PREVENTION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

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Campus sexual misconduct has been a growing concern in recent years. The researchers of this qualitative study analyzed the perceived adequacy of current sexual misconduct training and delivery practices from Title IX coordinators representing 11 higher education institutions across the United States. Results point to the importance of establishing both online and in-person Title IX practices to change the culture of sexual misconduct, greater support victims, and prevent future violence. Awareness of these practices is critical for institutions seeking to create safer campus climates and communities.

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Campus sexual misconduct is a topic that has gained national attention in recent years due to the large amount of news coverage on this topic such as the famous Hollywood producer, Harvey Weinstein, who was fired from his namesake company after multiple women came forward to accuse him of rape and sexual assault, which he was recently charged and convicted of (Almukhtar, Gold, & Buchanan, 2018; New York Times, 2020). Since this incident, many others in the entertainment and news media industries, have also been fired or forced to resign after accusations of sexual misconduct, ranging from inappropriate comments to rape.

Cases such as these are not only occurring in Hollywood, they are also occurring on college campuses. The U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos recently announced that the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) is requiring a major overhaul of Title IX procedures at Pennsylvania State University after finding that the school failed to protect students and address their complaints of sexual abuse in the wake of the Jerry Sandusky scandal, a case that opened in early 2014 (U.S. Department of Education holds Penn State accountable, 2020). This story showcases students who were denied justice and the importance of holding universities accountable in their Title IX procedures.

The number of women affected by sexual misconduct remains relatively unchanged in the last decade. An estimated 20% of women between ages 18 and 44 were forced to have vaginal intercourse – a number they say has remained at approximately 20% since 2002 (Axinn, Bardos, & West, 2018). This is similar to findings from the Bureau of Justice Statistics Campus Climate Survey (Krebs, Lindquist, Berzofsky, Shook-Sa, Peterson, Planty, Langton, & Stroop, 2016) that states 21% of college women experienced sexual assault and the Association for American Universities' (2015) reports that 23.1% of college women experienced sexual assault, including 10.8% who experience penetration. To quantify this issue, 431,840 rapes or sexual assaults of persons 12 years or older occurred in 2015 (Truman & Morgan, 2016), and more than 90% of sexual assault victims on college campuses do not report the assault (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000).

In an effort to more fully explore the perceived adequacy of current sexual misconduct training and delivery practices occurring at higher education institutions across the country, three research questions were asked to Title IX coordinators: (a) What type of Title IX trainings [online and/or in person] does your higher education institution utilize for students, faculty, and staff? (b) What qualifies as adequate Title IX training for students, faculty, and staff? and (c) How do you perceive the adequacy of Title IX trainings for students, faculty, and staff at your institution?

Existing Literature

The prevalence of sexual assault on college campuses is a cause for concern to both parents and students alike. In fact, safety is at the front of many students' minds when they are searching for their college. A study by Chekwa, Thomas, and Jones (2013) shared college students' perceptions of campus safety and found that "when asked about their expectations of safety while on campus, 70% of respondents said that campus safety was very important in their selection of college" (p. 329). The sample group was asked to rank five security measures, with "1" being the most important. The security feature respondents considered most important to combat criminal activity were security officers, followed by cameras, emergency call boxes, and lighting. Burglary was the number one crime identified, followed by sexual assault and battery crimes. Among these crimes for which these students expressed concern, sixty percent of those surveyed indicated that alcohol was a contributing factor to crime on their campus.

Campus Safety

In 1986, a college student at Lehigh University in Pennsylvania was awakened from her sleep in her dorm room by an assailant who brutally raped and beat her to death. This resulted in what is known today as the Clery Act, or Student-Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act of 1990. This law requires all higher education institutions to maintain a daily incident log and to publish an annual report that contains three years of campus crime statistics, as well as disclose their campus security policy to current and prospective students and employees. In addition, institutions must immediately notify or warn the campus community regarding any crime or activity considered to be a threat to students or employees (Chekwa et al., 2013). The Clery Act is a consumer protection law whose main objective is to provide transparency around campus crime policy and statistics. In order to comply with Clery Act requirements, colleges and universities not only must understand what the law entails, they must also know their role and responsibilities, including actively fostering campus safety.

