (1975) commented that some faculty believe that human sexuality topics are already adequately covered in other required courses. The findings of the present study somewhat align with these findings. Participants hoped that human sexuality could be better integrated into all classes in addition to having separate human sexuality electives. However, more research is needed to determine if other faculty members (ones that do not teach human sexuality coursework) feel that sexuality topics are covered in other classes.

A common theme of changing attitudes and beliefs about human sexuality also was present both in this study's findings and previous literature, both as a potential obstacle and as an objective to teaching human sexuality. For example, Rowe and Savage (1985) discussed the need for social workers to further develop their attitudes about sexuality and the social norms surrounding sexuality to better serve clients, which is what many participants discussed in this study. Participants reported that witnessing the growth of their students and seeing their attitudes become more open to human sexuality was rewarding and a motivator to continue teaching such topics. Next, Harris and Hays (2008) concluded after interviewing 175 therapists that those who had more education about human sexuality were more comfortable discussing such topics with clients. This point is illustrated by Participant 8 who stated, "they [students] are growing up and gaining confidence...they leave the classroom and see themselves as advocates of human sexuality inclusion." The findings of this study appear to support Harris and Hays' findings, as participants reported that they believed that students felt more comfortable talking about human sexuality topics both in a personal and professional way after taking their classes.

In addition, Gochros (1974) and Myers (2008) outlined several major objectives that human sexuality coursework should attempt to meet in order to best prepare MSW students for clinical practice. Some of those objectives include: enabling students to approach sexuality

related topics with empathy, comfort and objectivity, provide knowledge about a variety of sexual behaviors and lastly to integrate practice skills with open-minded attitudes about sexuality. The findings of the present study support the literature that outlines the objectives of sexuality education as many of the participants shared about the importance of student's evolving attitudes and increased comfort with sexuality topics. In conclusion, previous literature and the findings of the present study suggest that attitudes, beliefs and social norms around human sexuality can sometimes act as barriers to teaching human sexuality coursework, while also changing those attitudes and .previously held beliefs is a byproduct of a successfully taught human sexuality course.

Implications for Social Work Education & Research

The findings of this study suggest that faculty who teach sexuality curriculum perceive human sexuality as a crucial part of social work students' education and is necessary to better prepare social work students for clinical work with clients. However, these findings suggest availability of these courses are regionally dependent. As stated in Chapter IV (Findings) of the total 140 MSW programs that were sampled, only 43% offered human sexuality coursework; thus suggesting greater than half of the MSW programs nationally lack human sexuality coursework. Most of the 43% of programs that did offer human sexuality coursework were MSW programs in the Northeast region and the Western region of the United States that offered the most human sexuality coursework to students. Only 20% of programs sampled in the Southwest offered sexuality coursework and 33% of programs sampled in the Southeast and Midwest offered sexuality coursework. Evidently, human sexuality course offerings are regionally dependent, with the Northeast and West offering more courses than the other regions of the U.S.

The findings of this study support the need for human sexuality education for both faculty and students and highlighted the importance of such education. Participants discussed candidly how sexuality is a part of all clients' identities and should not be overlooked by social workers; eluding avoidance of sexuality topics and identities in the therapy room starts in the classroom. The findings of this study support the rationale for providing human sexuality education to social work students since enhancing student's comfort with sexuality topics and improving student's attitudes will help them to better serve their clients. Human sexuality education should not only be provided to MSW students but perhaps also to faculty members as continuing education credits (CE's) so they too can increase their comfort with talking about and thinking about sometimes challenging and personal sexuality topics. Awareness and open minded attitudes come from education, education that can be rewarding both to the faculty and the students. In closing, implications this study raises for social work education largely include the need for more human sexuality education around the country, especially in the regions of the U.S where so few courses are offered. Social work students need greater access to human sexuality education, whether they receive it in an integrated way through all required classes or if they voluntarily take human sexuality electives to better prepare themselves for clinical work with clients because as many participants voiced; we have a professional obligation and responsibility to be knowledgeable in all areas of human experience, including sexuality, to serve our clients.

