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Katherine Driscoll
Bystander Empowerment Amongst
Trained Facilitators of the Mentors
in Violence Prevention (MVP)
Program: An Exploratory Study

ABSTRACT

This study explores how a sample of college students trained to be peer facilitators of the Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) program describe the impact of their training. Participants (N=7) were undergraduates from a medium size New England University who attended an MVP Train the Trainer program, which consisted of 25-30 hours of training on facilitation skills and exposure to the MVP curriculum. Participants of this study were asked open-ended questions on the messages of the MVP program, their concept of being an empowered bystander, their use of training, and ways they identify themselves as more empowered bystanders. The findings indicate that participants' concepts of an empowered bystander and the messages they gleaned from the program were consistent with the MVP curriculum. A major finding was that after being trained, most participants did not go onto facilitate MVP programs. However, participants provided a range of examples of how they have used their training in everyday situations indicative of their behavior as bystanders post-training. Findings having to do with the diversity amongst trainees that attended the Train the Trainer are also presented. Discussion highlights the multiple benefits of the training and explores the problematic issue of facilitators not having programming opportunities. Discussion also suggests that social workers in a university or community setting may find value in offering the MVP program or other bystander approach prevention programs for the purpose of augmenting clinical services and as a measure of primary prevention of sexual violence.

**BYSTANDER EMPOWERMENT AMONGST TRAINED FACILITATORS OF THE
MENTORS IN VIOLENCE PREVENTION (MVP) PROGRAM: AN EXPLORATORY
STUDY**

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

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2012

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

This project was designed with attention to the problem of sexual victimization on college campuses (Associated Press, 2011; Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000; Hnida, 2004), a subset of the broader problem of sexual violence against women (Roze & Koss, 2001). This exploratory study examines the impact of the Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) facilitator training program “Train the Trainer” on trainees of the program at one university. The MVP program takes a “bystander approach” to violence prevention (Katz, 1995). The bystander approach refers to a style of programming whereby program participants are engaged as potential witnesses to violence---bystanders—who are capable of acting to prevent its incidence. This style of program has recently become popular on college campuses (American College Health Association, 2007; McMahon, Postmus, & Koenick, 2011), which prompts the relevance of this study. This study seeks to answer the following questions: 1) What are the messages of the MVP program according to MVP facilitators? 2) How do MVP facilitators conceptualize being an empowered bystander? 3) How do MVP facilitators use their training? 4) What ways do MVP facilitators identify themselves as empowered bystanders? Narrative data gathered through open-ended interviews with participants as well as demographic information are analyzed for similar and divergent themes, and thematic content and demographic data are examined for possible associations.

The purpose of this project is to contribute to the literature on primary prevention of sexual violence. This research will contribute to the field of social work by shifting attention from the often-dominant clinical practice in which social workers engage in order to explore a macro-practice avenue for combating sexual violence. This research may be particularly useful to school social workers as they are positioned to provide both clinical services as well as programming for a general student audience. This study's promotion of greater interest in primary prevention interventions in schools is backed by recent social work research. Kelly and colleagues (2010) discuss a disconnect between the delivery of services in school settings and the profession's commitment to systems-based interventions. In reviewing data from the National School Social Work Survey, Kelly et al. (2010) find that school social workers value the systems perspective as a strength of the profession, but they engage in very limited amounts of interventions at the systems level or in the way of primary prevention. This study answers the call for attention to interventions at the systems level.

The prevalence of women who are raped in the course of their lifetime is the issue motivating this research. However, defining the problem of rape proves difficult because consensus on the definition of rape is lacking (Beres, 2007; Rozee & Koss, 2001). Rape is often defined as non-consensual vaginal, oral, or anal penetration (Rozee & Koss, 2001), and a perpetrator gaining power and control over a victim is considered central to rape (Brownmiller, 1976). Yet, the question of how consent is defined and communicated remains (Beres, 2007). In her overview of the literature on sexual consent, Beres (2007) finds that "current understandings of consent are underdeveloped and rely largely on assumed and implied definitions" (p. 94). In order to account for differences in the definitions of rape use by authors who write about sexual violence, this paper uses the term sexual assault when summarizing the literature. Consistent

with legal literature, sexual assault is an umbrella term inclusive of rape, statutory rape, and non-consensual fondling (R.I. Code § 11-37). However, when the ideas of a single, particular author are being discussed, this paper will mirror his or her language. Thus, the terms rape and sexual assault are not used interchangeably; however, they may represent the same concept in this paper.

In their overview of research on rape of women between 1980 and 2000, Rozee and Koss (2001) suggest that the prevalence of rape has persisted around 15% for women across the twenty-year span. That means that one in six women report having been raped at some point in their lives. Many of the empirical studies considered by Rozee and Koss (2001) rely on samples of college students (Brener, McMahon, Warren, & Douglas, 1999; Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987; Koss & Oro, 1982). However, prevalence figures from a non-college national sample are similar, finding 17.6% of women raped at some point in their life; the estimate is 3% or one in thirty three for males (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Two surveys, the National Violence Against Women Survey (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000) and the annual National Crime Victims Survey (NCVS) (Department of Justice, 2011) have yielded data on the incidence of rape per year. The National Violence Against Women Survey found 876, 064 incidence of rape in a year period (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). The NCVS reported 125,920 incidents of victimization in 2009 and 188,389 in 2010 (Department of Justice, 2011). Of note, individuals age 12 and under, people in institutions such as nursing homes or prisons, and people without homes are not included in the NVCS sample. While the NVCS is useful for examining trends in the rates of various types of victimization over time, their report warns that in the case of sexual assault victimization, estimates are based on a relatively small number of reported cases and should be interpreted with caution. In general, capturing the prevalence of sexual assault through national sampling

techniques poses methodological problems (Department of Justice, 2011; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Nonetheless, an overview of literature suggests that incidents of rape have been documented since the 1980s and occur in the hundreds of thousands each year.

Consensus is lacking on what differences in the prevalence of rape exist according to race. According to Rozzee & Koss (2001), this is in part due to lacking research on victimization of women of color. The 1999 national survey of college students by Brener et al. purposely oversampled institutions with high rates of minority students to improve the quality of data collected across racial demographics. This particular study found no significant differences in rape prevalence between racial demographics. However, as a group, Alaskan and Native American women have been found more likely to be victims of rape than women of other ethnicities (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Hispanic women have been found to be less likely than non-Hispanic women to be victims of rape (Department of Justice, 2011; Sorenson & Siegel, 1992; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Rates of victimization of African American women have been reported as greater than (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000), similar to (Brener et al., 1999; Wyatt, 1992), and less than White women (Wingood & DiClemente, 1998). The most recent NCVS data found Black and multiracial populations had the highest rates of sexual assault compared to other ethnicities (Department of Justice, 2011). However, as previously stated, the study cautions against interpretation of estimates of rape due to the small number of reports. The greatest consensus in the literature on race and victimization is that larger samples of minority populations are needed in studies (Department of Justice, 2011; Rozzee & Koss, 2001).

Demographic patterns exist for those raped. Rape often occurs prior to or early in adulthood and the majority of victims report knowing their perpetrator (Department of Justice, 2011; Fisher et al., 2000; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Over half of female rape victims are under

age 18 at their first incidence of rape; for men, three quarters of victims are under age 18 (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Fisher et al. (2000) found that one in five college women experience rape during their undergraduate years (Fisher et al. considered college to last 5 years). Recent publicized campus sexual assault trials and reports of school officials mishandling cases have highlighted the problem of sexual violence on campuses (Associated Press, 2011; Hnida, 2004). While both women and men are victims of rape, female gender is the most powerful predictor of victimization (Koss et al., 1994) and perpetrators of rape are nearly always male (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Given the enduring prevalence of sexual assault, effective prevention efforts are clearly needed, and prevention interventions that happen prior to adulthood, as well as amongst college populations, are particularly called for.

The MVP program, the focus of this study, is one of a group of violence prevention programs that are gaining popularity on college campuses. The unifying feature of these programs is their so called “bystander approach” (American College Health Association, 2007; McMahon et al., 2011). A bystander approach refers to the style of these programs addressing participants as potential witnesses to violence—bystanders—rather than potential victims or perpetrators of violence (Banyard, Moynihan, & Plante, 2007; Katz, Heisterkamp, & Fleming, 2011). The philosophy behind the bystander approach is that approaching participants as potential victims or perpetrators engenders defensiveness. Therefore, treating participants as potential bystanders allows participants to be more receptive to program messages and more willing to engage in honest dialogue (Berkowitz, 1994). Another defining feature of the MVP program is that workshops are led by peer educators. MVP was originally designed to work with college male athletes. Its premise was to facilitate groups of male athletes to 1) discuss and think critically about the ways in which dominant masculine norms contribute to violence against

women and 2) empower them to encourage peers to have healthier attitudes and behaviors towards women. At its inception, MVP operated through peer led workshops and a “playbook” that offered realistic scenarios of potential violence. Participants used scenarios from the “playbook” to explore options for intervening. Since its inception, MVP has developed curriculum for women as well, and expanded the curriculum content beyond the playbook making the program suitable for non-athletes. In line with the bystander approach, the program’s mission was to target participants as agents for changing the culture—agents in “reconstructing masculinity”—rather than targeting male participants as potential perpetrators. MVP curriculum focuses on topics including gender roles, types of abuse, alcohol and consent, harassment, and homophobia (Cissner, 2009; Katz, 1995).

As previously stated, MVP is not the only program of this kind. For example, The Men’s Program (Foubert, 2000) educates men on ways to support sexual assault survivors post victimization and through its interactive workshops promotes attitude changes in participants. Men Against Violence (Hong, 2000) is a campus-based men’s group that functions to build a network of men dedicated to ending violence. Membership in the group involves examining predominant attitudes, behaviors, and socialization of men and discussing the relationships between these patterns and violence (p. 270). Bringing in the Bystander (Banyard et al., 2007) is a program that operates through peer facilitated interactive workshops where one-time participants learn about the scope and causes of sexual violence, and how to safely intervene to prevent violence in situations. Green Dot (Green Dot, 2010) offers a framework for community and/or campus organizing, and a curriculum for training people with skills to be effective bystanders. Green Dot operates through the idea of ending “power-based personal violence” through gaining a critical mass of people who accept responsibility for challenging violence and

have effective skills for intervening. In sum, working with single sex groups (Berkowitz, 1994; Foubert, 2000; Hong, 2000; Katz, 1995; Moynihan, Banyard, Arnold, Eckstein, & Stapleton, 2010, 2011), engaging men specifically (Berkowitz, 1994; Foubert, 2000; Hong, 2000; Katz, 1995), athletes (Katz, 1995; Moynihan & Banyard, 2008; Moynihan et al., 2010), Greek life (Cissner, 2009; Moynihan & Banyard, 2008;), utilizing a set curriculum with interactive activities (Berkowitz, 1994; Cissner, 2009; Foubert, 2000; Katz, 1995) and the model of peer led, one-time workshops (Banyard et al., 2007; Cissner, 2009; Foubert, 2000; Katz, 1995) are common themes amongst this group of bystander approach programs. According to the program developers, these programs are designed based on research (Banyard et al., 2007; Foubert, 2000; Green Dot, 2010; Hong, 2000; Katz, 1995). An overview of the theoretical and empirical literature having to do with prevention (Albee, 1982; Lofquist, 1983, 1989), bystander behavior (Banyard, 2008, 2011; Burn, 2009; Latane & Darley, 1968), criminology (Cohen & Felson, 1979; Schwarts & Pitts, 1995), social change (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Perkins & Berkowitz, 1986; Rogers, 1983), as well as findings on the efficacy of programs, speaks to the premise and promise of bystander approach violence prevention programs.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

Origins of Prevention

The demand for sexual violence prevention emerged amidst the Feminist movement (Donat & D’Emilio, 1992), and sociopolitical interest in crime and prevention (Johnson, 1966) during the 1960s and 1970s. Collins and Whalen (1989) and Campbell and Martin (2001) chronicle the anti-rape movement. Collins and Whalen (1989) explain that anti-rape activists developed rape crisis centers in the early 1970s. They also note that first federal funding for a rape crisis center happened in 1974. Campbell and Martin (2001) write that the early aims of rape crisis centers were to change fundamental social and political power dynamics between men and women and provide services for sexual assault survivors. Rape crisis centers along with feminist activists were the leaders in sexual violence prevention efforts (Wildlake, 1997).

Koss (2005), Biden (1993, 2000), and Collins and Whalen (1989) each add to the discussion of how prevention of sexual assault has become a more visible issue. In discussing the history of rape prevention research, Koss (2005) highlights the importance of federal funding. She narrates how 1975 saw a huge surge of rape-prevention research in tandem with the establishment of the National Center for the Prevention and Control of Rape. Vice President Joe Biden (1993, 2000), a political supporter of preventing violence against women, also writes about legislative reforms relevant to rape prevention beginning in the 1970s. Biden (1993) notes that the 1978 Privacy Protection for Rape Victims Act prohibited victims’ sexual histories from

being discussed in courtrooms. In 1984, the Victims of Crime Act created a means for financially compensating rape and domestic violence victims. Finally, 1994 saw the passage of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), of which Biden (2000) led the drafting. VAWA (1994) established the Rape Prevention and Education Program, which added to the funding of prevention efforts (Basile, Lang, Bartenfeld, & Clinton-Sherrod, 2005). However, Collins and Whalen (1989) point out that the federal government has historically preferred funding survivor services to prevention programming. Koss (2005) adds to this in discussing how federal funding often goes towards capacity building for victim services rather than to prevention research. This distinction between reacting to versus preventing social problems that Collins and Walen (1989) and Koss (2005) highlight is mirrored in the theories of prevention that began to emerge in the 1980s.

Theoretical Overview

Theories of prevention

George Albee (1982) and William Lofquist (1983, 1989) developed leading theories on prevention, and contemporary designers of sexual violence prevention programs are mindful of these theories (American College Health Association, 2007). Albee was a clinical psychologist concerned with preventing psychopathology. While a clinician by practice, Albee privileged preventing psychopathology over treating it. He was concerned with systems of oppression as a major force contributing to illness. Albee's (1982) theory of prevention proposed that psychopathology could be prevented through reducing an individual's stress. His model of prevention involved reducing powerlessness, increasing social competence, increasing self-esteem, and expanding social networks. Albee's interest in prevention was much broader than preventing sexual violence. However, Albee did write about preventing sexism and considered

sexism a form of psychopathology (Albee, 1981). In similar fashion to Albee, Lofquist (1983) wrote about prevention and emphasized the importance of “changing the conditions under which negative behaviors are most likely to occur.” Lofquist focused on the role of those who facilitate the collaboration necessary for community change—leaders and organizers. Lofquist (1983) stressed the importance of collaboration with multiple players throughout a community. He also stressed that interventions be attuned to the values and beliefs of the particular communities in which prevention efforts take place. In 1989, Lofquist formulated a “technology of prevention” and supplied a workbook to aid program developers in their planning of prevention interventions. These early theorists stressed that social conditions formed the basis for injury and its prevention and that addressing social conditions was integral to prevention. Rather than targeting populations of potential victims or perpetrators of injury, their theories of prevention called for a community response and actions aimed at community development.