The Clery Act is one of other campus safely legislation laws that higher institutions must adhere if they receive Title IV funding (Compliance overview, 2020). Title IX, Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (DFSCA) are additional laws that govern institutional reporting and policies around campus violence. Title IX is a civil rights law that sought to end discrimination, including sexual violence, on the basis of gender in educational institutions. While the Clery Act is only relevant in higher education settings, Title IX also applies in K-12 settings. Under both laws, certain individuals have reporting responsibilities when they become aware that sexual violence has occurred. "Responsible employees" are responsible under Title IX and "campus security authorities" are responsible under the Clery Act (Compliance overview, 2020).

The Safe Campus Act was introduced to the U.S. House of Representatives on July 29, 2015 (Kingkade, 2015). This bill aims to prevent colleges from pursuing internal investigations in cases of campus sexual assault to legally require alleged victims of sexual assault to report the crime to the police in order to see justice on campus. The Safe Campus Act requires universities to educate all their adult and student staff on sexual assault and encourages, but does not require them, to educate their students. Universities must allocate funds to these programs to help victims of sexual assault on campus (Salmon, 2015).

In our nation, the focus of university sexual violence often changes when there is a change of administration, such as the transition from the Obama administration to the Trump administration (Mehta, 2019). These changes are found in federal documents, such as Title IX policies. When Title IX federal policies change, and continue to change, this often leads to confusion because of inconsistent policies given from the Department of Education, leaving higher education institutions struggling to comply these changes. Consequently, there is little to no effect on the attempt to decrease sexual violence on college campuses leaving schools and students at risk and vulnerable (New, 2016). "Enacting new policies, providing more trainings, and expanding federal oversight seemingly still have yet to ameliorate the key pressing issue," (Blanchard, 2018, p. 259). In other words, criticism exists because schools are focusing more on these policies instead of working to change the culture of sexual misconduct to greater support victims and prevent future violence (Blanchard, 2018; Richards, Branch, Fleury-Steiner, & Kafonek, 2017).

With little regulation to keep students safe, many higher education institutions are struggling with how to handle cases of sexual harassment internally. Some schools who choose to dismiss students found in violation of Title IX have seen significant backlash from dismissed male students who then go on to sue the school on the

same grounds of sex discrimination under Title IX. These students claim the school's internal investigations were flawed or biased toward the women who were accusing them, and many have found success with this strategy in court (Joyce, 2017; Shapiro, 2017). Male students who were dismissed by their school have also sued for lack of due process by the schools who have used the Office of Civil Rights guidance for "preponderance of the evidence standard when deciding cases of sexual harassment and sexual assault, which means that a hearing panelist must decide if it is more likely than not that the offense occurred" (Blanchard, 2018, p. 262).

As of September 2018, the U.S. government has conducted 502 investigations of colleges for possibly mishandling reports of sexual violence where 192 cases have been resolved and 310 remain open (Title IX: Tracking sexual assault, 2018). Schools found guilty of mishandling reports of sexual violence have often found it frustrating to determine what statements in the Office for Civil Rights guidance are seen as the law when Department officials repeatedly stated that the 'guidance does not hold the force of law,' and that they view it as carrying out existing rules" (New, 2016, p. 2). Thus, the Department of Education's vague and inconsistent guidance on campus sexual assault continues to challenge colleges and universities.

Importance of Training

One such vague statement reported in the Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance (2001) under Prompt and Equitable Grievance Procedures says that "the school must make sure that all designated employees have adequate training as to what conduct constitutes sexual harassment and are able to explain how the grievance procedure operates" (p. 21). The term "adequate" is never defined and no additional guidance is given for what training should be for all employees. Thus, colleges and universities are left to determine how to properly train their

employees and to assess if it is adequate.

