HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY SOCIAL WORK WEBPAGE:

BILINGUAL RESOURCES FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

By

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ABSTRACT

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As the Latino population grows throughout the United States, so does the demand for professional bilingual social workers. The purpose of my community project is to identify the needs of bilingual social work students and professionals. In addition, I will create a mock webpage based on the needs that have been identified by students and professionals. This particular project consisted of questionnaires to students and interviews with professional bilingual social workers to find out how they are utilizing their bilingual skills and to figure out what, if any, trainings and resources have been provided to them by their agency.
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ........................................................................................................................ ii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .................................................................................................... iii

TABLE OF CONTENTS ................................................................................................... iv

LIST OF TABLES .............................................................................................................. v

LIST OF FIGURES ........................................................................................................... vi

INTRODUCTION .............................................................................................................. 1

   Definition of Terms .................................................................................................... 4

   Purpose Statement ...................................................................................................... 5

   Project Aims ................................................................................................................. 5

   Project Approaches .................................................................................................... 5

      Student Questionnaires ........................................................................................... 6

      Professional Social Workers- Interviews ............................................................... 6

REVIEW OF LITERATURE ............................................................................................. 9

METHOD ......................................................................................................................... 13

RESULTS ......................................................................................................................... 18

DISCUSSION ................................................................................................................... 30

REFERENCES ................................................................................................................ 35
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Master Project Sustainability Plan................................................................. 32
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1……………………………………………………………………………………………………24
Figure 2……………………………………………………………………………………………………25
Figure 3……………………………………………………………………………………………………26
Figure 4……………………………………………………………………………………………………27
Figure 5……………………………………………………………………………………………………28
Figure 6……………………………………………………………………………………………………28
Figure 7……………………………………………………………………………………………………29
INTRODUCTION

According to Pew Research Center, Latinos will surpass Caucasians as the largest racial/ethnic group in California in 2014 (Lopez, 2014). Lopez indicates that the population of Latinos in California has increased from 32.3% to 39.0% from 2000 to 2014. According to him, the year 2014 marked the first time “since California became a state in 1850 that Latinos are the Golden State’s single largest racial or ethnic group” (Lopez, 2014, n.p.).

In California, there are several large social services agencies which include: Children and Adult Protection Services, Behavioral Health Services, wellness programs, and various non-profits. The substantial growth of the Latino population is surely placing pressure on these social services, since these social service programs have government mandates that require them to provide culturally-supported services and language access to the Latino population. Executive Order 13166, signed on August 11, 2000 by President Bill Clinton states, people who are limited English Proficiency (LEP) should have access to federal programs and activities (“Frequently asked Questions,” 2015).

Domestic violence shelters, therapists, social workers, and advocates are but a few programs and individuals who require that program information be written in Spanish and that it is culturally relevant. In addition, resource guides should be specific to their immediate cultures, subcultures, and the environment in which they are in. One challenge that is faced by the monolingual, Spanish-speaking Latino community, when trying to obtain social service resources, is the lack of providers who speak their language.
Rural counties, such as Lake County, have limited funding sources, which decrease available resources that include the hiring of bilingual staff in social service programs. These minimized resources also affect programs directed to help children, such as schools. Agencies such as Lake County’s Child Welfare Services and Lake County Behavioral Health have struggled to recruit and retain bilingual social workers and therapists who can communicate and help Latinos, who may speak one or several languages, navigate through government systems effectively. Rural communities are already experiencing limited resources that they can provide to English speakers, but even worse so to Latino monolinguals.

However, having bilingual social workers within one agency is not enough. As a Spanish-speaking bilingual social worker, there are several challenges that one faces: lack of supports and lack of monetary compensation, not being able to provide services in Spanish such as informational pamphlets, having to translate paperwork from English to Spanish without losing the meaning, and not knowing how to speak Spanish in a professional setting versus a non-professional setting with a variable age gap between social worker younger and client older.

I have personally experienced some of these challenges while working for foster youth and child welfare services. For example, I had to translate a case plan from English to Spanish, while still attempting to keep up with my increasing caseloads. This process took me approximately a month to complete. The challenging part was the legal language that I had never been introduced to in Spanish. It is important that social workers have the
proper training and tools needed that will help their Spanish-speaking clients meet their goals.

According to Verdinelli and Biever (2009), the “Spanish-dominant Latinos are among those who have been traditionally underserved by medical and mental health services” (p. 230). Bilingual workers should be allowed to work in their area of strength. Verdinelli and Biever also mention that there are few mental health professionals who have had any professional training and linguistic proficiency “to competently provide services to clients who are Spanish dominant or bilingual as required by professional and government guidelines” (Verdinelli et al, 2009, p.230). The testing that currently is being done to verify a person competent in a language does not identify how best the individual could help their client. There is no set standard or measures on how services are being delivered competently in the Spanish-language (Verdinelli et al, 2009). There are those individuals who are better at being able to provide basic hellos and goodbyes, while others have the capacity to do some extensive work in the home and with the clients.

