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Relationship Between Race, Gender, and Elder Abuse Awareness

James Earl Burrell
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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James Earl Burrell

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Walden University
2019

Abstract

Relationship Between Race, Gender, and Elder Abuse Awareness

by

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MS, University of West Alabama, 1982

BS, Tuskegee University, 1974

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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May 2019

Abstract

Lack of elder abuse awareness and underreporting is an increasing problem in the United States in that only 1 in 14 cases of elder abuse is reported. The failure to report incidents of elder abuse and suspected elder abuse allows further abuse of elders and for elder abusers to go unpunished. The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental study was to understand the relationship between race, gender, and elder abuse awareness and fill the gap in elder abuse literature. Research questions tested mean differences between race and gender, respectively, and elder abuse awareness. The theoretical frameworks for this study were the social cognitive theory, self-perception theory, and Dunning Kruger Effect. The study included a convenience sample of 75 federal corrections retirees with diverse educational and professional backgrounds living in the United States. Data were collected using an online survey that ascertained the respondents' attitudes toward elder abuse and knowledge of elder abuse laws. Independent samples *t* tests were performed to test the mean differences of elder abuse awareness between different races and genders. Results of the study revealed African Americans have a statistically significant higher mean than Caucasians. However, there was not a statistically significant mean difference between males and females, respectively, and elder abuse awareness. The implications for social change include aiding public and private sector elder abuse prevention advocates adopt programs and policies that will increase elder abuse awareness campaigns, increase elder abuse reporting behavior of different races and genders, and prevent deaths resulting from a lack of elder abuse awareness.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the numerous individuals who played an important role in my lifelong pursuit of this ultimate educational goal. Though too numerous to list, I especially dedicate this study to my parents, Estelle “Booke” Allen and Farris Burrell, Sr., who always wanted the best education for their son. I also dedicate this study to my family, Earnestine, Tarsha, Keith, Matthew, and Ruth, for their love and support throughout my life’s journey.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Elder abuse (EA) is a pervasive problem in society today; significant aspects of the problem include lack of EA awareness and EA underreporting. The National Center on Elder Abuse (2017), noted that one in 10 Americans age 60 and older experienced some form of EA, and only one in 14 cases of EA ever comes to the attention of authorities. Therefore, as noted by the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) in 2017, the aging population will require more care and protection than is currently available. Thus, EA awareness among professionals and the lay population is critical in efforts to prevent EA.

The problem addressed by this study is EA awareness and EA underreporting. Plati, Kariofi, Monios, and Kourkouta (2016) noted that EA awareness and prevention strategies must include discussions with the elderly when EA is suspected; therefore, there is a need to inform all individuals how to recognize and report EA and suspected EA. Increased EA awareness will influence an individual's behavior toward EA, thereby increasing the care and protection provided for the older population.

The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental study was to understand the nature of the relationship between race and gender, respectively, and EA awareness among individuals who previously worked in a corrections environment by surveying members of the Federal Prison Retirees Association (FPRA) living in the United States. In this study I explored whether a relationship existed between race, gender, and EA

awareness, and if so, to what extent. The theoretical framework for this study included the social cognitive theory (SCT), self-perception theory (SPT), and Dunning-Kruger Effect (DKE). This theoretical framework helped explain the relationship between race, gender, and EA awareness as viewed through the prism of SCT, SPT, and DKE that allowed interpreting the findings from a perspective that reflected an understanding of the influence of learned behaviors, self-perceptions, and overclaiming.

The results of this study will benefit elder abuse prevention (EAP) advocates' efforts to identify EA initiatives and programs that increase EA awareness among different cultures in society. Also, the results of the study will influence EA stakeholders' decisions and efforts to provide effective EA awareness initiatives and programs for targeted populations.

The implication for positive social change is the potential for effective EA awareness initiatives that will increase EA reporting and decrease EA deaths. Thus, the results of this study could impact social change by influencing future research, development, and implementation of EA awareness initiatives and programs. Listed below is a brief description of the major sections of this chapter.

The background section includes a summary of research literature related to the scope of the study and why the study is needed. The problem statement section includes the problem; presents evidence that the problem is current, relevant, and significant to EA; provides a discussion of the meaningful gap in the literature. The purpose section identifies the type of quantitative study and the variables and intent. The questions and

hypotheses section states the research questions, null hypotheses, alternative hypotheses, and the variables, associations, and measurements. The theoretical framework section identifies the theories included in the framework, along with their origins and how they relate to this study. The nature of the study section provides a concise rationale for the selection of this quantitative study design, key variables, and methodology. The operational definition section provides concise definitions of variables and terms unique to this study. The assumptions section clarifies aspects of this study that were believed but not proven to be true. The scope and delimitations section is a description of aspects of the research problem that I addressed, as well as why I chose the specific focus. The limitations section describes limitations of the study related to the design, methodological weaknesses, biases, as well as reasonable measures that address the limitations. The significance section of this study identifies potential contributions of the study that will advance knowledge in the EA discipline and potential implications for positive social change as bounded by the scope of the study. The final section, summary, encapsulates the main points of the chapter and provides a transition to Chapter 2.

Background

EA is a universal problem that includes EA awareness and EA underreporting (Roberto, 2016). Also, as noted by Roberto (2016), the EA problem increases as the Baby Boomer generation reaches 65 years of age. As a result, the pervasiveness of EA is expected to increase proportionally along with the growth in the older population (Goergen & Beaulieu, 2013). Therefore, because EA is a social phenomenon that

impacts all races and genders, there is a critical need for effective EA public awareness initiatives as well as universal education courses and training programs that might increase EA awareness and prevent EA (Roberto, 2016). There exists a critical need to identify and adopt EA awareness initiatives designed to influence different cultures and segments of the population while considering their perception of EA awareness and thereby increasing overall EA awareness and reporting and decreasing EA deaths.

Because of the expected rise in EA among the older population, there is a need to understand the relationships that exist within the EA phenomenon. Moon (2000) noted there was a great need for public outreach efforts that could increase awareness of consequences of EA as well as community resources that were available. Moon (2000) further noted that growing evidence was gained from understanding acculturation and perceptions of EA among different ethnic and racial groups. Also, Hyde (2005) noted that the issue of gender differences in variability merited further investigation, whereas Zhang et al., (2016) noted the need to understand the effects of personal and cultural values on attitudes toward older adults. Therefore, determining whether a relationship exists between race, gender, and EA awareness among retirees previously exposed to a federal corrections law enforcement culture might benefit EA awareness advocates in their efforts to identify effective strategies to improve EA awareness, increase EA reporting, reduce EA incidences, and encourage further research of other EA relationships and cultures.

This quantitative nonexperimental study was needed because the prevalence of EA continues to increase, and personal values and cultures have significant effects on ageist attitudes (Zhang et al, 2016). In fact, in 2016 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) stated the older population in the United States was increasing more rapidly than any other age group. Additionally, the CDC (2017) predicted the elderly population would be 72 million by 2030, and 90 million by 2060 (Jirik & Sanders, 2014). Along with those predictions, the CDC (2017), also noted that one in 10 elders would experience EA, and the National Center on Elder Abuse (2017) noted that only one in 14 cases of EA ever came to the attention of authorities. Therefore, it is critical that EAP stakeholders identify and implement EA awareness initiatives and strategies aimed at increasing EA awareness and prevention in all segments of society.

Research over the past 5 years related to EA focused on the perceptions of EA (Aday, Wallace, & Scott, 2017), EA detection (Carney, 2015), and (De Ponder, De Witte, Brosens, Dierckx, & Verté, 2015), EA prevalence (Burnes et al., 2015), and EA interventions (Baker, Francis, Hairi, Othman, & Choo, 2016; Cooper & Livingston, 2016). Also, Schwab and Wangmo (2017) conducted a study that focused on the importance of designing EAP programs with tailored messages, methods, and measures of prevention to meet the cultural background and socioeconomic level of the targeted audience. As a result of the study, Schwab and Wangmo (2017) recommended further study of older persons to define better ways to spread the awareness of EA. Also, Zhang et al. (2016) noted a significant association of personal individual traits and values with

attitudes toward older adults. The author recommended further investigation into cross-cultural attitudes toward older adults (Zhang, et al., 2016). Therefore, determining the relationships that may or may not exist between demographic variables is essential to designing, adopting, and implementing EA awareness initiatives intended to motivate individuals to detect and respond appropriately to instances of EA and suspected EA. As a result, the implication for positive social change resulting from this study might include the potential for implementing EA awareness initiatives that could influence EA reporting and decrease EA deaths. Also, the results of this study could positively impact social change by influencing the implementation of effective EA awareness initiatives and programs appropriate to meet individual and cultural needs.

Problem Statement

There is a problem today with EA in the United States (Roberto, 2016). The older population of the United States increases as more of the Baby Boomer generation reach 65 years of age (Roberto, 2016). Therefore, as noted by Roberto (2016), the prevalence of EA in homes, group homes, nursing facilities, and assisted living facilities has increased along with the growth of the older population. Goergen and Beaulieu (2013), noted that “EA or mistreatment of older adults is a status offense in which socially undesirable acts of doing, or not doing, happen to older persons and cause harm, or the potential to cause harm” (p.1218). Goergen and Beaulieu (2013), further noted the types of EA as neglect, self-neglect, financial abuse, psychological abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and exploitation. Therefore, as noted by Roberto (2016), because EA is a

societal problem, it is critical that public awareness of EA is increased, as well as that professional education courses and training programs be available to caregivers.

The prevalence of EA is a universal problem that includes a lack of EA awareness and EA underreporting (Roberto, Teaster, McPherson, Mancini, & Salva, 2015). Thus, while earlier studies (Jackson, 2016; Killick, Taylor, Begley, Anand, & O'Brien, 2015; Gil et al., 2015; Goergen & Beaulieu, 2013) identified several factors that contributed to EA pervasiveness, EAP efforts remained a challenge. To date, research has not included examining the effectiveness of generic EA awareness initiatives in detecting, reporting, and preventing EA and suspected EA (Policastro & Payne, 2014). Treating all individuals as if their awareness or perceptions of EA were the same may have contributed to EA underreporting (Aday et al., 2017). For that reason, in this study I explored whether a relationship exists between three variables (two attributes and one criterion) and to what extent, in order to better understand EA awareness and behavior among retirees previously exposed to a corrections environment and culture.

The problem addressed by this study was EA awareness. The results revealed the relationship between race, gender, and EA awareness and the impact on EA reporting behavior among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States. Thus, the results of this study could influence EAP advocates' efforts to identify EA awareness initiatives that might increase EA awareness among different cultures in society.

The gap in the current literature was a lack of studies that explored whether a relationship exists between race, gender, and EA awareness among retirees in the general population. EAP advocates have expressed the need to determine the effectiveness of EA awareness initiatives provided to the lay population (Merriman-Nai & Stein, 2014). However, to evaluate the effectiveness of EA initiatives and programs, it was essential to understand whether relationships existed between variables associated with the EA phenomenon among different demographic cultures and environments. Schwab and Wangmo (2017) noted that effective EAP strategies required adapting to the needs and cultures of targeted populations. In this study I examined the relationship of EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees as correlated with race and gender. The significance of this study is that it could fill the EA literature gap regarding relationships between race, gender, and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States and highlight the need for further research of relationships between other variables in similar and dissimilar employment cultures that might influence the design, adoption, and implementation of effective EA awareness initiatives and programs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental study was to explore whether a relationship exists between race, gender, and EA awareness among individuals living in the United States who previously worked in a federal corrections law enforcement culture by surveying members of FPRA, and if so, to what extent. I utilized the EA Awareness

survey instrument (see Appendices B & E) to ascertain data reflecting demographics, level of EA awareness, attitude toward elder mistreatment, and knowledge of EA laws. I analyzed the data gathered from the survey using IBM SPSS to determine whether a relationship existed between the attribute variables (race, gender) and the criterion variable (EA awareness), and if so, to what extent. More specifically, I used independent *t*-test analyses to determine whether a relationship existed and to what extent, as discussed further in Chapter 4.

The results of the study might increase EA awareness and reporting among different segments of society by (a) helping the development of EA awareness partnerships between the public and private sectors, (b) furthering the inclusion of EA awareness in public policies affecting older persons, and (c) promoting EA awareness training for approved government programs recipients, such as student aid, housing, Medicare and Medicaid.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The predominant question guiding this research asked whether a relationship exists between race, gender, and EA awareness among retirees living in the United States who previously worked in a corrections culture, and if so, to what extent.

This quantitative nonexperimental study included two research questions and two hypotheses. The research questions and hypotheses for this study were:

RQ1: Does a mean difference exist between race and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States, and if so, to what extent?

*H*₀1: No mean difference exists between race and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States, as determined from the results of a comparison of the EA survey total scores using independent samples *t* tests, if statistical assumptions are met, or Mann-Whitney *U* tests, if assumptions are not met, based on responses to the EA survey questionnaire.

*H*₁1: A mean difference exists between race and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States as determined from the results of a comparison of EA survey total scores using independent samples *t* tests, if statistical assumptions are met, or Mann-Whitney *U* tests, if statistical assumptions are not met, based on responses to the EA survey questionnaire.

RQ2: Does a mean difference exist between gender and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States, and if so, to what extent?

*H*₀2: No mean difference exists between gender and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States as determined from the results of an independent samples *t* tests, if statistical

assumptions are met, or Mann-Whitney U tests, if statistical assumptions are not met, based on responses to the EA survey questionnaire.

H_{12} : A mean difference exists between gender and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States as determined from the results of an independent samples t tests, if statistical assumptions are met, or Mann-Whitney U tests, if statistical assumptions are not met, based on responses to the EA survey questionnaire.

The variables in this study consisted of race, gender, and EA awareness. The attributes of the race variable included White or Caucasian, Black or African-American, Hispanic or Latino, Asian or Asian American, American Indian or Native American/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and another race. The attributes of the gender variable included male and female. Lastly, the attributes of the EA awareness variable included Extremely Aware, Very Aware, Somewhat Aware, Not So Aware, and Not at All Aware.

The race and gender attributes encompassed all possible EA stakeholders, including those individuals who were older adults or interacted with older adults in the community. Accordingly, EA stakeholders included the elderly, family members, healthcare providers, community leaders, politicians, caregivers, religious leaders, financial professionals, friends, researchers, and EAP advocates. Hence, this quantitative nonexperimental research study tested the hypotheses as viewed through an integrated theoretical framework.

Theoretical Framework for the Study

The theoretical framework for this study included the SCT, SPT, and DKE. Combining these theories allowed for intermingled assessments of knowledge, behaviors, and attitudes regarding EA awareness among federal corrections retirees who may or may not be considered older adults.

