Measures/ Procedures

Participants
- N = 227 professionals from substance use treatment, emergency services, and corrections fields
- 58% Male

Research Aims:
(1) To examine the similarities and differences between men and women in their accounts of (a) witnessing a serious injury (b) witnessing a death (c) being personally exposed to a potentially harmful or dangerous situation.

(2) To determine how male and female professionals differ in their help-seeking behaviors and attitudes.

METHOD

Participants
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Measures/ Procedures
- Voluntary survey included:
  - Exposure to stress/trauama on the job
  - Diversity index (Range = 0-14)
  - Binary index of prior help seeking behavior
  - Open-ended questions about most terrifying experience on the job. Responses coded:
    - by profession, gender, and type of incident.
    - for emotional words, graphic/ vivid/ descriptive imagery, and indices of impact on the participant.

INTRODUCTION

Background:
In many fields, professionals are exposed to stressful and sometimes traumatizing experiences first or second-hand. These experiences can have an adverse personal and professional impact. Professionals may be reluctant to seek out help for many reasons such as stigma or failure to see concerning signs in themselves. How they talk about their experiences, too, may play a role.

There may be clear distinctions between men and women, as women are more likely to seek psychiatric help, while men may face greater perceived stigma for doing so.

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RESULTS

M # Stressful/Traumatic Experiences (Diversity Index)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Witness Death</td>
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<tr>
<td>Witness Serious Injury/ Assault</td>
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<td>Health/Safety in Danger</td>
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<td>Sample Quotations from Participants</td>
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DISCUSSION

Summary of Findings
- Men experience significantly more and more variety of traumatic incidents at work than women, among the professions examined.
- Men are similar to women in their help-seeking behavior.
- Very few men or women actually seek out help for their traumatic on-the-job experiences.
- Women’s accounts tend to use more emotionally-laden words and be more graphic and vivid in their descriptions of the incidents.
- Men’s accounts have less emotional content and emphasize more contextual and objective details.

Limitations
- Sample is not generalizable to other professions or geographic regions.
- Conclusions are limited to the people who participated.

Implications and Future Directions
- Few professionals seek help for their traumatic on-the-job experiences, despite having had a variety of kinds of these experiences.
- Even with more– and more diverse – on the job experiences that are highly stressful and potentially traumatic, men are not significantly more likely to seek help than women.
  - This could be an artifact of small sample size or reflective of reality.
- Men’s lack of help-seeking behavior, relative to the frequency and diversity with which they experience trauma on the job, is consistent with prior literature.
- Efforts to decrease stigma for help-seeking and improve access to and availability of services would be beneficial across all professions and genders.
- Ongoing analysis of the data will yield other potentially beneficial insights and recommendations for professionals.