The hardest of all would be using writing skills, which not everyone has been properly trained to do, especially in the legal and professional verbiage that is required by the law. Verdinelli and Biever go on to discuss how the inability of psychotherapists to properly communicate with their clients in the clients’ dominant language caused the quality of services to be compromised (Verdinelli et al, 2009). In addition, they argue that the lack of proper communication can create a barrier to “cultural understanding and a misinterpretation of the clients’ communication” (Verdinelli et al, 2009, p.230).
However, there are social work departments around the United States who are looking into addressing these needs. On May 2014, the Hoggs Foundation for Mental Health awarded the University of Texas at El Paso’s Department of Social Work funding ($172,142) to improve bilingual education within the program (Acosta, 2014). The grant will fund a specific class, which will be taught entirely in Spanish. The students in the course will engage in “clinical social work with Spanish-speaking clients in a culturally competent manner” (Acosta, 2014, np). This class is considered to be one of a kind.

This project focused on identifying the issues that are faced by bilingual social work students attending Humboldt State University and address those issues via a mock webpage. A mock webpage is a layout of the digital content used to demonstrate what the fully functional website could potentially look like. This project discussed the difficulties in which social work students have/will face in their internships and/or place of work. The project used questionnaires created specifically for Bachelor and Master level social work students at Humboldt State University and I interviewed professional bilingual social workers. The goal is to explore professional developmental use of their Spanish skills as social workers.

**Definition of Terms**

For the purpose of this project, Latinos are referred to a group of people who share the Spanish language and cultural roots, which are based in countries of Latin America. However, it is important to note that there is diversity in cultures and languages within what is now called Latin America. In addition, social workers in this project will
be considered to be individuals who have a caseload in mental health, child welfare, and other social services.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this project is to identify the needs of Humboldt State University bilingual social work students, specifically aiming to look at the “Latino/Hispanic” population. In addition, I developed a mock webpage for bilingual social work students to assist in their ongoing need to access reliable bilingual resources. Many bilingual social workers have challenges ahead of them. It is my hope that this project will be able to begin conversation about the need to train and certify social work students, not just at Humboldt State University, but throughout the state and this nation.

**Project Aims**

The project aims to create a mock webpage that Humboldt State University’s bachelor and graduate students will utilize. It is the hope that this project could start the conversation around creating a program at Humboldt State that trains and certifies social work students in another language. This project is a pilot program/project aimed at establishing the theoretical foundation for other students to continue building, creating, and updating the webpage with current/valid resources and trainings.

**Project Approaches**

This project has several approaches. The first approach to this project is:
**Student Questionnaires**

For my project, I will focus on a qualitative questionnaire that solicited input from social work students that are enrolled in the Bachelor and Masters Social Work program at Humboldt State University. This questionnaire asked 10 questions about their experiences using their language skills in their internships or workplace. According to the Humboldt State University Social Work Program staff, there are approximately 48 students who identify themselves as “Latino and/or Hispanic.” In this email I requested voluntary participation in the online survey in hopes to be better able to comprehend their current agency practices and to identify the needs specific to bilingual social workers in the social work program.

**Professional Social Workers- Interviews**

In addition, for this project the goal was to have interviewed bilingual social workers from different agencies to get a better understanding of the challenges that they have faced. It was my hope to interview a handful of social workers who would like to talk about their experiences within their current or past agency. I had hoped to interview at least 4 professional bilingual social workers from Child Welfare Services, Mental Health, a Non-Profit Spanish Speaking Resource center, and possibly a foster family agency overall.

**Anticipated Outcomes**

The aim of creating the qualitative questionnaire is to comprehend the needs of bilingual social worker students and professionals’ that may or may not be utilizing their
language skills. This will help me determine how their needs could be addressed in a webpage. The anticipated outcomes for this project are that I’ll be better able to comprehend the need for more Spanish bilingual social workers and to create a social work webpage that can be utilized by the student even after they graduate from Humboldt State University’s social work program. I am hoping that the survey along with the webpage will help start those important conversations around the huge necessity for proper training via agencies and social work school programs.

**Project Assumptions**

My initial assumption is that there is a lack of understanding and lack of support and compensation for bilingual social workers within their agencies. In addition, I assume that there is no school within the United States that focused on a curriculum to help address the need of educated bilingual social workers. Therefore, creating a mock webpage for social work students would be beneficial for the learning process of all social workers that will be utilizing their bilingual skills within their agencies. The data that was collected will provide me with a better sense of what Humboldt State University social work students will want to see in the webpage.

Schools, such as University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP), are addressing these needs by implementing classes that are taught in Spanish and integrating the clinical language that will be used. According to Lusk, a professor at UTEP, learning the language alone is not enough; students must be culturally competent about the
subcultures and the health beliefs of their clients in order to be effective social workers (Acosta, 2014).