This theoretical framework helped explain that behaviors and attitudes learned while working with one vulnerable population influence perceptions, attitudes and behaviors when responding to other vulnerable populations. Though the overarching behavior in each instance may have been different, learned behavior influenced self-perceptions. As a result, the perceived level of knowledge toward a population in one setting or environment influenced the perceived level of knowledge in another setting (Bandura, 2001). Therefore, in light of the absence of a testable theory related to EA awareness, understanding the possible relationship between race, gender, and EA awareness required using the SCT, SPT, and DKE theoretical framework (see Figure 1).

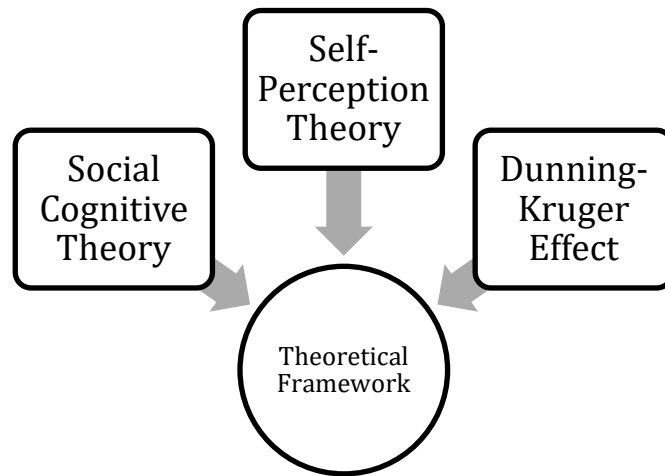


Figure 1. Theoretical frameworks.

Social Cognitive Theory

Connolly (2017), Grusec (1992), and Wulfert (2013) noted that SCT explained human behavior as the result of observational learning, imitation, and triadic reciprocal causation. Social psychologist Bandura founded SCT in 1986 (Bandura, 2001). For this study, SCT was essential in determining whether a relationship existed between variables, as well as interpreting the responses to inappropriate and criminal behavior.

The goal of SCT was to explain behavior development, maintenance, and modification (Bandura, as cited by Wulfert, 2013). Wulfert (2013) further noted that Bandura posited that response behavior was the result of observational learning from a lifetime of human development from past experiences where the body acts as a human agency. More explicitly, Bandura (2001) noted the human body acted as an agent with

four tenets that included intentionality, forethought, self-reactiveness, and self-reflectiveness (see figure 2).

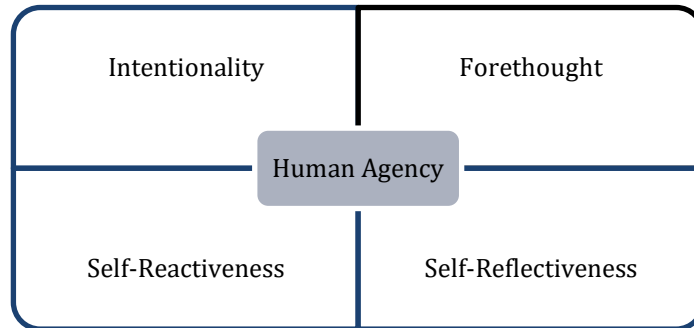


Figure 2. Social cognitive theory agentic elements.

Bandura (2001), noted that forethought was translated into incentives and guides for action through the aid of self-regulatory mechanisms where individuals controlled their thoughts, feelings, and actions. Therefore, an instrumental component to human behavior included observational learning that occurred in the work environment as part of the occupational culture. Hence, SCT explained human behavior as triadic reciprocal causation that included behavior, environmental factors, and personal factors (Miller, Sharma, Brown, & Shahbazi, 2015). Thus, there was continuous interaction between behavior, environmental factors, and personal factors (see Figure 3).

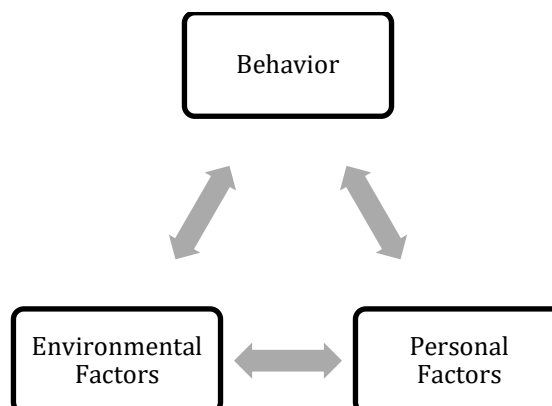


Figure 3. Triadic reciprocal causation—human behavior.

Because the learned behaviors of participants in this study might influence their behavior toward EA, SCT helped explain attitudes and behaviors based on responses to EA survey items. Also, as the study sample included retirees, who may or may not be considered older adults, identifying their perceived level of EA awareness helped elucidate the relationship between race and EA awareness and gender and EA awareness. However, in addition to SCT as one component of the theoretical framework, SPT also helped describe the possible relationship that might exist between race, gender, and EA awareness.

Self-Perception Theory

The field of behavioral psychology has several theories that attempt to explain human behavior. However, in 1965, psychologist D. J. Bem proposed SPT as an alternative to the interpretation provided by the theory of cognitive dissonance (Bem, 1967). The primary hypothesis that resulted was the induced-compliance paradigm where individuals engaged in and accepted a new behavior when there was little or no

external inducement (Ross, Lepper, & Hubbard, 1975). Therefore, whereas the theory of cognitive dissonance explained how individuals struggled with changes in behavior when there was a lack of harmony and disagreement, Bem (1967) postulated that SPT explained how internal and external cues led to behavior that affected attitudes (see Figure 4).

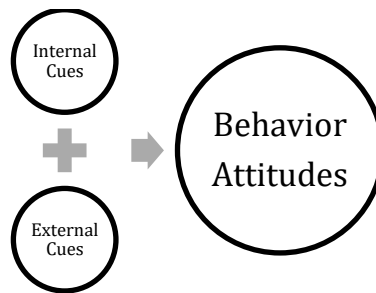


Figure 4. Behavior attitude.

Bem (1972) stated that individuals learned about their attitudes, emotions, and other internal states partially by inferring them from observations of their behavior, as well as circumstances in which their behavior occurs. However, Bem also posited, as cited by Greenbert and Murphy (2013), that weak and ambiguous internal cues caused individuals to infer those internal states the same way that observers based their behavior attitudes on external signals. Thus, as noted by Bem (1972), individuals' perception of themselves came from inferences based on external information rather than from direct internal contact with their feelings. Therefore, Bem noted, as cited by Greenbert and Murphy (2013), it was possible that external cues caused behavioral changes in individuals.

Greenbert and Murphy (2013) reported the self-perception process began in childhood and continued throughout the individual's lifespan. Greenbert and Murphy noted that subtle introductions and encouragements of different behaviors may lead to a change in a person's attitude and behavior. Also, the presence and absence of external inducements may affect attitudes and behavior (Bem, 1972). However, as noted by Bem (1967), the absence of external inducements leads individuals to adopt behavior based on internal cues. Hence, due to the implications for compliance and persuasion, it may be difficult to determine whether the cause of a behavior change is intrinsic motivation or external inducements (Bem, 1967). In summary, it was appropriate to include SPT as a component of the theoretical framework for this study because the paradigm of external inducements and intrinsic motivation provided knowledge useful in interpreting the relationship between race, gender, and EA awareness. The third component of the theoretical framework for this study was DKE.

Dunning-Kruger Effect

The ability individuals to assess their knowledge, skills, and abilities is challenging. However, in 1999, Kruger and Dunning coined DKE, a cognitive mechanism used to describe individuals' ignorance of their ignorance. More specifically, Kruger and Dunning (1999) explained how DKE laid the groundwork for further study in overclaiming. For example, according to Atir, Rosenzweig, and Dunning (2015), people overestimate their knowledge of events, facts, and people. Metacognitive skills tests in

different venues showed there were cognitive biases in the self-assessment of skills and knowledge as compared to accurate nonbiased assessments (Kruger & Dunning, 1999).

Gibbs, Moore, Steel, and McKinnon (2016) applied DKE in a computing workplace setting and showed that workers with lower level skills did not recognize their actual levels of knowledge and performance. Consequently, incompetent or unskilled individuals perceived their level of performance and knowledge to be higher than it was. Therefore, a lack of knowledge or awareness may prevent individuals from accurately assessing their level of knowledge, awareness, or performance. In summary, DKE was appropriate for this study because it helped me to understand and describe the behavior and assessments of participants who might be unaware of their true level of EA awareness as compared to others.

In summary, the theoretical framework allowed me to view the research data through a lens where SCT, SPT, and DKE converged. Consequently, my analysis of the survey responses considered the possibility that individuals are human agents who may reflect learned behaviors from many observations that influenced their perceptions. The next section describes the nature of the study.

Nature of the Study

This quantitative nonexperimental research design was appropriate for this study because the goal was to understand whether a relationship existed between race, gender, and EA awareness. It was also appropriate because the levels of measurement for the attribute variables (race, gender) and the criterion variable (EA Awareness) were

categorical and could not be manipulated. Thus, a nonexperimental study was used to determine whether a mean difference existed between race, gender, and EA awareness. Therefore, the results of the study might influence future EA research and EA awareness initiatives.

In addition to the nonexperimental study, I also considered the quasi-experimental, nonequivalent groups design and the qualitative research design. However, the quasi-experimental, nonequivalent groups design, is most useful when included with the pretest-posttest design (Cook & Campbell, as cited by Cox, 2016). Therefore, in light of the challenges associated with the sample, sample size, and logistics, and the fact the data would not answer the research questions, I determined the pretest-posttest design with nonequivalent groups was inappropriate.

Next, I considered the qualitative phenomenology design to determine the relationship between race, gender, and EA awareness. However, the purpose of a phenomenology study is to understand the meaning a phenomenon has for participants, or lived experiences (Crawford, Burkholder, & Cox, 2016). Therefore, after reviewing the problem and purpose of the study, I determined that understanding the phenomenon of EA awareness would neither address the research questions nor fill the EA literature gap. As a result, I determined the phenomenology design was also inappropriate for this study. Consequently, I determined the quantitative nonexperimental design was the most appropriate research design for this study.

The population for this study consisted of federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States. This study also included a nonprobability random sample of active members of the Federal Prisons Retiree Association (FPRA). The recommended sample size (64) for this study was determined by utilizing the G-Power 3.1.9.2 calculator, exact correlations formula, with an alpha of .05, power of .80, and effect size of .3 (see Figure 5).

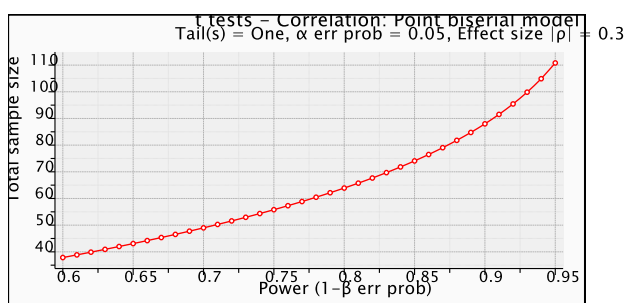


Figure 5. Total sample size—*t* tests—correlation point biserial model.

FPRA was selected as the sample because it included a diverse population of federal corrections law enforcement retirees, as indicated in the FPRA Directory. More specifically, the study sample included FPRA members residing throughout the United States, that included Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Missouri, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma,

Oregon, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New York, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Although I had access to the FPRA directory, I also obtained acknowledgment from the president of FPRA that I planned to invite members of the association to participate in this research study (see Appendix A). Furthermore, as an active member of FPRA, I had access to the membership database that included the email and residential addresses of all members. I divided the sample into two groups. Group 1 included FPRA members with e-mail addresses, and Group 2 included FPRA members without e-mail addresses. The plan was to use Group 2 if Group 1 did not meet the recommended number of participants.

After identifying the two groups, I sent an e-mail survey invitation to Group 1 inviting them to participate in the survey. More specifically, the e-mail included the survey website, <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PX25CXM>, where they gained access to an informed consent message. The informed consent message included an introduction, background, procedures, voluntary nature, risks, benefits, compensation, confidentiality, contact information, conflict of interest, and statement of consent. As noted earlier, the recommended sample size for this study was 64. Therefore, because 75 participants from Group 1 volunteered and completed the survey, it was not necessary to contact Group 2. Hence, the EA Survey was a 30-item self-administered internet computer-assisted survey that required multiple choice, and Likert-scaled responses.

More specifically, the survey consisted of five demographic items (see Appendix B), and 25 survey items (see Appendix E).

The participants had seven days to access and respond to the survey. However, I sent an e-mail invitation reminder to the sample Group 1 after the fourth day. At the end of the seven days, I retrieved the data from the internet computer-assisted survey database and proceeded with the analyses. The counting protocol entailed totaling the number of participants and their responses that were used for analyses utilizing IBM SPSS Statistics, Version 25. Also, the data collected from the study will be maintained in a secure location, that only I have access, for no less than five years and will be destroyed after that period.

The instrument used to generate the EA Survey Questionnaire was the Attitude Scales on Elder Mistreatment that was developed in 1999 by Daniels, Baumhover, Formby, and Clark-Daniels. Permission to use and modify the instrument is in the appendix (see Appendices C and D). The survey instrument contained 25 Likert-scaled items that assessed police officers' perceptions of elder mistreatment issues and knowledge of the law (Daniels et al., 1999b).

I utilized the total score of the EA Survey that was calculated by adding all of the responses to the survey items and dividing by the total number of items. The distribution of the EA Survey total scores was checked for normality using skewness and Kurtosis statistics. Because, neither statistic was above an absolute value of 2.0, the assumption was not violated. Also, the Levene's Test of Equality of Variances was used to test for

the assumption of homogeneity of variance for between-subjects comparisons of continuous values. The assumption was not violated.

For Research Question 1, race groups (White or Caucasian and Black or African American) were compared on EA Survey total scores using independent samples *t*-tests after the statistical assumptions were met. Also, means and standard deviations were reported.

For Research Questions 2, gender groups (Male and Female) were compared on EA Survey total scores using independent samples *t*-tests after the statistical assumptions were met. Also, means and standard deviations were reported.

As noted earlier, the total survey score was calculated by adding the responses for all survey items together and dividing by the total number of items. Skewness and kurtosis statistics were used to test for the assumption of normality of continuous distributions. If either statistic was above an absolute value of 2.0, then the assumption was violated. Levene's Test of Means and standard deviations were reported and interpreted, and statistical significance was assumed at an alpha value of 0.05. All analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Version 25 (Armonk, NY: IBM Corp.). Next, I will describe the operational terms and definitions germane to the understanding of this study.

Operational Definitions

The terms defined below have multiple or unique meanings and reflect conceptual and operational specificity and clarity in the context of this study.

Abandonment: The desertion of an older adult by an individual who has assumed responsibility for providing care for an elder, or by a person with physical custody of an elder (CDC, 2017).

