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An Overview of Human Trafficking in the United States

by

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A Capstone Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
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Department of Criminal Justice

College of Liberal Arts

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Abstract

This research paper delves into the multifaceted problem of human trafficking, seeking to provide a comprehensive understanding of its dynamics, root causes, and the myriad challenges associated with combating this serious crime. Drawing on empirical studies and criminological theories, the paper navigates through the factors that contribute to the perpetuation of human trafficking. The study begins by exploring the historical and theoretical contexts that create the demand for trafficked persons and the vulnerabilities that make individuals susceptible to exploitation. Additionally, the paper examines the legal and policy frameworks implemented at the national level to combat human trafficking. It aims to identify gaps and challenges in enforcement, prosecution, and victim protection. It examines the role of law enforcement agencies, non-governmental organizations, and multi-agency collaborations in addressing the nature of human trafficking. Furthermore, the research explores the experiences of trafficked individuals, emphasizing the importance of survivor-centered approaches in rehabilitation and reintegration resources. Overall, this research aims to contribute to the collective efforts to eradicate human trafficking worldwide.

Chapter 1: Human Trafficking and Criminological Theories

Introduction

Human trafficking is a crime against persons that impacts the lives of many people across the world, and in every country and community. Human trafficking, often referred to as modern day slavery, involves the buying and selling of people by a third party for the purpose of exploitation. It can take many forms, including sexual exploitation, labor exploitation, and domestic servitude, and often involves the use of force, coercion, or deception, such as debt bondage, to lure and exploit victims. This illegal trade of people may involve crossing state or country borders, although this is not required in order to be considered human trafficking. Though human trafficking can occur in any community, some communities may be more vulnerable than others and therefore experience more human trafficking. Understanding the factors that may contribute to the prevalence of human trafficking in a specific area is a crucial step towards better preventing and combating human trafficking.

This capstone project will review existing research on human trafficking and explore other concepts that may relate to human trafficking at a community level, with the aim of identifying where further research is needed. The paper will comprise of three different focuses. The first will concentrate on reviewing the prior research on human trafficking and explore how criminological theories can be used to study why human trafficking occurs. The second section will look at current efforts to combat human trafficking and other available resources for human trafficking. The third part will explore data collected about human trafficking victims.

Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is a horrible crime that involves the exploitation of vulnerable people for various purposes such as forced labor or sexual exploitation. Trafficking can happen to

anyone, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status. However, marginalized groups such as immigrants, LGBTQ+ individuals, and people experiencing homelessness may be extra vulnerable to trafficking due to systemic inequalities and discrimination. Due to the underground and illegal nature of the crime, the exact statistics of human trafficking are difficult to determine.

Human trafficking is a serious problem in the United States, with thousands of people being trafficked within the country and across its borders each year. According to the U.S. State Department, between 14,500 and 17,500 people are trafficked into the United States each year, and an estimated 400,000 individuals are currently living in forced labor or forced sexual exploitation situations within the country. Sex trafficking is the most commonly reported type of human trafficking in the United States, followed by labor trafficking and trafficking for the purposes of both labor and sex. Women and children make up the majority of human trafficking victims in the United States, with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children reporting that 1 in 6 endangered runaways were likely victims of sex trafficking in 2020.

It is important to note that these statistics are likely an underestimation of the true scope of human trafficking in the United States. Additionally, human trafficking often goes unreported, and many victims are afraid to come forward due to fear of retaliation from their traffickers. Some victims may not report their trafficking experiences due to a lack of trust in law enforcement or fear of being deported if they are undocumented immigrants.

Criminological Theories

One way to study human trafficking is by examining it through the lens of criminological theories, such as general strain theory, social disorganization theory and routine activities theory. Looking at criminological theories is important because they provide a framework for

understanding why people commit crimes and why crime rates vary across different places and times. These theories can help to identify the underlying causes of crime and to develop effective strategies for preventing and reducing crime. Criminological theories are also important because they inform public policy and criminal justice practices.