**Rationale or Significance**

This project is relevant to social work and the social work practice because there is a demand for bilingual social workers in general and there is a need for workers to be trained to use their skills in either English or Spanish (or other languages). There is a need for proper training and certification and a need for bilingual resources in multiple agencies. This project is on its way to getting this message across. This project could be the first stepping-stone to having the conversations about promoting bilingualism in the program at Humboldt State University, and providing economical support to be able to provide resources and proper training. This project could also have the potential to extend to all students who are bilingual in other languages.
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Being able to grasp the research that has already been conducted around the individual needs of bilingual social workers and the experiences that they have shared within those studies has been instrumental for this project. The literature that I have had the privilege to read leaves me with more questions than answers. Some of my thoughts or questions that have risen are: that there is a lack of research being done in addressing the needs of bilingual social workers, how do employers assist and compensate bilingual social workers in the workplace? And how are communities coming together to address the lack of bilingual resources? The purpose of the literature is to provide an overview of what information is available on the issue of bilingual social workers.

Understanding the Latino Population

In order to fully comprehend the issues that have arisen in this modern day, we need to comprehend the history of what is now known as the United States. Haymes and Kilty discuss that (2007), “The Latino experience in the United States actually began with the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 but was especially propelled by this country’s expansionist wars of the nineteenth century, namely the Mexican-American War (1846-1848) and the Spanish Way (1898)” (p.103). Haymes and Kilty go on to say that there has always been a Latino presence within the United States. Chicanos/Latinos for example, had settled in areas like Florida, Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, and California to name a few.
According to Gutiérrez (n.d.) by early 1940s U.S. agricultural companies had lobbied and convinced the Federal Government to create a labor agreement between the United States and Mexico also known as the “Bracero Program” (Gutiérrez, n.d.). The two governments officially signed the Emergency Farm Labor Agreement in 1942. In addition, Gutiérrez discusses that by the 1950s through 1980s, political and economic turmoil in Cuba and different parts of Central America such as El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua, had pushed people up North to the United States (Gutiérrez, n.d.). Most recently, the North American Fair Trade Agreement (NAFTA), passed in 1994, became another catalyst of the migration influx currently experienced in the US (Gutiérrez, n.d.).

Complexities of Language within the Latino Population

As people migrate to different parts of the world, including the United States, there are myriad of complexities of the language. Language shift is a phenomenon that is often seen when Spanish-native speaker’s move to another area where their native tongue isn’t utilized as much. According to Anderson (2012), “language shift is usually reported across generations and is characterized by a pattern whereby members of the immigrant population are fluent in their native language with limited skill in the host country’s language” (p.194). The second generation becomes proficient in both the native language and the community’s second language. Anderson (2012) states that the by the third generation the child has become fluent “in the host country’s language; thus, the minority language is replaced as the first language for this population” (p.194). However, there are other studies indicating that the maternal language is lost by the second generation and
does not survive through the third generation (“Second-Generation Americans: A Portrait of the Adult Children of Immigrants”, 2013).

Barriers to Services

The exponential growth of the monolingual Latino community, which has been fueled by the influx of immigrants, has posed a challenge to the social services structures according to Haymes and Kilty (Latino Population Growth, 2007). In addition, there are professional and personal barriers that are a consistent pattern in the articles I have read, which explains why Latinos underutilize social services.

The research indicated that themes such as language, legal status, and cultural aspect are barriers to service. In addition, barriers such as stigma, family influence, acculturation stress, and gender have been identified as other determinants to access services. Communication is especially important to note since without proper communication there is no service. It is also important to note that many agencies do not have the appropriate resources to provide services or forms in Spanish, making it difficult for providers who are bilingual to take on their agencies Spanish-speaking cases.

Comprehending the Needs of Bilingual Workers

Engstrom and Min (2004) state that, “little is known about how bilingual social workers view the responsibility of being the only workers in their agencies capable of communicating directly with LEP (Limited English Proficiency) clients” (p. 62).
Engstrom and Min (2004) also stated that little is known of bilingual social workers when it comes to how they would react with the demands and expectations of their agencies.

As stated by Aliviado (2003), “if agencies are to deliver effective services, they need to be sensitive not only to the culturally diverse populations that they are working with, but also to the employees who are providing the services” (p. 3). Therefore, individuals need to be empowered through ongoing training, knowledge and resources to help their clients and themselves. The work takes more time for multicultural and multilingual social workers. For example, gathering information in one language and having to translate it into English, all the while trying not to lose the meaning, takes a great effort.
METHOD

Introduction

My community project included data that was collected by a questionnaire given to Humboldt State University Bachelor Social Work (BASW) and Masters Social Work (MSW) students who have identified as “Latino and/or Hispanic”. The data will be analyzed in order to comprehend how BASW/MSW students are utilizing their bilingual skills in their internship or workplace. The data will also be used to determine what the barriers are within their agency, and how are they being supported by their agency to utilize their bilingual skills.