Abuse: The willful infliction of injury, unreasonable confinement, intimidation, or cruel punishment with resulting harm, pain, or mental anguish; or deprivation by a person including a caregiver, of goods or services that are necessary to avoid physical harm, mental anguish, or mental illness (CDC, 2017).

Ageism: Discrimination against people on the basis of age (CDC, 2017).

Dunning-Kruger effect: A cognitive mechanism that can be described as a person's ignorance of his or her ignorance (Kruger & Dunning, 1999, 2009 as cited by Gibbs et al., 2017).

Elder: Any person whose chronological age is 60 years or older (CDC, 2017).

Elder abuse: An intentional act or failure to act by a caregiver or other person in a relationship involving an expectation of trust that causes or creates a risk of harm to an older adult (CDC, 2017).

Elder mistreatment: An intentional act or failure to act by a caregiver or other person in a relationship involving an expectation of trust that causes or creates a risk of harm to an older adult (CDC, 2017).

Emotional or psychological abuse: The infliction of anguish, pain, or distress through verbal or nonverbal acts that includes, but is not limited to verbal assaults, threats, intimidation, humiliation, and harassment. Also, treating an older person like an

infant; isolating an elderly person from his/her family, friends, or regular activities; giving an older person the “silent treatment;” and enforced social isolation (CDC, 2017).

Financial abuse: Illegally or improperly using an elder’s money, benefits, belongings, property, or assets for the benefit of someone other than the older adult, to include taking money from an older adult’s account without proper authority, unauthorized credit card use, and changing a will without permission (CDC, 2017).

Gender: A social construction whereby a society or culture assigns certain tendencies or behaviors the labels of masculine or feminine (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018a).

Level of awareness: The self-assessed degree of knowledge or awareness (Naughton, Drennan, & Lafferty, 2014).

Neglect: The failure by a caregiver or other person in a trust relationship to protect an elder from harm or the failure to meet needs for essential medical care, nutrition, hydration, hygiene, clothing, necessary activities of daily living or shelter, which results in a serious risk of compromised health and/or safety, relative to age, health status, and cultural norms, to include food, water, shelter, clothing, hygiene, and essential medical care (CDC, 2017).

Older adult: Any person whose chronological age is 60 years or older (CDC, 2017).

Physical abuse: The intentional use of physical force that results in acute or chronic illness, bodily injury, physical pain, functional impairment, distress or death, to include such acts of violence as striking (with or without an object or weapon), hitting,

beating, scratching, biting, choking, suffocation, pushing, shoving, shaking, slapping, kicking, stomping, pinching, burning, inappropriate use of medications and physical restraints, pinning in place, arm twisting, hair pulling, force-feeding, and physical punishment of any kind (CDC, 2017).

Race: The racial categories included in the census questionnaire generally reflect a social definition of race recognized in this country and not an attempt to define race biologically, anthropologically, or genetically. Thus, the categories of race include the race and national origin or sociocultural groups. i.e., African American, White, Asian, Native American, and Some Other Race (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018b).

Self-neglect: An adult's inability, due to physical or mental impairment or diminished capacity, to perform essential self-care tasks including – obtaining essential food, clothing, shelter, and medical care; obtaining goods and services necessary to maintain physical health, mental health, or general safety; or managing one's own financial affairs (CDC, 2017).

Self-perception theory: States that people come to know their emotions, attitudes, beliefs, and other internal states by inferring them from observations of their behavior (Bem, as cited by Haemmerlie & Montgomery, 1982).

Sexual Abuse: Forced or unwanted sexual interaction of any kind with an older adult, to include unwanted sexual contact or penetration or non-contact acts such as sexual harassment (CDC, 2017).

Social cognitive theory: Explains learning by vicarious reinforcement, symbolic activities, forethought activity, self-regulatory capability, self-reflecting capability, self-efficacy, and self-reinforcement (Bandura, as cited by Malone, 2002).

Assumptions

One assumption with this quantitative nonexperimental study was that of nomothetic methodology. Thus, the reality of the phenomenon, EA, is that it is single and tangible. Therefore, responses gathered can be counted to determine whether there is a relationship between the variables. Also, it was an assumption that the numerical values will allow further statistical analysis to determine the strength of the effect if one exists. Another assumption is that the entire sample received the survey instrument and decided whether to participate or not. Thus, the percentage of participation was based upon the opportunity of the entire sample to volunteer and participate. Another assumption was the generalizability of the study results which will allow predictions for similar populations under the same conditions and circumstances. Another assumption was the study is theory-driven and will explain the relationship that exists between the attribute and criterion variables. A final assumption was the sample was representative of the population. In conclusion, the assumptions were necessary to the validity and reliability of the data gathered and the integrity of the nonexperimental study.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of this study focused on the behavior toward EA and EA knowledge level of a diverse population comprised of individuals of different races and genders who

previously worked in a corrections law enforcement culture. Therefore, this study explored behavior exhibited by individuals of different races and genders who have worked in an environment with a vulnerable population. Hence, the survey sample included experience working with federal inmates, a vulnerable population due to the nature of a correctional setting. I selected this population because EA awareness is a problem as many individuals who witness, as well as experience EA, fail to detect or report the abuse to the proper authorities. Consequently, the ability to identify and respond to inappropriate conduct was key to being successful in a prison environment. Therefore, work cultures, such as federal correctional law enforcement agencies, provide training and experience that might enhance employees' willingness to act appropriately to mistreatment of vulnerable individuals in the general population.

One of the factors that affect the unwillingness to report EA is a lack of knowledge of available resources. Thus, effective EA awareness initiatives must provide information that identifies and describes available EA resources, as well as possible outcomes when individuals fail to report EA and suspected EA.

The fact that federal correctional law enforcement professionals must retire at age 57 was considered when I selected this population as representative of the target groups. More specifically, I selected participants who are members of the FPRA because the association included individuals who may be older adults, communicate regularly with older adults, as well as other age groups. While the nonprobability selection of a convenience sample of retired federal law enforcement correctional professionals is a

limitation of this study, the generalizability is also limited when applied to other populations. For example, as noted by Warner (2013), nonexperimental studies involve creating an artificial world by selecting participants and variables. Thus, generalization is limited because the study design entailed a convenience sample and no manipulation.

Delimitations, as noted by Crawford et al. (2016), narrow the study by stating what the study does not include. In that FPRA is comprised of members who live throughout the United States, a delimitation of this study is the exclusion of members who live outside of the United States. Also, another delimitation is the exclusion of minors, young adults, and middle-aged adults who are not eligible for FPRA membership, except federal law enforcement correctional retirees who retired early due to a disability. Another delimitation of the study is the exclusion of federal corrections law enforcement retirees who were not members of FPRA. Lastly, a delimitation of this study was the exclusion of all attribute variables other than race and gender. As a result, I will not correlate demographic variables such as socioeconomic status. In addition to scope and delimitations, it is essential to identify the limitations of a study.

Limitations

Limitations, as defined by Crawford et al. (2016), identify weaknesses in the study design or methods. Accordingly, one limitation, or weakness, of this study is all participants did not have a personal email address. However, to compensate for this weakness, I utilized members without e-mail addresses (Group 2) as a backup in case I did not receive the recommended number of respondents from members with e-mail

addresses (Group 1). Another limitation was the use of a convenience sample for this nonexperimental study, rather than a random sample. Although the study was limited to federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States, cultures unique to different regions of the United States allowed diversity among the survey sample. Also, in that many retirees are considered part of the older adult age group, there was a possibility of age-related biases. Finally, inherent problems associated with a quantitative nonexperimental design study include the inability to determine a causal effect. Accordingly, nonexperimental studies cannot prove a relationship exists between variables (Babbie, 2017). However, while nonexperimental studies cannot prove a relationship exists between variables, they are significant. The significance of this nonexperimental study follows.

Significance

The prevalence of EA is a universal social problem that affects older adults throughout the world. While cultural differences may exist in different areas, EA transcends racial, social, cultural, and socioeconomic demographics (Dong, 2015; & Gil et al., 2015). Thus, there is a gap in EA literature because current literature has not explored whether a relationship exists between race, gender, and EA awareness among retirees, a significant segment of the older adult population. With this in mind, the results of this research study has the potential to fill the EA literature gap by explaining whether a relationship exists between race, gender, and EA awareness among federal correctional law enforcement retirees, and if so, to what extent. Also, the results of this study might

highlight the need for further research exploring whether relationships exist between these variables among different age groups and segments of the population, as well as other variables.

The significance of the study is the potential to influence the future development and implementation of effective EA awareness initiatives and programs. Exploring whether a relationship exists between race and gender, respectively, and the level of EA awareness among federal correctional law enforcement retirees will provide useful information for EA advocates. Moreover, determining whether a relationship exists between the identified variables might enhance efforts to increase EA awareness, reduce EA prevalence, increase EA reporting, and prevent EA deaths.

The findings from the study may benefit attempts to improve the effectiveness of EA awareness initiatives, as well as advance future research to explore whether relationships exist between other EA related variables. For example, the relationship that exists between race, gender, and EA awareness needs to be explored with other populations and in other geographic locations. Thus, the hope is that the findings from this study will spur the interest for future research related to the influence of variable relationships on EA reporting. Examples of EAP advocates' effort to change EA related policies that will benefit from the results of this study include the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, International Federation on Ageing, Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, International Plan of Action on Ageing, and World Health Organization.

The implications for positive social change resulting from this study include the potential to develop, adopt, and implement EA awareness initiatives that might contribute to a safe environment for older adults. Thus, the aim of the study is to provide results that may be used by EAP advocates to develop and implement initiatives and programs that will target individuals, groups, and systems that will lead to an increase in EA awareness, increase in EA reporting, and decrease in EA deaths. As an example the private sector could form partnerships and with local, state, and national political representatives to provide financial support for EAP initiatives and programs that might increase EA awareness.

There is the potential for improving the governmental support of EA awareness by including funding for EA awareness and prevention in annual budgets. Thus, data revealing the relationship between different variables might attract the attention of those segments of the population and inspire support. Therefore, I anticipate that understanding the relationship, or lack thereof, between race, gender, and EA awareness might change the culture of society; thereby resulting in a more informed population that could lead to a decrease in EA prevalence and EA deaths worldwide.

Summary

This quantitative nonexperimental study was needed because EA is a universal problem in the United States, as well as other countries (Roberto, 2016). Furthermore, as noted by Roberto (2016), the EA problem increases as more Baby Boomers reach 65 years of age. Accordingly, the prevalence of EA is expected to increase proportionally

along with the growth in the older population (Goergen & Beaulieu, 2013). As a result, this expected increase in EA will spread across all races and genders, thereby, increasing the need for effective EA awareness initiatives that increase EA reporting and decrease EA deaths.

The problem addressed by this study was EA awareness and how knowledge of whether a relationship exists between race and gender, respectively, and EA awareness will contribute to future EA awareness initiatives and preventive strategies aimed to prevent EA deaths. Furthermore, knowledge of this relationship, or lack thereof, has the potential to influence the effectiveness of EA awareness initiatives and programs for different populations. Thus, this study addressed the problem by correlating race, gender, and EA awareness and sharing the results of the study with EAP stakeholders worldwide. Consequently, determining whether a relationship exists between race, gender, and EA awareness might benefit EAP stakeholders in their efforts to further understand EA awareness and combat EA underreporting by encouraging policymakers to consider the impact of social policies on EAP efforts.

Chapter 2 includes a literature review essay with a synthesis of current research related to the problem statement, research questions, and hypotheses noted in Chapter 1.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

There is a problem today with EA in the United States (Roberto, 2016). The older population of the United States continues to increase as the Baby Boomer generation reaches 65 years of age (Roberto, 2016). Therefore, as further noted by Roberto (2016), the prevalence of EA in homes, group homes, nursing facilities, and assisted living facilities increases along with the growth of the older population. In that EA is a societal and global problem; there is a need for public awareness of EA, particularly with the older population, as well as professional education courses and training programs for stakeholders (Roberto, 2016).

The problem that was addressed by this study was EA awareness and underreporting. The results of this study may enhance EA advocates' efforts to increase EA awareness among different populations in society by understanding the relationship between race, gender, and EA awareness. In addition, the results of this study might enhance EA stakeholders' knowledge to be used in decision-making efforts to implement effective EA awareness initiatives and programs.

The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental study was to test the mean difference between race, gender, and EA awareness among federal corrections retirees living in the United States, and if so, to what extent. The results of the study reveal the relationship between the attribute variables (race, gender) and the criterion variable (EA awareness). The results may provide valuable data for researchers, policymakers,

caregivers, EA prevention advocates, elders, and the general public to utilize in their daily lives, as well as to assist in the design and implementation of effective EA awareness initiatives that might increase EA reporting, reduce EA prevalence, and prevent EA deaths. Finally, these results may benefit political leaders when considering legislation that directly or indirectly affects the welfare and safety of older adults.

In this chapter I discuss existing relevant literature in the EA field of study including research on EA awareness and other EA-related topics. The chapter covers literature about SCT, SPT, and DKE as elements of the theoretical framework for this study. However, before we review the current literature, it is essential to understand the EA phenomenon and apply this theoretical framework as intended.

The definition most commonly used refers to EA as an intentional act, or failure to act, by any person in a relationship who violates an expectation of trust that causes or creates harm or a serious risk of harm to an older adult, age 60 and older (CDC, 2017). While it is essential to understand that the reference to any person includes individuals of different races and genders, it is equally important to understand that EA encompasses different types of behavior. For example, the CDC (2017) identified the five types of EA as physical, sexual, neglect or self-neglect, emotional or psychological, and financial. The definition of EA evolved from a brief reference as a social concern decades ago to its current status as a crime in the criminal justice system (Jackson, 2016).

Before the passage of the Social Security Act of 1935, the average lifespan of males was 58.1 years, and females, 61.6 years (Jackson, 2016). After the passage of the

Social Security Act, older adults became more financially independent which led to an increase in independent living (Jackson, 2016). Around the same time, advances in modern medicine increased the average lifespan of adults (CDC, 2017). Also, as noted by Jackson (2016), by the time of the passage of the Older Americans Act of 1965, the average lifespan for males increased to 65.6 years and for females increased to 71.1 years. As a result, this increase in average lifespan led to an increased percentage of the elderly population in the United States from 8.1% in 1950 to 9.8% in 1965 (Jackson, 2016). As further noted by Jackson (2016), these changes caused society to view the status of the elderly population differently.

The change in older adults' behavior and living arrangements caused concern. More elders choosing to live alone led to an increase in society's concern for their well-being (Jackson, 2016). Also, one primary concern that accompanied the independent living arrangement was the family dynamics and responsibilities related to caring for older adults for more extended periods than in the past. As a result, in 1975 a British physician published the first known article referencing EA in a British medical journal that referred to EA as "Granny Battering" (Jackson, 2016). Shortly after that, a similar article was published in the United States referring to EA as elder maltreatment (EM) (Jackson, 2016). Subsequently, communities worldwide began recognizing EA as a social concern. However, although society identified EA as a social problem, it would be years later before EAP coalitions successfully advocated for federal funding for EAP.