Due to the nature of their jobs and their interactions with students, residential advisors have a particular need for training (Holland & Cortina, 2017). Residential advisors (RAs) are in frequent contact with students making them more likely to hear about a sexual assault. Scholars found that based on data from 305 RAs that their likelihood to report and refer varied, depending on RAs' knowledge of reporting procedures and resources, trust in these supports, and perceptions of mandatory reporting policy (Holland & Cortina, 2017). They also mentioned the lack of official rules regarding training for students, faculty and staff, and suggested enacting such rules could help with training RAs.

Training the masses on policy or safety measures is common for a wide variety of businesses and organizations who deal with anything from operating heavy machinery to suicide prevention training. Online training is seen as a cost-saving solution for industries and is considered a booming industry in recent years (McCue, 2014; Weber, 2016). According to the eLearning Industry, this has caused industries to look into the differences between online and in-person training to ascertain the learning outcome differences between the two.

The effectiveness of training delivery has been scrutinized in many areas, but it has yet to be analyzed for Title IX. In general, many studies have shown there to be no significant difference between online and in-person training, or a slight advantage to online training (Berland, Lugassy, Fox, Tofighi, & Hanley, 2017; Mullin, Saver, Savageau, Forsberg, & Forsberg, 2016; Roget, Hartje, Woods, Shadley, & Freese, 2014). However, the U.S. Department of Education published a report in 2010 evaluating online learning of 51 programs and found that "instruction combining online, and face-to-face elements had a larger advantage relative to purely face-to-face instruction than did purely online instruction" (Means, Toyama, Murphy, Bakia, & Jones, 2009, p. xv). In

addition, they discovered that online training enhanced student learning outcomes by giving learners control of their interactions with media, prompting learner reflection (Means et al., 2009).

Purpose of the Study

This investigation expands upon previous studies in two ways. Although previous studies were conducted to assess the training delivery and effectiveness of Title IX programs, few have assessed the programmatic impact from a qualitative approach. In addition, previous studies examining online vs. in-person Title IX trainings have found online trainings to be utilized most often, even though there is evidence suggesting the learning outcomes are more effective when there is a combination of the two (Means et al., 2009). This qualitative study contributes to the literature by analyzing participants' perceptions of their institution's adequacy of Title IX trainings in relationship with whether or not they utilized online and/or in-person trainings.

Methodology
Data Collection & Analysis

A total of 35 Title IX higher education coordinators representing diverse institutional types (e.g., public and private institutions) and geographic locations were invited to participate in this study through purposive sampling. Purposive sampling requires researchers to have prior knowledge about the purpose of their studies so that they can properly choose and approach eligible participants (Creswell, 2014). In this study, we selectively contacted these 35 professionals on purpose because they fit and met the criteria of our study which was (a) having the specific job title of Title IX coordinator because this job description expects employers to comply and carry out responsibilities under Title IX and (b) being employed at a public or a private university from a specific region of the United States. We desired a diverse sample of participants to represent perspectives from private and public institu-

tions as well as multiple geographic regions of the United States.

After the participants were identified by the criteria for selection, the principal investigator called them by phone inviting them to participate. Eleven responded, for a response rate of 31%. These responses represented a diverse representation of institution types including community colleges (27.27%), private colleges (54.55%), and public universities (18.18%). There was also wide representation of geographic locations of institutions including Northeast (New England, Mid-Atlantic; 18.18%), Midwest (East North Central, West North Central; 36.36%), South (South Atlantic, East South Central, West South Central; 27.27%) and West (Mountain, Pacific; 18.18%).

We used a qualitative approach to gather participants knowledge and collect deep and rich data (Creswell, 2014). A constructivist paradigm was applied encouraging the participants to voice their own understanding and knowledge of the world through their own experiences and reflections of those experiences (Creswell, 2014). The eleven participants of our study were first contacted by phone explaining the purpose of study which was to gather their perception of their institution's adequacy of Title IX trainings in relationship with whether or not they utilized online and/or in-person trainings. We informed the participants that their perceptions would be gathered by completing a survey. After receiving their informed consent form through email, they were then emailed the IRB approval number and a survey that they were asked to fill out anonymously within 15 days. The survey questions were formulated in a manner to encourage depth and breadth in responses (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013). These questions were open-ended questions to allow for open-ended responses to help us understand each participant's interpretation of adequate training. Since the participants of the study typed their responses verbatim, the researchers did not need to transcribe their responses. We sought to

address three research questions: (a) What type of Title IX trainings [online and/or in person] does your higher education institution utilize for students, faculty, and staff? (b) What qualifies as adequate Title IX training for students, faculty, and staff? and (c) How do you perceive the adequacy of Title IX trainings for students, faculty, and staff at your institution?