Participants

There were two separate groups participating in this project. The first group was be made entirely by Humboldt State University social work students who are currently enrolled in the bachelor and the master’s program. The second group consisted of professional bilingual social workers who are currently working in their perspective communities. The estimated number of participants is between 3-5 professional bilingual social workers. The projected date of data collection was the end of March 2015.
**Humboldt State Social Work Students-Online Questionnaire**

The participants were be 18 years old and over and will be Humboldt State University social work students in the bachelor and master’s program who are self-identified as “Latino and/or Hispanic.” Some of the questions included in the questionnaire are:

1. Which service areas are students interested working in?
2. Their abilities in reading, writing, and/or speaking Spanish.
3. Are they utilizing their bilingual skills in their internship/work?
4. Do they feel competent utilizing their skills in professional manner?
5. What are the needs to help utilize their language skills?
6. If given a webpage with resources, what you envision in it?
7. Have you been trained and compensated justly for being bilingual?
8. What bilingual resources have been available at your place of employment?
9. Have they been faced with any challenges or barriers within their agency?
10. What challenges or barriers have you faced thus far in your agency as a bilingual social worker? Please explain.

The goal was to send the questionnaire to 48 students in the social work program in hopes to get responses from 20-30 students.
Professional Social Workers- Interviews

The participants within this group were also be over 18 years old and have been identified as a professional bilingual social worker. My goal was to interview at least 3-5 people bilingual workers. The purpose is to understand the complexity of what it means to be a bilingual social worker and what challenges they have faced.

Project Design

Student-Qualitative Questionnaire

The project used a qualitative questionnaire. Jamie Jensen, Director of the Distributed Learning program, helped me by recruiting student participants via email. I received the list of students who wanted to be contacted by me. I then emailed to the students a brief description of the project and a consent form. Once they clicked and agreed the consent form I sent another email with the link to the Survey Monkey questionnaire. Participants were notified that the questionnaire should take about 10-15 minutes. My hopes was to receive around 20-30 responses from the social work students by the third week of February, giving me ample time to analyze the data that was collected.

Professionals- Interviews

The project has also been designed to have face-to-face interviews. As a lead investigator, I would have personally interviewed the professional social workers, which is a separate group from the Humboldt State University students. The interview was set to last between 45-60 minutes. There will be a range of 8-10 questions asked, and the
interviews were audio recorded. If by any chance the person being interviewed states that they wish not to be recorded, I would take written notes. The following questions would have been asked:

1. Could you please identify the service area that you currently work in?
2. Do you have the ability to read, write, and/or speak Spanish?
3. Are you currently utilizing your bilingual skills in the agency that you are interning/working for?
4. Do you feel competent enough to utilize your bilingual skills in a professional level? (i.e. translating paperwork, talking to a client, or writing a report in Spanish.) Could you please explain?
5. What do you feel you need from your employer to help you utilize your bilingual skills within your agency? Could you please explain?
6. If you were given the opportunity to have a bilingual resource webpage specific to social workers, what would you like to see? Could you please explain?
7. Has your agency trained you/prepared you to work with Spanish speaking clients? If yes, how did that look like?
8. What field agency resources are available to you in Spanish that you are able to provide to your Spanish-speaking clients? Could you please explain?
9. Have you ever been used as a translator or interpreter in the agency that you currently work for or have worked for in the past? If yes, please explain.
10. What challenges or barriers have you faced thus far in your agency as a bilingual social worker? Could you please explain?
Data Collection

Student-Qualitative Questionnaire

As mentioned before, the qualitative questionnaire was emailed. Jamie Jensen sent an email out to Humboldt State University social work students, asking for students to partake in the questionnaire. The student would open up an email with an introduction of who I am, an introduction of the project, and a “thank you” for their participation. The next part of the email was a webpage that has an electronic form of the informed consent form. Once the student agreed to participate I was informed and the student was sent a second email with the link to the Survey Monkey online questionnaire.

Professionals- Interviews

As for the interviews, I sent out 10 emails asking a variety of people who have been identified as bilingual social workers to participate. The hope was to interview 3-5 people to obtain a better understanding of what bilingual individuals are going through within their agency.
RESULTS

Anticipated Results

I initially anticipated that I would have had enough time to create a fully functional website. However, after much consideration, I now have to take a step back and realize that this project will be an ongoing one. I have planted the seed, but the people who will come after me have the ability to take care of the seed and watch it grow. I will be creating a mock webpage that will use the data that was collected by the participants. My vision is that the webpage would be broken down by county, and each county would be broken down into sub-sections. These sub-sections will include: names of bilingual service providers, names of translators, templates for pamphlets in Spanish, forms or resources to properly translate legal documentation, and other resources. I will create the framework for my vision in hopes that another graduate student will take on this project to create the fully functioning webpage.

As for the data, I anticipate that many of the students would state that their internships do in fact utilize their bilingual skills. I also anticipate that students may not feel comfortable to provide such services because they are often the only ones that are capable of doing so in their internship or their workplace. I anticipate that the professional social workers who I planned to interview would talk about many of the challenges that they are faced with and the fact that the work that they do is rewarding.
Online Questionnaire

Out of the 48 students from whole social work program who are considered “Latino/Hispanic,” only 15 students responded to her email. Out of those 15, only 14 students wanted to be contacted by me. Out of those 14 students, only nine signed an informed consent form. Out of those nine participants, only four have responded to the online questionnaire.