As the population of elders increased, lawmakers and civic leaders struggled with remedies to address the EA problem. Initially, lawmakers proposed solutions that eventually led to social services legislation that provided caseworkers to assist elders (Jackson, 2016). For decades, society viewed EM as a social concern that required social services assistance for the elderly. However, as noted by Jackson (2016), by the end of the 20th century, society's views of EM changed, resulting in the criminalizing of EA behavior.

EA was first recognized in the United States as a criminal offense in the 1990s as part of the family violence model (Jackson, 2016). However, it was more than a decade later, in 2010, that the United States Congress passed the Elder Justice Act as part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Affordable Care Act of 2010). The Affordable Care Act of 2010 was the first federal legislation to protect the rights of elders to be free of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. While the passage of this legislation was historic for older adults and EAP advocates, resources for EAP programs were limited (Affordable Care Act of 2010).

Increased funding of EA awareness initiatives and programs is critical to combating the rise of EA in today's society. More specifically, increased funding is needed for research and evaluations to assess the effectiveness of EA awareness initiatives and programs. Therefore, in that EA is a human rights problem, it is also critical that EA public awareness programs be available to the general population (Roberto, 2016). It is noteworthy that EAP funding has increased over time. In 2010, the

Elder Justice Act, as part of the Affordable Care Act of 2010, authorized \$757 million over four years (2011–2014) for services, grants, and programs to combat EA. In 2017, DOJ invested \$3.42 million in the fight against EA and financial exploitation (DOJ, 2017).

While increased funding is essential to EAP, it is also important that EA awareness initiatives focus on the target population (Schwab & Wangmo, 2017). Also, as noted by Naughton, Drennan, Lyons, and Lafferty (2013), increasing awareness of EA at the general and older population level is one of the key strategies for elder protection. Naughton et al. (2013) further noted the importance of EA awareness among the elderly, which includes the possibility that this group may not recognize abusive behaviors occurring in their lives. Therefore, because the EA phenomenon transcends all races and genders, understanding whether relationships exist between these variables supports targeting older adults as one strategy to prevent EA. Moreover, knowledge of individuals' level of EA awareness is vital to designing and implementing effective EA awareness initiatives and programs for target populations.

There is a gap in EA literature regarding the relationship between race, gender and EA awareness among retirees, a significant portion of the older adult population. With this in mind, the results of this research study might fill the EA awareness literature gap by exploring the relationship that exists between race, gender, and EA awareness among federal correctional law enforcement retirees. Thus, the results may highlight the

need for further research showing the relationship between race, gender, and EA awareness among other age groups and segments of society.

Chapter 2 includes syntheses of scholarly literature and findings that address domestic and global EA, EA awareness initiatives, and theory-based prevention strategies. Because all types of EA occur globally, the research literature will cover physical, psychological or emotional, sexual, neglect or self-neglect, and financial EA. The first section consists of literature on SCT, SPT, and DKE. The second section consists of literature that covers EA concerns. The third section consists of literature that addresses EA and gender. The fourth section consists of the literature that covers EA and race. The fifth section consists of literature that focuses on EA awareness initiatives and programs, and the final section describes the gap in current EA literature.

Literature Search Strategy

While current literature corroborates an increase in EA prevalence and EA underreporting, there is also a need for more information that will contribute to effective EA awareness programs and initiatives. Thus, the effectiveness of EA awareness initiatives involves identifying and implementing strategies that communicate information to specific populations at their perceived level of EA awareness. To date, there is a gap in the EA awareness literature that explores the relationship between race and gender respectively and EA awareness. To confirm this gap in the research literature, I conducted an initial review of literature published over the past 5 years about EA and EA awareness. After identifying limited peer-reviewed literature related to the research

topic, a subsequent search was expanded to include literature earlier than 5 years as historical data and developments. The literature search for scholarly sources revealed books, dissertations, and peer-reviewed articles identified through a search of Google Scholar and the Walden University research databases: Criminal Justice Database, Political Science Complete, SAGE Journals, SocINDEX, Taylor and Francis Online, Thoreau Multi-Database Search, ProQuest Central, ScienceDirect, EBSCO ebooks, Wiley Online, Nursing and Allied Health, LegalTRAC, and PsycINFO (see Figure 6).

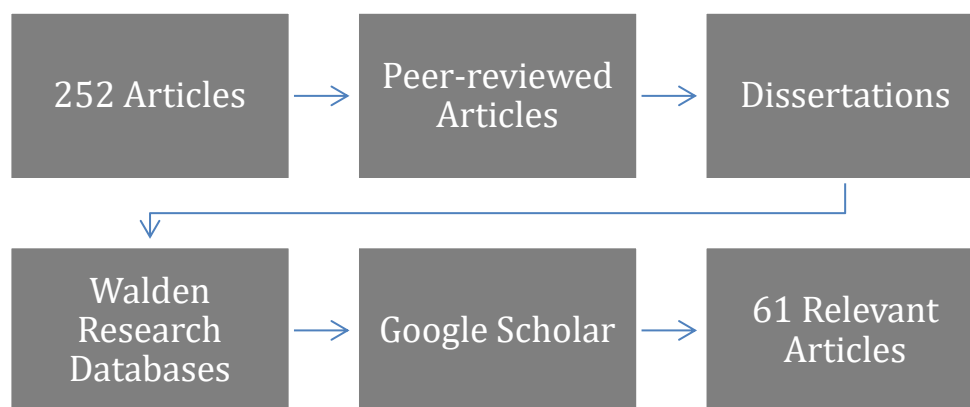


Figure 6. Literature review strategy.

I conducted extensive database searches utilizing keywords and phrases, including *elder abuse, elder mistreatment, mistreatment of elderly, elder abuse awareness, elder abuse awareness initiatives, elder abuse prevalence, seniors maltreatment, elder maltreatment, learning theory, social cognitive theory, self-perception theory, Dunning-Kruger effect, and elder abuse reporting*. Also, I utilized variations and combinations of

keywords (e.g., *elder*, *older*, *seniors*, *mistreatment*, *elder neglect*, *elder awareness*, *SCT*, *SPT*, and *DKE*) to find articles that other searches missed. As a result, the exhaustive search strategies yielded more than 252 articles, with 61 relevant to the research topic.

In summation, examining and understanding the relationship between race and gender, respectively, and the level of EA awareness among retirees is an essential step in increasing EA awareness and preventing abusive behaviors toward a vulnerable elderly population. This literature review of scholarly sources reveals findings and applications of theoretical frameworks related to behavior modification, EA, EA awareness, and EA reporting.

Theoretical Foundation

Understanding the relationship between the level of EA awareness, and race and gender, respectively, required viewing the relationship through the SCT, SPT, and DKE theoretical framework. Combining these theories permitted objective assessments of individual behaviors and attitudes contributing to EA awareness among a specific population.

Social Cognitive Theory

SCT, initially called social learning theory, was founded by social psychologist Albert Bandura in 1986 (Wulfert, 2013). SCT, as further explained by Wulfert (2013) and Connolly (2017), provides a theoretical framework for understanding and explaining human behavior based on observation learning and imitation as part of a triadic reciprocal causation occurrence. Thus, it was essential to the development of effective EA

awareness programs that we understand whether a relationship exists between factors that contribute to learned behaviors, as well as responses to inappropriate and criminal behavior learned from earlier observations.

The goal of SCT was to explain behavior development, maintenance, and modification (Bandura, as cited by Wulfert, 2013). Wulfert (2013) further noted that individuals made causal contributions to their motivation and action within a system; whereby, the body acted as a human agency where internal instrumentalization and external influences met. Thus, the response behavior was the result of observational learning from a lifetime of past experiences to include one's childhood, later life, social, and work environments.

Wulfert (2013) noted that SCT elements included cognition, vicarious, self-reflective and self-regulatory interactions with the human body acting as an agent and an object. Wulfert (2013) further stated Bandura posited that forethought regulated most human behavior which was also purposive. Therefore, Bandura, as cited by Wulfert (2013), stated forethought was translated into incentives and guides for action through the aid of self-regulatory mechanisms where individuals had control over their thoughts, feelings, and actions. As a result, SCT has been useful in explaining human behavior development, behavior maintenance, and behavior modification.

SCT also explains human behavior as triadic reciprocal causation involving behavior, environmental factors, and personal factors (Miller et al., 2015). As an example, an SCT application occurred in predicting and changing behavior in a study of

African-American women involved in a nutrition program by explaining the increase in breastfeeding rates that resulted after modeling behavior. In another study, SCT was used to explain the prediction of middle school students' intent to smoke. In both studies, triadic reciprocal causation explained how environmental and individual factors influenced behavioral changes.

SCT was also used to explain the results of a qualitative study of programs used to promote an increase in physical activity among African American women. The results of the study of three focus groups of obese and sedentary African-American women after a 6-week period revealed increased physical activity was explained using elements of SCT (Joseph, Ainsworth, Mathis, Hooker, & Keller, 2017). Also, Joseph et al. (2017) used SCT as the theoretical foundation where exposure to social cognitive constructs, behavioral capacity, outcome expectations, self-efficacy, self-regulation, and social support were essential to understanding the success of the program.

Another application of SCT in behavior modification efforts was a qualitative study where McKinley and Turner (2017) aimed to increase breastfeeding rates among African-American women enrolled in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). The results of the study revealed that SCT constructs (self-efficacy, observational learning, expectancies, expectations, and locus of control) were used to explain effective strategies used to improve breastfeeding among participants in the study. In summation, the SCT elements were useful in explaining the behavior modification of the study sample toward breastfeeding.

SCT was an appropriate framework for this study because the aim was to describe the relationship between the attribute variables of respondents (race and gender) and the criterion variable (level of EA awareness) considering their learned behavior based on past environmental and personal factors. In that, the population sample included retirees who may or may not be considered older adults, identifying the levels of EA awareness will elucidated the relationship of race and EA awareness, and gender and EA awareness. However, in addition to utilizing SCT as a filter in the theoretical framework, SPT also helped describe the relationship that may or may not exist between race and gender, respectively, and EA awareness.

Self-Perception Theory

Psychologist Daryl Bem proposed SPT in 1965 (Greenbert & Murphy, 2013). Bem, as cited by Greenbert and Murphy (2013), postulated that SPT explains how internal and external cues lead to behavior that can affect attitudes. Bem, as cited by Greenbert and Murphy (2013), further stated that individuals learn about their attitudes, emotions, and other internal states partially by inferring them from observations of their behavior and circumstances in which their behavior occurs. Another assertion of Bem, as cited by Greenbert and Murphy (2013) is that when internal cues are weak or ambiguous, individuals infer those internal states the same way that an observer would base their attitudes on external signals. Therefore, individuals' perception of themselves comes from inferences based on external information rather than from direct internal contact with their feelings (Greenbert & Murphy, 2013).

The primary hypothesis resulting from SPT was that individuals who engaged in a new behavior where there was little or no external inducement would accept that behavior, also referred to as the induced-compliance paradigm Bem, as cited by Greenbert and Murphy (2013). However, Bem also noted it was possible that external cues may result in behavioral changes in individuals (Greenbert & Murphy, 2013). Thus, Greenbert and Murphy (2013) reported that the self-perception process began in childhood and continued throughout the individual's lifespan. As a result, subtle introductions and encouragements of different behaviors might lead to a change in a person's attitude and behavior (Greenbert & Murphy, 2013). Therefore, the presence and absence of external inducements would affect attitudes and behavior.

Greenbert and Murphy (2013) noted that the absence of external inducements led individuals to adopt behavior based on internal cues. Thus, SPT has implications for compliance and persuasion. Therefore, it was appropriate to apply SPT as part of the theoretical framework I use to explain the relationship that may or may not exist between race and gender, respectively, and EA awareness as a paradigm free of external inducements, and inclusive of intrinsic motivation.

An application of SPT by Woosnam, Draper, Jiang, Aleshinloye, and Erul (2018) was used to predict residents' attitudes about tourism development through travel histories. The framework of the study revealed an introspective approach to individual's views of future development (Woosnam et al., 2018). Thus, the travel use histories of individuals were beneficial in predicting views of tourism development (Woosnam et al.,

2018). The researchers concluded that individuals with extensive travel histories viewed tourism development in a more positive view than those with fewer travel histories.

Another application of SPT was used by Tomlin, Metzger, Bradley-Geist, and Gonzalez-Padron (2017) to explain the need for ethics education to focus on self-perception biases. The researchers concluded that biases, heuristics, and psychological traps are conducive to ethics blind spots (Tomlin et al., 2017). Thus, those blind spots impact future ethical decisions and behaviors (Tomlin et al., 2017). Therefore, viewing the self-perceptions of participants in this study was beneficial in describing the relationship between the study variables. The third component of the theoretical framework for this study was the DKE.

Dunning-Kruger Effect

DKE, coined in 1999, is a cognitive mechanism used to describe a person's ignorance of his or her ignorance (Kruger & Dunning, 1999). As an example, metacognitive skills tests in different venues showed there were cognitive biases in the self-assessment of skills and knowledge as compared to accurate nonbiased assessments (Kruger & Dunning, 1999). Gibbs et al. (2017) applied DKE in a study of a computing workplace setting that showed workers with lower level skills do not recognize their actual levels of knowledge and performance. Consequently, incompetent or unskilled individuals perceived their level of performance and knowledge to be higher than it was. Therefore, it was conceivable a lack of knowledge may prevent individuals from accurately assessing their level of knowledge, awareness, or performance. In

summation, a search of the available literature did not reveal a causal or underlying relationship between DKE and gender and race; however, understanding the possibility of DKE was crucial to the analysis and interpretation of the research data for this study.

It is important to note that while this study sample may have personal and professional experiences with the elderly population, their exposure or lack of exposure, may or may not unduly influence their responses and level of EA awareness. Therefore, the ability to accurately assess one's level of EA awareness may reflect DKE. Thus, because the possibility of DKE exists, it will be considered in the analysis and interpretation of the data collected.

Elder Abuse

EA is defined as an intentional act, or failure to act, by any person in a relationship who violates an expectation of trust that causes or creates a serious risk of harm to an older adult (CDC, 2016). However, it is important to note that over time, the definition of EA has expanded to include five types of abuses: (1) physical, (2) emotional or psychological, (3) sexual, (4) financial, and (5) neglect or abandonment (WHO, 2018). Consequently, the types of EA expanded along with the increase in the older population.

Elder Abuse Prevalence

The older population in the United States is increasing more rapidly than any other age group (CDC, 2016). As further noted by the CDC (2016), as the Baby Boomer Generation reaches age 65, there is a projected proportional increase in both the elderly population and EA. More specifically, the CDC (2016) predicted that by 2030 one in

every five Americans would be age 65 or older, and by 2060 the elderly population is expected to reach 90 million (Jirik & Sanders, 2014). Also, the CDC (2016) noted that 1 in 10 elders would experience EA. Therefore, it is critical that EA stakeholders identify and implement EA awareness strategies and initiatives based on data reflecting relationships that exist, or do not exist, between different variables. The success of these initiatives will support efforts to ensure more individuals will detect and respond appropriately to incidences of EA and suspected EA.