Trustworthiness

As the principal investigator of this study, I identify as a White, cisgender, heterosexual woman who had the unique opportunity of being mentored and supervised by the Title IX coordinator at a private college located in the Midwest. From my training and experience, I became more aware, knowledgeable, and passionate about Title IX issues, which led me to pursue this as a research project. However, in order to avoid research bias in this study and to ascertain the quality and rigor of the data analysis, I applied a multistage inductive analysis as well as compared the findings of this study to other studies (Berland, et al., 2017 & Means et al., 2009) that also utilized online and in-person trainings. I conducted an inductive analysis to understand and identify general patterns, or categories (Patton, 2015). Open-coding (Maxwell, 2005) was first achieved by segmenting the data into meaningful expressions or themes based on participant responses. I identified key phrases used by participants in their responses; in this case, responses to the open-ended questions. Next, I identified themes that help organize participants' responses.

Once themes were identified, analytic triangulation took place where I, the principal investigator, worked with two peer debriefers who were former student affairs professionals and current faculty members to enhance the accuracy of the findings (Creswell, 2014). Each peer debriefer individually identified key phrases and themes that emerged from data. Then each peer debriefer shared their findings with me (the principle investigator) whereby we collec-

tively discussed and identified the themes and their meaning Peer debriefing adds trustworthiness to the findings and prevents researcher bias by ensuring that the accounts resonated with others in the field and allowing the researchers the opportunity to critically evaluate their themes and make minor modifications to them as they jointly determined was appropriate.

Results

Through our data analysis we discovered the presence of a number of themes. From the three research questions, nine themes were identified: (a) The majority of trainings were online, (b) The majority of institutions had both online and in-person trainings, (c) Trainings should occur for Title staff, (d) Adequacy must first begin with adequate training for the trainers, (e) Quantity matters in adequate training, (f) Context matters in adequate training, (g) Perceived adequacy of training for faculty was lowest, (h) Comprehensiveness led to greater perceived adequacy, and (i) Recommendations to improve perceived adequacy. We identified three themes per question. Of the 11 participants who participated in the study, 9 responded to the first and second questions, and 10 responded to the third question. Themes are listed in order from greatest number of participant responses to least number of responses for each question.

Type of Title IX Trainings

Our first research question asked, "What type of Title IX trainings [online and/or in person] does your higher education institution utilize for students, faculty and staff?"

The majority of trainings were online. Nine of the eleven institutions reported that the majority of their trainings were online (two institutions did not specify). Online trainings included online videos about duties as mandatory reporters, webinars for staff, Title IX modules for students (e.g., healthy relationships and consent), and emails including resources and support. Online trainings were often required annually

for all employees, including student workers and adjuncts. Student online trainings commonly occurred prior to matriculation, as a required session in New Student Orientation, or as optional thematic sessions offered throughout the year. These online trainings outlined Title IX, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking. Additional trainings about bystander intervention, campus resources, and the University's policies and procedures helped students with knowing when and how to report an incident.

The majority of institutions had both online and in-person trainings. Seven institutions reported having both online and in-person trainings. In-person trainings for faculty and staff included workshops for new employees, semester meetings/trainings and refreshers for faculty and staff, meetings with department chairs at their annual retreats, and providing expertise at faculty meetings. In-person trainings for students included presentations during new student orientation, educational training for athletes and student organizations, and student-led theater to spotlight mental health, healthy relationships, consent, and substance abuse.