The first question on the questionnaire asked respondents to “identify which services area they would like to work in after they graduate from the Bachelor or Master’s program from Humboldt State University.” The respondents stated that they would like to work in Domestic Violence, Mental Health, Medical Social Worker, and Child Welfare Services.

The second question asked respondents to “identify their ability to read, write, and/or speak in Spanish.” Three out of four responded that they were comfortable with their ability to read, write, and/or speak in Spanish. One respondent stated that they understand “conversational Spanish. I can read some articles in Spanish, but will always run into words that I do not know. I speak very little Spanish.”

For the third question, I asked the respondents they if they were “utilizing bilingual skills in the agency that they are interning and/or working for? And if they were, at what capacity?” One respondent stated that they had volunteered for an agency in Humboldt County. They had participated at a local event for this agency. They mentioned that were challenged to find the correct words when speaking about Domestic Violence with Spanish speaking people. Another respondent mentioned that they were
translating, creating flyers, and helping Spanish speaking families. The last respondent said that they were not utilizing their bilingual skills. The last respondent chose to skip the question.

The fourth question asked participants, “Do you feel competent enough to utilize your bilingual skills in a professional level? (i.e. Translating paperwork, talking to a client, or writing a report in Spanish) Please describe.” All four respondents stated that they felt that they could work on their Spanish. They mention their hesitation to utilize their skills, since their Spanish is conversational Spanish and that their vocabulary skill is limited. In addition, a respondent mentioned that they are unsure on how to properly translate terminology in Spanish.

The fifth question asked participants, “What do you feel you need as a student/intern/employee to help you utilize your bilingual skills? Please explain.” Two students stated that they would like the social work program to help them translate and comprehend social work terms in both English and Spanish. Respondents would also benefit from the university to encouraging Spanish-speaking students to utilize their skills in their areas of interests. Another student mentioned that they would like an online class or forum for students to help each other use their bilingual skills.

The sixth question asked participants, “If you were given the opportunity to have a bilingual resource webpage specific to social workers, what do you envision the webpage to look like and how should it be utilized? Please explain.” One respondent stated that they would like to see a link where they are able to use to have social work terminology translated. Another mentioned that they would envision the webpage to have
a page where they can try to locate jobs for Spanish speaking social workers. They would like to see a link to a forum where students could talk to each other, to address questions or issues in a culturally competent way. The respondent would like to the webpage to have trainings and information on bilingual social workers best practice.

The seventh question was two-fold which asked participants, “Has your agency trained you/prepared you to work with Spanish speaking clients? Please explain. If you use your skills, do you receive any compensation regarding your bilingual skills?” Most of the respondents answered that they had not received any proper training or prepared them to work with Spanish speaking clients. Two out of the four respondents stated that they did not receive any compensation for using their bilingual skills. One respondent omitted from answering the questions. The last respondent states that even though they haven’t received any proper training, they were hired after finishing their internship, and are now receiving pay for their work.

The eighth question asked participants, “What field agency resources are available to you in Spanish that you are able to provide to your Spanish speaking clients? Please explain.” One respondent was unsure of what agency resources were available. Another respondent stated that there are handout and information on the agency and another mentioned that they too had pamphlets and applications in Spanish. Lastly, one of respondents answered that they had two Spanish-speaking advocates who worked within the agency, but was not aware of any other resources beyond that.

The ninth question asked participants, “Have you ever been used as a translator or interpreter in the agency that you currently are interning with or work for? If yes, please
explain.” Two out of the four respondents stated that they had not been used as a translator or interpreter in their agency, but had been used as a translator in other ways by other places. One respondent stated that they had not been used as a translator this year for their current agency. The last respondent is providing translation services during medical examinations, translation for staff, and they are translating handouts and flyers into Spanish.

The last question of the questionnaire asked participants, “What challenges or barriers have you faced thus far in your agency as a bilingual social worker? Please explain. One respondent stated that their biggest barrier is facing the uncertainty of translating terminology appropriately. In addition, they were asked to translate paperwork, which would have taken time away from their position as a social work intern; however, the supervisor later realized that it was not the student’s place to do the translation, that it was the student’s job to do their duties as an intern. Another respondent answered that it was difficult time for them to be an outsider and working for a community that that they had not bonded with. Another barrier that they experienced is that they don’t have the ability to use their skills, other than with their partner. Lastly, one respondent answered that they felt that their barrier was not being able to fully connect families to services, since some service providers do not have bilingual services.
**Professional Interviews**

As for the interviews, I emailed about 10 social workers that I am aware of who are bilingual in the Mendocino and Lake County area. Out of those 10 emails that were sent, I only received one response. However, due to some scheduling issues, the individual who did respond initially was unable to meet with me. The lesson that I learned here is that when trying to have people participate in an interview it would be best if I have people scheduled for the interviews months ahead of time. Social workers in my area are extremely busy and with hectic schedules.