By studying criminological theories, researchers and practitioners can gain insights into the complex social, economic, and psychological factors that contribute to criminal behavior. They can use this knowledge to better design interventions that target specific risk factors for crime, such as poverty, drug addiction, and social isolation. For example, theories that focus on how social and economic inequality may be contributing to crime rates may lead policymakers to work on addressing poverty and increasing economic opportunities as a way to reduce crime. Similarly, theories that emphasize the importance of community involvement and social control may lead to the development of community policing programs or restorative justice initiatives. Overall, criminological theories are essential for understanding the complex roots of crime, and they play an important role in forming public policies and criminal justice practices that alleviate key factors driving the crimes.

General Strain Theory

General strain theory is a criminological theory that explains how strain or stress can lead individuals to engage in criminal behavior. According to general strain theory, deviant behavior is the result of demands and circumstances, referred to as strains, that are imposed by society. This theory posits that when individuals experience high levels of strain, they may be more likely to engage in criminal behavior as a means of coping with or relieving that strain. Strains or stressors can be caused by a variety of factors, such as economic hardship, social inequality, discrimination, or personal failures. This can also help explain why certain areas may have

higher rates of crime. For example, if there are not enough job opportunities in a particular area, individuals in that area may experience financial strain due to their inability to earn money legally. In an effort to alleviate this financial strain, they may turn to stealing or mugging as a way to acquire money.

General strain theory suggests that three types of strains are particularly likely to lead to criminal behavior: failure to achieve positively valued goals, such as economic success or social status; removal of positively valued stimuli, such as the loss of a loved one or a job; and presentation of negatively valued stimuli, such as abusive relationships or discrimination. General strain theory also suggests that the likelihood of criminal behavior depends on several factors, such as an individual's coping mechanisms, social support network, and available opportunities for conventional or legal coping strategies. In other words, individuals who lack coping skills, social support, or legitimate opportunities may be more likely to engage in criminal behavior to cope with strains or stressors.

Social Disorganization Theory

Social disorganization theory is a criminological theory that explains how the physical and social characteristics of neighborhoods or communities can influence the prevalence of crime and delinquency. According to social disorganization theory, communities with high levels of poverty, unemployment, residential mobility, and ethnic diversity may experience social disorganization, which can lead to higher crime rates. Social disorganization can occur when a community is unable to maintain social control due to a lack of shared values, social cohesion, and institutional resources. This can result in weakened informal social controls, such as the breakdown of families, churches, and community organizations, as well as a lack of formal social controls, such as a police presence and effective criminal justice system. Social

disorganization theory suggests that when social control is low, there may be less supervision in an area, making it easier for criminal or delinquent behavior to go unnoticed. On the other hand, in areas with high levels of social organization and social control, the increased supervision can help prevent such behavior from occurring. In socially disorganized areas, the lack of supervision may make it easier for crimes like human trafficking to happen, and it may also increase the vulnerability of potential victims.

Overall, social disorganization theory suggests that the physical and social environment of a neighborhood or community can influence an individual's behavior and increase the likelihood of criminal activity. The theory also suggests that interventions that address social disorganization, such as community policing, neighborhood watch programs, and community organizing, can reduce crime rates by strengthening social cohesion and informal social control mechanisms.

Routine Activities Theory

Routine activities theory is a criminological theory that proposes that crime is more likely to occur when three elements are present: a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian. According to routine activities theory, crime is not primarily caused by factors such as poverty or social inequality, but rather by the convergence of motivated offenders and suitable targets in the absence of effective guardianship. A motivated offender is someone who has the desire and the ability to commit a crime, while a suitable target is an object, person, or place that is attractive to the offender. A capable guardian, on the other hand, is someone or something that can prevent the crime from occurring or reduce the risk of harm. For example, if a thief sees an unlocked car with valuable items in it, and there are no police officers or security guards around to deter them, then the opportunity for crime is present. The routine activities

theory suggests that if any of these three elements is missing, the likelihood of a crime occurring is reduced.

In sum, routine activities theory emphasizes the importance of situational factors in the occurrence of crime and suggests that crime prevention efforts should focus on reducing opportunities for crime by increasing the presence of capable guardians, reducing the availability of suitable targets, and discouraging potential offenders.