Social change

The question of how change in individual and communities can be facilitated is at the heart of prevention. Social change is noted as a key component of sexual violence prevention and a variety of theories discuss this process. Social Norms Theory, proposed by Perkins and Berkowitz (1986), takes the position that people’s behavior is influenced by their perceptions of how other group members think and act, and that people often inaccurately estimate the thoughts and behaviors of others. Social norms interventions (Bruce, 2002; Kilmartin, et al., 1999) aim to offer people knowledge of actual normative behavior and attitudes in order to correct misperceptions. In the context of preventing sexual assault, the social norms approach may involve exposing a group of males to the actual degree to which male peers are opposed to

violence against women (Kilmartin et al., 1999) or are uncomfortable with sexually aggressive behaviors of peers (Bruce, 2002).

Roger's (1983) Diffusion of Innovation theory also speaks to the process of change within communities. Diffusion of Innovation theory (Rogers, 1983) is the theoretical basis of the Green Dot program (Green Dot, 2010) and a component of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Rape Prevention and Education Model of Social Change (Cox, Lang, Townsend, & Campbell, 2010). Diffusion of Innovation theory (Rogers, 1983) articulates how an 'innovation'--a practice that is perceived as new--can spread through a community and saturate the community to the point where new social norms emerge. Cox et al. (2010) discuss Roger's (1983) theory and explain that Diffusion of Innovation considers how the nature of the innovation, the channels by which it is communicated, the greater community system, and timing can each serve to facilitate its saturation within a community. According to the theory, the new idea must be perceived as superior to the status quo, should be compatible with the values of the community, should be simple, and the results of the new behavior should be visible. The perceived similarity of those promoting the innovative behavior to the people with whom they communicate is also noted as important (Cox et al., 2010).

The Rape Prevention and Education (RPE) Model of Community Change introduced above incorporates multiple theories in addition to Diffusion of Innovation. Theories of individual change and theories of social change are combined, which include the theory of community readiness, the theory of reasoned action, the theory of planned behavior, and the health belief model. The RPE model was developed by social work researchers Cox and her colleagues (2010) for the Center for Disease Control and Prevention in order that grantees who receive funding use a common framework from which to develop theory-based programming.

According to Cox et al., the model is designed particularly for family social workers. The fact that social processes and individual change are considered in tandem in this model resonates strongly with the values of the social work field from which it hales. Amongst helping professions, social work is defined by its commitment to the person-in-environment perspective (Hare, 2004). The person-in-environment perspective holds that practitioners be ever mindful of the way in which individuals and their environment influence each other in a bidirectional, co-creating process (Hare, 2004; Kondrat, 2002). The perspective conceptualizes interventions as occurring where individuals and their environment interface (Hare, 2004). With the profession's commitment to holistic interventions, it is fitting that a model conceptualized by social workers considers individual and community processes at once.

Routine activities theory

Sociologists Schwartz and Pitts (1995) use Routine Activities Theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979) for understanding incidence of sexual violence in college settings. From the criminology field, Cohen and Felson's (1979) Routine Activities Theory provides a model for understanding the occurrence of a crime. Routine Activities Theory proposes that three variables must exist at the same time and place in order for a crime to happen; the presence of a "likely offender," a "suitable target," and the absence of "capable guardians" must converge. Cohen and Felson (1979) resisted focusing on the nature of offenders or victims, and instead focused attention on the circumstances of crime. The theory particularly attends to the fact that the convergence of these three factors happens through the everyday or "routine" activities of people. In other words, patterns of presumably legal actions in everyday life—i.e. going to work or school—interact to form circumstances for criminal acts to occur.

Danner (2003) illuminates the application of the theory in his research on how crime increased amidst increasing economic growth in a district of Tampa, Florida. Danner writes about how, through the 1990s, attempts to revitalize a district in the heart of Tampa, Florida were successful in generating more jobs, city revenue, and infrastructural improvements. While economic activity was improving, crime paralleled the increase. Speculation held that the changing demography of the location and emergence of nightlife caused the crime. Danner's research tested this speculation through documenting the routine activities of people in the area over time. Danner's research discounted concerns regarding the demography of the area but upheld the notion that increased nightlife contributed to crime. Applying a Routine Activities framework structured the problem as a convergence of increased targets, offenders, and absence of guardians. Thus, the Routine Activities Theory helped offer insight on how to mitigate increasing crime as a matter of city planning.

Schwartz and Pitts (1995) proposed that college environments where coeds routinely eat, work, sleep, and party together, on and off campus, largely unsupervised, provide a context for the convergence of suitable victims, likely offenders, and an absence of guardians. Through surveying college women, Schwartz and Pitts (1995) found evidence of sexual victimization of college women by college males, and that victimization was more pronounced in women with similar lifestyle attributes—similar routine activities. Through application of Routine Activities Theory, Schwartz and Pitts found that college women who went out drinking often and who were friends with motivated offenders were more likely to be victimized. Cohen and Felson's (1979) Routine Activities Theory explicitly draws attention away from how offenders become motivated. However, Schwartz and Pitts (1995) remain interested in the question of *why* some college men are ready to rape, and they advocate for incorporating a feminist frame to the

Routine Activities Theory to help address this question. Schwartz and Pitts (1995) point toward further exploration of the role of male peer support amongst offenders. Schwartz and DeKeseredy (1997) follow this research agenda. Their research examined the relationship between males who admitted to raping and their association with male peer support groups that promoted rape-supportive attitudes. While the Routine Activities Theory (Cohen & Felson 1979) is a framework useful for appreciating the circumstantial convergence of victims, offenders, and an absence of guardians in the context of sexual assault, Schwartz and Pitt's (1995) feminist approach draws attention back to the problem of male motivation to rape.

Bystander behavior

Social psychologists, Latane and Darley (1968) pioneered the theory of bystander behavior. They introduced the idea that in an emergency, an individual's sense of personal responsibility to help is mediated by the presence of other bystanders. The idea is that the response to a person in need will diminish amongst a crowd versus a single witness. Their research offers evidence that when a person in need fails to be helped, it may have more to do with "diffusion of responsibility" amongst bystanders than the personality characteristics, gender, or apathy of an individual bystander who fails to respond (p. 382). Latane and Darley (1970) also developed a framework for the process an individual negotiates when intervening in an emergency--the situational model of bystander intervention. The model proposes that a bystander must 1) notice the situation, 2) interpret it as an emergency/problem, 3) take on responsibility, 4) plan a course of action, and 5) follow through with the intervention. Given this process, Latane and Darley (1970) erected the concept of "situational barriers." Situational barriers are aspects of a situation that causes a bystander to 1) not notice the problem, 2) not identify an emergency as one, 3) not feel responsible, 4) not have adequate skills to intervene, or

5) fail to intervene. So, situational barriers are features of a given situation that inhibit effective bystander responsiveness.

Burn's (2009) study attempts to extend Latane and Darley's (1970) situational model to the context of sexual violence. In her study, Burn creates a list of items designed to indicate whether or not the participant would be derailed from surmounting any of Latane and Darley's five barriers. For example, Burns first scale includes items such as, "At a party or bar, I am probably too busy to be aware of whether someone is at risk for sexual assault." This item is designed to speak to the participant's likelihood of noticing a problem situation—Latané and Darley's first barrier. The second part of Burn's (2009) study involved participants filling out a scale measuring their actual bystander behaviors. For example, one item on this scale reads, "To reduce the chance of sexual assault, I never leave a friend at a bar or party even if she says she'll be all right." Burn's (2009) study sought to test the correlation between self-reported identification with situational barriers and self-reported bystander behavior. As hypothesized, Burn (2009) found that identifying with any of the barriers was correlated with less likelihood of intervening to reduce the risk of sexual assault. Burn's (2009) study demonstrates that Latane and Darley's situational model is useful for examining bystander behavior in the context of sexual assault. Moreover, it emphasizes that prevention curriculum should be designed to strengthen students' ability to surmount all five barriers.

While Burn (2009) examined the way in which a range of factors affected individuals' likelihood of intervening, other researchers paved the way by investigating and identifying important correlates of helping behavior. Gender (Eagley & Crowley, 1986), perceived similarity to the victim (Batson, Eklund, Chermok, Hoyd, & Ortiz, 2007) attitudes (Hoefnagels & Zwikker, 2001; Shotland & Huston, 1979), and sense of responsibility (Chaurand & Brauer,

2008; Latane & Darley, 1970) have each been studied in their relation to dynamics of bystander behavior. In addition, Dovidio, Piliavin, Gaertner, Schroeder, and Clark (1991) developed the cost reward model of helping. This model posits that witnessing distress causes anxiety for a bystander and that intervening relieves this distress. Thus, bystander arousal is another factor that has been targeted in attempting to understand bystander behavior. However, Banyard (2011) points out that these models and determinants of bystander behavior have been tested in the context of emergency situations not related to sexual assault (Chaurand & Brauer, 2008; Latane & Darley, 1968; Hoefnagels & Zwikker, 2001).

Banyard (2011) reflects on the literature regarding bystander behavior. She is critical of the types of variables that are examined as determinants of bystanders' willingness to intervene in a situation. Banyard (2011) notes that variables such as gender, arousal, confidence in one's skills, and sense of responsibility are each conditions *within* an individual. She coins such factors "intrapersonal variables" and juxtaposes these to "community level variables." According to Banyard (2011) examples of community level variables are police responsiveness to victims of sexual assault, knowledge of sexual assault reporting procedures, and visibility of services for sexual assault victims. Banyard (2011) sees these types of variables as equally if not more relevant to a bystander's responsiveness than intrapersonal variables. She stresses that the situational model is limited in addressing determinants of bystander behavior in the context of sexual assault because it does not encourage focus on variables at the community level. In sum, early theories of bystander behavior are useful for conceptualizing bystander behavior in the context of sexual assault. However, these models promote a tendency to overlook community level variables that may be extremely relevant to the behavior of bystanders in the context of sexual assault.

Ecological systems theory

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems theory, or the ecological model is also referred to in sexual assault prevention literature (Banyard, 2011; Casey & Lindhorst, 2009; Cox et al., 2010). Throughout his career, Bronfenbrenner studied human development.

Bronfenbrenner was influenced by Lewin's (1931) formulation that a person's behavior is an outcome of the person in their environment. In other words, the person and his or her situational context are inextricable when attempting to explain behavior. Bronfenbrenner (1979) formulated that human development occurred through the process of mutual accommodation between an individual and his or her environment as each changed over time. Bronfenbrenner (1979) also devised a model for understanding this interplay of systems of relationships. His (1979) "ecological model" can be imagined visually as four systems of relationships nested within each other: microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, and macrosystems. Microsystems are the systems of everyday relationships in a person's life. For example, a family is a microsystem. Mesosystems are the interaction of microsystems as in the relationship between a family (one microsystem) and a school (another microsystem). Exosystems are the third field of systems defined as a context in which an individual does not interact but that may indirectly affect him or her. For a child, a parent's workplace would be an exosystem. The all-encompassing system is the macrosystem—the larger cultural context comprised in part by economic and social policies. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) model is often displayed as four concentric circles.

Banyard (2011) exemplifies the relevance of ecological theory to sexual assault prevention. Banyard (2011) expresses interest in how variables at the community level affect sexual assault perpetration and the likelihood of bystander intervention. She notes that perpetrator behavior may be "exacerbated, intensified, and camouflaged" by peer norms and

other community level variables. She offers the example that an individual may be aware of sexual violence, feel a sense of responsibility, and have skills for intervening, but may choose not to intervene due to environmental factors such as silencing of sexual assault in the community, or social norms that suggest what goes on between two people is private (p. 225). So, Banyard highlights community level variables to emphasize the importance of systems thinking when conceptualizing sexual violence prevention. At a glance, the review of theoretical literature having to do with sexual assault prevention spans across a range of disciplines including psychology, sociology, social work and criminology. However in synthesizing the material, this call for systems thinking in planning prevention is thematic throughout the theories and models.

Empirical Overview

This review of empirical literature speaks to trends in sexual assault prevention programming, empirical findings relevant to the designs of bystander approach programs, and findings on the efficacy of prevention programs including MVP.

Nationally

MVP and other bystander approach programming have emerged amidst a bleak terrain. The National Violence Against Women Prevention Research Center's (NVAWPRC) (2003) report discusses existing prevention programming being utilized by agencies throughout the country. The report is based on a survey conducted by the NVAWPRC in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), which sent paper surveys to over 2,500 domestic violence and sexual assault agencies yielding open-ended descriptive data on their programs for preventing violence against women. Given a response rate of about 20 percent (N = 526), only 52 percent reported having any prevention programming at all. According to the report, agencies

tend to use programs developed by agency staff rather than manual based curricula. Programs most often targeted women and rarely targeted males as players in preventing violence. In this same vein, programs also rarely focused on perpetration. Some agencies reported using research to inform their programs. However, little evidence suggests that agencies took efforts to evaluate their prevention programming (NVAWPRC, 2003). Parallel to this, Karjane, Fisher, and Cullen (2005) find that college and university prevention curricula do not often specifically target combating sexual violence.

Helping behavior

As previously stated, designers of bystander approach violence prevention programs often cite that their programs are designed according to research (Banyard et al., 2007; Foubert, 2000; Green Dot, 2010; 1994; Hong, 2000; Katz, 1995). Empirical research on helping behavior is often the type of research these program designers cite. For example, investigations by Hoefnagels and Zwikker (2001) and Shotland and Huston (1979) suggest that bystanders are more likely to intervene in situations more clearly identified as an emergency. Latane and Darley's (1968) laboratory experiment showed that slower bystander responsiveness was found to occur when there were multiple witnesses to an emergency rather than if only one bystander was present. However, Fischer, Greitemeyer, Pollozek, & Frey (2006) found that, when an emergency situation is dangerous or violent, the number of witnesses does not affect the response time of a bystander. Additionally, research by Levine & Crowther, (2008) and Levine, Prosser, Evans, and Reicher (2005) suggests that people are more willing to help when amongst their friends, or when the person in distress is a member of their group. Furthermore, Rushton (1978) finds helping is more likely in smaller communities rather than larger ones. Eagley and Crowley (1986) find through a meta-analysis of 99 studies that men are more likely than women

to intervene in an emergency. Particularly, the greater the danger or emergency, the greater the likelihood that a man will intervene. Eagley and Crowley (1986) propose a theory to explain the finding—the social-role theory. Social-role theory proposes that men are more likely to help the more dangerous the situation because men are socialized to meet an expectation of being heroic and chivalrous. In sum, the research suggests that the nature of the emergency and who is around influence a bystander’s likelihood of intervening.