**Mock Webpage**

After receiving the information that was provided to be by the respondents I was able to create the mock webpage. The following images depict what the mock webpage could potentially look like.
Figure 1 shows what the potential main webpage could look like. On the left side there is a table of contents, which has been broken down to information for bilingual social workers, information on Northern and Southern California counties, and so forth. In addition, it has links to trainings and other articles that students would find beneficial.
Figure 2: Terminology page

Figure 2 illustrates the area of the mock webpage in which students will be able to help each other with documents or words that need to be translated in Spanish to English and vice versa. This is also the area in which students will be able to comment about the use of the word or words with their clients.
Figure 3: Faculty pages for bilingual skills

Figure 3 is the page in which all of Humboldt State University Social Work program staff and faculty will be showcased. However, in this page, I envision that the staff and faculty indicate which second language they know and comprehend. I believe making it easier for students to access those individuals when they have questions in regards to terminology or other issues that may pertain to a certain community.
Figure 4: Bilingual resources per county

Figure 4 breaks down the Northern California counties. In this page, there will be even more detail per county. My vision for this page would be that each county would be easily accessible and within each county there be contact information on bilingual social workers within the different fields. This tool would be helpful for students who are currently in the program and those who have since graduated.
Figure 5: Bilingual Resources per county continued

Figure 5 shows the Southern California Counties. Much like Figure 4, each county will be represented and each county will indicate which social workers provide bilingual services and what agencies provide services other than English, as well.

Figure 6: Bilingual Trainings page
Figure 6 is the page that will have the upcoming trainings and news articles that are important to social work, specifically for bilingual social workers.

Figure 7: Sharing Resources page

Figure 7 demonstrates the page in which people will be able to upload resources that will help other students and professionals.
DISCUSSION

Rationale or Significance

The project is relevant to social work and social work practice because there is a demand for bilingual social workers who are properly trained and certified. In addition, there is a need for bilingual resources in multiple agencies. This project could be the first stepping-stone to having the conversations about promoting bilingualism in the social work program at Humboldt State University.

Ethical Considerations

As I worked on this project I came to realize a lot of my own biases. I had to relearn that Latinos are a diverse and complicated cultural background. I also realized that this project could have been handled differently and I could have input of former Humboldt State University social work students. After reviewing my work, I think it would have been essential to have integrated more of an input of the social work faculty. Overall, with the time that has been allocated I am proud of the work that I have done. It is important that this work does not stop here and that it continues and that Spanish is not the only language that is represented on the website.
**Sustainability Plan**

This project is twofold. The first part of this project comprises of the questionnaire for HSU students and the interviews for the professional bilingual social workers. The second portion of the project consists of creating a mock webpage with information and resources that individuals would utilize in their school as well as in their profession.

In order to get my project going, I thought long and hard how I would get my point across and how data would support my point. I thought to myself what better way than to ask the source, the students. I believe that the students are aware of what their needs are and what they would find beneficial for them when looking to access bilingual resources for themselves or the potential clients in the future.

I developed questions in early December of 2014 and went back in forth on what information I really wanted from the students. I worked with my committee and other colleagues to see if my questions were leading me to the information I needed. Once I received feedback from my committee, I began to integrate the information and was able to complete the questions by late January 2015. As for the mock website, my ultimate goal is that once I received the responses from the students during the month of February 2015 that I would have the month of March to complete the website. I wanted to make sure that answers that I received would be incorporated into the mock webpage.
Table 1. Master Project Sustainability Plan – Year Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component /Method</th>
<th>Action Steps</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group</td>
<td>Set up focus groups: Time and location</td>
<td>October 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collect data from evaluations that have been submitted after the focus groups</td>
<td>November 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop Website/Publish Website</td>
<td>Sort through data</td>
<td>December 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Talk with IT/staff who developed the Social Work webpage</td>
<td>January 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Begin developing website</td>
<td>February 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Publish website</td>
<td>April 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Project Limitations

The initial limitation of this project is trying to obtain enough information for the project. There is a lack of research on the needs of bilingual social workers. This has made the project much more difficult than what I anticipated. However, this provides me a better picture of the research that needs to be done in the future. It is essential that more research be done in order to allocate funds to schools and to agencies, which need to train and certify their Spanish-speaking students/workers.

Another limitation that has hindered this project is time is to be able to gather information while trying to implement a full functioning webpage. However, due to the
lack of time, my project will be limited to obtaining crucial information and creating a mock webpage. It is my hope that this project will interest another graduate student, who will then be able to implement a fully functional bilingual resource webpage.

Overall, there was a small sample size of students (n=4) who participated in the online questionnaire and I was unable to reach my original goal (n=48). I would have preferred to have a bigger pool of respondents, but the individuals who did respond provided valuable information and insight to what they would like to see in the future. Students do want to use their bilingual skills to be advocates for a variety of people.

Lastly, even though I was unable to have any bilingual social workers participate in the interview portion of this project, I did learn a lesson. The lesson that I learned is that start early with those conversation and potential dates and times with people you would like to interview.