To achieve these goals, faculty who teach these curricula offered three prominent recommendations for integration of human sexuality curriculum in social work educational programs. First, participants suggested integrating human sexuality coursework and content into preexisting and required classes as to reach all social work students and not just the students that opt to take a human sexuality elective. Second, the findings of this study also suggest a need to

not only better train students but better train and teach faculty about sexuality topics. If faculty were better educated and prepared to teach human sexuality electives, much like their students who need to be better trained to clinically discuss sexuality with clients, more classes could cover sexuality topics. Third, participants voiced concerns that they were the only ones in their respective MSW programs that were motivated to, or wanted to teach human sexuality courses, leaving the participants feeling isolated. Participants felt overall isolated and sometimes not supported by administration, professional peers or even students, thus showing a need for improvement in how MSW programs react to and treat human sexuality courses and to integrate human sexuality topics into curriculum.

Future Areas for Research

Given the connections to extant literature and implications to practice, further research in the field of human sexuality education should continue to focus on the obstacles and barriers faced by faculty teaching human sexuality coursework to better evaluate where changes can be made. This study focused on the personal and interpersonal obstacles faced by faculty; additional research would be especially helpful in understanding the organizational and institutional barriers in order to offer recommendations to overcome those barriers. This could be done by surveying members of administration or faculty members who are actively involved in curriculum committees to assess the obstacles they face in changing curriculum; or comprehensive evaluations of MSW programs could also be carried out. Second, further research could also provide comparative analyses of how other professional fields, such as psychology, psychiatry, nursing or medicine are educating their professional students on topics of human sexuality. It would be interesting to see how topics of sexuality are addressed in those fields that so often overlap and work in collaboration with the field of social work. Last, further research

could also be done with clients to gain their perspective about how having competent providers who are educated about human sexuality has impacted their personal growth in therapy. In summary, additional research is needed to continue to examine the obstacles faculty face when teaching human sexuality and how those obstacles can be overcome or avoided; other research possibilities include exploring how other professional fields teach about sexuality and gaining the perspectives of clients who are being served both competent social workers as to better support the rationale for teaching human sexuality to MSW students.

Limitations and Strengths

The most significant limitations of this study were time and resources. Without the constraints of time the sample size may have been able to be increased. Time limited this researcher's ability to recruit many participants, given the small and unique population (faculty who teach human sexuality coursework to MSW students) that was sampled. In addition, if this researcher had access to resources such as money for travel, interviews could have been done in person and perhaps more in depth questions could have been asked of participant's experiences. More time and resources would have allowed for more participants, perhaps more in depth questions and therefore resulted in a more expansive analysis of findings. In addition, more time and resources could have deepened the content analysis of the MSW program websites in the first phase of data collection. Again, due to limited time, this researcher could only examine a limited number of MSW program websites which perhaps may have weakened the overall review and analysis of each individual website.

Secondly, this study was primarily limited by the size and racial composition of the participants, as eight participants is a very small sample size and all participants identified as White. The methods used for recruitment may have contributed to the limited number of

7

participants, in addition to the fact that the population sampled is very specific and relatively small. Recruitment emails were sent to faculty whose contact information was gathered from MSW programs websites which resulted in “cold calling” potential participants. In regards to racial diversity, all participants identified as White; see Chapter III (Methodology) for discussion regarding limited racial diversity. It should be noted that the researcher is a White female which may have impacted recruitment and the limited racial diversity of the sample. Due to the small sample size, findings may not be generalizable. With more time and resources, this researcher would aim to increase sample size and diversity.

While there are many ways the sample could have been improved, the data that was provided by the eight participants was very informative and the sample size was in other ways very diverse. The participants provided crucial information about their experiences of teaching human sexuality coursework to social work students and how important their role as faculty is. Even though their responses may not be generalizable, the information each participant provided shed light on the obstacles to teaching and motivations faculty have for teaching human sexuality coursework. Secondly, although the sample was not big in size or racially diverse, it was in fact geographically diverse, all regions of the U.S were represented in the sample; there was diversity in gender and sexual orientation as well. One of the purposes of this study was to investigate regional variation of human sexuality course offerings. With the data gathered from the content analysis and the regionally diversity of the participants, one of the main findings of this study was that there is regional variation across the U.S with the Northeast and West offering more human sexuality coursework than the South (Southeast and Southwest). Despite the small sample size, the participant’s insightful responses combined with the content analysis data helped this researcher answer and reflect on the three research questions posed.