Additional Criminological Theories

There are many other theories that can be included in the study of human trafficking. Theories of prostitution are also important to look at. This includes various theories and perspectives that seek to understand the social, economic, and cultural factors associated with voluntary sex work. These theories often focus on why individuals become involved in prostitution, how the practice is organized, and the social implications of sex work. Studying theories of why voluntary sex work occurs can also provide insight into why involuntary sex work or human trafficking occurs. Demand theory, economic and social exchange theory, and labeling theory can be applicable.

In the context of criminal justice, demand theory tries to explain the demand for illegal goods and services, such as human trafficking. This theory focuses on the motivations and factors that cause people to engage in illegal behaviors or to seek out illegal goods and services. In the case of human trafficking, the demand for labor or sex work provides a financial incentive for a trafficker.

Economic and social exchange theory is a perspective that looks at the principles of exchange, reciprocity, and mutual benefit in social interactions. This theory aims to explain how

individuals and groups make decisions or create relationships based on the potential rewards or costs associated with their actions. Economic and social exchange theory have the foundational idea that human interactions are influenced by the pursuit of self-interest and the desire to maximize personal or collective benefits. In the lens of human trafficking, traffickers profit from the trafficking of others. Offenders view the economic gain from trafficking to be greater than the crime of trafficking (Vo, 2016). This means that the victimization of others is less important when compared to the potential financial gain.

Labeling theory is a sociological perspective within the field of criminal justice that looks at the role of societal reactions in the creation and continuation of deviance and criminal behavior. This theory suggests that individuals become criminals or engage in deviant behavior due to the labels that society attaches to them. The process of labeling can lead individuals to adopt certain roles and identities that are associated with criminal or deviant behavior (Bernburg et al. 2006). With prostitution and human trafficking, labeling individuals with negative stigmas such as “whore” may cause someone to be more likely to continue engaging in those behaviors. This applies both to those engaging in voluntary sex work and those being trafficked. Internalization of those labels can lead individuals to believe that they are only valuable when providing the associated services which can make it difficult to ask for help when needed.

Integrating the Criminological Theories

Social disorganization theory and general strain theory seem to be closely related, with various factors appearing to be highly correlated. For instance, three elements of social disorganization in a community - poverty, heterogeneity, and transiency - all appear to be connected to sources of strain as defined by general strain theory. Poverty may mean that individuals in an area do not have opportunities or legitimate ways to relieve strain, but it may

also be a source of strain itself. Heterogeneity may also be a source of strain for individuals in a community if there is tension or conflict between groups. Transiency can contribute to the social disorganization of a neighborhood, but it may also increase strain or potentially remove opportunities from an area depending on the population change. Similarly, different aspects of general strain theory may also affect social disorganization factors. A lack of opportunities may cause individuals to move away or potentially commit a crime to relieve strain, leading to incarceration, which can impact the levels of transiency in an area.

In summary, the factors that contribute to social disorganization theory and general strain theory may be multicollinear, and the two theories can work together to provide a more complete understanding of how environmental and social factors can increase the likelihood of criminal behavior. Social disorganization theory focuses on the environmental and social factors that create conditions that are conducive to crime, while general strain theory explains how various factors (strains) may drive individuals to engage in deviant or delinquent behavior as a means of relieving that strain. Given these overlaps, it makes sense to integrate social disorganization theory and strain theory into a single theory that explains how both environmental and social factors can increase an area's vulnerability and the likelihood of its residents engaging in criminal behavior.

Additionally, routine activities theory can be incorporated. Although routine activities theory suggests that crime occurs when there is a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian rather than occurring due to social or economic factors, routine activities theory can be paired with social disorganization theory and general strain theory. When combined, social disorganization theory and general strain theory can explain how someone may become a motivated offender or a suitable target due to the social and economic factors in their

area. Social disorganization theory and social control also explain why there may be an absence of capable guardians in a community. Together, these three theories can be used to look at how environmental and societal factors can facilitate the amount of crime that occurs in an area.

Literature Review

A study by Cockbain and Bowers (2019) examined the types of human trafficking that occur in the UK and the potential factors that may help to predict the occurrence of each type. They focused on sex trafficking, labor trafficking, and domestic servitude and analyzed data from the UK National Referral Mechanism, the agency responsible for handling all human trafficking cases in the UK. They examined differences in victim demographics, trafficking processes, and law enforcement responses to cases of each type and used statistical analyses to identify any significant differences and to determine if certain factors seemed to be predictive of a particular type of human trafficking. The study found that age, gender, and nation of origin were some factors that had significant differences between trafficking types and had strong relationships with the type of trafficking. Other factors that were found to have significant differences between trafficking types included the agency identifying the case, the location of case identification, and the month of identification. These findings support the idea that environmental and social factors can impact human trafficking.