**Summary**

The project intended to gather information from Humboldt State University social work students about what they believe they would like to see in a fully functioning webpage. The information that I gathered has helped me create the mock webpage, which will be used as a reference for future graduates to take on. My hope is that this project and the data that I have collected will emphasize to the Humboldt State’s social work program the importance of having support, resources, and proper certification for their bilingual social work students.
As a bilingual student who graduated from the Humboldt State University BASW program in 2012, I felt that I did not receive proper training and education to use my bilingual skills in a professional manner. I take responsibility for not taking the initiative of trying to obtain Spanish as a minor, but then again, if the curriculum would have already been put in place within the social work program, I wouldn’t have to take on more units and spend another year in school to get my degree. My hope now as a graduate student would be that bilingual students have the proper training that they could utilize in their future careers. As bilingual social workers, we need proper training to make sure that we are able to use theories, evidence based practices, and any therapeutic approach in both English and in Spanish.
REFERENCES


APPENDICES

Appendix A. Online Questionnaire

1. Identify the service area that you would like to work in after graduating from the BASW/MSW program from Humboldt State University. If you have already graduated, indicate the service area you are currently working in.

Domestic Violence
International Aid
Adult Protection Services
Mental Health
Medical Social Worker
School
ICWA
Child Welfare Services
Foster Family Agency
Other (Please specify)

2. Do you have the ability to read, write, and/or speak Spanish?

I can only read in Spanish
I can only write in Spanish
I can only speak in Spanish
I can read, write, and speak Spanish
Other (please specify)

3. Are you currently utilizing your bilingual skills in the agency that you interning/working for? And at what capacity? (ie. Translating, interpretation, etc.) Please describe.

4. Do you feel competent enough to utilize your bilingual skills in a professional level? (ie. Translating, talking to a client, or writing a report in Spanish). Please explain.

5. What do you feel you need as a student/intern/employee to help you utilize your bilingual skills. Please explain.

6. If you were given the opportunity to have a bilingual resource webpage specific to social workers, what do you envision the webpage to look like and how should it be utilized?

7. Has you agency trained you/prepared you to work with Spanish speaking clients? Please explain.
7a. If you use your skills, do you received any compensation regarding your bilingual skills?

8. What field agency resources are available to you in Spanish that you are able to provide to your Spanish speaking clients? Please explain.

9. Have you ever been used as a translator or interpreter in the agency that you currently are interning with or work for? If yes, please explain.

10. What challenges or barriers have you faced thus far in your agency as a bilingual social worker? Please explain.
Appendix B. Interview Questions

1. Could you please identify the service area that you currently work in?

2. Do you have the ability to read, write, and/or speak Spanish?

3. Are you currently utilizing your bilingual skills in the agency that you are interning/working for?

4. Do you feel competent enough to utilize your bilingual skills in a professional level? (i.e. translating paperwork, talking to a client, or writing a report in Spanish.) Could you please explain?

5. What do you feel you need from your employer to help you utilize your bilingual skills within your agency? Could you please explain?

6. If you were given the opportunity to have a bilingual resource webpage specific to social workers, what would you like to see? Could you please explain?

7. Has your agency trained you/prepared you to work with Spanish speaking clients? If yes, how did that look like?

8. What field agency resources are available to you in Spanish that you are able to provide to your Spanish speaking clients? Could you please explain?

9. Have you ever been used as a translator or interpreter in the agency that you currently work for or have worked for in the past? If yes, please explain.

10. What challenges or barriers have you faced thus far in your agency as a bilingual social worker? Could you please explain?
Appendix C. Informed Consent Form for Online Questionnaire

This online survey has been created by Graduate Student a Master’s of Social Work student at Humboldt State University. The questionnaire/survey/interview is a part of a community project that is focused on identifying the needs and wants of bilingual social worker students at Humboldt State University. This survey is completely optional, and you may stop at any time. The following Consent Form is to explain the details about the online survey.

**Informed Consent Form**

**Humboldt State University Social Work Webpage: Bilingual Resources for Social Work Students**

I understand that he/she will answer any questions that may have concerning the investigation or the procedures at any time. I also understand that my participation in any study is entirely voluntary and that I may decline to enter this study or may withdraw from it at any time without jeopardy. I understand that the investigator may terminate my participation in the study at any time.

The online survey will be set up via an online website: Survey Monkey. Filling out the online survey is estimate to be around 10-15 minutes. The purpose of the questionnaire is to begin to understand the needs of social work students who will be utilizing their bilingual skills in their workplace. It will also address what barriers or challenges that have experience thus far in their internships/careers. The questionnaire will consist of a series of questions that will help identify the needs of social work students that will be later addressed in the social work webpage.

The questions will ask Humboldt State University social work students to remember their experiences about interacting with agencies while utilizing their bilingual skills. Direct quotations may be used from the open ended questions. There are no foreseeable risks. However, in order to minimize any potential risks that may arise, you will be informed in the beginning of the questionnaire that you have the right to decline answering a questions, take a break or stop the questionnaire at any time for any reason without penalty.

After the questionnaire is filled out, the graduate student will keep the questionnaires secured on the website ‘Survey Monkey’ protected by a username and password. The responsible investigator will be the only one with access to the data. No names or other identifying information will be asked. The questionnaires will be kept confidential, and will be destroyed May 20th, 2015.