At one institution, bystander intervention training was required for all first-year students as part of a for-credit course. The bystander intervention training targets specific groups of students (rapidly expanding in scope), and includes a series of educational events including speakers, workshops, and panels. Another institution reported having mandatory in-person requirements for faculty, staff, and students:

Faculty are required to attend a three hour in-person session every five years or within the first year they are hired. This includes part time faculty, visiting faculty, and lecturers as well as affiliates and mentors/advisors who may not be teaching but are working with students. Staff (including part time staff) are required to attend a three hour in-person session every five years or within the

first year of employment. Students are required to attend different in-person session depending on if they are an undergraduate student having leadership in role in sports, clubs, or are planning to study abroad. Teaching Assistants [TAs] and Resident Assistants [RAs] or any student employees are also required to attend in-person trainings to understand their requirements as agents of the university and required reporters.

Training should occur for Title IX staff. Four of the eleven Title IX coordinators emphasized the importance of participating in professional development trainings for themselves and/or their staff. One professional discussed:

All full-time Title IX employees are trained biannually, and all part-time Title IX employees are trained annually through professional organizations like Association of Title IX Administrators [ATIXA] and National Association of College and University Attorneys [NACUA]. I attend annual or biennial trainings offered by ATIXA. I have attended a few other smaller trainings, but they were not great. I organize all trainings for my investigators and deputies, which are four times a year, and are focused on whatever issues seem most important at the time. All investigators begin with a full day "basic" training. The deputies also attend an ATIXA week-long basic training.

Another professional similarly stated:

As Title IX Coordinator I have attended trainings through ATIXA for Title IX Coordinators and Title IX Investigators. I have also been trained through a grant with the Office for Violence Against Women. This training involved 3 trainings, one week per training.

Another professional stated:

Each year I attend a Title IX coordinator training, in person, usually two days, conducted by a law firm. I choose which trainings to attend and have rotated through major players (ATIXA, TrainEd/

Gray Plant Mooty, Husch Blackwell) to get multiple perspectives. I also participate in webinars as needed to provide updates or illuminate tangential issues as well as consult outside TIX attorneys about novel issues as they arise.

Qualifications for Adequate Title IX Training

Our second research question asked, "What qualifies as adequate Title IX training for students, faculty, and staff?" We defined adequacy for the participants in this question as "satisfactory or acceptable in quality or quantity."

Adequacy must first begin with adequate training for the trainers. When answering what qualifies as adequate training for students, faculty, and staff, four professionals underscored the importance of first feeling adequate in their own abilities. Four professionals related adequacy to the amount of training (e.g., certifications, licenses) that they presently had and that they will need to continue to obtain. One professional stated:

Adequacy to me is having annual in-person trainings, conferences and certifications from the state commission against discrimination, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [EEOC], National Text on 9 keys [T9] groups such as ATIXA or T9 Coordinator certifications, local conferences with/for/at peer institutions, webinars related to same, and a minimum of 5 days annually per employee.

Another professional similarly said:

As Deputy Title IX Coordinator for Human Resources [HR], I have received training from ATIXA for Administrative Training Level 1 & 2, and Investigator Training also. I receive Continue Education Units [CEUs] to maintain certification through ATIXA. As time and funds afford, I hope to receive Level 3 and 4 certification training. New students, faculty, and staff receive training during orientation and annually.

Another professional described adequacy in terms of educating others:

"Adequacy is informing as many stakeholders as possible of the sexual misconduct policy, the resources available for reporting and support as well as options for trainings on a consistent and ongoing basis." Thus, these findings suggest that adequacy must first begin with adequate training for the trainers.

Quantity matters in adequate training. Although two professionals stated that having annual training to cover existing policies, resources, expected responses, and prevention strategies is adequate, two professionals highlighted the importance of being comprehensive in order to be adequate. One professional stated:

I would say adequate means training all students, faculty and staff in a variety of methods at different time during the academic year. Online, in-person, and making sure it is not a one-and-done program to check off the list. Training should be comprehensive and revisited at different times within the academic year. You would ideally want to have a primary prevention program upon every student's first year and build off of that training so that students receive training and education during their entire college career. I do believe colleges and universities have the freedom to choose the types of programs as long as they hit on all of the important topics noted in Violence Against Women Act [VAWA].