However, Banyard (2011) points out that the likelihood of a person intervening is not the same across different situations. Affirming this, Fischer et al. (2006) suggest that bystanders perceive greater cost in intervening in a situation of partner assault than a situation of assault by a stranger. Banyard (2011) also highlights that most findings on helping behavior have not been tested in the context of preventing sexual assault. Specific to the context of sexual violence, Burn (2009) finds that the most important correlate of bystander intervention is “felt sense of responsibility.” Greater knowledge about sexual assault is correlated with greater self-reported likelihood of intervening in a context of sexual violence (Banyard, 2008). Banyard (2008) also found women more likely than men to intervene in situations of risk for sexual assault. Acceptance of rape-myths—beliefs that minimize sexual assault (Franiuk, Seefeldt, & Vandello, 2008)—is correlated with many self-reported attitudes adversarial to preventing sexual assault (Temkin & Krahe, 2008).

The following empirical findings point to the utility of social norms interventions. Specifically, interventions that educate youth on actual (high) levels of support for gaining consent and interventions that highlight peer opposition to sexist thinking and behavior may have utility based on these findings. Fabiano, Perkins, Berkowitz, Linkenback, and Stark (2003) found that males underestimate their peers’ level of support for intervening to challenge sexist

behavior. Additionally, Burn (2009) suggests that individuals may be inhibited from intervening in the context of sexual assault by the belief that peers will judge them unfavorably. Similar to this, Fabiano et al. (2003) suggest that perceived norms influence personal attitudes towards the importance of gaining consent prior to sex. Gottfried (2002) suggests that men do not personally subscribe to dominant notions of masculinity but believe that most other men do. Kilmartin et al. (1999) find that males underestimate how uncomfortable other males are with sexist comments. And Bruce (2002) finds that males overestimate the rape-supportive attitudes and behavior of peers. Berkowitz (2004) affirms the utility of social norms interventions in his finding that when programs incorporate many strategies, the social norms component is most associated with program effectiveness. Also relevant to bystander approach programming, the benefits of same-sex male audiences for programming have been supported by Scheel, Johnson, Schneider, and Smith (2001). And, Stein (2007) found college students' exposure to sexual assault peer educators predicted their willingness to prevent rape.

Race has been somewhat examined in empirical studies of men and sexual assault prevention. Mori, Bernate, Glenn, Selle, and Zarate, (1995) and Kennedy and Gorzalka (2002) find that Asian men are more likely than Whites to hold victim-blaming attitudes towards rape survivors and to deny perpetrator responsibility. Varelas and Foley (1998) find African Americans are less likely to believe situations that meet the legal definition of rape should be reported to authorities. Other researchers point out that students of color drink less than their White counterparts (Mohler-Kuo, Dowdall, Koss, & Wechsler, 2004). This is relevant given the link between male sexual aggression and alcohol consumption by both males and females that has been documented by many (Abbey, Clinton-Sherrod, McAuslan, Zawacki, & Buck, 2003; Abbey, McAuslan, Zawacki, Clinton, & Buck, 2001; Carr & VanDeusen, 2004; Mohler-Kuo et

al., 2004). Given the differences in drinking habits and attitudes towards rape across different ethnic groups, Foubert and Cremedy (2007) suggest the necessity of evaluating the efficacy of programs specifically with students of color, as well as the possibility of tailoring programs to individual ethnic groups. Foubert and Cremedy (2007) examined the reactions of men of color to one bystander approach program, The Men's Program. In their study, Foubert and Cremedy (2007) analyzed the written responses of men of color (N=36) to open-ended survey questions after their participation in The Men's Program. In the study, the survey questions focused on whether the program had an impact on participants' attitudes and their predicted behavior changes regarding alcohol related sexual assault. Foubert and Cremedy (2007) found that the participants were impacted by the programming in a variety of ways and note that the responses of the men of color were similar to the responses of White participants of the program from a previous study. Similar studies for other sexual violence prevention programs are lacking.

Program evaluation

Part of what draws attention to violence prevention programs that utilize a bystander approach is that these programs are empirically evaluated (Banyard et al., 2007; Cissner, 2009; Foubert, 2000; Foubert & Cremedy, 2007; Foubert & Marriott, 1997; Foubert & McEwen 1998; Foubert, Newberry, & Tatum, 2008; Hong, 2000; Katz et al., 2011; Moynihan et al., 2010, 2011). Evaluation usually involves program participants completing a self-report survey prior to the program and after the program to determine if change occurred. Some programs have tested participants a third time a number of months following exposure to the program to see if changes persist over the long run (Banyard et al., 2007; Foubert, 2000; Foubert & Marriott, 1997; Foubert et al., 2008; Moynihan et al., 2010). The self-report surveys are often composed of scales measuring constructs such as participants' rape-myth acceptance (Foubert, 2000; Foubert &

Marriott, 1997; Moynihan et al., 2010), intent to rape (Foubert, 2000; Foubert & McEwen, 1998), attitudes towards male violence against women (Cissner, 2009), intent to intervene (Moynihan et al., 2010), self-efficacy in intervening (Cissner, 2009) and self-reported bystander behavior (Foubert, 2000; Foubert et al., 2007; Moynihan et al., 2010). Across programs, studies often find positive change across all measures used.

Cissner's (2009) study is the most relevant research to the present study and offers an example of how these programs typically evaluate program efficacy. Cissner's sample included both regular MVP workshop participants as well as students who received additional training in order to become MVP facilitators. She utilized qualitative and quantitative methods and her quantitative methods are explored here because they are representative of program evaluation designs across the literature. Cissner used the previously discussed format of a pre and post-test survey. The survey measured three dimensions: 1. A participant's acceptance of sexist beliefs—their "attitudes"; 2. A participant's sense that he or she could intervene to prevent gender violence—"self efficacy"; and 3. A participant's assessment of his or her peer's attitudes regarding sexual violence. Each dimension was measured through a scale made up of statements or "items" with which participants would rate their agreement. For example, participants would rate whether they strongly disagree, disagree, are unsure, agree, or strongly agree to a statement such as, "It's harmless to tell dirty jokes about women." Items on the survey mirrored content from the MVP curriculum. Each of the three scales had between 13 and 22 items. Cissner found that participants' level of sexist beliefs significantly decreased and their sense that they could successfully intervene to prevent gender violence increased following participation in an MVP program. Workshop participants (but not the peer facilitators who received extended training) also reported decreased beliefs around the level of sexist beliefs held by peers. In terms of her

study's design, Cissner's study along with others who follow a similar pre and post-test format, is about capturing changes in participants' agreement to a list of preset statements related specifically to sexism.

Samples

Being that these programs are implemented on college campuses, samples in the literature on program evaluation are largely undergraduate students. In the case of the MVP program, high school students have also been the target of programming and Ward (2001) used a high school sample in her evaluative study. Men are often the target audience of bystander programming and males also make up many of the samples (Berkowitz, 1994; Foubert, 2000; Foubert & Cremedy, 2007; Foubert & Marriott, 1997; Foubert & McEwen, 1998; Foubert et al., 2008; Hong, 2000). Additionally, student athletes (Moynihan et al. 2010; O'Brien, 2001) and members of Greek life (Cissner, 2009; Foubert & Cremedy, 2007; Foubert & McEwen, 1998; Foubert et al., 2008; Moynihan & Banyard, 2008) have also been targeted for receiving programming and comprised samples. Of note, research often examines the impact of programming on the participants who attend one workshop. The peer educators who facilitate programming have rarely been sampled to examine the impact of programming on them. As previously stated, Cissner (2009) included peer educators in her sample. However, Cissner evaluated peer educators and workshop participants according to the same evaluation measures in the style of comparing the two subsamples. In other words, peer educators weren't studied in their own right. Samples have been noted as consistent with the racial demographics of the college populations being studied (Fabiano et al. 2003). However, students at the college institutions being studied are predominantly White (Cissner, 2009; Fabiano et al., 2003; Banyard

et al., 2007). So, the efficacy of programming specifically of students of color that participate is a under examined aspect of program evaluation.

Weaknesses in the research

Throughout the literature, the heavy reliance on pre and post-test self-report surveys poses limitations. Validity (Rubin & Babbie, 2010) is problematic on multiple levels. In creating these surveys used to measure constructs such as “rape myth acceptance” or “self efficacy,” researchers develop items used to gauge overall attitudes, feelings, and or behaviors. But, it is difficult to determine if the items within the scales truly measure the constructs they intend to measure. Looking again to Cissner (2009) for an example, her survey asks participants to indicate their agreement with the statement, “Sometimes women want to have sex even when they say ‘no’.” ‘Strongly disagreeing’ with this statement indicates an optimal attitude about violence against women on the scale. More precisely, the optimal outcome of programming is for a participant to disagree with the statement more so following exposure to MVP programming than prior to programming. However, it is not incorrect to hold that sometimes women *do* want to have sex even when they say no (Sprecher et al., 1994). Indeed, if a program participant was quite engaged in the field of ending violence against women, he or she may be familiar with the phenomenon of “token resistance”—a woman saying no to sex when she does in fact want to have intercourse (Sprecher et al., 1994). So, a person quite aware of dynamics of violence against women may be hard pressed to strongly disagree with the statement. Thus, it is difficult to say if that item accurately informs the scale measuring sexist attitudes of which it is a part.

Beyond the individual statements on surveys, the constructs measured in evaluations (i.e. self-efficacy) are not measures of actual behavior change. For example, Berkowitz (2001) points

out that measuring changes in participants' attitudes is popular, but is not a strong measure for claiming program effectiveness. Cissner (2009) explains that survey items are designed to reflect the content of the program curriculum. This suggests that evaluations are measuring if program content has been retained, but how this relates to actual behavior changes in participants is unclear. Berkowitz (2001) states that evaluating any rape prevention program is difficult because it is hard to know the "ingredients" associated with change. Capturing the actual behavior of participants proves difficult through self-report surveys (Berkowitz, 2001). Additionally, self-report surveys are vulnerable to social desirability bias (Rubin & Babbie, 2010). A final weakness in the research on program evaluation is that programs are not regularly investigating whether program effects stick with participants or drop off over time.

Samples in program evaluation studies also pose weaknesses. Examining the way in which a program impacts its participants across racial demographics has yet to be undertaken by researchers other than Foubert and Cremedy (2007) reporting on The Men's Program. Even in the case of Foubert and Cremedy (2007), the authors acknowledge that the study did not uncover specific dynamics of how rape prevention programming and race may intersect. The authors encourage future studies to specifically ask participants of color how their race or identity affects their perceptions of programming materials. Also, samples are most often comprised of one-time participants of program workshops. Aside from a sub sample within Cissner's (2009) study, the peer educators that facilitate many of the programs are overlooked as a sample for investigating the impact of programming. Studying the impact of a program on the students trained to lead it or the impact of the training these peer educators receive has not been the focus of studies in its own right.

Summary

In summary, the prevalence of rape has persisted around 15% for women—one in six—since the 1980s (Rozee & Koss, 2001). For college women, findings suggest one in five experience rape during their undergraduate years (Fisher et al., 2000). Rape often occurs prior to or early in adulthood, is mainly male perpetrated, and the majority of victims report knowing their perpetrator (Department of Justice, 2011; Fisher et al., 2000; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Despite the persistent and pervasive problem of sexual violence, the implementation of prevention programming is lacking (NVAWPRC, 2003). Furthermore, findings indicated that less than half of college institutions' prevention curricula specifically targeted preventing sexual violence (Karjane et al., 2005). Prevention efforts are rarely evaluated to determine their efficacy and they most often target women. This neglects men's role in perpetrating sexual violence as well as their capacity to help prevent it. In sum, the prevalence of rape has been well documented and unchanging for over thirty years, yet evidence based prevention efforts remain lacking.

Amidst this bleak terrain, a group of sexual violence prevention programs are emerging that work with college populations, are designed according to research, and claim positive results through empirical studies (Banyard et al., 2007; Berkowitz, 1994; Cissner, 2009; Foubert, 2000; Hong, 2000;). The unifying feature of these sexual violence prevention programs is their use of a "bystander approach" (McMahon et al., 2011). Bystander approach programs avoid treating program participants as perpetrators or potential victims of violence and instead treat them as potential witnesses capable of improving the situation. The philosophy of the bystander approach is that by treating participants as neither potential perpetrators nor victims of violence, participants are less resistant to program material and are more open to honest discussion

(Foubert, 2000; Katz et al., 2011; Moynihan et al., 2010). Many of these programs have been empirically studied for their efficacy and have shown positive results (Banyard et al., 2007; Cissner, 2009; Foubert, 2000; Foubert & Cremedy, 2007; Foubert & Marriott, 1997; Foubert & McEwen 1998; Foubert, Newberry, & Tatum, 2008; Hong, 2000; Katz et al., 2011; Moynihan et al., 2010, 2011).

The positive results reported by these programs are often generated in the following way. Participants complete a self-report survey prior to and after the program to determine if change occurred. Some studies have tested participants a third time a number of months following exposure to a program to see if changes persist over the long term (Banyard et al., 2007; Foubert, 2000; Foubert & Marriott, 1997; Foubert et al., 2008; Moynihan et al., 2010). The surveys include scales which are designed to measure constructs such as participants' rape-myth acceptance (Foubert, 2000; Foubert & Marriott, 1997; Moynihan et al., 2010), intent to rape (Foubert, 2000; Foubert & McEwen, 1998), attitudes towards male violence against women (Cissner, 2009) intent to intervene (Moynihan et al., 2010), self-efficacy in intervening (Cissner, 2009) and self-reported bystander behavior (Foubert, 2000; Foubert et al., 2007; Moynihan et al., 2010). Thus, the empirical data supporting the efficacy of bystander approach sexual violence prevention programs relies on self-report pre and post programming surveys, and is largely quantitative. More specifically, the evaluation format is about capturing changes in participants' agreement to a list of statements related specifically to sexism and violence.

