



Trauma-Informed Practices of Mental Health Providers Around the Globe

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Introduction

This study examined trauma-informed practices of mental health professionals around the world. The literature indicates that many practitioners feel unprepared and unequipped to therapeutically work with individuals who have experienced trauma-related psychological disorders (SAMHSA, 2014). This is a concerning reality since approximately 90% of individuals receiving services in public health care settings have experienced trauma (SAMHSA, 2015). This poster offers recommendations to improve training programs to better prepare future mental health professionals to work with clients impacted by trauma.

Demographics

Participants (N=41; M age= 44; age range 23-75) were recruited from trauma-informed trainings during Dr. Sperry's international sabbatical in 2020.

- **Participants:** from 20 different countries throughout Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, and South America
- **Country list:** Australia, Canada, China, Germany, Israel, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain, United States of America, Uganda, and Uruguay.
- **Participant professional identity:** Counselors, Psychologists, Psychiatrists, Art Therapists, Marriage and Family Therapists
- **Gender:** 33 female and 8 male participants
- **Clinical experience:** ranged from 1 to 47 years of counseling practice. Average years of experience=14 years.

Results

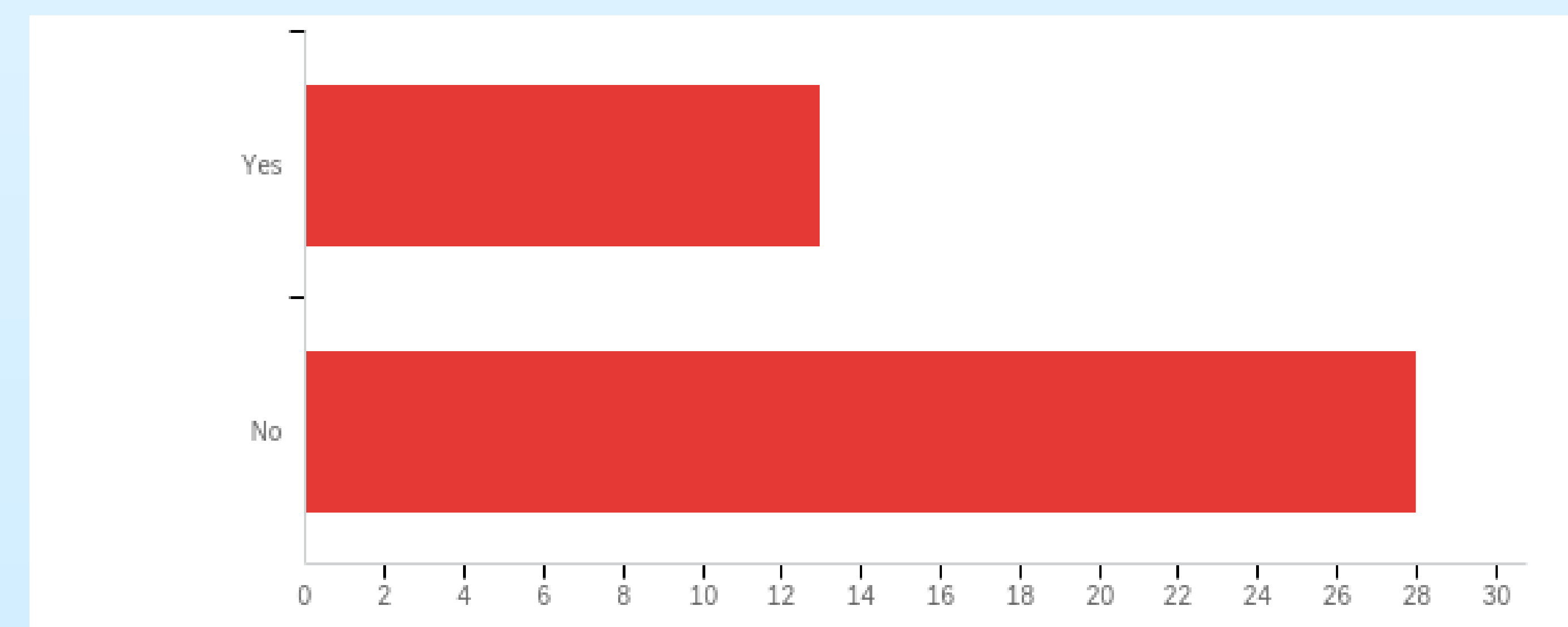
"Rate your level of confidence in treating clients with PTSD or trauma-related symptoms." (1 to 100 score)

Minimum: 10 Maximum: 92 Mean: 54.80
Std Deviation: 23.29 Variance: 542.40 Count: 41

"Rate your level of familiarity with trauma-informed care principles." (1 to 100 score)