Protecting vulnerable members of society from EA is the moral responsibility of all members of society. However, the inability of individuals to understand and assess their EA awareness level advances a culture where EA thrives. Thus, the failure of individuals to detect and respond appropriately to EA and suspected EA impedes the efforts of EAP advocates to reduce and prevent EA (De Ponder et al., 2015). Therefore, even though some professions require employees to report EA and suspected EA, such as medical practitioners and religious leaders, a large segment of the population is not mandated to report EA (Jackson & Hafemeister, 2015). Thus, it is essential that EAP advocates and stakeholders design and implement EAP initiatives and programs that will increase EA awareness; thereby, encouraging the public to participate in EAP efforts.

Elder Abuse Reporting

Preventing EA requires responsible actions by individuals observing or experiencing EA. One key factor in reducing EA is reporting EA or suspected EA to the proper authorities and agencies (Jackson & Hafemeister, 2015). In most cases, social

services and the criminal justice system are available vehicles for reporting EA. However, an inaccurate level of EA awareness perpetuates the problem of underreporting of EA and promotes an environment that allows unreported EA to flourish (Roberto, 2016). As further noted by Roberto (2016), there is a dramatic discrepancy between EA prevalence rates and EA cases reported.

Moon and Evan-Campbell (2008) supported the argument that the lack of awareness of support services is partially responsible for the under-reporting of EA by victims themselves or by third parties. Moon and Evan-Campbell (2008) further argued that failures to report EA caused delays in the intervention of EA cases. Therefore, an effective campaign or program designed to increase the EA awareness of individuals based on their perceived level of EA awareness will play a critical role in expanding the EA reporting pool of non-mandated EA reporters.

Detecting and reporting the abuse of elders is difficult due to the existing relationship between the victim and abuser, especially financial abuse (Knight et al., 2016). As further noted by Knight et al. (2016), family members perpetrated most elderly financial abuse. Knight et al., (2016) conducted a study of the elderly living in Southern California that described the perception of elders toward financial abuser. The results revealed that older adults were less likely to perceive a child as an abuser when involved in a financial situation (Knight et al., 2016). Accordingly, the results of this study further corroborated the challenges associated with EA awareness and

underreporting. Thus, EA awareness must be reviewed in conjunction with EA underreporting.

Elder Abuse Awareness

The design of effective EA awareness initiatives and programs should target individuals at their perceived level of EA awareness. One approach to EA awareness that might benefit the older adult population is peer education. As an example, Weeks, Bryanton, McInnis-Perry, and Chaulk (2015), conducted a study which revealed that older adults have a higher level of self-esteem of elders when receiving information from a peer expert opposed to a nonpeer expert. More specifically, the researchers found that a significant criterion for utilizing peer education in EA awareness initiatives was that elders feel peers understood their rights and are involved in protecting them. Thus, understanding the relationship that exists between race and gender, respectively, and EA awareness of retirees might support efforts to increase EA awareness, expand the EA reporting pool, reduce EA prevalence, and prevent EA deaths.

The increase in EA prevalence worldwide has magnified the need for effective EA awareness programs. Examples of recent research of EA include studies in China (Dong, 2015), Portugal (Gil et al., 2015), and Iran (Morowatisharifabad, Rezaeipandari, Dehghani, & Zeinali, 2016). The consensus of the findings of these studies support the need for EA awareness initiatives and programs in efforts to reduce EA.

One perspective of EA awareness includes efforts to prevent and eliminate EA that is dependent upon detection and reporting. Burgess, Ramsey-Klausnik, and

Gregorian (2008) conducted a study that compared rates of sexual EA reporting utilizing social services and the criminal justice system. The results revealed that victims who reside in private residences utilized social services at a higher rate; whereas, victims who resided in institutions utilized the criminal justice system (Burgess et al., 2008). Thus, the researchers noted that detecting and reporting EA remained a challenge.

In addition to studies of EA prevalence, some studies focused on specific types of EA. The government of Canada commissioned a study of the awareness and perception of EA with specific attention to financial abuse (Ekos, 2009). The extent of the survey regarding awareness was a response indicating if the respondent had heard the term EA, as well as their perceptions of physical abuse, neglect, psychological, and financial abuse (Ekos, 2009). Murphy, Waa, Jaffer, Sauter, and Chan (2013) conducted a literature review of physical EA and described the most common types of injuries that occurred in physical abuse of the elderly. The findings identified dementia and depression as risk factors for EA, as well as transgenerational violence as a risk factor in which abused children continued a cycle of violence by abusing their parents (Murphy et al., 2013). In addition to risk factors associated with EA, the researchers studied older adults' awareness of EA.

The fact that older adults communicate with elder peers and share peer-to-peer relationships makes EA awareness especially crucial for this group. Recent studies of EA awareness among older adults include a study by Naughton, Drennan, Lyons, and Lafferty (2013) that revealed that more than 80% of older adults recognized the term EA.

However, older adults with less education, physical impairments, and deprived living conditions were less likely to be aware of the definition of EA. As a result of the findings, the authors noted a need for more targeted EA education campaigns. While I located research literature related to EA and age, I was unable to locate literature that described whether a relationship existed between gender and race, respectively, and EA awareness.

Elder Abuse and Gender

While previous EA studies focused on the association between EA and demographic variables such as age, education, and gender, I found no studies that focused on the relationship between race, gender, and EA awareness. For example, a Portuguese national prevalence study on aging and violence revealed there was a significant association between domestic EA and education level, age, and functional status (Gil et al., 2015). Also, a cross-sectional study conducted of China's population aimed to show the association between support services for the elderly and the mistreatment of elders' risk factors (Dong, Chen, & Simon, 2014). As a result, Dong et al. (2014) reported the results of the study indicated a need for social services interventions to prevent EM in China. Additional research also described which gender was more likely to experience EA.

In 2009, Krienest, Walsh, and Turner conducted a descriptive study of the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) and EA. The researchers examined a cross-national database of 87,422 reported incidents of EA between 2000 and 2005.

The findings were contrary to an earlier study conducted by McCabe and Gregory in 1998 which indicated that females experienced all types of EA the same as males. Krienert et al. (2009), revealed that male victims of EA were more likely to experience aggravated assault, and female victims are more likely to experience simple assaults and intimidation. In addition to gender, race was also a variable considered when examining EA awareness.

Elder Abuse and Race

Research literature of EA and race included different perspectives of EA awareness. Furthermore, as noted by WHO, failure of the primary healthcare and social service sectors to identify and deal with the EA problem would perpetuate an environment where EA was underdiagnosed and overlooked (Grover, 2015). Also, research conducted in this area included studies aimed at detecting, identifying, and reporting EA. Moreover, the studies focused on identification instruments and tools, as well as populations of nurses, emergency medical technicians (EMTs), elder care workers, clergy, pharmacy students, oral healthcare providers, students, and elders.

EA literature also included studies of EA reporting to social services and the criminal justice system. For example, Jackson and Hafemeister (2015) conducted a qualitative study of the impact of relationship dynamics on the detection and reporting of EA that occurred in domestic settings. The findings revealed that detection and reporting were two separate actions, and the extent of the relationship was the determining factor in both actions. The findings also revealed that regardless of gender, the relationship

between the victim and offender influenced the difficulty in reporting, as well as the relationship between the victim and the reporter. While I was unable to locate any studies that explored the relationship between the EA awareness and race, my review of the literature confirmed the critical need for EA awareness regardless of gender and race.

Elder Abuse and Level of Awareness

Developing effective EA awareness initiatives is a challenge from both domestic and global perspectives. Although elders have the right to be free from abuse, prevention efforts of EA have been less than those aimed at preventing child abuse and domestic violence (Killick et al., 2015). Killick et al. (2015) further noted that the lack of political and social recognition of EA resulted in limited financial and social resources.

Accordingly, EA research and literature before the 1970s were sparse. Equally important, it was not until the 1980s that EA awareness initiatives began (Merriman-Nai & Stein, 2014).

The United Nations has supported efforts to combat EA globally. For example, the first worldwide EA awareness initiative was in support of a symposium held at the United Nations by WHO and INPEA (Merriman-Nai & Stein, 2014). As further noted by Merriman-Nai and Stein (2014), the observance was held to show unity in support of EAP, as well as to support their mission of protecting the rights and well-being of older individuals. Localities worldwide supported the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) observances in attempts to enlighten the world population of EA awareness.

The following paragraphs include examples of research studies of EA awareness from different perspectives.

In 2015, Burnes et al. conducted a cross-sectional study of New York State households of seniors age 60 and older that assessed the prevalence of EA (emotional, physical, and neglect). The results revealed that EA was common among elders in New York. More specifically, the results revealed that emotional abuse was 1.9%, and physical abuse and neglect were both 1.8% (Burnes et al., 2015). Burnes et al. (2015) further noted that emotional abuse, physical abuse, and neglect were more common in low-income households of separated or divorced, and younger age adults. The results of the study also noted that neglect was less likely in older adults of Hispanic ethnicity. While the findings were useful to EAP advocates' efforts to improve public screening, the results were less useful in developing and adopting EA awareness initiatives.

Numerous countries have conducted research confirming an increase in EA prevalence and the need for effective EA awareness programs. As an example, a cross-sectional study in Iran explored the social and cultural changes in that country which revealed the challenges of family relationships related to the care of elders that has led to an increase in EA (Morowatisharifab et al., 2016). While the study did not focus on levels of EA awareness among individuals, the results revealed that abuse scores were related to elder's age, education level, living status, and insurance status (Morowatisharifab et al., 2016). Finally, the study revealed there were no difference in

EA among men and women. Incidentally, the researchers did not consider race as a variable in the study.

Gap in Current Literature

Research over the past five years related to EA focused on the perceptions of EA (Aday et al., 2017), EA detection (Carney, 2015); (De Donder et al., 2015), EA prevalence (Burnes et al., 2015), and EA interventions (Baker et al., 2016; Cooper & Livingston, 2016). Also, Schwab and Wangmo (2017) conducted a study that focused on the importance of designing EAP programs with tailored messages, methods, and measures of prevention to the cultural background and socioeconomic level of the targeted audience. As a result of the study, Schwab and Wangmo (2017) recommended further study of older persons to define better the best ways to spread the awareness of EA.

As EA continues to increase proportionally along with the increase in the older population, the lack of effective EA awareness initiatives perpetuates the EA problem (Roberto, 2016). Therefore, understanding the relationships that exist between individuals' perception of their level of EA awareness and other variables may enable EAP advocates to develop and implement effective EA awareness programs. While individualized programs could address every level of EA awareness, it was not feasible to test and design individualized programs for the entire population. However, this nonexperimental study of a sample group determined whether a mean difference exists between specific attribute variables (race, gender) and the criterion variable (EA

awareness). Accordingly, understanding and describing the relationship that may or may not exist between these and other variables among specific segments of the society might aid in the development of effective EA initiatives and promote further research.

Therefore, preventing further EA and promoting the safety of older individuals depend on EA awareness that includes comprehending the definition of EA, realizing that EA is a growing problem, and reporting EA and suspected EA to the proper authorities.

Research literature indicated that efforts to ensure clinicians have the tools to identify EA have improved over time with the development of assessment tools such as Brief Abuse Screen for the Elderly (BASE), Elder Assessment Instrument (EAI), and Conflict Tactic Scale (CTS), to name a few (Beach, Carpenter, Rosen, Sharps & Gelles, 2016) ; (De Ponder et al., 2015). However, there were limited efforts to increase EA awareness among non-clinicians and the general public. Hence, Cooper and Livingston (2016) reported there was evidence that educating front-line clinicians reduced EA; however, there is no research indicating successful interventions that prevented EA unrelated to front-line clinicians. Accordingly, there was a need to identify the level of EA awareness among individuals who were in or near the older age group, including retired correctional law enforcement professionals. Consequently, identifying relationships that exist between EA awareness, race, and gender will fill the literature gap and provide the insight needed to further increase EA awareness. Therefore, the results from this study will provide information for EA stakeholders to review in efforts to improve EA awareness initiatives and programs.

Summary

My review of the literature revealed a projected increase in the older population will lead to a proportional increase in EA and underreported EA. Thus, there is the need for effective EA awareness initiatives and programs. While I located studies of different aspects of EA, a thorough literature review search did not identify any studies of the relationship between race, gender, and EA awareness among federal corrections retirees living in the United States.

There is a problem with EA in the United States, as well as other countries. Thus, the older population continues to increase as more Baby Boomers reach 65 years of age. Accordingly, the prevalence of EA in homes, group homes, nursing facilities, and assisted living facilities has increased along with the growth of the older population. In that EA is a societal problem, it is essential that EA public awareness is available to the population. Thus, an effective strategy for preventing EA is understanding the EA awareness level among the lay population. Therefore, identifying whether a relationship exists between race, gender, and EA awareness among federal corrections retirees will support efforts to increase EA awareness and expand the EA reporting pool; thereby, reducing and preventing future EA. Given that fact, the need exists for research data exploring the relationship that exists, or does not exist, between race, gender, and EA awareness among federal corrections retirees living in the United States.

In summary, while my review of the literature revealed a consensus that EA underreporting and the unknown effectiveness of EA awareness programs are universal

problems, it did not locate any research indicating a relationship exists between the attribute variables (race, gender) and the criterion variable (EA awareness). Next, Chapter 3 includes the rationale for selecting a quantitative, nonexperimental, design for this study, as well as how I developed the study design from the problem statement. Also, Chapter 3 provides details of an introduction, research method, research design and rationale, methodology, threats to validity, and ethical procedures. Also, Chapter 3 provides the study population, sampling and sampling procedures, participation and data collection, instrumentation and operationalization of constructs, operationalization of variables, and data analysis plan.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

This chapter covers research design and rationale, methodology, sampling and sampling procedures, recruitment procedures and participation, threats to validity, and the operationalization of constructs. Additionally, this chapter names and describes the methodology, population, instrumentation, data collection, and ethical procedures as they pertain to this study.

A worldwide increase in the older population has increased EA (Roberto, 2016). Thus, there was a need to address the current increase, as well as the anticipated increase in the foreseeable future. A recent study (Schwab & Wangmo, 2017) noted the need to identify EA awareness initiatives and programs that might enhance efforts to increase EA awareness, increase EA reporting, and decrease EA deaths.