While the results of these evaluations are positive on the whole, the quantitative pre and post- test survey format of evaluation poses limitations. Validity (Rubin & Babbie, 2010) is problematic on multiple levels. First, it is difficult to determine if the items within scales truly measure the constructs they intend to measure. Beyond the individual statements on surveys,

there is the challenge of knowing if the constructs chosen for measuring a program's impact are really indicative of over-all behavior change in participants. Constructs often are measuring attitudes, for example "rape myth acceptance" or "self-efficacy." Yet, attitudinal changes have been cited as a weak measure for claiming program efficacy and the issue remains that evaluating any rape prevention program is difficult because it is hard to know the "ingredients" associated with change (Berkowitz, 2001). In general, evaluation techniques that capture the actual bystander behaviors of participants are lacking. The way in which participants of programs retain the impact of programming has also not been thoroughly captured.

Certain populations are also missing from the samples used for program evaluation. Samples often lack People of Color (POC), in part mirroring the college populations they pull from. Due to this, the way in which programming affects participants across racial demographics lacks examination. Also having to do with race, examination of how the racial identity of participants intersects with perceptions of programming materials and presentation is lacking. Additionally, samples are most often comprised of one-time participants of program workshops. This means that the peer educators that facilitate many of the programs are overlooked as a sample for investigating program impact. Studying the impact of a program on the students trained to lead it or the impact of the training these peer educators receive has not been the focus of studies.

Theoretical and Empirical Considerations for the Present Study

The above review of literature is expansive and poses a vast array of considerations for sexual violence prevention programming and future research on it. In attempting to synthesize the literature, a few themes emerge in both the theoretical and empirical literature that guided the current research project. A major point that shaped the current research was the historical pattern

of prioritizing victims' services and individual clinical work over the primary prevention of sexual violence. This pattern is inconsistent with the person-in-environment perspective of the social work profession and prompted the current research to focus on social change work rather than further attention to working with victims. A second point from the theoretical literature was the issue that a theoretical model for sexual violence prevention is only in early stages of development. This issue reinforced the relevance of studying prevention efforts that are built upon theory. A third point from the literature was that bystander approach sexual violence prevention programs are often theoretically based and have shown promise as a community level intervention. It followed that an empirical investigation of a bystander approach intervention answered the desire to focus on theoretically grounded community level prevention efforts.

A variety of weaknesses in the designs of program evaluations were explored in the review of empirical literature. However, one issue emerged as a priority for the current research. The weak ability of existing program evaluations to address if and how participants of prevention programs change their bystander behavior post-programming guided the current study. The fact that the peer educators who are responsible for facilitating prevention programs have not been the focus of empirical investigation also influenced the design of the current research. In the present study, a group of peer facilitators of a bystander approach program were examined to see how their training had impacted them. The research questions specifically aimed at capturing how these individuals' behavior as bystanders had changed since attending the training program.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

This exploratory study examines the impact of the Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) facilitator training program, entitled “Train the Trainer,” on trainees of the program at one university. This study was designed with the priority of capturing changes in participants’ bystander behavior due to programming—an aspect that has not thoroughly been addressed in literature evaluating bystander approach programs. The sample and the design of the study were purposely chosen to suit this priority. The study is qualitative, employs flexible-methods, and utilizes open-ended interviews to gather narrative data. Demographic information was also collected from each participant. Narratives were examined for similar and divergent themes, and thematic content and demographic data were examined for possible associations. While this study evolved out of the program evaluation literature, it is exploratory and therefore does not aim at a definitive evaluation of the MVP “Train the Trainer.” Four research questions were developed to examine the impact of the program and specifically capture evidence of participants’ behaviors as bystanders post-training. A “bystander,” according to the MVP model, is a person who is neither the perpetrator nor the target of sexual harassment or potential violence, but is a witness to it (Katz et al., 2011, p. 686). An “empowered bystander” is an individual who discourages, interrupts, or prevents sexual harassment or violence. This is in contrast to a “passive bystander”—a person who does nothing (Katz et al., 2011, p. 687). The research questions are: 1) What are the messages of the MVP program according to MVP facilitators? 2) How do MVP facilitators conceptualize being an empowered bystander? 3) How do MVP facilitators use their training? 4) What ways do MVP facilitators identify themselves as empowered bystanders?

Sample

As discussed in the literature review, capturing the bystander behaviors of individuals who attend bystander approach programming is methodologically difficult. Aside from issues of reliability and bias in the measurement methods, sufficient time following the program is required for participants to encounter situations providing them the opportunity to intervene as a bystander. Many evaluations do not follow up with participants more than a few months following programming, if at all. A non-probability, convenience sample of seven ($N = 7$) undergraduates trained to be MVP facilitators at a medium-sized New England university were chosen for this study in part because roughly six months had passed since their being trained, during which time they may have had opportunities to use their training.

Additionally, this sample was also chosen because peer facilitators who have been trained to lead prevention programs have yet to be examined in the evaluation literature. The participants of the prevention program make up the crux of evaluation samples. An overview of the MVP program illuminates the distinction between peer facilitators and participants of the workshops. The MVP program is a dynamic curriculum segmented into modules focusing on the following topics: gender roles, types of abuse, alcohol and consent, harassment, and homophobia. The overarching goal of the MVP program is to foster agents for changing the culture—agents in “reconstructing masculinity” (Cissner, 2009). When an institution such as a school rolls out the MVP program, MVP workshops may be offered or even mandated for a general audience or a specific group of students (i.e. an athletic team). Participants of the workshop would likely be exposed to one module of the curriculum per workshop. A series of workshops would be required to cover the whole curriculum. MVP workshops are facilitated by peer educators and these facilitators are specifically trained for the position.

MVP facilitators comprising this study sample have completed a three-day, 25-hour training program, which exposes them to the entire MVP curriculum and teaches them

facilitation skills. The training involves both didactic instruction as well as interactive, experiential activities. Once trained, MVP facilitators may lead programs for groups of students as little or as often as they desire. Thus, the distinction between MVP facilitators and participants of programs is that facilitators have had greater exposure to the curriculum, the additional benefit of being taught facilitation skills, and possibly have reinforced their training through the activity of facilitating workshops. The contrast between MVP facilitators and regular participants in their level of engagement with the MVP program warrants the current study's interest in the under-examined MVP facilitator population.

The exploratory approach of this study is consistent with Rubin and Babbie's (2010) recommendation that exploratory approaches be used for new areas of research. A few aspects of this study are new to the literature. Participants' bystander behaviors following exposure to bystander approach programs such as MVP are largely unexplored. Secondly, the MVP facilitator training program, "Train the Trainer," has not previously been the focus of empirical investigation. Additionally, the bystander approach as a concept is new and still lacks definition (McMahon et al., 2009). In line with the exploratory approach, an open-ended design was chosen for this study. The open-ended design allows participants to express what aspects of the program resonated most with them, in contrast to the existing style of program evaluation that asks participants to agree or disagree with preset statements. This follows the aim for attunement with the subject (Kvale, 1996) in order that a subject's experience and the meaning she makes of it is accurately understood (Seidman, 1991). Participants were interviewed using a guided interview approach (Berry, 1999; Rubin & Babbie 2010) with a semi-structured set of questions (Patton, 1990; Rubin & Babbie, 2010) allowing flexibility for the researcher to probe for greater detail, clarification, and meaning.

In this study, MVP facilitators are defined as undergraduate students who have attended an MVP "Train the Trainer" during any year of their schooling, and all participants are at least 18 years of age and currently enrolled at the university. The Director of the "Train the Trainer"

program facilitated recruitment of participants by providing the researcher with the contact information of MVP facilitators who were currently enrolled at the university. A recruitment letter was emailed to all potential participants (Appendix A). Additionally, a representative from the Empowerment Center with which the MVP program is associated helped with recruitment by sending out notification to all participants that encouraged their participation. The goal sample size was 9 participants (N=9), which was the total number of trained facilitators currently enrolled at the university. Sampling was not specifically stratified for diversity for two reasons. Firstly, the number of potential participants was small, and secondly, the Director confirmed that the group of potential participants was diverse in race, sexual orientation, and gender.

During recruitment, potential participants were informed that the study involves being interviewed in person for about an hour, that their interview will be audio recorded, and that they will be required to sign a consent form (Appendix B). They were also informed that the study asks them to fill out a brief form on demographic information and that their identities will be kept confidential in this study. They were informed that any identifying information they report will be disguised in the process of transcribing interviews into written form. They were also informed that their interviews will be used for a Masters thesis and may be used in presentations or publications.

Potential participants were told that they did not have to prepare for the interview in any way and that the study was looking for their candid responses. It was explained that the study was interested in hearing how their training to be an MVP facilitator has impacted them and that they will be compensated with a \$10 payment. They were offered the option to choose a public place for the interview that was quiet and private, or that they could meet with the researcher in the Student Counseling Center. The researcher and potential participant agreed upon a time and place to meet during this follow up stage of the recruitment process.

Ethics and Confidentiality

This study was undertaken with the approval of the Institutional Review Committee of the university from which students were recruited (Appendix C). Participants were given two copies of the informed consent form to read and sign upon meeting with the researcher. Participants were asked if they had any questions about the form. The researcher reviewed the parameters of confidentiality stating the following points in plain language: The final report from the study may be used in presentations or for publication. Any identifying information participants may provide will be disguised in the transcription process. The researcher's advisor will also have access to the information after it has been transcribed. Demographic information is confidential, but not anonymous because the researcher will see it. Participants were shown the resources for referrals at the bottom of the informed consent form. Participants were also reminded that they could leave at any time. Once signed, informed consent forms were coded and stored. Demographic questionnaires were then completed, coded, and stored separately from informed consent forms as a measure to ensuring confidentiality.

Instrumentation

After demographic information was obtained, the interviews followed a guide of open-ended questions and lasted between 20 to 60 minutes (Appendix D). The method of collecting data through self-reporting presented the potential for social desirability biasing the data. Neutral and standard responses (Patton, 1990) were used by the researcher to minimize her influence on participants. Interview guide questions evolved somewhat throughout the course of interviewing. This primarily occurred upon the researcher learning during the second interview that most participants had not led programs since being trained. Because so few participants could report using their training to facilitate programs the interview guide was modified. After Participant 2, participants were still asked how they used their training since being trained.

However, probing questions about the nature of facilitating programs were dropped from the interview and the researcher moved onto the next question regarding use of training outside of facilitating. The researcher focused more on hearing about how participants used their training or skills in everyday life. When Participants 4 and 5 reported they did use their training to facilitate programs, the researcher allowed space for them to speak about these experiences as a matter of building rapport, but did not probe into their experiences according to the interview guide questions. While each of the three participants who had gone on to facilitate programs (Participants 2, 4, and 5) offered some narratives on their experiences, the issues discussed were different for each of the three participants and themes did not emerge. The main change to the interview guide was that participants were probed more thoroughly around how they used their training in everyday life. This modification was carried through nearly all interviews except Participant 1.

One additional issue came about during the course of the interviews. Diversity and recruitment emerged as extremely salient to the narrative of Participant 4. During the interview process with Participant 4, the researcher was mindful of the fact that the intersection of race and programming is an understudied area in the literature. Comments on diversity and recruitment were outside of the original research questions, but given the exploratory intent of the investigation, seemed very valuable. The researcher allowed space for the participant to speak at length about her experience of recruitment to the Train the Trainer and diversity within the training. Later participants were not directly asked about recruitment or diversity within the training. However, upon review of all the interviews, the researcher found that previous participants had discussed the topic of recruitment without being directly asked. As a result, thematic material on diversity and recruitment emerged and was included in the findings despite

the fact that no research question or interview guide question having to do with recruitment or diversity was posed.

Probing questions (Patton, 1990) were used to help participants clarify or further elaborate when they offered examples especially on their use of training. The researcher also found that allowing moments of silence during interviews was especially useful in yielding desired content. An example from one interview demonstrates how this combination of probing and using silence flowed:

Researcher: And what sort of things have you done with your training?

Participant 1: (laughing) I actually haven't done much, yet. Um, although, I've heard from the Director and my boss, they told me that there was going to be more [programs] coming up soon.

Researcher: And so, ...you're talking about formal ways you use your training?

Participant 1: Yeah

Researcher: Outside of facilitating and these formal roles, do you think you've used your training in any other ways?

Participant 1: (7 seconds of silence) (laughing) Haven't really thought about it. Um (3 seconds of silence). I guess a little bit because, um one of my, one of our friends over the weekend um was remembering something from her past and we were all trying to like help her get through that and go passed it and (pause) do the best you can.

In this example, a participant had not thought much about her use of training. She took a long moment of silence, but was then able to identify that she had used skills from her training in an everyday context to help a friend.

All audio recordings were transcribed by the researcher, and any information identifying the university, the participants, or any individuals mentioned by the participant was disguised or removed. Audio recordings of interviews were kept separate from forms containing identifying information. Transcription of interviews was done on a computer accessible only through the

researcher's personal password. Transcriptions were backed up on a flash drive that was secured when not in use. In accordance with federal guidelines, data from this project will be kept secured for three years. If it is still needed after three years, data will continue to be kept secured and will be destroyed when no longer needed.

Data Analysis

Following the process described above, qualitative data were examined for common and divergent themes and demographic variables were examined for associations with thematic content.

CHAPTER IV

Findings

The research questions for this study were: 1) What are the messages of the MVP program according to MVP facilitators? 2) How do MVP facilitators conceptualize being an empowered bystander? 3) How do MVP facilitators use their training? 4) What ways do MVP facilitators identify themselves as empowered bystanders? Findings were organized around the research questions, and subheadings of this chapter reflect the research questions. As discussed in the methodology, themes having to do with recruitment and diversity emerged in the data; they fell outside of the research questions but seemed salient to the exploratory intent of the study. An additional subheading was created to present this finding. Quantitative data based on demographic information will be presented first.

Demographic Information of Participants

Participants in the study ranged in age between 18 and 27 years old. All participants but two were underclassman, in their freshman or sophomore year. Five participants were female and two were male. All but one of the participants identified as heterosexual. Racially, four participants identified as White while three identified as People of Color (POC). Only three of the seven participants had used their training to facilitate MVP programs since being trained. These three facilitated a weekly program for middle school teens at a YMCA. The group of three YMCA facilitators was comprised of one White female, one male POC, and one female POC. Of the three who had facilitated since being trained, only one had facilitated MVP

programming with college-aged students. See Table 1. Demographics for a summary of the demographic data.