Similarly, a professional stated:

Adequate training entails a thorough education on the rights and responsibilities that we all have to ourselves and one another as affiliates of an institution. We all have an accountability to act responsibly, fairly, and justly to one another, and these are the expectations of the institution. In terms of quantity, training and education should occur at least once a year to stay relevant and accurate on trends, issues, and needs. I would say adequate means ongoing and

not just a one-time event. For the TIX team, we are trained regularly (at least once or twice a year and often more frequently). Trainings range from victim advocacy to basic TIX processes to legal matters to gender equity in athletics and many things in between. For students, we feel annual training is appropriate, though a required online training will only be required every other year. Training includes information on university policy, consent, misconduct behaviors, resources available, and healthy relationships. For faculty and staff, adequate should be every year. Training includes information on behaviors, reporting requirements, supporting students, and the university policy. All training should be professionally done by respected organizations, and we believe that the more training that can be done, the better.

Context matters in adequate training. Two professionals emphasized the importance of context when answering what adequacy means. One professional said:

Adequacy depends on the constituency. Students need MANY trainings while at college, but it is hard to get them to keep coming. Faculty and staff need less often, but more targeted trainings, such as mandatory reporting, what constitutes sexual harassment, how to comply with Title IX while traveling abroad with students, etc.

Another professional similarly stated:

I would say adequate means training all students, faculty and staff in a variety of methods at different time during the academic year. Online, in-person, and making sure it is not a one-and-done program to check off the list. Training should be comprehensive and revisited at different times within the academic year. You would ideally want to have a primary prevention program upon every student's first year and build off of that training so that students receive training and education during their entire college career. I do believe colleges and universities have the freedom to choose the types of programs as long as they hit on all of the important topics noted in VAWA.

Perception of the Adequacy of Title IX Trainings

For our third research question, we asked "How do you perceive the adequacy of Title IX trainings for students, faculty, and staff at your institution?"

Perceived adequacy of training for faculty was lowest. When reporting the adequacy of their training for students, faculty, and staff, the perceived adequacy of training for faculty had the lowest. Four professionals felt the perceived adequacy of training for their faculty was low. Only two professionals perceived that they had very adequate training for their faculty. When describing the training for staff at their institution five professionals perceived that they have adequate training for their staff. The majority of institutions perceived their adequacy of training for their staff and students as high or very high. Nine professionals reported their perceived adequacy of training for their staff and students as moderate, high, or very high.

Comprehensiveness led to greater perceived adequacy. Seven of the eleven institutions reported having both online and in-person trainings. When examining the relationship of adequacy to whether or not they had in-person trainings and/or online trainings, those who had both described their adequacy as higher than those who just did online or just in-person training. This is a similar finding to past studies that used both (Means et al., 2009). As mentioned earlier, two professionals highlighted the importance of being comprehensive in order to be adequate. Two professionals highlighted that trainings should occur more than annually and that it should be ongoing (not just for new staff, students, and faculty). Professionals also discussed how bi-monthly or quarterly meetings with case reviews would

be helpful for the Title IX team to keep practicing and applying their skills to stay sharp.

Recommendations to improve their perceived adequacy. Although the perceived adequacy of their own title IX practices varied, several participants had recommendations and ideas to improve their adequacy such as overcoming distractions, hiring staff with targeted duties, utilizing assessment in measuring adequacy outcomes, and keeping the institution's mission in mind. One professional discussed that distractions can be difficult to overcome and stated, "I wish that companies would stop hawking their 'trainings' and we could all agree upon something that is really good. I don't have the time to evaluate all the email offers I get, so I ignore most of them."

Hiring staff with specific duties and implementing assessment strategies were ideas mentioned by a professional:

> We recently hired a full-time Deputy TIX Coordinator to specifically address training and education. This person will be responsible for evaluating the needs of our campus, as well as the outcomes of the trainings we currently do in order to ensure we are as effective as we can be. For us, it is an ongoing process that we are continually evolving based on the needs of our students and campus community.

Ensuring that institutions have allotted adequate resources (human and fiscal) to address training needs as well as following after that matter were additional suggestions. Having a strategy and organized system of assessment was another important component shared in being more adequate.

One professional reported "I think we are doing a pretty good job at training all of campus, but we could always do a better job at follow up to make sure all are taking and attending the trainings."