Conclusion

As articulated by study participants, it is our responsibility as mental health professionals to be offering conscious and appropriate services to all clients, and in order to do so we need to be educated on an array of topics, including topics of human sexuality, gender, HIV/AIDS and sexual abuse and trauma. The research of this study demonstrates the need to expand graduate level education of professional social workers, arguably both clinical and macro social workers, to be inclusive of all forms of human sexuality. Additionally, social workers have an ethical responsibility, according to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics (2008), to understand cultural competence and social diversity which includes aspects of sexuality such as: sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and marital status. Social workers have a responsibility to stay abreast on evolving topics that impact their client's well-being; human sexuality included.

The findings of this study highlight larger themes around the U.S and in many fields not just social work: human sexuality topics are complex, personal and often surrounded by shame and stigma. This study shows that the U.S as a culture and society have a long way to go in terms of how human sexuality is addressed in professional settings, like social work, but also on a personal individual level as well. At the same time however, there are many faculty members around the country, like the eight participants of this study that are making a difference in social work education through their dedication to teaching human sexuality coursework to social work students.

References

- Abramowitz, N.R. (1971). Human sexuality in the social work curriculum. *The Family Coordinator*, 20(4), 349-354.
- Blomberg, D. (2009). Multiple intelligences, judgment, and realization of value. *Ethics and Education*, 4(2), 163-175. doi:10.1080/17449640903326797
- Berman, L. A. (1997, July). A study of the influence of sexuality education experiences, sexual comfort and agency support on social workers' willingness to address client sexual concerns. *Dissertation Abstracts International*. Section A, 58, 0100.
- Cade, J.D., & Jessee, W. T. (1971). Sex education in American medical schools. *Journal of Medical Education*, 46, 54-68.
- Chonody, J. M., Woodford, M. R., Brennan, D. J., Newman, B., & Wang, D. (2014). Attitudes toward gay men and lesbian women among heterosexual social work faculty. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 50(1), 136-152.
- Council on Social Work Education (2009). Sexual orientation and gender expression in social work education: Results from a national survey. Retrieved from:
<http://www.cswe.org/File.aspx?id=25675>
- Council on Social Work Education. (2012). Educational policy and accreditation standards. Retrieved from <http://www.cswe.org/File.aspx?id=13780>
- Diaz, Y. E., & Kelly, J. A. (1991). AIDS-related training in U.S. schools of social work. *Social Work*, 36(1), 38-42.
- Dunk, P. (2007). Everyday sexuality and social work: Locating sexuality in professional practice and education. *Social Work and Society International Online Journal*, 5(2), 135-142.

Dunk-West, P., & Hafford-Letchfield, T. (2011). Sexual identities and sexuality in social work:

Research and reflections from women in the field. London: Ashgate.

Fredriksen-Goldsen, K. I., Woodford, M. R., Luke, K. P., & Gutiérrez, L. (2011). Support of

sexual orientation and gender identity content in social work education: Results from

national surveys of U.S. and Anglophone Canadian faculty. *Journal of Social Work*

Education, 47(1), 19-35. doi:10.5175/JSWE.2011.200900018

Gochros, H.L. (1970). Introducing Human Sexuality in-to the Graduate Social Work Curriculum.

Social Work Education Reporter, 28, 47-48.

Gochros, H.L. (1971). Sexual problems in social work practice. *Social Work*, 16, 3-5.

Gochros, H.L. (1974). A concentration in social work practice with sex-related problems.

Journal of Education for Social Work, 10(2), 40-46.

Gochros, H.L. (1984). Teaching social workers to meet the needs of the homosexually oriented.

Journal of Social Work and Human Sexuality, 2(2/3), 137-156.

Gochros, H. L. (1985). Overcoming client resistances to talking about sex. *Journal of Social*

Work and Human Sexuality, 4(1/2), 7-15.

Haselkorn, F. (1970). Family planning: Implications for social work education. *Journal of*

Education for Social Work, 6,195-198.