Table 1. Demographics

Participant Number	Age	Year in school	Gender	Sexual Orientation	Race	Experience facilitating programs post-training
1	19	Fresh	female	Heterosexual	White	0
2	19	Soph	female	Heterosexual	White	bi-weekly for many months with middle school teens
3	21	Senior	male	Heterosexual	White	0
4	27	Soph	female	Heterosexual	POC	bi-weekly for many months with middle school teens
5	18	Fresh	male	Non-dominant	POC	bi-weekly for many months with middle school teens (2) Residence programs with college age
6	22	Senior	female	Heterosexual	POC	0
7	19	Soph	female	Heterosexual	White	0

Messages of the Program

Near the beginning of the interview participants were asked directly, “What are some of the messages of the MVP program?” Participants often described multiple messages. Messages of the program sometimes emerged in responses to other questions throughout the course of interviews as well. Thus data from throughout the interviews was examined in the process of considering what participants identified as the main messages of the MVP program. Participants reported a wide range of messages. However, four discrete messages of the program emerged as thematic.

Be a responsive bystander

According to participants the most prominent message from the MVP program was the message to *be a responsive bystander*. Participant 2 said that a main message was, “If you see something going wrong, step up and take a leadership role and be a bystander.” Similar to this, participant 5, a male facilitator, stated that the focus of the program was “on teaching people how to be better bystanders.” Participant 1 described the message of the program as, “just be a better person and the whole like 'see something, say something' kind of thing... Take the initiative and go help them and do whatever you can.” Though she doesn't use the word “bystander,” phrases such as “take the initiative,” “saying something,” and “helping however you can” are ways in which being an empowered bystander is defined by the bystander literature. Participant 7 echoed these last sentiments in stating the main message as, “to be proactive and just stand up for what you feel is right.” In all, four of the seven total participants reported the program communicated the message to be a responsive bystander. These similar responses came from four participants diverse in gender and race. These four participants also each had different levels of experience facilitating MVP programs since being trained.

It's OK to be different

A second message of the program that emerged in narratives was the message that “it's ok to be different.” Participant 4 reported,

“The only message that I've gotten really is just be strong and be ok with who you are, whatever you are...., just learn that its ok to be different, you don't have to be caught up inside a box.... you don't have to be what the world wants you to be; you can be what you want to be.”

Participant 2 reported along similar lines saying, “I like to look at it more as like a self-awareness type course--understanding yourself and being comfortable with yourself, and that not everyone

is going to be the same." So both these participants received the message that everyone is not going to be the same and that it's OK to be different.

While, the above two participants discussed being comfortable with themselves, Participant 7 talked about embracing others' differences. She stated the main message of MVP being,

"to accept everyone and promote that within your community...to treat everyone with the same respect and dignity...accepting and learning where different people come from and why they are who they are...and just embrace them for that...and spread that to other people you know."

With all three participants' responses, embracing difference is thematic—the message that it's OK to be different resounds.

Take a step back

Another message of the program that participants reported was the idea of “stepping back” when in the midst of conflict. About half of the participants (N = 3) discussed that the program taught them to take pause in moments of conflict and approach the situation less emotionally. Participant 4 stated, “I guess that is sometimes what we learn in the program--is not to react.” She explained,

“...learning how to control your emotions and also learning how to not always react, not be so quick to react even though the person's reaction isn't always what you want to hear, or always positive. You know, where you like hold onto yourself, ... like stay strong a little bit.”

Participant 1 also discussed this concept of controlling your reaction and offered a vignette. She stated, “I feel like with a lot of people, their first reaction is like just like to yell at the person. But sometimes that can be...counterproductive.” She went onto describe a situation with her roommate where she resisted the urge to “go off” on her roommate out of anger:

“Cause me and my roommate...she and I don’t really get along that well. And, instead of me going off on her, I kind of stepped back and I’m like you know what, I’m not going to go there, I’m not going to stoop to her level.”

Similar to the above responses, Participant 2 stated that one of the major “take aways” was “to assess the situation... and think before I speak.” At a later point in the interview, Participant 2 was describing a scenario where she put this concept to use. She was leading MVP programming with male teenagers and was frustrated by one boy instigating conflict with a peer. In explaining her situation, she described herself as “stepping back” and telling herself, “think before you speak.” She went onto describe how she was able to effectively respond to the situation and handle the conflict in a positive way. So Participant 2 along with two others described the directive to “step back” in moments of conflict as a major message of the program.

The scope of violence is a serious problem in society

Another prominent message of the program that emerged had to do with participants realizing the scope of violence. This message was not reported in direct response to the interview question asking about the program messages. However, many participants discussed how “eye opening” it was to learn about how much sexual assault or violence in general occurs in our society. This idea that violence against women is in fact a serious problem came through as a major message that the trainees took away from the program.

Participant 4 stated, “the fact that [the MVP] program exists,” communicated to her that “this is a serious problem.” She reiterated, “the fact that there has to be a training” for people to learn how to do prevention work means that the problem of violence in society is big enough that people have to do something about it.

Participant 6 reported that the MVP program puts the issue of sexual assault “in your face” and forces people to pay attention to the reality that sexual assault goes on. She first talked

about the purpose of the program to get young people to “make wiser choices when it comes to dating and sex and drinking.” This message to “make wiser choices is separate from the theme explored presently. However, in her response to the question about program messages,

Participant 6 went onto say,

“Its like you see everything that’s going on, we don’t really take it seriously. Like you don’t really hear too much about sexual assault and prevention and all of that. So, [with the MVP program] it’s like right there in your face, it’s like an eye opener.”

At a later point in the interview, Participant 6 also stated that the training taught her that “rape can happen to anyone.” So for Participant 6, MVP was an “eye opener to the problem of sexual assault that people don’t really pay attention to.” MVP communicated the message that the problem of sexual violence isn’t treated as seriously as it should be in society.

Participant 1 also reflected evidence that the program had communicated the seriousness of the problem of gender violence. She reported that discussing statistics on violence during the program impacted her. She said,

“...violence against women, violence in general, and violence against children and stuff -it was just ridiculous the numbers. Because you realize that it goes on, but you don’t realize how many cases each year and how many aren’t reported and everything.”

Similarly, Participant 3 said,

“More people are influenced by violence than you think, especially in their years through college and um ...and most often in domestic relationships where it’s violence but they don’t know its violence...It was really eye opening for me because I didn’t know it was that influential in our society.

In these responses, participants demonstrate that the MVP program taught them the scope and seriousness of the problem of gender-based violence in our society. The message they took away was that violence is a serious problem in our society.

It is important to keep in mind that, collectively, participants reported an array of messages the MVP program promoted-- many more than the four explored above. However,

based on the data from this study, four major messages of the program emerged. These were: 1) to be a responsive bystander; 2) that it's OK to be different; 3) to take a step back when negotiating conflict; and 4) that the scope of violence is a serious problem in society.

Concepts of an Empowered Bystander

Participants were directly asked, “ Did this concept of an empowered bystander come up in your training.” They were also asked, “How would you explain this idea of an empowered Bystander?” All participants were familiar with the term “empowered bystander” and most participants explained the concept at length, offering a comprehensive definition. Descriptions of an empowered bystander included defining the person in terms of their relation to a conflict. Being a bystander was also noted as role people commonly are in. Additionally, being an empowered bystander was defined as involving assessment of the situation, planning a course of action, taking responsibility, and acting or doing something. Participants also noted that sometimes being an empowered bystander might mean calling for help. The following excerpts demonstrate the comprehensive definitions participants offered in describing what an empowered bystander is.

Location in relation to conflict

When asked what an empowered bystander was, many participants first described what a bystander was. They often used an example of a situation where there was a conflict to provide a context for pointing out the person in the situation who would be a bystander. Participant 4 described being a bystander as "the person who sees what is going on... even if you don't see or hear it, you know about it.” For Participant 4, just knowing about a conflict was enough to make a person a bystander. Participant 6 said, “someone that is an observer.” So part of participants

defining an empowered bystander involve describing an individual in terms of his or her location in relation to conflict.

Being a bystander is common

When probed to elaborate their ideas about what being an empowered bystander means, three of the participants specifically discussed that being a bystander is common. Participant 4 noted that "pretty much everyone has been a bystander at some point in their life." Participant 1 said, "whenever there's a crime there's always bystanders, there is always witnesses." And, participant 2 explained, "Everyone who is in the situation is a bystander." Participant 4 elaborated on her point that bystanders are common by offering a series of examples of various situations where one may find oneself as a bystander. In the tone of reading a long list, she stated,

"Children witnessing something in the house hold with the parents,...or you have a group of friends and one of your friends is telling you what happened to her or him,...or you see two total strangers fighting,...or a situation that made you uncomfortable."

Her examples offer a range of different ways a person may identify in relation to the people in conflict—they may identify as a child, a friend, a stranger. Her last example was unique from other participants in that it referred to conflict or potential violence between two people not as a set of behaviors; rather the situation was defined by a feeling that the onlooker harbors—the feeling of being "uncomfortable." Taken together, these participants communicated the idea that it is not uncommon for an individual to be a bystander to conflict.

Assessing the situation and planning

Participants 1, 2, and 4 offered comments suggestive of assessing a situation and planning action as part of being an empowered bystander. Key phrases included, "Knowing what to do in the situation," "figuring out how you are going to handle it," "figure out what the

right thing is to do in certain situations, “figuring out your own strength in the situation,” or “assessing the situation.” Participant 4 shared a related sentiment in stating, “you shouldn't always be quick to jump in yourself and try to be superman.”

Taking responsibility and taking action

Taking responsibility and taking action was key to defining being an empowered bystander for the majority of participants. Participants 1, 2, and 7 described being an empowered bystander with the phrases, “taking the initiative,” “taking an initial step,” “being proactive,” “take action and be a leader,” and “rising to the challenge to not only recognize that something is wrong, but also to act on it.” Participant 7 said a bystander was someone that “takes it upon themselves to help the situation, to fix the situation, or to do something positive.” Participant 7 also added that being a responsive bystander required “taking responsibility.” Participants 2 and 5 had statements that were somewhat similar to each other along the lines of taking action. Participant 2 said that her mantra when facilitating programs was to say, “it’s better to do something than nothing.” Participant 5 said the same thing in different words, -- “doing nothing is the worst thing you can do.” Participant 1 expressed taking action as “to not just turn a blind eye,” and 2 “not just sit and let it be.” On the topic of taking action, Participant 5 was unique in pointing out that when you are intervening, “you gotta make sure that that something is something productive and not violent, not going to cause more problems.” He also noted that taking action “doesn’t have to be right then in the situation it could be later.” So in no unclear terms, participants reported that being an empowered bystander required taking responsibility and taking action in a situation.

Calling for help

Many participants also identified calling for help as possibly being a part of being an empowered bystander. Participant 1 stated, “if you can’t [help], possibly calling the authorities or just calling someone that can help or know what to do.” Participant 4 said, “you may have to call someone else in the situation.” Participant 2 said that if you can’t do anything, “you’re gonna tell someone.” Additionally, when describing situations in which they had intervened, two participants indicated that they had reached out for help during their interventions.

In sum, participants responded easily when asked to describe the concept of an empowered bystander. Participants’ concepts of an empowered bystander were multifaceted and rich. And, these definitions were similar across the sample.

Use of Training

Facilitating programs

Of the 7 participants, 3 had gone on to facilitate MVP programming. These three facilitated the same programming opportunity, which involved working with middle school teens off campus at a YMCA. The programming opportunity was described by participants as an official after school program at the YMCA and facilitating this program was a bi-weekly commitment for the facilitators. All participants of the training were aware of the YMCA opportunity and all who did not participate (N =4) expressed that they were not able to because it interfered with their class schedule. Aside from the YMCA opportunity, participants were largely unaware of other opportunities to facilitate MVP programs. Most participants expressed either a desire for more programming opportunities or stated that they anticipated that there would be more opportunities in the future.

The three who facilitated at the YMCA traveled to the YMCA program twice a week. Therefore, they each had many hours of experience facilitating MVP curriculum. However,

some of their collective comments indicated that the YMCA programming opportunity was not necessarily engaging the training they received through the Train the Trainer. Participant 2 explained that some of the scenarios from the MVP curriculum were not relevant to the lives of middle school teens and had to be modified. She said, “[the teens] have relationship issues” but, “it’s completely different.” She also commented that it required special strategies to communicate “with 13 year old boys.” Participant 4 was more overtly critical of the program. She described the MVP curriculum as a bad fit for the population and the programming opportunity as bad fit for the ways in which they were prepared to facilitate through the Train the Trainer. She explained,

“...we were trained for an adult level and we were dealing with kids on a kid level.....I just felt like for that age group, we have to limit it so much because they are 13, 14, 15,... we were basically going on an adult level and like dumbing it down for the kids.

Later in the interview she reflected,

“I really did like the program, but then it wasn’t what I expected. I just expected to have different seminars throughout the year talking about relationship awareness and violence and how to handle situations better. ...I thought we were going to be dealing with college students and we haven’t had one thing with our fellow college students.”

So, with Participant 4, there was a clear desire to have programming opportunities with her peers. Participant 6 also explicitly expressed a desire to work with a peer-aged population in the community or on campus rather than the teens at the YMCA. Participant 1, 2, and 5 were of the mind that more programming opportunities on campus would be available in the future.

Importantly, the above criticisms of the YMCA program are taken out of a context of many positive remarks about the YMCA. Participants 2 and 5 reported that on the whole the YMCA program benefited the teens and that leading the program was a good experience. However, the finding that the YMCA opportunity wasn’t necessarily a fit for their training is highlighted given this study’s focus on how trainees are putting their training to use. For this

study, the salient finding is that only 3 trainees went on to actually implement their training as facilitators and the main opportunity they had was ambiguous in its fit to their training because it was not with college-aged peers.

Participant 5 was unique in that he had facilitated two MVP programs on campus in addition to his work at the YMCA. Participant 5 explained that he had helped run programs for Residence Assistants in the residence halls. He described that he used parts of the MVP curriculum and that the programs were basically students “having a conversation” about whatever was the chosen topic of the program. He described his role as a facilitator as asking questions “to keep the conversation going” or “redirecting” the conversation when people trailed off topic.

In sum, a minority of the trainees of the program went on to actually facilitate MVP programs and very few opportunities for leading MVP programs on campus were visible to participants. According to the data, the age of the YMCA MVP participants and scheduling conflicts worked against trainees participating in the YMCA opportunity.

In everyday life

While many participants reported that they had not gone on to facilitate programs post-training, most participants were quick to report that they used their training in everyday situations. Even without the researcher prompting participants, many commented that the training was useful across a variety of settings and relationships. For example, Participant 3 stated, “What you learn in the MVP train the trainer, at least for me, you can apply to real life situations with friends, family, and others.” Participant 3 was an RA and reported that he used his training as an RA on a regular basis. Participant 2 stated, “It doesn’t have to be a violent situation, it can just be an everyday situation.” Participant 4 made a point of discussing how

relationships exist in all contexts and that skills from the MVP training could be used across a range of relationships, not just in romantic relationships. So for MVP facilitators, their training registered as usable outside of the sole purpose of leading programming. The following are examples of how facilitators have found themselves using their training in everyday life. Their interventions are exemplary of their behavior as bystanders.