Finally, a professional reported the need to focus on the institution's mission and the role that Title IX professionals have within that mission. She reported:

> As we are restructuring our student-focused training and prevention efforts to unify them all within a consistent messaging umbrella, we are asking ourselves: What does success look like? How would we know if our training programs were effective? In the long run, we aim to foster a campus climate that is intolerant of sexual violence such that the students themselves can transmit shared value of sexual autonomy amongst themselves, identify and defuse many situations before they occur, and effectively support survivors when incidents do happen.

Discussion

In the last several years we have witnessed increased attention to sexual misconduct occurring on college campuses, including intensified educational efforts on campuses and greater coverage in the media. Although there has been societal changes and growth in safety measures on college campuses, struggles still exist in how to change the culture of sexual misconduct, greater support victims, and prevent future violence. In this study, the perspectives of Title IX coordinators representing both public and private institutions as well as diverse geographic regions were purposely utilized, as their opinions are highly esteemed and valued given their important role in leading, complying, and carrying out responsibilities under Title IX on college campuses. We wanted to know Title IX coordinators' perceptions of their institution's adequacy of Title IX trainings in relationship to whether or not they utilized online and/or in-person trainings. Through our chosen methodology we were able to analyze the perceived assessed training delivery and effectiveness of Title IX programs from a qualitative approach.

The participants in our study for the first research question shared that the majority of Title IX trainings for students, faculty, and staff at their institutions were online at that several of them utilized both online

and in-person trainings for their students, faculty, and staff. For our second research question, we discovered that those who had both online and in-person trainings for their students, faculty, and staff described their perceived adequacy as higher than those who just did online or just in-person training. This finding is congruent with a similar study that also found when combing both methods professionals perceived the adequacy of their trainings was higher (Means et al., 2009).

From the second question, we also found that several Title IX coordinators emphasized the importance of participating in professional development trainings for themselves and/or for their staff. Discovery of this finding demonstrates that Title IX staff should be adequately equipped before they can adequately train other constituent groups on their campuses. This finding aligns with a study that also suggested the necessary first step in transformation leadership and global social responsibility is the importance of equipping the leaders of organizations (Ewest, 2015). It is critical that higher education institutions invest time and financial resources to support Title IX coordinators and staff in this important endeavor.

Title IX coordinators also underscored the importance of being comprehensive in order to be adequate. This aligns with our previous finding that Title IX coordinators who had both online and in-person trainings for their students, perceived their adequacy of trainings to be higher. This perspective makes sense as under Title IX, schools are required to conduct prompt, thorough, and impartial investigations (Henrick, 2013).

It was mentioned by two participants that following up with faculty, staff, and students about completing their online training was difficult. While some institutions said their training was required by all, there are no consequences for not taking the training and this could cause effectiveness to decrease at those institutions. One participant emphasized that students need many train-

ings while they are in college, but that it is difficult to get them to keep coming. Another participant shared that online trainings were optional for all students and that only about 10% of students accessed and completed the annual trainings. Thus, there are most likely many variables to consider that may be barriers for students to make the choice to complete the trainings.

For our third research question, we discovered that Title IX coordinators' perception of the adequacy of their training was the lowest for faculty. This finding is fascinating, and its implications can be significant since the relationships students have with their faculty has been found to be crucial in their persistence and success (Komarraju, Musulkin, Bhattacharya, 2010). Faculty can and should have an important role in identifying and reducing sexual misconduct on college campuses through integrating this content into curriculum and pedagogy (Hamilton & Spruill, 1999). Future researchers should take a closer examination at ways to best train and equip faculty in their role of preventing sexual misconduct on college campuses.

Overcoming distractions, hiring staff with targeted duties, utilizing assessment in measuring adequacy outcomes, and keeping the institution's mission were recommendations the Title IX coordinators provided to improve the adequacy of their trainings. Thus, the role of finances in hiring new staff and in training current staff in their office with specific job duties is another area to explore more closely. Depending on the funds available and the size of the institution, hiring more staff could be helpful in organization and tapping into one's specific specialization and expertise. These recommendations can be paired with the three recommendations provided by Linder & Harris (2017) which include (a) learn the history of sexual violence and the current context of legal and policy issues, (b) employ an intersectional, identity-conscious perspective by centering the most marginalized people in efforts to address interpersonal violence, and (c) fo-

cus on perpetrators where perpetrators and their power dynamics are made known and visible.