Harris, S. M., & Hays, K. (2008). Family therapist comfort with and willingness to discuss

client sexuality. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 34(2), 239-250.

doi:10.1111/j.1752-0606.2008.00066.x

Laverman, C.M. & Skiba, D. (2013). Sexuality content in the BSW curriculum: A pilot study

of student perceptions. *The Journal of Baccalaureate Social Work*, 17(17), 85-102

- Leiblum, S.R. & Rosen, R.C. (2000) *Principles and practice of sex therapy*. 3rd. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Matek, O. (1977). A methodology for teaching human sexuality to social work students. *Journal of Education for Social Work, 13*(3), 50-55.
- McCave, E., Shepard B., & Ramseyer Winter V. (2014). Human sexuality as a critical subfield in social work. *Advances in Social Work, 15*(2), 409-427.
- Miller, S., & Byers, E. (2010). Psychologists' sexual education and training in graduate school. *Canadian Journal of Behavioral Science, 42*(2), 93-100. doi:10.1037/a0018571
- Morrow, R. (2008). *Sex Research and Sex Therapy: A Sociological Analysis of Masters and Johnson*. New York City, New York: Routledge.
- Myers, S. (2008). Revisiting Lancaster: More things that every social work student should know. *Social Work Education, 27*(2), 203-211.
- National Association of Social Workers. (2008). *Code of ethics of the National Association of Social Workers*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Postmus, J.L. McMahon, S., Warrenner, C., & Marci, L. (2011). Factors that influence attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of students toward survivors of violence. *Journal of Social Work Education, 47*(2), 303-319. doi: 10.5175/JWSE.2011.20090012
- Roberts, R. (2008). Teaching human sexuality in social work: The neglected curriculum. *Australian Social Work, 39*(3), 17-23. doi: 10.1080/03124078608549878
- Rodriguez-Kitkowski, L. (2003, May). The effects of a human sexuality seminar on the knowledge, attitude, and moral development of counseling professionals. *Dissertation Abstracts International*. Section A, 63, 3866.

- Rowan, D. & Shears, J. (2011). HIV/AIDS course content in CSWE-accredited social work programs: A survey of current curricular practices. *Journal of Teaching Social Work, 31*(2), 119-130. doi:10.1080/08841233.2011.562119
- Rowe, S. & Savage, S. (1985). Skill acquisition in human sexuality training. *Canadian Social Work Review, 3*, 265-273.
- Rowtree, M.R. (2014). Making sexuality visible in Australian social work education. *Social Work Education, 33*(3). doi: 10.1080/02615479.2013.83488
- Satterly, B. A., & Dyson, D. A. (1998). The use of instructor self-disclosure as an educational intervention in the graduate social work human sexuality classroom. *Journal of Sex Education & Therapy, 23*(1), 55-61.
- Schinke, S.P., Schilling, R.F., Krauskopf, M.S., Botvin, G.J. & Orlandi, M.A. (1998) AIDS and social work: Socio-psychological training curriculum for human sexuality and related field of professional practice. *Journal of Social Work & Human Sexuality, 6*(2), 105-119. doi: 10.1300/J291v06n02_08
- Sloane, H. M. (2014). Tales of a reluctant sex radical: Barriers to teaching the importance of pleasure for wellbeing. *Sexuality and Disability, 32*(4), 453-467. doi:10.1007/s11195-014-9381-5
- Speziale, B. A. (2008). Introducing sexual diversity into social work education: A humanistic group approach. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work, 15*(1/2), 51-61. doi: 10.1300/J067v15n01_05
- Tanner, L.A. (1974). Teaching a course in human sexuality in a graduate school of social work: Strategy and content. *The Family Coordinator, 23*(3), 283-289.