The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental study was to test the mean difference between race, gender, and EA awareness utilizing a theoretical framework built on SCT, SPT, and DKE. Consequently, the results of this study addressed the social and research problem of EA awareness as related to the existence or nonexistence of a relationship between race, gender, and EA awareness. The lack of understanding of the relationship between these variables might lead to challenges in identifying effective EA awareness initiatives. Exploring whether a relationship exists between race, gender, and the EA awareness among federal corrections retirees living in the United States may support efforts to identify and design effective EA awareness programs, as well as

expand the EA reporting pool. The results of the study have the potential to contribute to efforts to increase EA awareness, reduce EA prevalence, increase EA reporting, and prevent EA deaths.

Research Design and Rationale

The purpose of quantitative nonexperimental correlational studies, as noted by Crawford et al. (2016), is to “help understand the nature of the relationship between naturally occurring variables that cannot be manipulated” (p. 6). The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental study was to test the mean difference between race and gender, respectively, and EA awareness among federal corrections retirees living in the United States, and if so, to what extent. The research was viewed through a theoretical framework composed of SCT, SPT, and DKE. Thus, this nonexperimental research design was appropriate because the levels of measurement for the attribute variables (race, gender) and the criterion variable (EA awareness) were categorical and could not be manipulated. Accordingly, these variables were used to determine whether a relationship exists between the variables, and to what extent. There were no time and resource constraints consistent with the nonexperimental design.

Quantitative nonexperimental correlational studies enable researchers to make predictions (Cox, 2016). Therefore, as further noted by Cox (2016), if a relationship exists between two variables, it is possible to predict the score of one variable from the known score of another variable. Also, statistical hypothesis testing allows the evaluation of hypotheses about population parameters based on sample statistics (Frankfort-

Nachmias & Leon-Guerrero, 2015). This quantitative research study tested the hypotheses as viewed through an integrated SCT, SPT, and DKE theoretical framework.

EA awareness programs encompass several theoretical strategies in attempts to increase the awareness of EA among the general public. However, to ensure that EA awareness programs accomplish the desired results required advance knowledge of the population. For that reason, this study included two attribute variables (race, gender) and one criterion variable (EA awareness) to provide the information needed to support the design and implementation of effective programs for older adults.

The research questions for this study allowed an in-depth exploration as to whether a relationship exists between race, gender, and EA awareness through a theoretical framework based on SCT, SPT, and DKE. Also, in that questions were asked and measurements taken at one point in time, it was appropriate to utilize the quantitative nonexperimental research design (Warner, 2013).

This quantitative nonexperimental study included two research questions and two hypotheses. The two research questions and hypotheses for this study were:

RQ1: Does a mean difference exist between race and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States, and if so, to what extent?

*H*₀₁: No mean difference exists between race and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States, as determined from the results of a comparison of the EA survey total scores

using independent samples t tests, if assumptions are met, or Mann-Whitney U tests, if assumptions are not met, based on responses to the EA survey questionnaire.

H_{11} : A mean difference exists between race and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States as determined from the results of a comparison of EA survey total scores using independent samples t tests, if assumptions are met, or Mann-Whitney U tests, if statistical assumptions are not met, based on responses to the EA survey questionnaire.

RQ2: Does a mean difference exist between gender and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States, and if so, to what extent?

H_{02} : No mean difference exists between gender and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States as determined from the results of an independent samples t tests, if statistical assumptions are met, or Mann-Whitney U tests, if statistical assumptions are not met, based on responses to the EA survey questionnaire.

H_{12} : A mean difference exists between gender and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States as determined from the results of an independent samples t tests, if assumptions are met, or Mann-Whitney U tests, if statistical assumptions are not met, based on responses to the EA survey questionnaire.

This quantitative nonexperimental research study tested the hypotheses as viewed through an integrated theoretical framework.

Methodology

This study was a quantitative, nonexperimental cross-sectional study of federal corrections retirees living in the United States who were members of the FPRA. This section includes a detailed description of study population, sample, recruitment, participation, data collection, instrumentation and operationalization for constructs for published instrument, operationalization for variables, data analysis plan, threats to validity, ethical procedures, summary.

Study Population

The population for this study included approximately 2,250 retirees of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, a federal corrections law enforcement agency under the supervision of the Attorney General of the United States of America. The mission of the Attorney General includes the supervision and direct administration and operation of the Bureau of Prisons (BOP), as well as other law enforcement agencies (DOJ, 2018; see Figure 7).

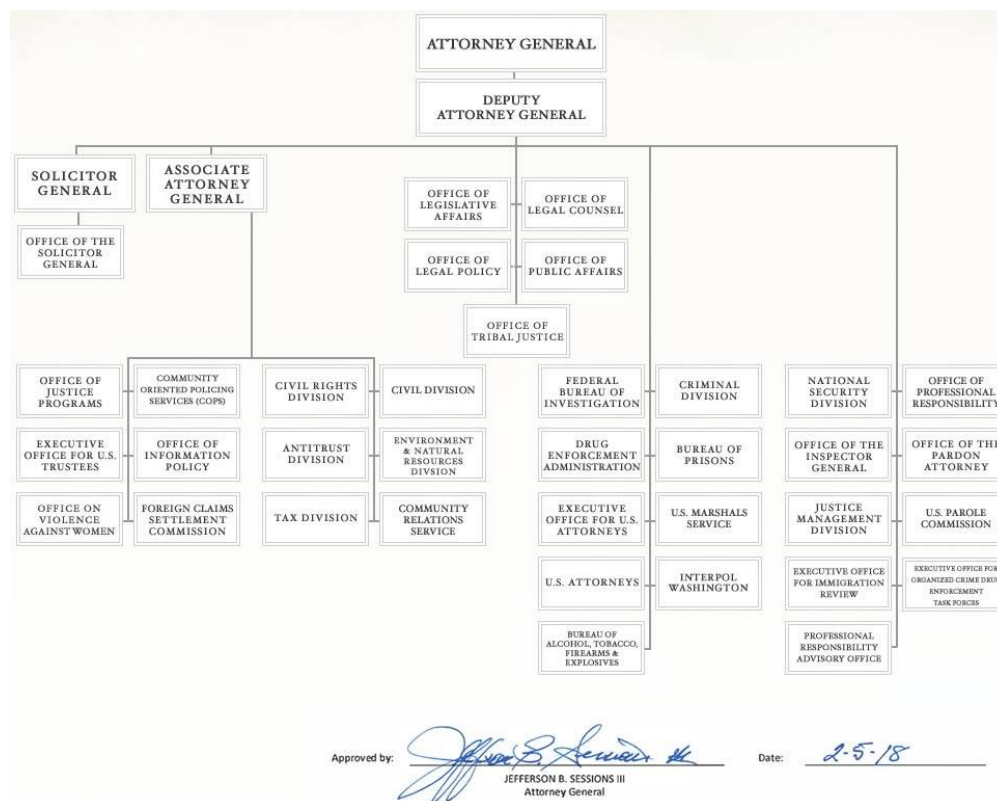


Figure 7. U.S. Department of Justice organization chart.

The United States race and ethnicity statistics based on the 2010 United States Census are: White (Nonhispanic) 72.4%, African American 12.6%, Asian American 4.8%, Native American .9% and Hispanic 16.3%. The BOP has a diverse workforce of more than 36,000 employees. Specifically, the BOP staff race and ethnicity statistics are White (Nonhispanic) 62.8%, African American 21.6%, Asian American 2.2%, Native American 1.3%, and Hispanic 12.1% (BOP, 2018).

Thus, the population of FPRA was representative of the BOP employee population, and the convenience sample of FPRA retirees living in the United States was

an appropriate representative sample of federal corrections retirees living in the United States.

Sampling and Sampling Procedures

The nonprobability sample for this research study included members of FPRA living in the United States. Upon retiring from the BOP, retirees are eligible to join FPRA, a federal corrections law-enforcement retiree association. FPRA is affiliated primarily with the BOP and associates. More specifically, FPRA members include federal employees who retired from one of the BOP's six regions or central headquarters office. The regional locations include the Southeast, Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Western, South Central, North Central, and Washington, D.C. In addition to BOP retirees, membership in the association includes retired United States Public Health Service employees who spent all or at least 15 years of service with the BOP, and former employees of BOP who have rights of deferred annuity (FPRA, 2018). Consequently, FPRA has 565 members living in the United States.

As an active member of FPRA, I had access to the membership database that contained the e-mail and residential addresses of all active members. Hence, this study included a nonprobability sample representing 41 states and Puerto Rico. Although I had access to the FPRA directory, I obtained acknowledgment from the FPRA president that I planned to invite members of FPRA to participate in this study (see Appendix A). I divided the sample into two groups. Group 1 consisted of FPRA members with e-mail addresses, and Group 2 consisted of FPRA members without e-mail addresses. I

determined the recommended sample size for this study by utilizing the G-Power 3.1.9.2 calculator. Based on an exact correlations formula with an alpha of .05, power of .80, and effect size of .3, the recommended sample size was 64. As noted by Warner (2013), when the sample size is greater than 30, the results will reflect the strength of the relationship between the variables. However, because the average percentage of responses per e-mail is low, I selected FPRA members as a convenience sample for the study which increased the probability of obtaining more than 30 participants for the study.

Participation and Data Collection

Following the Institutional Review Board's approval (approval no. 10-25-18-0233358), I sent an e-mail survey invitation message to Group 1, FPRA members with e-mail addresses residing in the United States. The e-mail informed prospective participants how to access the survey website and gain access to the informed consent message. The informed consent message included an introduction, background, procedures, voluntary nature, risks, benefits, compensation, confidentiality, contact information, and statement of consent.

According to a recent study conducted by FluidSurveys Team (2014) used to determine the response rate to online surveys, the average response rate to email surveys is 24.8%. In efforts to increase the interest in my research, while attending FPRA's Annual Convention in 2018, I shared my intent to conduct EA awareness research and to expect an invitation to participate in the survey in the future. Also, I utilized other

strategies to improve the response rate. For example, I included “important request” and “help solve the problem” in a short and succinct subject line, and allowed the survey to be completed using mobile devices. Consequently, the number of respondents to the survey invitation for this study was 75, a response rate of 22.1 %. Therefore, in that I received more than the number of participants recommended for the survey from Group 1, I did not contact Group 2.

Group 1 received e-mail invitations to volunteer and access the survey via an internet link provided in the e-mail. Upon accessing the website, the participant was required to acknowledge informed consent as to the nature of the research before proceeding to the survey (Babbie, 2017). After consenting to voluntarily participate in the study, participants proceeded with completing the survey. Participants were allowed seven days to access and complete the computer-assisted survey. Upon completing the survey, the participant received a thank-you message for participating, and exited the survey. At the end of the seven days, I collected the data from the survey website database (SurveyMonkey) and closed the survey. All responses were secured in password-protected file locations that only I have access until I retrieved the data and entered it into IBM SPSS Statistics, Version 25 (Armonk, NY: IBM Corp.) for analysis. After entering the data in IBM SPSS Statistics, the data was returned to the password-protected files where it will remain for no less than five years at which time it will be destroyed.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

This study design included a self-administered Internet computer-assisted survey. The survey instrument, Elder Abuse Survey, included five demographic items (see Appendix B), and 25 questions with multiple choice, or 5 Likert-scaled responses (see Appendix E). More specifically, the survey, a modified version of the ASEM (Daniels et al., 1999a), included questions that covered eight factors: (a) legal responsibility, (b) punishment, (c) familiarity with law, (d) satisfaction with current reporting system, (e) insignificance of mistreatment, (f) obstacles of reporting, (g) confidence in detention and reporting, and (h) victim denying mistreatment. Thus, this instrument was appropriate to ascertain the sample group's attitude, behavior and knowledge of EA laws.

The resource instrument, ASEM, was developed in 1999 by Daniels et al. The survey questions from the prior measurement tool assessed police officers' perceptions of elder mistreatment issues and knowledge of the law (Daniels et al., 1999a). I received permission to use and modify the instrument from the author (see Appendices C and D). In particular, the permission statements grant permission to use the instruments for educational purposes without seeking written permission, and the author's permission to modify the instrument to reflect the participant's professional status and home state.

ASEM was developed for a study that examined police reporting behavior in elder mistreatment cases (Daniels et al., 1999b), as well as assess police officers' perceptions of elder mistreatment issues and knowledge of the law. ASEM was modified from a 30-item instrument used to survey physicians, nurses, and emergency department

personnel's knowledge and actions regarding the maltreatment of the elderly (Daniels, Baumhover, and Clark-Daniels, 1999a).

The Chi-square test of the original seven factors revealed chi-square – 305.16; df – 246, a significant deviation from a perfect model. However, increasing the model to eight factors produced a stable nonsignificant model (Daniels et al., 1999a). The factor reliabilities ranged from .594 to .924. The scales of the test were comprised of 25 Likert-scaled items utilizing a five-response Likert-scale ranging from “definitely not true” to “definitely true” for each item. The instrument includes eight factors: (1) Legal Responsibility, (2) Punishment, (3) Familiarity with Law, (4) Satisfaction with the Current Reporting System, (5) Insignificance of Mistreatment, (6) Obstacles to Reporting, (7) Confidence in Detention and Reporting, and (8) Victim Denying Mistreatment (Daniels et al., 1999a).

Operationalization for Each Variable

The operationalization of the study includes determining the procedures for measuring the variables of interest in the study (Cox, 2016). The level of measurement for the attribute variables and the criterion variable in this study was categorical (nominal and ordinal). Each respondent was asked five demographic questions designed to identify their race, gender, age, education level, and level of EA awareness.

The attributes for race were White or Caucasian, Black or African-American, Asian or Asian American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, or another race (nominal). Also, each respondent was asked to identify

their gender as male or female (nominal). Finally, each respondent was asked to identify their level of EA awareness utilizing the ordinal measurements and Likert-scaled:

Extremely Aware = 5, Very Aware = 4, Somewhat Aware = 3, Not So Aware = 2, or Not At All Aware = 1, with Very Aware representing the highest level and Not At All Aware representing the lowest level. Thus, the measurement instrument elicited responses reflecting the respondent's knowledge, awareness, and attitude toward EA. The total survey score was calculated by adding the responses for all survey items together from the EA Survey instrument.

Exploring the relationship between race and gender, respectively, and level of EA awareness among federal corrections retirees living in the United States will allow EAP stakeholders to design, identify, and implement effective EA awareness initiatives based on the relationship between different races, genders, and EA awareness. DKE demonstrated the importance of understanding the relationship between variables when considering the results of any survey or test. However, DKE, as noted by Kruger and Dunning (2009), was described as a cognitive mechanism where a person was ignorant of his or her own ignorance. Thus, it was essential that we understood the possibility that inaccurate assessments could lead to elevated perceived levels of EA awareness. However, understanding it was impossible to assess respondents' level of EA awareness quantitatively, the possibility of an inflated perception of EA awareness would not diminish the benefits gained from the analysis of results ascertained from the measurement instrument. The next section describes the data analysis plan for the study.

Data Analysis Plan

This quantitative nonexperimental study included two research questions and two hypotheses. The two research questions for this study were:

RQ1: Does a mean difference exist between race and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States, and if so, to what extent?