Limitations

The findings of this study should be seen as a starting point for a framework to future studies in the area of effective Title IX training. Although the term adequacy was defined for the participants, the participants were also allowed to personally describe what they felt adequacy meant from their perspective. This allowed for much honest and depth in their responses but was also challenging to measure or quantify what adequacy looks like. The results indicate that not all online training or in-person training can be treated equally when determining their effectiveness. This idea is also mentioned in a study from the American Journal of Public Health, which concluded that engagement is a significant indicator in determining the effectiveness of training, meaning the more active participation that a medium requires, the more that the trainees will learn from it (Burke, Sarpy, Smith-Crowe, Chan-Serafin, Salvador, & Islam, 2006). The sample of the study included a wide representation of institution types from across the nation. Future studies could analyze a specific type of institution in greater depth. This study specifically analyzed the perception of training and what and how it occurs. Although hard to measure, future studies should consider analyzing how the effectiveness of these trainings is molding the student body into a community that is intolerant of sexual violence.

Implications

This analysis of Title IX training across multiple types of institutions all over the country provides a small view of a larger issue for every higher education institution in the United States. Further study of Title IX training and its effectiveness on a large scale could be used to find statistically significant data to create a standard for institutions all over. Future studies could include research in multiple areas not addressed in this survey including questions on the frequency of training, content of the training and the duration of those trainings. Asking about the frequency of training would help to determine a clearer result of how that affects the rating of effectiveness at each institution. Comparing the content of each training could help address compliance with what Title IX asks each employee to be trained on. This comparison of content could also expand into seeing how interactive each training is and determine if learning outcomes are better achieved through "giving learners control of their interactions with media and promoting learner reflections" with online learning similar to other studies (Means et al., 2009, p. xvi). Asking about the duration of training could also give insight into effectiveness. It would be interesting to learn if length has any effect on learning outcomes of this training as well.

Another area of study within Title IX training would be to look into how institutions keep students, faculty and staff accountable when taking the training. This could be measured through asking about response rates from the past few years and finding out the school's policy on consequences, if there are any, to not taking the training. At some institutions, it has been reported that the registrar's office gets involved in order to incentivize completion of training; this includes placing a hold on class registration until that training is completed by students (Sutton, 2017). This area would help address the issue of compliance with adequate training when comparing response rates with the rating of effectiveness of these trainings.

For in-person professional practice, higher education professionals could have a common read that all students read about the topic to bring further awareness and change of culture of sexual misconduct. For professionals leading Title IX trainings (in-person or online), they should consider the timing of when these trainings occur. Implementing the trainings at the beginning

of semesters may be best so that pertinent information is given early onset rather than later for preventive reasons.

Looking at the mission statement of Title IX offices and further examining how effective they are in changing the culture of their institution is worth investigating. Hearing from the student body about ways to combat intolerance of sexual violence could be enlightening. Students are more educated and knowledgeable about consent and healthy relationships than ever before. Students are getting more comfortable reporting incidents that they are involved in, but they are more likely to cite the #MeToo campaign than our most recent on-campus awareness event. Campus administrators and educators must support our Title IX coordinators and work together to push the college beyond compliance to truly engage the student body about sexual violence and its destructive effects on their campus communities.

Conclusion

College campuses have increasingly become the battleground for Title IX debates. Results from this study indicated that institutions who utilized both online and in-person Title IX trainings rated their adequacy as higher than those who did just online training. Through further study of Title IX training at institutions across the United States, it could be possible to standardize how we effectively inform key stakeholders at every institution of their rights and responsibilities in relation to Title IX. This standardization could also help protect higher education institutions from continued investigations into how they handle these cases and would also protect students who are affected by sexual assault knowing that their institution has been properly trained to handle the issue.

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