Helping peers process personal issues.

The following findings illuminate interventions where facilitators weren't necessarily intentional in involving themselves in a conflict. Rather, friends or peers sought them out or presented in need of empathy or help problem solving.

Participant 1 identified having used her training when “one of [her] friends...was remembering something from her past” and Participant 1 tried “to help her get through that and go past it and (pause) do the best you can.”

Participant 4 reported that she sees herself as always having been, “the one people were always coming to for advice on how to help their relationship out.” She reported that she uses the training in this role as the “go-to person” for her friends. Specifically, Participant 4 reported that the program “heightened her senses” and gave her an idea of more situations that are “not necessarily good.” Participant 4 said that she is able to approach this role of being a confidant to her friends with the awareness that “there are more types of abuse than just the types of abuse that you would think.” Participant 4 reported gaining a “heightened awareness” about abuse and relationship dynamics from the training and finds that she uses this as she helps friends process issues—a regular activity for her.

Similar scenarios were described by Participant 6 and 2. Participant 6 added that often times it is her roommates that she is supporting.

Participant 7, an athlete, reported that one way she has used the training is by making a point to reach out to teammates who are having issues with other girls on the team. She reported that on a girl's team, "little comments" between teammates are common and she painted a picture of an environment that can be quite critical at times. The following is one example reported by participant 7 of using her MVP training within her team. She said, "I know I've definitely gone up to one person after and said to one girl, if you ever want to talk after practice, you know you can talk to me about it, I've been in a similar situation as you." Related to this, Participant 7 also stated that the training taught her that you have to "respect their right to not share information with you" as well.

Intentional interventions

The second category of interventions includes scenarios where facilitators took intentional action to intervene in a situation of conflict. These scenarios include examples of participants challenging bullying or intervening on behalf of someone who was physically vulnerable.

Participant 2 offered examples of how she had used her training to intervene in bullying situations. She explained,

"I've definitely taken the skills that I've learned and made myself better in social situations where I've picked up on someone, it was actually my classmate, not really bullying but like putting himself on top to make himself look better. So I said something to him and like totally gave it back to him."

Participant 2 recounted the scenario,

"Someone didn't have a specific shoe label to go for an interview with—it was weird. He was like, 'those shoes aren't shiny enough,' something with this kid's shoes, I don't really remember. And I was like, 'yours aren't shiny either.' And he was like, 'well, I'm not going for an interview.' And I was like you really just can't bully to make yourself look good, like... you're almost twenty you shouldn't be doing that. You could tell the kid getting picked on was kind of like thanks for sticking up for me. Like you didn't have to, you don't know who I am... It doesn't have to be a violent situation, it can just be an

everyday situation. Its like pretty much just be a better person... So just in everyday life, I definitely pick up on different social cues. I haven't seen yet any violence between relationships. But if I did, I definitely would take my skills and definitely reinforce them."

Participant 7 also reported an example of intervening in a bully situation on her athletic team.

She said,

"As a member of the team, I think after the program, I've been more open to things. And that when comments are made, I don't necessarily have to be dramatic and make a big production, but there's ways of redirecting comments or being there to help another person."

Participant 7 explained that she is in the habit of noticing--"watching"--"little comments" made by team members and reframing these critical comments to "make it lighthearted so its not taken as offensively." When teammates are making fun of others, Participant 7 reported using phrases like "I think that's cool" or "I wish I could do that" or "that's so and so for you--she's one of a kind" in an attempt to turn a negative sentiment into a positive sentiment. Participant 7 gave yet another example of intervening. She reported that if she saw two teammates "sharing comments" about a stranger walking by, she would make a point to say something to challenge their behavior. It wasn't clear if the example was hypothetical or an actual lived incident, but Participant 7 made the point of articulating that being an empowered bystander meant "doing what was right" even when the person was a stranger and the people "sharing comments" were your friends.

Slightly different from the bullying scenarios above, Participant 4 described challenging people's thinking even in situations where noone's feelings or safety was at stake. Participant 4 described his tendency to notice out loud patterns he sees in his every day interactions that connect with insights he gained in the training. He gave the example of watching a music video and noticing how the males were performing stereotypical masculine roles in relation to the

females in the video, who were also stereotypical. His use of training was in simply stating what he saw out loud to the other people in the room. There was no conflict or bullying situation, but he nonetheless seized the opportunity to challenge people's thinking.

Participant 7 described yet another way she used the training with her teammates. In addition to reacting to the negative behaviors of peers, Participant 7 also responds to their positive behaviors. Participant 7 reported that she tells teammates when they are doing something well and gives them positive reinforcement. She described this as "giving people the recognition they deserve." She explained, "not to feed their ego, but to give them a little more confidence." This pattern of recognizing good things done by peers was something Participant 7 explicitly identified as related to the MVP training.

Another example of using the training in an active way came from Participant 6. Participant 6 reported that she is mindful of how much her friends drink when they go out to parties. She said,

"I really don't tolerate or encourage drinking, but you know everyone is their own person. If they are going to drink, I'm going to monitor it and make sure that I'm always around them until we leave. And if they're drunk, I'm not going to let them stay there or leave them--I'm going to make sure they get back to the dorm. But I'm going to try and make sure they don't drink so much they are intoxicated... I'm going to keep my eyes on them."

Whereas many other examples of interventions have to do with people watching what others say, this participant described keeping an eye on how much her friends drink. This participant's response was more specific to preventing sexual assault consistent with this participant's interest in preventing sexual assault expressed elsewhere in her interview.

Participant 3 reported that he used his training at the mall. His friend and he noticed a woman being "trapped" up against a wall by a male. He intervened by approaching the woman

as if they were friends. Participant 3 reported that she played along with it and the male aggressor walked away. In his own words, Participant 3 reported,

“I was fortunate enough that I saved a woman’s life. I was at the mall, walking through and me and a buddy of mine were going past I think it was Newberry Comics, and there was a woman that I saw that was being victimized, like she was being trapped in a corner or I guess one of the walls and people just kept walking past and then she was trying to escape but the male that was trapping her wouldn’t let her. So I walked up like I was one of her friends and she knew what I was doing so she played along with it, fortunately the male walked away from the situation and didn’t come and attack me which I felt could have happened...I gave her my email and she emailed me back and she said thank you. She said that if it wasn’t for me she wouldn’t know where she would be, and that she is no longer in that situation.”

Participant 3 went onto report that he told a mall security person about the incident so that an authority could be on the lookout for the male who was giving the female a hard time. He also reported that he gave her “outreaches” or referrals for community domestic violence agencies.

Participant 5 also reported intervening on behalf of a stranger. Participant 5 described a scenario where he was at a club and he saw a guy acting aggressively towards a female who was clearly drunk. Participant 5 stated, “I’m pretty sure the guy was on something.” He decided telling a bouncer would be a better idea than trying to do something himself. He and his friend told a bouncer, who responded to the situation.

Resolving personal conflicts

Participants also offered examples of using their training for resolving personal conflicts. This theme emerged in conjunction with the finding that a major message of the program was to “step back” during conflicts and not react out of emotion.

As previously presented, Participant 1 reported using her training in the dorms with her roommate. She explained that she and her roommate “didn’t really get along” but during a conflict, she was able to “step back” instead of “going off on her.”

Participant 4 gave an example of using her training to resolve conflict in a professional context. She reported that she had been volunteering for a number of months and needed to end her commitment early due to a personal emergency. Participant 4 explained that when she told the director she would be ending, “there were only like two weeks left, but they were kind of upset about it.” Participant 4 went onto explain that she was surprised that the administrator she volunteered under did not respond with more concern given that Participant 4 was dealing with a personal emergency. In the words of the participant, “Instead of their response being like, is everything ok, [their] first response was that well, I’m disappointed that you had to quit in such short notice ...The first response should have been is everything ok, is there anything I can help you with.” Participant 4 reported that the way she “handle the situation was good for [her]” and that she was able to “not react... and not become overly emotional” when she felt “like she didn’t get the love [she] thought [she] should get.” Participant 4 also reported, “...if they have another event, and I am able to attend, I will definitely attend and definitely support it without that emotional baggage.” For participant 4, this idea of not taking things personally and becoming more able “to not react” emotionally were two skills she reported strengthening through the MVP Train the Trainer.

Self Reflection

The final category of ways that participants identified using their training was through instances of self-reflection. Participant 2 reported that the program made her more reflective of her relationship with the person she is dating. She said,

“The training is in the back of my mind, always, even within my relationship...I’ve been in a relationship myself for a year and a half, so I’ve definitely taken away what I can do better, what I had been lacking, what our relationship is like....”

She also described reflecting upon the training as a means of individual growth. She reported, “I’ve definitely taken the training, and made myself better too... its just like that constant, what can I do to be a better person. It makes you evaluate who you are as a person.” Similarly, Participant 4 said she has used the program training “in her relationship with herself.”

Identification as a More Empowered Bystander

The final research question asked, In what ways have MVP facilitators become more empowered bystanders from their training? Many of the vignettes in the above section of findings exemplify the ways in which participants have acted as empowered bystanders since being trained. However additional interview questions were asked to probe if and how the participants personally identified being more empowered.

Participants were asked directly if they felt they had become a more empowered bystander from the training. All but one participant reported that they felt they *had* become a more empowered bystander from the training. The one participant who reported differently said, “I think I’m getting there. I just need maybe a couple more trainings, and just, be more participating in programs.” The researcher probed, “What sort of things would you like to get from trainings a little bit more?” The participant explained, “I’d like some more exercises not like in class, but out in the field, actually doing things.” So this participant felt like she was in the process of becoming a better bystander but desired more “field” opportunities for “doing things.”

Upon reporting that they had become more empowered bystanders, most participants gave examples of how they had improved. Those who did not offer examples were probed by the researcher asking, “how do you think you’ve become a more empowered bystander?” A major theme emerged in how participants described the ways they were more empowered. Participants talked about their improved abilities as a bystander along the line of being more

assertive. Assertiveness refers to participants reporting that they came from an experience of being uncomfortable at “making their presence known” in social situations or “saying no” to people, but gained a changed sense of comfort in asserting their thoughts and feelings and an increased ability to “stand up for what’s right” in “uncomfortable situations.” Demographically, this theme of becoming more assertive from the training was a uniquely female phenomenon.

Assertiveness

Participant 4 described developing more comfort at saying “no” to people as a result of the training. She began by describing how difficult it has been for her to tell people “no” throughout her life. In her words, “For the longest time I didn’t feel like I could say no to my friends, because I was thinking that oh, if I say no, you won’t be my friends anymore. (With emphasis) And I’m an *adult* thinking like this--that it’s not OK to say no (laughing at herself).” Participant 4 reported that through the training she learned how to say no, and that it heightened her sense of “learning how to be strong and how to stand up for herself.” “Being ok with removing [herself]” from a situation in which she feels uncomfortable was something Participant 4 also reported she had grown at. So, participant 4 grew in her ability to say no, stand up for herself, or remove herself from a situation as a means of honoring or asserting her sense of discomfort in situations.

Participant 6 echoed this almost exactly. She said that the training was in part about “learning how to speak up if you don’t feel comfortable doing something” as well as learning how “to say no.”

Similar to the passivity reported by Participants 4 and 6, Participant 7 described herself as “not speaking up” in the past. She reported that now, she finds herself less compelled to act in a ways “so that people will like her” and less compelled to “keep her mouth shut.” She reported

that she cares less when she feels pressured to agree with someone with whom she disagrees.

When asked if she felt that she had become a more empowered bystander, she said,

“I think so because there are some things that I would just let slide, well maybe not let slide but just like wow that’s not right, but maybe not say anything. And I definitely would say that now, its not that I don’t care, but if someone gets mad at me for saying ‘I think that’s cool,’ or ‘why can’t we accept that,’ or ‘what’s normal for you isn’t what is normal and maybe what you think is different from what that person thinks.’ So I think I’ve grown in that sense in that I’m not more like, I need to say this so that every one likes me, or I need to keep my mouth shut so that I can have friends, because that’s not the cool thing to do. ...And I think I’ve become a more empowered bystander by voicing that everyone is unique and you can’t just shut people down. And I would say that I don’t really care if someone is like, hey you need to agree with me on that. To me it’s more about what’s right than what my friends want. And I’ve found that by doing that, I’ve actually gotten better friends (laughing). I’m not trying to say that my other friends were bad friends, but you know by doing that you get a more mature group...people that are grown ups.”

Participant 2 had comments similar to Participant 7. She explained that “before [the training, she] would definitely let things go.” Participant 2 described ways she would rationalize behaviors she witnessed—“maybe that kid’s having a bad day, maybe that guy is always like that and that’s just their relationship.” She explained, “I would definitely mind my own business more...I wouldn’t want to put myself in that uncomfortable situation.” However, since being trained and actively facilitating MVP programs, Participant 2 reports that she “doesn’t care about putting herself in that uncomfortable situation.” She stated that since the training she is more able to “stick up for people,” and “make her presence known.”

So, having challenges around being assertive and strengthening this ability through the training was common to all female participants of the training. The two males reported having become a more empowered bystander as well. But in their narratives, there was no indication that they came from a place of struggling to “say no,” or that they were in the habit of rationalizing situations that made them uncomfortable. They explained their progress in terms of learning better ways to address situations through the training or in learning how “to keep the

conversation going.” So while nearly all participants reported being more empowered bystanders since the training, the females were similar in the way that they described their empowerment in terms of becoming more assertive.

Diversity and Recruitment

In addition to data above, comments related to diversity and recruitment for the Train the Trainer emerged as extremely salient to the narrative of one participant. While aspects of sexual violence have been studied with regard to race somewhat in the literature (i.e. rates of rape according to race, attitudes towards victims according to race), the way in which racial dynamics affect the quality of sexual violence prevention programming is largely understudied in the literature (Foubert & Cremedy, 2007). Comments on diversity and recruitment fell outside of the original research questions, but are included given the exploratory intent of the investigation. Given that interview questions regarding diversity were not explicitly posed to participants, issues related to diversity and recruitment were in no way thoroughly explored. To reiterate, the following excerpts are included for the purpose of considering new areas for exploration in program evaluation research.

Participant 4 discussed her experience of being a Black facilitator in the group of trainees, and reported having questions about the recruitment process. She said,

“In the training, I felt like the only people that were there were the people from the Empowerment Center and three or four people from a sports team. So then to me, the way I see it, the only people they advertise to were the athletics department, and maybe not all (teams), and the Empowerment Center.... like I didn’t see fliers posted everywhere, and I think they should have a better way to market to get more diversity.”