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a participant, any concerns regarding this project, or any dissatisfaction with any part of this study, you may report them—
confidentially, if you wish—to the Dean for Research & Sponsored Programs, Dr. Rhea Williamson at Rhea.Williamson@humboldt.edu or (707) 826-5169.

Contact information of Primary Investigator: Wendy Gonzalez wcg6@humboldt.edu
Contact information of Faculty advisor: Cesar Abarca (707) 826-4448 or Cesar.Abarca@humboldt.edu

Thank you for your participation in this research.

SIGNATURE: ___________________________  DATE: _______________________
Appendix D: Informed Consent Form for Interview

This interview has been created by Graduate Students a Master’s of Social Work student at Humboldt State University. The questionnaire/survey/interview is a part of a community project that is focused on bilingual services/training within your agency. This interview is completely optional, and you may stop at any time. The following Consent Form is to explain the details about the interview.

Informed Consent Form
Humboldt State University Social Work Webpage: Bilingual Resources for Social Work Students

I understand that he/she will answer any questions I may have concerning the investigation or the procedures at any time. I also understand that my participation in any study is entirely voluntary and that I may decline to enter this study or may withdraw from it at any time without jeopardy. I understand that the investigator may terminate my participation in the study at any time.

The interview will be administered by a Master’s Social Work Graduate student. Participating in the interview is voluntary and is estimated to be around 45-60 minutes. This interview will be audiotaped with your approval, but if you decline to be recorded, written notes will be taken. The purpose of the interview is to begin to understand the needs of professional bilingual social workers who are currently or those have in the past utilized their bilingual skills in their workplace. It will also help address what barriers or challenges they have experienced thus far in their careers. The interview will consist of a series of questions that will help identify as mentioned earlier those challenges and how they may or may not have been supported by their agency.

The questions will ask the professional bilingual social workers to remember their experiences about working with agencies while utilizing their bilingual skills. Direct quotations may be used from the open ended questions. There are no foreseeable risks. However, in order to minimize any potential risks that may arise, you will be informed in the beginning of the interview that you have the right to decline answering a questions, take a break or stop the interview at any time for any reason without penalty.

The responsible investigator, Wendy Gonzalez, will be the only person with access to the date collected (interview audio, notes, and transcribed interviews). No personal information will be asked of you. The data collected will be kept confidential, and will be destroyed May 20th, 2015.

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a participant, any concerns regarding this project, or any dissatisfaction with any part of this study, you may report them—
confidentially, if you wish—to the Dean for Research & Sponsored Programs, Dr. Rhea Williamson at Rhea.Williamson@humboldt.edu or (707) 826-5169.

Contact information of Primary Investigator: Wendy Gonzalez wcg6@humboldt.edu
Contact information of Faculty advisor: Cesar Abarca (707) 826-4448 or Cesar.Abarca@humboldt.edu

Thank you for your participation in this research.

SIGNATURE: __________________________     DATE: _______________________
Appendix E. Email Recruitment Letter for Online Survey

Dear Humboldt State University Social Work Student:

I am sending you this email to ask you to voluntarily participate in a research project “Humboldt State University Social Work Webpage: Bilingual Resources for Social Work Students.” The project aims to identify the needs of bilingual social work students and social work professionals who are currently using their bilingual skills in their internship and/or job. My hope is that you are willing to participate in this study.

If you agree to participate, I will send you a link to a SurveyMonkey online questionnaire that should take about 10-15 minutes to complete. In this questionnaire, you will be asked questions about your bilingual skills and how you utilize them in your internship and/or job?

At the end of this email there is further information about your rights as a participant in this research conducted through Humboldt State University. Please make sure to read thoroughly. By agreeing to participate in the study, it will be inferred that you have read the message carefully and understand your rights as a participant.

If you would like to participate, please click on the link provided to you at the end of this email. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me via email or via the phone.

Respectfully,

Wendy Gonzalez

Graduate Student
Department of Social Work
Humboldt State University
Email: wcg6@humboldt.edu
Phone: 424-675-1805
Appendix F: Email Recruitment Letter for Professional Bilingual Social Workers

Dear {Participants Name}:

I am sending you this email to ask you to voluntarily participate in a research project “Humboldt State University Social Work Webpage: Bilingual Resources for Social Work Students.” The project aims to identify the needs of bilingual social work students and social work professionals who are currently using their bilingual skills in their internship and/or job. My hope is that you are willing to participate in this study.

If you agree to participate, I would like to schedule a time to meet with you at your earliest convenience and any means of communication (phone call, Skype, etc.). During this interview, you will be asked questions about your bilingual skills and how you utilize them in your job?

At the end of this email there is further information about your rights as a participant in this research conducted through Humboldt State University. Please make sure to read thoroughly. By agreeing to participate in the study, it will be inferred that you have read the message carefully and understand your rights as a participant.

If you would like to participate, please respond to this email or contact me at the number that I have provided below to schedule a time to do the interview. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me via email or via the phone.

Respectfully,

Wendy Gonzalez

Graduate Student
Department of Social Work
Humboldt State University
Email: wcg6@humboldt.edu
Phone: 424-675-1805