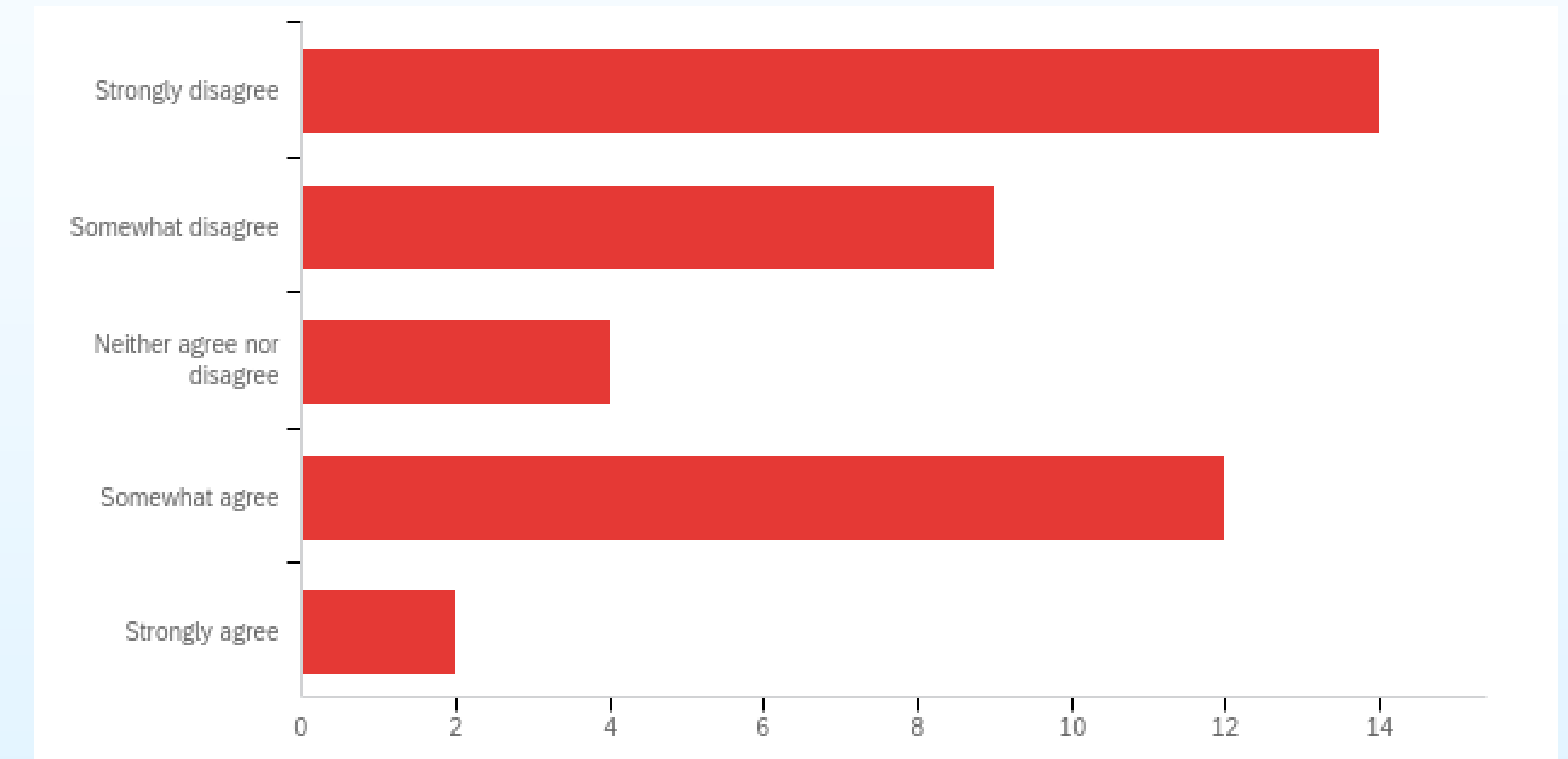
Minimum: 8 Maximum: 100 Mean: 61.33
Std Deviation: 23.29 Variance: 572.56 Count: 41

"Have you ever taken a university course in assessment and/or treatment of psychological trauma?"



Results

"My university training adequately prepared me to work with clients who have experienced significant psychological trauma."



Summary of data:

- 56% of participants identified that their graduate training did not adequately prepare them to work with clients that are experiencing psychological trauma.
- 13 (or 31%) of the 41 participants completed a graduate level traumatology course.
- 25 (or 60%) of the 41 participants participated in formal trauma therapy training outside of the university setting.
- Most common post-graduate trauma trainings: EMDR, Trauma-Focused CBT, Trauma-informed care introductory course.

Discussion and Future Directions

Counseling programs could benefit future practitioners by adding a traumatology course and/or intensive training modules that highlight trauma-informed assessment, conceptualization, and treatment. Clinical supervisors can address this deficit by recommending that trainees attend post-graduate training in trauma. The next steps in this study include qualitative interviews with practitioners in each country.