Later in the interview, Participant 4 said,

“And it’s like, I’m always the only Black person, it sucks, I’m tired of being the only Black person. And literally, had I not been a part of the softball team, I wouldn’t have even been a part of MVP at all. Cause I didn’t see any fliers, had I not been on the softball team. You know?”

Elsewhere in her interview, Participant 4 discussed the importance of diversity amongst the facilitators to the efficacy of the MVP programs, especially for the YMCA youth program. She stated,

“I think diversity is an issue, and they need to work on that. Because when you try to help the community, the community wants to see the community in a sense. So if everyone is mixed in the community, than they everyone needs to be mixed in the facilitators.”

Participant 4 also talked about improving the dynamics within the team of MVP facilitators by “talking more about things that we don’t understand.” She went onto say, “sometimes you just don’t understand, you don’t understand a person’s lifestyle, you don’t understand a person’s background, you don’t understand why a person talks or speaks the way they do.” This part of her interview flowed directly from the previous section regarding the need for diversity within the group.

In sum, Participant 4 expressed a hope that the program increase diversity amongst the facilitators and had questions as to whether the recruitment strategy effectively brought in a diverse mix of students. Juxtaposed to Participant 4, Participants 2 and 3 also talked about the recruitment process, but with a much different sentiment.

Participant 2 was a participant with strong involvement at the Empowerment Center—the campus center out of which the Train the Trainer was run. She reported that she was somewhat involved in planning this year’s Train the Trainer and had attended a portion of the previous year’s Train the Trainer. She described last year’s turnout to the training as “lacking” and enthusiastically reported that this year’s turnout was “great,” and that the event was just “a good social situation.” She explained the process of getting students into the Train the Trainer as an insider having been involved in recruitment. She stated, “we get together, and take a couple of students from the Empowerment Center, a couple from Greek Life, and just students who we feel

like are a leaders in the community. So, we pick these students....” Participant 2 explained that this year’s group was comprised of a few athletes and “regular students” who worked at the Empowerment Center. So, Participant 2 acknowledged that students were thoughtfully targeted for recruitment and a broad based style of recruitment was *not* utilized. Having seen the “lacking” turnout the previous year, Participant 2 was also very pleased with the turnout this year.

Participant 3 explained the recruitment process similarly to Participant 2. He was of the mind that the Director of the Empowerment Center hand-picked students. Participant 3 reported that he had a longstanding relationship with the Director through involvement in various campus groups and that he had been picked because the Director thought he “would be able to handle the position.”

So while Participant 4 felt as though she could have missed the opportunity entirely and there was not strategy for getting People of Color in the group, both Participants 2 and 3 came in with the impression that recruitment to the training was predicated on leadership qualities and that the leader of the training had confidence in their abilities.

Noone explicitly commented on racial dynamics of the group aside from Participant 4. However, Participant 7, a White female, also discussed her experience of diversity on the team. She reported that she had come from a rural, non-diverse, community. To her, the group of trainees was “diverse,” and the difference of people coming from the “city and country” stood out for her as a major component of the different identities in the group. She described working amidst diverse people during the training and hearing about people’s experiences of being victimized was “a reality check” and a “big wake-up.” It prompted her realize the impact her upbringing had on her sense of reality. After stating this, she acknowledged,

“It was hard to understand where they came from because I had never experienced that. I don’t come from a very diverse town. I come from a very small town where everyone knows each other. You know every ones’ parents.”

So, while participant 7 did not qualify “diversity” as racial diversity like participant 4, she did discuss diversity as salient to the impact of the program on her.

Summary of the Findings

In summary, narrative data was gathered to answer the four open ended research questions. Four messages of the MVP program emerged as thematic, and participants could clearly articulate a similar and rich concept of what being an empowered bystander means. Participants most often did not go on to facilitate MVP programs despite being trained to do so, which was related to a dearth of opportunities. Participants did, however, identify strongly with the idea of using their training in everyday situations. A wide range of interventions were described that portrayed the bystander behavior of participants. Participants confirmed that they felt they had become more empowered bystanders. Beginning to overcome issues with being assertive was a major way in which female participants identified they had become more empowered through the training. Findings related to recruitment and diversity were also included because they connected to a hole in the literature and pose considerations for further exploration regarding the intersection of diversity and programming. Outside of the findings having to do with assertiveness, strong patterns between demographic data and themes did not emerge.

CHAPTER V

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of the MVP Train the Trainer program on undergraduate trainees of the program. The priority of the study centered on capturing the actual bystander behaviors of participants post-training. This priority was set as a matter of improving on the present evaluation literature, which often does not capture more than participants' *intentions* to intervene in *hypothetical* situations (Cissner, 2009). The study was successful in gathering sought after content. Participants reported a range of program messages, described comprehensive concepts of empowered bystanders, reported a variety of ways they used their training, and nearly all felt they had become more empowered bystanders from the training. Aside from the disappointing finding that many trainees did not go on to facilitate MVP programs, findings suggest that the program impacted participants to expand their abilities and responsiveness as bystanders in everyday scenarios. In this chapter, key findings are discussed. The benefits of the training are especially highlighted. Recent literature on the bystander approach and social change is revisited. In light of findings, diversity within the program is also discussed. The study's strengths and limitations are summarized. And implications for future research and social work practice are explored.

Key Findings

Taken in tandem, the findings for all of the four research questions suggest that the Train the Trainer was successful at leading trainees to see themselves as potential bystanders to

violence and communicated a clear concept of what being a responsive bystander means. One of the most reported messages of the program was that when participants perceive violence or the potential for it, they should “step up” and “do something to help the situation”—the definition of acting as an empowered bystander. Findings for the second research question further demonstrated that the trainees took away a solid cognitive understanding of the concept of an empowered bystander. Participants defined being an empowered bystander along multiple dimensions and in a comprehensive way. According to participants, bystanders are witnesses or observers, and being a bystander is common. Additionally, being an empowered bystander involves assessing the situation or planning a course of action, taking responsibility and doing something, and sometimes this may mean calling for help. Participants’ definitions of an empowered bystander were most consistent with concepts of a responsive bystander the literature (Banyard, Moynihan, & Plante, 2007; Cissner, 2009; Katz, 1995). Specifically, the dimensions of being an empowered bystander that were reported by participants nearly mirror aspects of being a bystander on Banyard and colleague’s (2005) scale for assessing the likelihood of a bystander intervening. Banyard et al. (2005) suggest that having awareness of the problem, taking responsibility for solving the problem, having a plan of how to intervene, and having confidence in one’s ability to execute an intervention each increase the likelihood of a bystander intervening. So, the concept of being an empowered bystander for trainees was identical to the concept of an empowered bystander developed by experts in the field. The finding that the training focused so thoroughly on the concept of being a bystander confirms that the Train the Trainer succeeded in taking a “bystander approach” as opposed to approaching participants as potential victims or perpetrators of violence.

While participants' concepts of empowered bystandership were impressive and clearly impacted by the training, findings related to their use of training suggest that the program had much more than just a cognitive impact. The trainees had put their training to use actively in a variety of ways since being trained. Trainees had used their training within their sports teams, at the mall, out at the clubs, with their roommates, with friends, at parties, and in professional contexts. Participants' vignettes of where and how they used their training suggest that they were able to successfully integrate the program's message to be a responsive bystander. In this way, the program had a holistic impact and the overarching goal of MVP to change behavior, not just attitudes, was met. Connecting this to existing evaluations of the MVP program, the current findings strengthen the evidence that the MVP program can be a useful tool for teaching students to prevent violence in their community and change the culture. Empirical research has demonstrated the positive impact of the MVP program in reducing sexist beliefs and improving participants' sense that they could prevent violence (Cissner, 2009). This study provides data that participants gain more than a greater sense of self-efficacy. Participants in fact improve their skills and behaviors as responsive bystanders according to the current findings. However, it is of note that participants in this study have received much more training than either sub-sample in Cissner's (2009) study.

Looking more closely at the findings, many of the interventions described by participants resonate with the recent literature on primary prevention (McMahon, Postmus, & Koenick, 2011). McMahon and her colleagues (2011) suggest that the bystander approach is still in the process of coming together as a concept. Their purpose in writing is to refine the concept of the bystander approach in a way that emphasizes the importance of engaging bystanders along the lines of primary prevention. Primary prevention efforts, they explain, include "altering the

negative underlying attitudes, behaviors, and practices that are believed to contribute to the incidence of rape as well as focusing on positive behaviors students can engage in to challenge rape-supportive beliefs.” Juxtaposed to this, secondary and tertiary prevention would involve minimizing the negative impact of violence as it occurs or afterward. The participants in this study reported bystander interventions across the spectrum of prevention, but especially provided examples of primary prevention. Participant 3 providing a victim with information about counseling resources could be considered tertiary prevention—responding to the aftermath of violence. Participant 4 reported helping friends process relationship issues. If her friends’ relationship issues involved problems of control or abuse, this could be considered secondary prevention--minimizing violence as it happens. Examples of primary prevention abounded in the findings. Participant 6 keeps an eye on how much her friends drink. Participant 7 neutralized the catty comments of her teammates. Participant 5 made an observation about a music video. He also saw his work as “keeping the conversation going.” These scenarios involve intervening long before violence, or where there is no real threat of violence. So while McMahon et al. (2011) argue for the importance of focusing on primary prevention in programming, this study finds that this MVP training has successfully impacted participants primarily to act along the lines of primary prevention of violence.

The examples of primary prevention found in the study have a subtle quality to them. Participants anecdotes are not glamorous accounts of catching guys red handed as they drug a person’s drink. For the most part, the scenarios are not about risking one’s life in the name of preventing assault. Participants’ vignettes are stories of individuals being in tune with very nuanced, unequal power dynamics in their surrounding environment. The scenario from Participant 2 captures this point well. Participant 2 called out a peer for making fun of

someone's shoes. In this scenario, there is no threat of violence; nor is making fun of someone's shoes overtly sexist. Nonetheless, making fun of a peer's shoes registered for Participant 2 as someone trying to put himself above someone else. Participant 2 responded to the power dynamics at play. Along with the often non-violence context of these interventions, the interventions are understated. Participant 7 captures this aspect in her statement, "...when comments are made, I don't necessarily have to be dramatic and make a big production, but there's ways of redirecting comments or being there to help another person." Participant 7 took from the training that she didn't need to "make a big production." Being responsive meant simply "redirecting comments." The fact that primary prevention is often not in the context of violence and that interventions are often subtle speaks to an ethical question from the literature. Banyard (2011) asks the following question about the bystander approach as a framework: Is it ethical to be asking people to intervene to prevent violence against others when this may place them at risk for experiencing violence themselves (p. 219)? Data from this study suggest that bystander approach programming can have the impact of promoting primary prevention more so than promoting high-risk interventions. This data also testifies to the fact that participants are capable of understanding nuanced imbalances of power in their social contexts and responding in subtle ways that pose minimal physical risk.

Another major benefit of the program was participants' reported skill development in two areas. One skill participants reported was to "take a step back" during conflict. The fact that some participants learned to take pause during the heat of a conflict and to move forward in a neutral or diplomatic way suggests that some participants developed skills around emotional regulation. Participant 4 put it succinctly stating that she learned to "hold on to herself" and "not be so quick to react." Additionally, Participant 4 provided an example of using this skill in a

professional context. So, in addition to becoming a facilitator, the program impacted Participant 4 to expand her capacity to act professionally in her personal life. Assertiveness was another skill set with which participants reported improvement. There was a strong theme of female participants reporting a pervasive discomfort “making their presence known” or simply “saying no.” Unanimously, female participants reported an increase comfort in “saying no,” “standing up for themselves”, and standing up for “what’s right” versus what their friends want since being trained. This finding was especially striking because the research did not set out to capture this data. The fact that participants who were interviewed independently from each other reported this same phenomenon may attest even more so to the training’s impact on their development of more assertive behavior. In sum, the trainings’ impact on skill development around conflict resolution and assertiveness suggests that the training impacted participants above and beyond their identities as bystanders and facilitators.

This study’s findings also related to a theoretical thread of the literature. In the theories of social change explored in the literature, Diffusion of Innovation theory was discussed as a theory that informed some bystander approach programs (i.e. Green Dot, MVP, Bringing in the Bystander). Diffusion of Innovation theory posits that social change happens when a new or “innovative” idea is introduced to a community and spreads throughout. In order for this to occur, the theory states that the innovation or new idea has to be easy to understand and easy to communicate to others. It also states that the idea has to be more appealing than existing ideas, and that people receiving the message must view the people promoting the new idea as similar to themselves. The data from this study show that the concept of empowered bystandership resonated strongly as a message of the program, participants could speak about the concept at length and with clarity, and that participants had embodied this idea of being an empowered

bystander in moments of their everyday life. Therefore, findings suggest that the concept of preventing violence through a responsive bystander model is workable as an innovative idea. Findings also suggest that these facilitators are well equipped to be passing on—diffusing--this innovative idea amongst their campus community.

Given that these peer facilitators were so well equipped to pass on the concept of preventing violence through bystander interventions, it was disappointing to find that opportunities to lead programs on campus were lacking. Based on the reports of the majority of participants (excluding Participant 5), there were no MVP programs for them to facilitate on campus. Aside from being a disappointing finding from a research perspective, a sense of disappointment was evident for some participants as well. As Participant 7 put it, “I thought we were going to be dealing with college students and we haven’t had one thing with our fellow college students.” The major facilitating opportunity that was available to trainees was with teens and didn’t fit with some facilitators’ schedules. Additionally, it wasn’t clear that facilitators were eager to work with a teen population or that they were adequately trained to meet the developmental needs of the population.