In an article by Farrell (2009), the responses of state and local law enforcement to a survey on their perspectives and views about human trafficking were examined to determine if certain factors might prevent the identification of human trafficking cases. Factors such as population size, proximity to borders, and poverty levels in an area could affect the likelihood of identifying a human trafficking case in that area. The survey covered perspectives on human trafficking, law enforcement responses, case identification, and challenges. The survey was sent

to leaders at various levels of law enforcement, including state and local levels. By analyzing the data collected, Farrell (2009) found that many agencies in smaller areas were less likely to have a specific response to human trafficking and were less likely to see it as a problem in their area. Farrell (2009) also found that many agencies believed that human trafficking was primarily a problem at the federal level rather than a problem for local law enforcement. Based on these different factors, Farrell (2009) concluded that law enforcement agencies need to consider the specific factors and organization levels in their area when developing a response to human trafficking in order to be more effective. These findings support aspects of social disorganization theory, which suggests that areas with less organization in the community and law enforcement agencies may be more prone to human trafficking.

In Franchino-Olsen's (2021) article, the author discusses how various criminological theories can be applied to issues of domestic minor sex trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of children. The article covers a range of theories, including general strain theory, and also touches on social control and environmental factors. While social disorganization theory is not explicitly mentioned, it is similar to other theories discussed in the article such as the age-graded theory of social control, ecological model, ecodevelopmental theory, and multilevel models. The article suggests that there is a connection between social disorganization and general strain theory in the context of human trafficking, as it presents a review of the relevance of different theories to this issue.

In their study, Jiang and Lafree (2017) examine the relationship between social control and human trafficking. To do so, they analyze existing data on human trafficking and explore the potential link between levels of social control and this issue. The researchers use trade openness, which reflects the degree of globalization, as a measure of social control. They propose that an

initial increase in globalization and trade leads to a decrease in social control, but that as these factors continue to grow, they eventually lead to an increase in social control. Through their use of random, fixed effects, and negative binomial regression analyses, Jiang and Lafree (2017) find evidence to support their hypothesis of a curvilinear relationship between trade openness and social control in relation to human trafficking.

The second focus of Jiang and Lafree's (2017) study was to explore the potential connection between their findings on social control and human trafficking. Based on social disorganization theory, they hypothesized that the initial decrease in social control resulting from increased trade openness may lead to an increase in human trafficking. To test this hypothesis, the researchers created a model with trade openness as the independent variable and human trafficking rates as the dependent variable. They used various regression analyses, including semiparametric fixed effects, fixed effects, random effects, negative binomial, and fixed effects negative binomial, to examine their model. The evidence from their analyses supported their hypothesis and suggests that there is a curvilinear relationship between some levels of trade openness and higher levels of human trafficking. These findings provide support for the application of social disorganization theory to the issue of human trafficking and suggest that other theories that involve social control such as routine activities theory may also be applicable.

Application to human trafficking

The article by Hepburn and Simon (2010) can be used to support the application of social disorganization theory, general strain theory, and routine activities theory to the issue of human trafficking. The article examines the impact of natural disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina, on human trafficking in an area. Natural disasters often destroy infrastructure and alter the social structure of a community, which can reduce supervision and increase the need for physical labor.

The damage to social networks and important community buildings, such as schools and churches, can lead to social disorganization and reduced social control as places for social interaction and support are lost. This may also increase the number of opportunities for crime to occur. Natural disasters may also create new strains, such as the lack of adequate shelter and other resources like food, which may make individuals more willing or inclined to engage in criminal behavior in order to reduce these strains.