*H*₀1: No mean difference exists between race and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States, as determined from the results of a comparison of the EA survey total scores using independent samples *t* tests, if assumptions are met, or Mann-Whitney *U* tests, if assumptions are not met, based on responses to the EA survey questionnaire.

*H*₁1: A mean difference exists between race and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States as determined from the results of a comparison of EA survey total scores using independent samples *t* tests, if assumptions are met, or Mann-Whitney *U* tests, if statistical assumptions are not met, based on responses to the EA survey questionnaire.

RQ2: Does a mean difference exist between gender and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States, and if so, to what extent?

H_{02} : No mean difference exists between gender and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States as determined from the results of an independent samples t tests, if statistical assumptions are met, or Mann-Whitney U tests, if statistical assumptions are not met, based on responses to the EA survey questionnaire.

H_{12} : A mean difference exists between gender and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States as determined from the results of an independent samples t tests, if assumptions are met, or Mann-Whitney U tests, if statistical assumptions are not met, based on responses to the EA survey questionnaire.

The counting protocol entailed totaling survey responses that provided quantitative data for analysis utilizing IBM SPSS Statistics 25. The variables in this study included two attribute variables with nominal levels of measure (gender and race) and one criterion variable with an ordinal level of measure (EA awareness).

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to control for race and gender when predicting for EA Survey total score. Statistical assumptions of multiple regression were analyzed. Linearity was assessed using scatterplots between the attribute variables and the criterion variable. Residual analysis was used to check for a normal distribution of errors between observed and predicted values, and multicollinearity was checked using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) statistics.

The autocorrelation assumption was tested for using Durbin-Watson statistics, and homoscedasticity was analyzed using a p-p plot of the residuals versus the predicted values. All analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 25 and statistical significance was assumed at an alpha value of 0.05.

Threats to Validity

Validity and reliability serve as checks and balances for research (Winter, 2000). Accordingly, as noted by Winter (2000), the researcher must answer the question, is the research valid? Does the research measure what it is supposed to measure? As a result, the construct of the research question was reviewed periodically to ensure the data collected supported the construct. Therefore, both external (generalizability) and internal validity of the tools was examined to ensure it measured what needs to be measured (Winter, 2000).

Threats to internal and external validity may occur during research. As noted by Babbie (2017), sources of internal threats to validity include history, maturation, testing, instrumentation, statistical regression, selection biases, experimental mortality, and demoralization.

History may serve as a source of threat to internal validity when historical events occur that confound the results of the study (Babbie, 2017). I monitored national and local news in the United States to identify any significant newsworthy occurrences related to EA that may unduly influence the results of the research.

Maturation may also serve as a source of threat to internal validity (Babbie, 2017). In a long-term experiment, participants grow old which can affect the outcome of the research. In that this was a cross-sectional study, maturation was not a threat to internal validity.

Testing may serve as a threat to internal validity when pretest and posttests are administered to the sample population (Babbie, 2017). Babbie (2017) further noted that participants will become familiar with the test when re-administered as a post-test which may influence the responses submitted. This research study administered one survey to participants simultaneously. Accordingly, the threat to internal validity was minimal.

Internal validity resulting from instrumentation may occur when different instruments are used to measure the same variable (Babbie, 2017). This research study consisted of one instrument that was administered to participants simultaneously.

Internal validity may occur from statistical regression when there is a regression to the mean, and any change will be attributed to the subject rather than the statistical regression (Babbie, 2017). Analysis of the results of this research study utilized Independent Sample *t*-Tests.

Selection biases may serve as a source of threats to internal validity when comparisons are made between control and experimental groups (Babbie, 2017). This research study was nonexperimental and did not test control and experimental groups. Accordingly, there were no threats to internal validity based on selection biases.

Experimental mortality may serve as a source of threat to internal validity when subjects drop out of the experiment before the experiment is completed (Babbie, 2017). This nonexperimental study required administering one test to the sample population at the same time. There were no deaths or removal of a volunteer, that affected the internal validity of the study.

Lastly, demoralization occurs when members of control groups feel deprived because of the difference in protocols between the experimental and the control groups (Babbie, 2017). In this study, there was no control group. Therefore, there was no threat to internal validity from demoralization. Also, in addition to threats to internal validity, there also exist threats to external validity.

The threat to external validity refers to the possibility the conclusions drawn from experimental results may not be generalizable to the real world (Babbie, 2017). Conclusions drawn from this study reflected the results of individuals from various professional backgrounds who worked with a vulnerable population in a corrections setting. The sample population included a diverse population of male and female federal corrections law enforcement retirees. In that participants have worked in several security levels in different areas of the United States, the sample was representative of various federal corrections law enforcement retirees; therefore, generalizability to a similar population exists.

Ethical Procedures

Upon receiving Institution Review Board approval (10-25-18-0233358), I proceeded with notifying the study sample (Group 1). This study was conducted in accordance with Walden University's Institutional Review Board and professional code of ethics, and all prospective participants were provided contact information to my committee chairperson, Institution Review Board, and me. Thus, the study's framework rested on the principles of autonomy, beneficence, and justice (Babbie, 2017). The study included ethical procedures that ensured voluntary participation, no harm to participants, anonymity, confidentiality, no deception, and accurate analysis and reporting (Babbie, 2017). Accordingly, this study established and followed procedures that addressed ethical issues by protecting individuals' right to privacy, protection from harm, and informed consent.

I received acknowledgment from the president of FPRA that I planned to contact FPRA members and ask for volunteers to participate in the study (see Appendix A). The voluntary sample population received the initial contact message that included an introduction to the researcher, purpose of the research, collection of data procedures, storage of data, use of the data, and distribution of the results and findings. Before distributing the survey, the researcher informed the prospective participants that the survey was voluntary and that no incentives were offered for participation. In addition, the message informed the prospective participant that although I am a BOP retiree and a member of FPRA, my previous position and current affiliations did not create a conflict

of interest with this study. Consequently, the intent of the formalized informed consent message was to ensure acknowledgment of voluntary participation in the research project and a full understanding of the possible risks associated with the survey.

The survey instrument and procedures ensured anonymity in that each participant's responses were not identified with the participant. Also, participants were instructed to not annotate or indicate their identity on the survey. However, if any survey instrument indicated a participant's identity it was discarded and not used in the results. The study also ensured confidentiality by ensuring the responses of participants were not identified or discussed. While I discarded any survey that revealed the identity of the respondent, I also did not discuss the content of any discarded survey. Finally, all data was stored in password-protected files and will remain there for five years, and can only be accessed by me. At the end of the five years, I will destroy the data keeping with the American Psychological Association standards.

Summary

This chapter discussed the quantitative nonexperimental research design and the rationale for choosing that design. The chapter also included the methodology which included a federal corrections law enforcement population, a convenience sample of FPRA members living in the United States, procedures for recruitment, participation, data collection, and data analysis. Also, the chapter included a thorough description of the measurement tool, EA Survey, and the development of the ASEM instrument. The chapter concluded with a description of the threats to validity and the procedures used to

ensure ethical procedures were consistent with the American Psychological Association standards. In conclusion, this chapter detailed what the study accomplished, how the research was conducted, and the measures used to ensure ethical procedures.

Chapter 4 will describe the findings and the statistical analyses of the research results. More specially, Chapter 4 includes an account of the data analyses, including whether a statistically significant relationship exists between race and EA awareness, and gender and EA awareness.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental study was to explore whether a mean difference exists between race, gender, and EA awareness, and if so, to what extent. The overall problem is EA, including EA awareness and EA underreporting. The problem this study addressed was EA awareness among members of the lay population who retired from a federal corrections law enforcement agency.

The two research questions and hypotheses for this study were:

RQ1: Does a mean difference exist between race and EA awareness among federal corrections retirees living in the United States, and if so, to what extent?

H₀₁: No mean difference exists between race and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States, as determined from the results of a comparison of the EA survey total scores using independent samples *t* tests, if assumptions are met, or Mann-Whitney *U* tests, if assumptions are not met, based on responses to the EA survey questionnaire.

H₁₁: A mean difference exists between race and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States as determined from the results of a comparison of EA survey total scores using independent samples *t* tests, if assumptions are met, or Mann-Whitney *U* tests, if statistical assumptions are not met, based on responses to the EA survey questionnaire.

RQ2: Does a relationship exist between gender and EA awareness among federal corrections retirees living in the United States, and if so, to what extent?

*H*₀₂: No mean difference exists between gender and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States as determined from the results of independent samples *t* tests, if statistical assumptions are met, or Mann-Whitney *U* tests, if statistical assumptions are not met, based on responses to the EA survey questionnaire.

*H*₁₂: A mean difference exists between gender and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States as determined from the results of independent samples *t* tests, if assumptions are met, or Mann-Whitney *U* tests, if statistical assumptions are not met, based on responses to the EA survey questionnaire.

I did not conduct a pilot study because I used an EA survey to test the sample group. The EA survey is a modified version of an instrument (ASEM) developed in 1999 by Daniels et al.. ASEM comprises questions designed to assess police officers' perceptions of elder mistreatment issues and knowledge of the law. The author granted permission to use and modify the instrument to reflect the participant's professional status and home state (see Appendices C and E).

I administered a 30-item survey comprised of demographic and EA questions via the internet to members of the FPRA living in the United States. At the end of 7 days, I gathered the results of the survey and stored them in a password-protected file. I

analyzed the data using independent samples *t* tests using total scores calculated from the survey responses. I also ensured trustworthiness of the study by using valid and reliable instrumentation, minimizing selection biases, and performing statistical regression. In summary, analyses of the data suggested there was not a significant difference in the means of the gender groups. However, there was a significant difference in means for the race groups. Chapter 4 includes a detailed account of how the study was conducted, including the data collection procedures and data analysis techniques.

Data Collection

The target population for this study was federal corrections law enforcement retirees who were members of the FPRA and were living in the United States. I estimated a nonprobability sample of 565 FPRA members represented approximately 25% of federal corrections retirees living in the United States (FPRA, 2018). The study sample was eligible to participate in the study. The timeframe between initial recruitment and completion of the survey for Group 1 was 7 days. Within this timeframe, prospective participants with e-mail addresses received an e-mail invitation to participate in the study, which included an embedded hyperlink to access an informed consent statement and anonymous survey that remained open for 7 days. Four days after sending the initial invitation e-mail, a follow-up e-mail was sent to all prospective participants reminding them of the 7-day deadline. The embedded hyperlink survey used to collect data included 30 items, five items to ascertain demographic data and 25 items from the Elder

Abuse Survey (modified ASEM) to gather elder mistreatment behavior. The average time respondents used to complete the survey was 9 minutes.

The 565 individuals in the obtained sample was comprised of Caucasian, African American, Hispanic, male, and female federal corrections law enforcement retirees. The sample was divided into two groups. Group 1 included FPRA members with e-mail addresses, and Group 2 included FPRA members without e-mail addresses. The age of the sample ranged from 35 to more than 65 years. More than 75 individuals volunteered to participate in the study representing residence in more than 41 states and Puerto Rico. A statistical analysis of the response rate of participation for the study revealed that 77 (24.1%) FPRA members accessed the survey. However, two of the participants declined or failed to complete the survey. Thus, the sample size used for statistical analysis was 75. Because I received more than the number of participants recommended for the survey from Group 1, I did not contact Group 2. In summary, there were no discrepancies from the proposed data collection method.

Descriptive Statistics for Variables

The descriptive statistics section includes a description of the attribute variables, race, and gender, the criterion variable, EA awareness, and demographic variables, education and age. Also, this section includes descriptive statistics for the total score. Lastly, Table 1 includes a display of the demographic variables for this study along with their attributes, frequencies, and percentages (see Table 1).

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics

Demographic variable		Frequency (%)
Gender	Female	27 (36.0)
	Male	48 (64.0)
Race	African American	55 (73.3)
	Hispanic	4 (5.3)
	Caucasian	16 (21.3)
Education	High school	6 (8.0)
	Two years of college	16 (21.3)
	Four years of college	26 (34.7)
	Postgraduate	27 (36.0)
Age	35-44	1 (1.3)
	45-54	6 (8.0)
	55-64	38 (50.7)
	65+	30 (40.0)
EA awareness	Extremely Aware	10 (13.3)
	Very Aware	35 (46.7)
	Somewhat Aware	21 (28.0)
	Not So Aware	7 (9.3)
	Not at All Aware	2 (2.7)

Note. (N = 75).

Attribute Variables: Race and Gender

The race demographic included 54 (73.3%) Black or African American, 16 (21.3%) White or Caucasian, and 4 (5.3%) Hispanic or Latino. Hispanic or Latino was treated as a separate racial group. None of the respondents identified their race as Asian or Asian American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, or another race. The gender demographics included 48 (64.0%) males and 27 (36.0%) females.

Criterion Variable: Elder Abuse Awareness

The respondents' descriptions for the criterion variable included 10 (13.3%) Extremely Aware, 35 (46.7%) Very Aware, 21 (28.0%) Somewhat Aware, 7 (9.3%) Not So Aware, and 2 (2.7%) Not-At-All-Aware.

Descriptive Statistics: Education and Age

The highest level of education completed by respondents included six (8.0%) for high school, 16 (21.3%) for 2 years of college, 26 (34.7%) for 4 years of college, and 27 (36.0%) for postgraduate. The age categories included one (1.3%) age 35 to 44, six (8.0%) age 45 to 54, 38 (50.7%) age 55 to 64, and 30 (40.0%) age 65 or older. No respondents were 34 years or younger.

Descriptive Statistics: Total Score

That total score was normally distributed as per skewness (-.114) and kurtosis (.310) statistics being below an absolute value of 2.0. Therefore, the statistical

assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance were met. The descriptive statistics for the total score was at a confidence level of 95%.

Research Question 1

The first RQ asked: Does a mean difference exist between race and EA awareness among FPRA members living in the United States, and if so, to what extent?

The group statistics for the race variable reflected the groups African American and Caucasian. Because only four Hispanics participated in the survey and no other race was identified, I chose to focus on the two largest groups, African American and Caucasian. Also, Hispanics were treated as a separate racial group and were not included with the African American and Caucasian groups.

The assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance were met. The Levene's test for Equality of Variances was conducted and revealed the significance was greater than .05 for the reported $F = .185$, $t = 1.997$, with a significance of .050. As a result, the null hypothesis stating there is no relationship between race and EA awareness was rejected. I rejected the null hypothesis because there was only 5% risk that I rejected the null hypothesis when it was true, and I was willing to accept a 5% risk of committing a Type I error. Therefore, the results suggest there is a significant mean difference between race and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States. In summary, the results suggest there is a significant difference in the means between African Americans and EA awareness, and Caucasians

and EA awareness. More specifically, African Americans ($M = 70.84$) perceive a higher level of EA awareness than Caucasians ($M = 66.80$).

Research Question 2

The second RQ asked: Does a mean difference exist between gender and EA awareness among members of the FPRA living in the United States, and if so, to what extent?

The assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance were met. I conducted the independent samples t tests for equality of variances, and this revealed there was not a statistically significant difference between the gender groups on the total survey score, $p = 0.88$. Therefore, in that the significance is greater than .05 (baseline alpha for the Levene's Test) for the reported $F = .025$, the null hypothesis was not rejected. If I rejected the null hypothesis, there would have been an 87.4% risk that I rejected a null hypothesis that was in fact true, and I would accept no more than a 5% risk of making such a Type I error. In conclusion, the results suggest there is not a significant difference in the relationship between gender groups, male ($M = 69.89$) and female ($M = 69.63$) and their EA awareness. Thus, there is no significant mean difference between males and females, respectively, and EA awareness among federal corrections law enforcement retirees living in the United States.

Statistical Methods

The assumptions of statistical hypothesis testing were considered for the study. More, specifically, the assumptions included level of measurement of the variables,

method of sampling, shape of the population distribution, and sample size. The total survey score was calculated by adding the responses for all survey items together from the EA Survey instrument. Skewness and kurtosis statistics were used to test for the assumption of normality of continuous distributions. If either statistic was above an absolute value of 2.0, then the assumption was violated. Levene's Test of Equality of Variances was used to test for the assumption of homogeneity of variance. When both statistical assumptions were met, independent samples *t* tests were used to compare independent demographic groups on survey scores. Means and standard deviations were reported and interpreted. Statistical significance was assumed at an alpha value of 0.05, and all analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Version 25 (Armonk, NY: IBM Corp.).

Statistical Results

Because the statistical assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance were met, independent samples *t* tests were used to answer the research questions. The total survey scores of the random sample, $N > 50$, were calculated and tested.

The independent samples *t* test results indicated that total survey scores were significantly higher for African Americans ($M = 70.8$, $SD = 6.64$) than for Caucasians ($M = 66.8$, $SD = 7.98$), $t(68) = 2.00$, $P = .05$, $d = 0.55$. The statistically significant outcomes of this study rejected the null hypothesis of no racial difference in the EA awareness among members of the FPRA, and there is a medium effect.

The independent samples *t* test indicated that total scores were not significantly higher for males ($M = 69.89$, $SD = 7.05$) than for females ($M = 69.63$, $SD = 6.96$). $t(72) =$

0.16, $p = 0.88$, $d = 0.04$. Thus, there is not a statistically significant mean difference between the gender groups for total survey scores. The statistical outcomes failed to reject the null hypothesis of no gender differences in the EA awareness among members of the Federal Prison Retirees Association living in the United States.

Table 2 includes a display of the independent samples t test results for the gender and race groups (see Table 2). Hispanics were treated as a separate racial group.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Group Comparisons

Awareness Score	Predictor		p value
	Gender		
	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	
Mean (SD)	69.63 (6.96)	69.89 (7.04)	0.88
	Race		
	<u>African American</u>	<u>Caucasian</u>	
Mean (SD)	70.84 (6.64)	66.80 (7.98)	0.05

Note. ($N = 75$).

Summary

A total of 320 members of the FPRA, Group 1, were invited to participate in the study. Seventy-Seven (24%) of those invited to participate accessed the survey. However, only 75 (23.4% response rate) completed the survey. Two of the respondents did not complete the survey. The data collected from the 75 respondents to the EA

Awareness Internet survey was imported into IBM SPSS Version 25 (Armonk, NY: IBM Corp.) for analysis.

Conclusion

The results of the study showed there was no statistically significant gender mean difference in the EA awareness. However, the results revealed a significant racial mean difference between Whites and Blacks and EA awareness. The mean for the Male group was 69.89 and the mean for the Female group was 69.63. Thus, the difference in gender group means was 0.26. Also, the mean for the African American group was 70.84 and the mean for the Caucasian group was 66.80. Thus, the difference in race group means was 4.04. The results suggest there is little difference in the overall EA awareness between males and females. However, the results also suggest there is a statistically significant mean difference in overall EA awareness between African Americans and Caucasians. Chapter 5 includes an interpretation of the research findings, recommendations for future research with other populations, implications for social change, suggestions for additional research, and limitations of this research study.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental study was to determine whether mean differences exist between race and gender, respectively, and EA awareness. As the older population increases, there is a similar increase in EA. Thus, the need exists to identify and implement effective EA awareness initiatives and programs (Schwab & Wangmo, 2017; Policastro & Payne, 2014). I selected the quantitative nonexperimental research design because it supported the goal of understanding the nature of the relationship between naturally occurring variables (race, gender, and EA awareness) that could not be manipulated, and the levels of measurement were categorical. Chapter 4 included the data analysis techniques and findings of the study. Chapter 5 contains a summary of the research study that includes the (a) interpretation of significant findings, (b) limitations of the study, (c) recommendations, (d) implications for social change, and (e) conclusions.

Interpretation of the Findings

Because of the inability to locate previous studies addressing the relationship between race, gender, and EA awareness, the results of this study established a foundation for future study.

Research Question 1

The results presented in Table 1 suggest that as a group, African American FPRA members have significantly higher perceived levels of EA awareness than Caucasian

FPRA members living in the United States. Thus, the implication is that African Americans are more confident of reacting appropriately to EA and suspected EA. Accordingly, EAP advocates may predict that EAP initiatives and programs may be more effective when race is considered.

Research Question 2

The results in Table 1 suggest that as a group, there is no significant mean difference in the level of EA awareness between male and female FPRA members living in the United States. Thus, it is anticipated that male and female FPRA members living in the United States have the same level of confidence when reacting to EA and suspected EA. Consequently, EAP advocates should anticipate that gender-neutral EAP initiatives and programs will be effective.

Limitations of the Study

Due to the nature of a nonexperimental study, one limitation to this study is the lack of causation attributable to the behavior of the survey sample (Crawford et al., 2016). While the results of this study will be beneficial to EAP advocates in tailoring EA awareness initiatives and programs for individuals whose background includes exposure to a federal correctional law enforcement work culture, the predictability for individuals with different occupational backgrounds require further study. Another limitation to this study was that only members of FPRA with e-mail addresses (Group 1) participated in the study. The plan allowed for contact with individuals without e-mail addresses (Group 2) if the required sample size was not met with the initial e-mail invitation. However, in

that the recommended sample size was reached with e-mail invitations, other FPRA members were not contacted. Another limitation is the study relied upon participants' honesty in answers provided to the anonymous survey items. A final limitation of the study was a convenience sample that included many individuals who are near or have reached the older adult age category. Lastly, there were no limitations related to the instrument validity and reliability of the study.

Recommendations

This study contributes to the limited body of knowledge of EA awareness; however, the limitations of the study reflect the need for additional study with sample groups representing different cultural backgrounds. More specifically, future studies might consider a sample population of state and local law enforcement retirees, as well as currently employed law enforcement employees. Another recommendation is to use a qualitative research design to explore EA awareness among individuals with non-law enforcement backgrounds. While this study explored race and gender, further studies might explore the relationships between other variables, including age, marital status, and socioeconomic status. Finally, because a major concern of EAP advocates is the effectiveness of EAP strategies, I recommend a quasi-experimental study using pretests, posttests, or a program evaluation study to determine the effectiveness of EA awareness initiatives.

Implications for Social Change

The implications for positive social change include a better understanding of the relationship between race, gender, and EA awareness among retirees with federal corrections backgrounds living in the United States. As the theoretical framework allowed an interpretation of the results from a perspective that respondents' behaviors and attitudes reflect the learned behaviors and perceptions regarding EA and level of knowledge and awareness. Also, as described by the DKE, there are instances when individuals are ignorant of their ignorance and may assess their knowledge as higher than it is in reality. Therefore, considering this theoretical framework's perspective, the results have the potential to influence EAP advocates in both public and private sectors when adopting policies that directly or indirectly affect older persons. EAP initiatives have the potential to lead to increased EA awareness, decreased EA underreporting, and reduced EA deaths. Also, the results of the study have the potential to effect changes in public policy through increased EA awareness among different segments of society as a result of (a) EA awareness partnerships between the public and private sectors, (b) inclusion of EA awareness in public policies affecting older persons, and (c) mandatory EA awareness training for approved Medicare and Medicaid recipients. The results of the study could be useful in designing gender-neutral EA awareness initiatives and programs aimed at increasing awareness among retirees and other older adults; thereby, contributing to a safe environment for older adults. The results have the potential to influence public policy by providing data that supports partnerships during the legislative

process where the impact of EA awareness is considered before adopting public policies. Also, understanding the significant differences in perception of EA awareness among races suggests the potential and need to improve the design of EA awareness initiatives that target different segments of the population. Therefore, understanding the relationships between race, gender, and EA awareness could change the culture of society with a more informed population, thereby increasing EA awareness, decreasing EA prevalence, and preventing EA deaths worldwide.

Moreover, the results of the study may provide valuable information for researchers, policymakers, caregivers, EAP advocates, elders, and the general public to utilize in their daily lives, as well as support EA awareness initiatives that will positively influence EA prevalence, EA reporting, and EA deaths. Also, adopting EA awareness as part of the high school and college curricula and direct services training programs, providing resources for EA awareness initiatives, and establishing annual EA awareness programs (supported by local, state, and federal agencies) may change the behavior and attitudes of the lay population. Consequently, these changes may increase EA awareness, decrease EA underreporting, and prevent EA deaths.

Conclusion

Thus, EAP advocates have expressed the concern and need to determine the effectiveness of EA awareness initiatives provided to the lay population (Merriman-Nai & Stein, 2014). Also, Schwab and Wangmo (2017) noted that effective EAP strategies required adapting to the needs and cultures of targeted populations. This study met the

purpose of understanding the nature of the relationship between race, gender, and EA awareness among federal corrections retirees living in the United States. While earlier studies focused on prevalence and types of EA, the results of this study support EAP advocates' efforts to increase EA awareness and determine the effectiveness of EA awareness initiatives and programs.

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Appendix A: Federal Prison Retirees Association Survey Acknowledge Message

From: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2018 5:52 PM

To: james5853@aol.com

Subject: Doctoral Program

Hi James,

Your request for the FPRA's support/permission to assist you and your pursuit of your doctoral program has been reviewed. Specifically, you requested the FPRA quarterly publication announce a survey and ask for volunteers.

The officers (Pres/V. Pres) reviewed your request and are of the belief that the members will not contact you. Also, they believe your best bet would be for you to contact members directly and by doing so they would be more likely to be of assistance to you.

Although each case is somewhat different, there was a similar request in the past and that individual was told to access the membership directory and make personal contacts.

Please note the password to access the directory is xxxxxxxx.

Appendix B: Demographic Questions

INSTRUCTIONS: The demographic information provided by research participants is a very important part of the questionnaire. Sometimes demographic data can help to illuminate study findings and results.

PLEASE REMEMBER, responses to the questions below are strictly on a voluntary basis AND as a reminder, ALL information provided is anonymous.

1. What is your gender?
 Male Female
2. What is your race?
 White or Caucasian Black or African-American Hispanic or Latino (
 Asian or Asian American American Indian or Alaska Native Native
Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Another Race
3. What is your highest level of education completed?
 High School 2 Years of College 4 years of College Post-Graduate
4. Which category below includes your age?
 24 or younger 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65 or older
5. How would you describe your level of elder abuse awareness?
 Extremely Aware Very Aware Somewhat Aware Not So Aware
 Not at All Aware

Appendix C: Attitude Scale Permission

Attitude Scales on Elder Mistreatment Version Attached: Full Test

PsycTESTS Citation:

Daniels, R. S., Baumhover, L. A., Formby, W. A., & Clark-Daniels, C. L. (1999). Attitude Scales on Elder Mistreatment [Database record]. Retrieved from PsycTESTS. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/t18537-000>

Instrument Type:

Inventory/Questionnaire

Test Format:

The 25 items are each rated on a five-response Likert-type scale ranging from "definitely not true" to "definitely true."

Source:

Daniels, R. Steven, Baumhover, Lorin A., Formby, William A., & Clark-Daniels, Carolyn L. (1999). Police discretion and elder mistreatment: A nested model of observation, reporting, and satisfaction. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, Vol 27(3), 209-225. doi: 10.1016/S0047-2352(98)00055-5. ©1999 by Elsevier. Reproduced by Permission of Elsevier.

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Appendix D: Attitude Scales on Elder Mistreatment Modification Approval

Re: Permission Request: Attitude Scales on Elder Mistreatment

XXXXXXXXXXXX <XXXXXXXXXXXX@csub.edu>S) Reply all I v RD

Today, 2:22 AM

James Burrell

James,

Yes, you may use the scales with the proposed changes.

XXXXXXXXXXXX

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 3/ 2018, at 5:30 PM/ James Burrell <james.burrell2@waldenu.edu> wrote:

Dr. Daniels. I am a Ph.D. candidate researching the relationship between race, gender, and elder abuse awareness among retired federal correctional professionals, and request your permission to use and modify the Attitude Scales on Elder Mistreatment. More specifically, I would like to replace "police officer" with "Correctional Professionals" and "Alabama" with "My home state." Thank you in advance for your consideration and approval. Please contact me if you require any additional information.

James E. Burrell
Ph.D. Candidate
Walden University

Appendix E: Elder Abuse Survey

****Please select the most accurate response for each item.**

1 = definitely not true; 2=not true; 3=don't know; 4=true; 5=definitely true.

1. As a correctional professional, I can accurately detect cases of elder mistreatment.
2. Very few older adults are abused.
3. Very few older adults are neglected.
4. Very few older adults are exploited.
5. As a corrections professional, I have a legal responsibility to report elder mistreatment.
6. Other professionals have a legal responsibility to report elder mistreatment.
7. Only major cases of mistreatment need to be reported.
8. I must be absolutely certain that mistreatment has occurred before reporting it.
9. The victim must consent before a report of mistreatment is made.
10. I am reluctant to report mistreatment because of potential lawsuits.
11. The potential disclosure of my identity would not deter me from reporting.
12. Families of mistreatment victims will assume that I am the one who reported the mistreatment.
13. I am unwilling to report elder mistreatment because evidence is often lacking.
14. Reporting mistreatment will only worsen the living environment for the victim.
15. Mistreatment victims will usually deny that they have been mistreated.
16. Reporting elder mistreatment is a violation of the elderly person's privacy.

17. I am subject to a jail sentence if I fail to report mistreatment.
18. I am subject to a fine if I fail to report mistreatment.
19. I am familiar with the state mandatory reporting law for mistreatment of adults.
20. I am aware of provisions of the Adult Protective Services Act in my home state.
21. There are standard administrative procedures for dealing with mistreatment.
22. Prompt action will be taken if I report cases of mistreatment.
23. I am happy with my home state's response to elder mistreatment.
24. My home state has sufficient services to meet the needs of mistreated elderly people.
25. Most mistreated elderly people are able to get help if they need it.