The final finding having to do with race and diversity was unanticipated, but spoke to the intersection of programming and race, which is an understudied area in the literature. One participant, a POC, reported that diversity within the group was lacking. She desired greater efforts to recruit POC. She also desired the training to include more space for group members to “talk about things they don’t understand”—which came through as a suggestion for more dialogue within the group directly about race and culture. While the desire for improved diversity was unique to one participant, another participant also reported that the diversity of trainees was salient to her learning. Participant 7 reported that the (strong) diversity amongst

trainees helped her to stretch her ability to see others' perspectives and grasp the scope of violence as much larger than she imagined. It may be useful to note that these findings emerged in tandem with the demographic finding that 3 of the 7 participants identified as POC and 4 of the 7 identified as White. Additionally, of the three participants who went onto do programming together, two were POC and one was White. In light of the demographic data, representation of POC in the sample exceeded the ratio of POC amongst the general student body and exceeded ratios of POC in samples from the literature. Yet, there remained a sentiment that "they just may need to improve diversity." Combined, these suggestions support the importance of diversity within groups of trainees and reinforce the finding from the literature review that more research on how programming and race intersect is warranted.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Study

The sample itself did not include all student trainees of the Train the Trainer for the academic year studied. Two males--one White, one POC--did not participate in the research. Participants' employment or relationship with the Empowerment Center was the biggest predictor of responsiveness to recruitment efforts for this study. Given these male's absence from the sample, females were somewhat overrepresented. The sample also overwhelmingly identified as heterosexual. Diversity of participants was stronger along the lines of age and race. The fact that the sample for this study was somewhat diverse was directly related to the success of the Empowerment Center to recruit a diverse group of students to partake in the Train the Trainer. Most importantly, the sample was small and therefore, findings from this study are not generalizable.

The self-reporting of participants posed limitations for the validity and reliability of data. Self-reporting presented the potential for social desirability biasing the data. Participants may

have felt compelled to exaggerate the impact or benefits of the program to promote their selves and/or promote the MVP program. The researcher's age, race, and gender may have influenced the dynamic of bias reporting in a variety of ways. The finding for the final research question offers an example for exploring how biases may have affected the data. Data answering how participants identified as more empowered bystanders showed a theme where females had gained a greater sense of assertiveness. The females were unique from male participants in that they expressed a phenomenon of coming into the program with difficulty related to "making their presence known" or "saying no" and improving their ability to be assertive from the training. No data from male participants reflected underlying difficulties around "saying no" or being assertive. However, discussing difficulties around being assertive may be generally more difficult for males. The researcher being White, female, and close in age to participants may have further compounded this phenomenon.

The researcher's background may have also biased the data collection and analysis process as well. As a young adult not long out of her undergraduate experience, the researcher identified with the participants' stories of campus life. The researcher's familiarity with college life may have improved her attunement to the meaning of the data. On the flip side, identification with the narratives of participants may have caused the researcher to assume she understood a participant when additional probing for meaning could have been useful. Additionally, this researcher undertook this research having lived experiences of overt sexism and sexual violence as a female. The personal relevance of the subject to the researcher's female identity engendered urgency for determining effective sexual violence prevention models. Therefore, this study may be biased in its strengths-based approach to assessing the impact of the training. The urgency with which recommendations are made for further research and for the

social work profession may also be influenced by the researcher's status as an in-group member of the demographic most affected by sexual violence.

In terms of strengths, this study was successful in gathering narrative, anecdotal data on the lived experiences of participants who had acted as responsive bystanders in a range of situations. As anticipated, the flexible method, open-ended, design of the study was a strength towards the priority of capturing actual bystander behaviors. Participants discussed stories of intervening across a vast array of scenarios—from the athletic field, to the bar, their dorm rooms, the mall. Such a wide range of reported behaviors is antithetical to the typical measurement methods used in typical, quantitative evaluations. An example from the findings provides an opportunity for examining the value of this study's open-ended approach. Participant 7 talked about how one of the ways she identifies as using her training is by giving her teammates “the recognition they deserve.” She tells her teammates when they have done well on the field and described a style of being complimentary rather than critical towards her teammates. In this study's review of literature on bystander prevention of violence, complimenting your teammates' athletic skills on the field did not come up as an exemplary intervention for preventing sexual violence. Yet, Participant 7 discussed this behavior as something that was influenced by the training. Her example is unique in that it begs the question, is this really preventing sexual violence? Does this fit with the concept of being a responsive bystander? Such questions help continue the conversation about the bystander approach and social change. They prompt further discussion about how sexual violence can be prevented. Therefore unique responses like the one from Participant 7 are valuable. Without the open-ended approach of this study, her unconventional example and the overarching diversity of interventions described certainly would not have been captured.

Implications for Research

This study's priority of capturing actual participant behavior following programming should be adopted in future research that evaluates bystander approach prevention programs. Greater evidence that programming impacts behaviors and not simply attitudes remains needed. Surveying participants years versus weeks or months after their exposure to programming may also be useful towards illuminating the drop off of a program's impact. This study examined participants with extensive (25+ hrs) exposure to training. Studies examining how "dosage" of programming affects a program's impact may also be important. Finding out what the benefits (or not) of multiple or extended exposure to programming may be useful for school administrators looking to have the greatest impact on their campuses.

Findings from this study also suggest that research should focus on how the impact of programming intersects with the racial identity of its participants. Foubert and Cremedy (2007) initiate a consideration of race in the literature in their evaluation of the Men's Program for male POC. However, they did not have a comparison group of White participants against which they could compare their data from male POC. They also did not ask participants directly about race in their questions. It is also not clear from their article whether the participants of their study attended the workshop in a group that was exclusively POC, or if the group was mixed or even predominantly White. While race is focused on in the study, the racial dynamics of the programming experience is totally omitted. Findings from the current study illuminate the importance of attending to how POC experience racial dynamics of the group process. More research on the experience of diversity in the dynamics of the training could be helpful.

Implications for the Train the Trainer

On the whole, this study provided qualitative evidence that the Train the Trainer program examined impacted participants to become better bystanders in their everyday life. Participants spoke at length about their experiences with the MVP training and, in some cases, facilitated their own programs and they demonstrated overall enthusiasm for the MVP program. Incidences where trainees of the program went on to prevent violence or challenge sexism in the campus and surrounding community abounded in the findings. The program is an asset to the campus in this way. Providing MVP facilitators on-campus opportunities to employ their skills is the most salient area for program growth. With such well-trained facilitators, the campus community is at a loss for not benefiting from the potential for these facilitators to be training others to be better bystanders. A next step for program development is to endeavor to institute MVP workshops on campus. As in the case with other campuses, mandating athletes or Greek life students to attend workshops may be one way of beginning to roll out programming. Programming in the residence halls as Participant 5 described is another forum for workshops.

Recruitment efforts for the program have demonstrated successes. Firstly, recruitment has succeeded in obtaining male facilitators for the field of sexual violence prevention, which is traditionally viewed as a women's issue. Recruitment has also succeeded in obtaining age and racial diversity amongst trainees that is more than representative of the overall diversity of the general student body. Taking a strengths based approach, programmers should recognize these success and continue to strengthen diversity amongst facilitators especially given this study's findings that programming efforts must be ever mindful towards the experiences of POC in university settings that are predominantly White. Having effective strategies for recruiting diverse participants and being transparent with participants of the Train the Trainer about these strategies may improve the programming experience for participants who are POC.

Implications for Social Work

The findings of this study have particular relevance for social workers. For social workers advocating for or implementing community level interventions, findings from this study show the importance of considering a variety of systemic aspects. For example, the disappointing finding that trainees had little opportunity to facilitate programs for their peers implies that best practices for implementing this type of program would include collaboration with other school administrators in order to get facilitating opportunities instituted on campus. Particularly, administrators who regulate programming in residence halls as well as administrators who are in a position to mandate that groups of students (such as athletes or Greek students) participate in workshops should be consulted. Also important is the consideration that social workers themselves may not be the best-suited staff to administer programming. In the case of this MVP training, the Empowerment Center, a center related to but autonomous from the Counseling Center administered the program. In line with the systems approach of social workers, the task in such cases becomes collaborating with others in a way that builds the capacity of those directly administering the program.

The findings of this study have broader implications to the social work profession as well. Foremost, macro practice in the form of broad based primary prevention interventions to decrease sexual violence is an ever-necessary area of social work practice—particularly for university social workers. Findings from this study suggest that the Train the Trainer program impacted participants' abilities to be agents of social change in many ways. Given the profession's stated commitment to social change (NASW, 2008), the MVP program or other bystander approach programs similar to it may be an asset to social workers as they aim to improve the social conditions in which people live. This study particularly illuminates that

social workers have options for responding to sexual violence outside of providing clinical services to victims, one person at a time. Additionally, the finding that the training impacted participants' ability to regulate emotion and be more assertive is of particular interest to university social workers. These two effects of programming are often desired goals of the individual, clinical work done by university social workers with clients. Therefore, implementing bystander approach programs may carry the benefit of augmenting the clinical work university social workers perform. Programming may have an additional benefit of reaching students who would not present for individual counseling. In all, the MVP program demonstrates potential for changing bystander behavior, and is worthy of social workers' attention as a community level intervention.

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Appendix A

Recruitment Letter

Dear MVP Facilitator,

My name is Katie Driscoll and I am conducting research on sexual violence prevention. [The Director] shared your contact information with me because you have attended a “Train the Trainer” Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) event. I am hoping you might be interested in participating in my study. The purpose of my research is to explore how “Train the Trainer” impacted you and hear your thoughts on being an empowered bystander. While I have used the support of the [University Empowerment Center] in reaching out to you, this research project is independent from [University] and/or the [University Empowerment Center]. Your decision to participate in the study, or pass on the opportunity, will not be disclosed to anyone, including [The Director]. In other words, if you are a work-study student of the [University Empowerment Center], there is no obligation to participate.

I plan to meet with each MVP facilitator and talk one-on-one for about an hour. Participants do not have to prepare in any way for this interview and participants’ identities will be kept confidential in this study. Students who participate will be compensated \$10 for their time.

I am hoping you might be interested in participating in this study. Please contact me at [redacted] if you would like more information. Please let me know the best way to reach you in your reply.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

Katie Driscoll
MSW Intern
Smith College School for Social Work

Appendix B

Informed Consent Form

Dear Participant,

My name is Katie Driscoll, and I am a graduate student at Smith College School for Social Work. I am conducting a study to explore the experiences of facilitators from the Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) program. The purpose of this research is to learn about how facilitator training has impacted MVP facilitators. Specifically, the study aims to hear how you use your training, and how you identify as an empowered bystander. This research aims to expand the literature on sexual violence prevention. This study will be presented as a thesis, and may be used in future presentations or publication on the topic.

As a participant, you will be asked to sit for an interview with me that will last approximately one hour. Prior to the start of the interview, you will be asked to fill out a brief demographic questionnaire. The interview itself will consist of me asking you a set of open-ended questions aimed at helping you talk about your experience. Our interview will be audio recorded, and I will personally transcribe the recording. Participation in the study requires that you are age 18 or older and that you are enrolled at-least part time at [University]. Signing this consent form indicates that you meet this criteria.

Participation in this study may trigger strong feelings related to your experience educating others around sexual violence prevention or working with peers who have been affected by sexual violence. Counseling referrals are listed on this consent form. Participating in this study may also be enjoyable for you. You may benefit by telling your story and having your work in the field of sexual violence prevention acknowledged. Participants may further benefit by gaining a deeper or new perspective on their role as an MVP facilitator through the interview process. Your contributions will provide important information that may be helpful in the development sexual violence prevention programming and its implementation in various settings. Your narratives may also provide rich examples of ways that individuals can act as empowered bystanders and leaders in violence prevention. All participants will gain the additional benefit of earning ten dollars for their participation.

Your confidentiality will be protected in a number of ways. Your identity will be coded with a number, and only this number will identify your demographic questionnaire and the audiotape of the interview. You will not be asked to identify your name while the recorder is running. You are also asked not to include any identifying information about individuals you have worked with during interviews. However, if identifying information is disclosed during the interview, I will disguise it during the transcription process. Some illustrative quotes from interviews may be used in the thesis, but will be reported without identifying information and disguised if necessary. I will be the primary handler of all data including tapes and any transcripts created. My research advisor will have access to my transcriptions of the interview as well as the demographic data collected and will assist in the analysis of the data. I will keep the demographic questionnaires, tapes, transcripts, and other data in a locked and secure environment for three years following the

completion of the research, consistent with Federal regulations. After that time, all material will be kept secured or destroyed.

As a voluntary participant, you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time – before, during, or after the interview – without penalty. You may withdraw from the study up to two weeks after the date of your interview.

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the above information; that you have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study, your participation, and your rights; and that you agree to participate in the study.

Signature of Participant _____ Date _____

Signature of Researcher _____ Date _____

Thank you for participating in this study. If you have any questions or would like to withdraw from the study, please contact:

Katie Driscoll
MSW Intern
Smith College School for Social Work
Katie.driscoll@emailaddress

Please keep a copy of this form for your records

Participant code _____

RESOURCES

Day One
Sexual Assault & Trauma Resource Center
100 Medway Street
Providence, RI 02906
(401) 421-4100

**[University] Student
Counseling Center**
Downtown campus:
[location]
[Remote] campus:
[location]
Phone number

HSR Approval Letter (Identity of the University Omitted)

UNIVERSITY OFFICE

Institutional Research

Institutional Review Board
Smith College
School for Social Work
Lilly Hall
Northampton, MA 01063

February 13, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

The University Research Committee at _____ grants permission to Katherine Driscoll to locate her research study, "Bystander Empowerment Amongst Mentors in Violence Prevention Facilitators at One University: An Exploratory Qualitative Investigation," at our Providence campus. _____ does not have a formal IRB committee, but this University Research Committee is authorized to grant approval to individuals and organizations seeking to use _____ as a site for research studies.

The University Research Committee requests that Ms. Driscoll not identify _____ explicitly in any written or oral report made on her study.

Please contact me at (401) _____ if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Christopher Hourigan, Ed.D.
Director of Institutional Research/Chair of University Research Committee

Providence, RI 02903
(401) _____

8 Abbott Park Place, Providence, RI 02903
401-598-2029 Fax 401-598-2024
Providence, R.I. North Miami, Fla. Denver, Colo. Charlotte, N.C.

Appendix D

Instrumentation

Interview Guide

Messages of the MVP program

1. Can you tell me what MVP facilitators learn about at “train the trainer”?
2. In your own words, what are the messages of the MVP program?

Use of training

3. Can you tell me what people who are trained to be MVP facilitators do with their training at [university]?
4. What sort of things have you done with your training?
 - Can you tell me more about what your role or duties were in that situation?
 - Who were you working with?
 - Can you tell me more about what exactly you were teaching?
5. Outside of facilitating, do you think you have used your training in any other ways?

Concept of being an empowered bystander

6. One thing I’ve read about the MVP program is that it tries to help people to become “empowered bystanders.” Did that term “empowered bystander” come up in your training?
7. Can you explain what being an empowered bystander means?

Identification as an empowered bystander

8. Has your training offered you knowledge on any strategies for doing something in situations where you hear or see something that supports gender discrimination or gender violence?
9. Have you used any of these strategies?
10. Do you feel like you have become a more empowered bystander from your training?
11. How would you sum up the ways in which you have become an empowered bystander?
12. That concludes the questions for this interview. Is there anything you feel I’ve missed asking about?