- Tennille, J., Solomon, P., & Bohrman, C. (2014). Using the FIELD model to prepare social work students and field instructors on sexuality and intimacy for persons with psychiatric disabilities. *Sexuality and Disability*, 32(4), 469-483. doi:10.1007/s11195-014-9380-6
- Tiefer, L. (2010). Beyond the medical model of women's sexual problems: A campaign to resist the promotion of 'female sexual dysfunction'. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 25(2), 197-205. doi:10.1080/14681991003750434
- Trotter, J., Brogatzki, L., Duggan, L., Foster, E., & Levie, J. (2006). Revealing Disagreement and Discomfort through Auto-ethnography and Personal Narrative: Sexuality in Social Work Education and Practice. *Qualitative Social Work: Research and Practice*, 5(3), 369-388. doi:10.1177/1473325006067366doi:10.1080/02615470701709709
- Valentich, M., & Gripton, J. (1975). Teaching human sexuality to social work students. *The Family Coordinator*, 24(3), 273-280. doi:10.2307/583177

Appendix A

HSR Approval Letter



School for Social Work
Smith College
Northampton, Massachusetts 01063
T (413) 585-7950 F (413) 585-7994

December 16, 2014

Nicole Nelson

Dear Nicole,

You did a very nice job on your revisions. Your project is now approved by the Human Subjects Review Committee.

Please note the following requirements:

Consent Forms: All subjects should be given a copy of the consent form.

Maintaining Data: You must retain all data and other documents for at least three (3) years past completion of the research activity.

In addition, these requirements may also be applicable:

Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of the study (such as design, procedures, consent forms or subject population), please submit these changes to the Committee.

Renewal: You are required to apply for renewal of approval every year for as long as the study is active.

Completion: You are required to notify the Chair of the Human Subjects Review Committee when your study is completed (data collection finished). This requirement is met by completion of the thesis project during the Third Summer.

Congratulations and our best wishes on your interesting study.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elaine Kersten'.

Elaine Kersten, Ed.D.
Co-Chair, Human Subjects Review Committee

CC: Thomas Mackie, Research Advisor

Appendix B

Protocol Change Request Form

RESEARCH PROJECT CHANGE OF PROTOCOL FORM – School for Social Work

You are presently the researcher on the following *approved* research project by the Human Subjects Committee (HSR) of Smith College School for Social Work:

Understanding the Rationale and Motivation of Offering Human Sexuality Coursework: A Content Analysis of Accredited MSW Programs in the U.S

**Nicole Nelson
Thomas Mackie, PhD**

.....
I am requesting changes to the study protocols, as they were originally approved by the HSR Committee of Smith College School for Social Work. These changes are as follows:

Due to challenges in the current recruitment approach for this study, I am requesting a modification to the approved approach. First, I would like to incorporate a snowball sampling approach by requesting that potential and recruited participants forward the study description, with my contact information, to professors who that they know teach curriculum in human sexuality. This request will be made of all professors who are recruited to participate. Secondly I would also like to post my request for participants on professional discussion boards, available to social workers and social work professors.

To facilitate this new recruitment, I also propose to post the attached recruitment letter, which is slightly revised from the original version. This recruitment letter incorporate the following changes:

.....
 X_I understand that these proposed changes in protocol will be reviewed by the Committee.
 X_I also understand that any proposed changes in protocol being requested in this form cannot be implemented until they have been fully approved by the HSR Committee.
 X_I have discussed these changes with my Research Advisor and he/she has approved them. Your signature below indicates that you have read and understood the information provided above.

Signature of Researcher: Nicole Nelson
Name of Researcher (PLEASE PRINT): Nicole Nelson **Date:** March 11, 2015

PLEASE RETURN THIS SIGNED & COMPLETED FORM TO Laura Wyman at LWyman@smith.edu or to Lilly Hall Room 115.

****Include your Research Advisor/Doctoral Committee Chair in the 'cc'. Once the Advisor/Chair writes acknowledging and approving this change, the Committee review will be initiated.*

.....

Recruitment Letter

I am currently in my second year at Smith College School for Social Work and am conducting research towards completing my thesis requirement. I am conducting a mixed methods design, combining quantitative content analysis of human sexuality curricula in MSW programs throughout the U.S. and qualitative interviews with professors who have taught human sexuality curricula to MSW students. I am interested in gaining a better understanding of the experiences of professors who teach this curriculum to MSW students.

Format for the semi-structured interview:

- Phone or video call (depending on your preference)
- Anticipated to last between 30-60 minutes
- Scheduled at a time most convenient for you

Content of the Interview:

- Part 1: includes close-ended demographic questions about your both socio-demographic background and prior teaching experiences (age, race, gender, education level, current position etc.).
- Part 2: includes open-ended questions about your experience teaching a human sexuality elective in your program, including challenges of teaching the course, successes/benefits of teaching the course, how was curriculum content decided upon, etc.

If participating in this brief interview is something you would be interested in or have additional questions about the study please contact me. In addition, please share this post with anyone you know who might be interested in participating.

Thank you for your time.

All the best,
Nicole Nelson
nmnelson@smith.edu

Research Adviser: Tom Mackie, PhD
tmackie@brandeis.edu

Appendix C

Protocol Changes Approval Letter



School for Social Work

Smith College

Northampton, Massachusetts 01063

T (413) 585-7950 F (413) 585-7994

March 12, 2015

Nicole Nelson

Dear Nicole,

I have reviewed your amendments and they look fine. These amendments to your study are therefore approved. Thank you and best of luck with your project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elaine Kersten'.

Elaine Kersten, Ed.D.

Co-Chair, Human Subjects Review Committee

CC: Thomas Mackie, Research Advisor

Appendix D

Informed Consent Form

Dear Participant,

My name is Nicole Nelson and I am an MSW candidate at Smith College School for Social Work (Northampton, MA) conducting research as part of my thesis. I am examining the experiences of graduate level professors who have taught or who are currently teaching human sexuality coursework within MSW programs in the United States. This study has been approved by the Smith College Human Subjects Review Committee and will be presented as a thesis at Smith College. It may also be used in presentations or publications on this topic.

The following interview will take about one hour to complete. The first part of the interview will include questions asking about your experiences of teaching human sexuality curricula and inquire about the process of including human sexuality coursework at your MSW program and any recommendations you have for teaching human sexuality curricula in other MSW programs. The latter part of the interview will be several demographic questions. Interviews will take place either via phone or through a video call using Skype and will take about one hour to complete. Interviews will be scheduled on a date and time that is most convenient to the participant.

This study presents minimal risk to participants. Risks to participants may include feelings of discomfort while answering certain questions about their work with human sexuality curricula or feelings of concern that their responses will be linked to the MSW program they work for. If you do feel uncomfortable or concerned about the questions or your responses, you do not have to answer any questions you do not feel comfortable.

Benefits to participation in the study include the opportunity to reflect on your experiences as professors to social work students and reflect on the work you do as teachers of human sexuality curricula and also help increase the body of research and knowledge of how institutional and professional activities and training about human sexuality may be important to MSW students. This research could help increase awareness about the need for human sexuality education for clinical social work students. In addition, this research could also assist other MSW programs in determining whether they too should include human sexuality curricula.

Participation in this study is confidential. I will collect names of participants, by maintaining signed copies of informed consent forms; no other identifying information will be kept with participants' information. In addition, no other identifying information about the program you work at or titles of courses you teach will be linked to your responses. Participants' signed informed consent form will be the only document with participants names attached until given an identifier number. Interview responses will be audio recorded and stored in a password protected location. In signing this informed consent document you agree to have your responses audio recorded. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to answer any question and may withdraw from the study at any time or choose to not answer certain questions. Participants will be able to withdraw from the study up until April 1, 2015.

All research materials including signed consent forms, recordings, transcriptions, analyses and consent/assent documents will be stored in a secure password protected location to insure confidentiality of participants for three years. In the event that materials are needed beyond this period, they will be kept secured until no longer needed, and then destroyed. When materials are no longer needed, they will be destroyed.

If you have any questions or concerns about the nature or purpose of this study or your rights as a research participant, or if you would like to receive a brief summary of the study with results and implications, please contact me at ____@smith.edu. You may also contact the Chair of the Human Subject Review Committee at Smith College School for Social Work, Northampton, MA, at (413) 585-7974.

Your signature below indicates that you have decided to volunteer as a research participant for this study, and that you have read and understood the information provided above. Please sign and return this document to the researcher, using the enclosed envelope. Please keep a signed copy for your records.

Name of Participant (print): _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Researcher: _____ Date: _____

Appendix E

Recruitment Email

Dear Professor _____,

My name is Nicole Nelson; I am currently in my second year at Smith College School for Social Work and am conducting research towards completing my thesis requirement. I understand that you have taught human sexuality and/or gender coursework and I would like to elicit your perspective about the courses you have taught.

Format for the semi-structured interview:

- Phone or video call (depending on your preference)
- Anticipated to last between 30-60 minutes
- Schedule at a time most convenient for you

Content of the Interview:

- Part 1: includes open-ended questions about your experience teaching a human sexuality/gender electives in your program, including challenges of teaching the course, successes/benefits of teaching the course, how was curriculum content decided upon, etc.
- Part 2: includes close-ended demographic questions about your both socio-demographic background and prior teaching experiences (age, race, gender, education level, current position etc.).

Research Project:

- Motivation for study: This study hopes to support other research findings which have concluded that offering human sexuality education to clinical social work students is an important piece of education that prepares them for clinical work with clients.
- Study design: This research is the second portion of a mixed methods thesis in which I first conducted a quantitative content analysis of human sexuality curricula in MSW programs throughout the U.S. A sample of MSW programs was taken from each of the five main regions of the U.S, examining what sexuality focused electives (if any) were offered in those programs.

If participating in this brief interview is something you would be interested or have additional questions about the study please contact me. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have. In addition, if you know of other colleagues that may be interested in participating please feel free to pass along my research project and contact information.

Thank you for your time.

All the best,

Nicole Nelson

Masters Candidate, Smith College School for Social Work

Appendix F

Interview Guide

Interviewer: _____ Identifier: _____ Date: _____
 Type of Interview (phone/video): _____

Introduction: Script

Good morning/afternoon, my name is _____, thank you again for taking the time to speak with me. As my emails have stated, I am an MSW Candidate at Smith College School for Social Work, and this research project is part of my thesis requirement for graduation. My thesis project is assessing the types of human sexuality curricula offered at MSW programs as well as focusing on the experiences of professors who teach human sexuality curricula to MSW students. I am interviewing a sample of professors from all over the country and you are a very important to this study. With the notes I take throughout this interview and the audio recordings, I will compile an analysis of professors' experiences of teaching human sexuality curricula. Do I have your permission to record this interview? *Participant's response.* Great, thank you. I want you to be as comfortable as possible while answering the following research questions.

To review, your answers will be anonymous and in the final research project no identifying information about you or the program you work for will be tied to your responses. If at any point you feel uncomfortable answering any of the following questions please just let me know and I can move on to another question. Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? This interview will take about 30-60 minutes to complete. It begins with thirteen open-ended questions and we will wrap up the interview with a few demographic questions.

Interview Questions:

Lens:

1. Can you please give an overview of the human sexuality coursework that you teach or have taught?
2. What are some of the responsibilities you have within your current position(s)?
3. When was the last time you taught this course?
4. Thinking back on the most recent time you taught the course, what were some of the highlights of teaching the course?

Challenges & Successes:

5. What are some of the challenges you have found overall in teaching human sexuality coursework to MSW students?
6. What are some of the benefits you have found overall in teaching human sexuality coursework to MSW students?

2

7. What have you seen, if any, as some of the benefits of teaching human sexuality coursework to you as a faculty member?
8. What have you found to be the most poignant topics within your class for your students to learn?
9. What challenges, if any, did you experience in determining your curriculum?

Implementation of Curricula:

10. What role did you play, if any, in implementing human sexuality coursework within your program?
11. Who within your program is responsible for monitoring and/or deciding what human sexuality coursework will be offered in the program?

Recommendations:

12. Ideally, what other human sexuality coursework or curricula would you like to see included in your program and why?
13. What recommendations would you provide to faculty looking to offer a human sexuality elective at their respective MSW programs?

Demographic Questions:

1. What is your age?
2. What is the race you most identify as?
3. What gender do you identify as?
4. What is your sexual orientation?
5. What is the highest degree in which you have earned and the school from which you earned it?
6. What is your current position within the institution you work for?
7. How long have you been in your position(s) at your program?

Conclusion

Thank you very much for your time today and for sharing your personal experiences about your successes and challenges within your position. Before we conclude, is there anything else you would like to add that we did not discuss today? If you have any follow-up questions or would like to get in contact with me to share additional thoughts, please email me at ____@smith.edu. If you would like, a summary of the research project can be sent to you upon its completion. Thank you again.