Kabbash and Ronis (2021) studied human trafficking and social institutions in 60 different countries and found that economic, social, and criminal justice variables were not significant in predicting human trafficking. However, the researchers also noted that the reported data may not accurately reflect the actual prevalence of human trafficking in a given country, possibly due to issues with the collection and reporting of human trafficking cases. These issues may be connected to differences in economic, social, and criminal justice factors across countries, and may include factors such as police training, police reliability, legislation, victim resources, and cultural beliefs or practices. Social disorganization theory may be applicable in this context because the resources necessary to effectively identify, intervene, and report human trafficking cases may be less available or accessible in areas with greater overall social disorganization, such as those with higher levels of poverty. Areas with more social disorganization were also less likely to have specialized human trafficking units in their law enforcement agencies (Jurek & King, 2020).

Mletzko et al. (2018) conducted a study on identifying geographic patterns of human trafficking in an urban area, specifically Austin, Texas, over a three-year period. The researchers analyzed the number of human trafficking offenses in different neighborhoods defined by census blocks, as well as the situational, geographical, and socioeconomic factors that differed between

neighborhoods. The results showed that there were distinct geographic patterns to human trafficking cases, with areas that were located closer to the interstate, had many cheap motels, and had higher levels of concentrated disadvantage, experienced higher levels of human trafficking. The researchers concluded that their findings align with criminological theories that link the environment to crime and support the application of social disorganization theory and general strain theory to understanding human trafficking prevalence in an area.

Discussion

Based on social disorganization theory and strain theory, new policies or programs should first aim to provide basic resources, such as food, shelter, and clothes, to those in need. Many victims enter into human trafficking to provide for themselves or their families. Situations such as homelessness may also increase vulnerability to being victimized. In the absence of resources available to meet basic human needs, individuals will often become involved in risky environments and situations in order to fulfill their needs.

Conclusion

Future research in this area could explore the relationship between economic gain and the risk of arrest for human traffickers compared to the economic gain and risk of arrest for other crimes that may alleviate strain, such as burglary. This type of research could help determine if there are factors that increase the likelihood of someone becoming involved in human trafficking rather than other crimes. Future research could also potentially involve qualitative analysis of interviews with those convicted of trafficking and survivors of trafficking. Such interviews could provide valuable insights into the issues surrounding human trafficking on both sides of the problem. Including the experiences of those involved in discussions about human trafficking

policies is a crucial step towards more effective responses and interventions for human trafficking.

Chapter 2: Anti-Human Trafficking Resources in Communities

Introduction

Human trafficking often occurs within smaller regions, such as cities or neighborhoods, in addition to involving the movement of individuals across countries or states. This local human trafficking is a persistent problem in many communities, and it can occur in urban, suburban, and rural areas regardless of socioeconomic status and other factors. However, the issues related to human trafficking may differ between communities and have different impacts, so the responses to human trafficking must also vary. There are many ways that a community's specific attributes can affect the response to human trafficking. The number and type of resources available, community relationships, and agency collaboration can all be important. Agencies that may be involved in responding to human trafficking include law enforcement, homeless shelters, women's safe houses, courts, and public health programs. These types of service providers need to be aware of how human trafficking presents in their local area and how to respond in the most beneficial way. The relationship between law enforcement and a community is also crucial in anti-trafficking efforts. There may also be barriers to effective anti-trafficking efforts within a community.

This paper will first look at the current research on what an effective response to human trafficking involves, and then will examine types of community resources that may be available, law enforcement involvement, and community obstacles in the fight against human trafficking. These factors will also be beneficial in identifying ways that communities may better prevent and intervene in cases of human trafficking, as well as how to best provide support for victims of human trafficking in their community.

Anti-Trafficking Efforts

Anti-trafficking organizations typically focus on one stage of human trafficking and are often based on the "three P's": prevention, protection, and prosecution. Prevention involves providing resources and services that aim to stop potential traffickers and assist vulnerable people before any trafficking occurs. This can include things such as homeless shelters and programs to educate people on human trafficking. Protection refers to the ability to help keep victims safe after trafficking and to assist them in their recovery, including physical resources such as housing or clothing and services such as therapy. Prosecution involves strengthening existing policies and creating new measures that aid in the prosecution of traffickers, as most trafficking cases that are reported do not result in a conviction due to a variety of reasons. In cases where evidence has been tampered with by traffickers, it can be difficult to secure a conviction for trafficking charges. In these cases, traffickers may only be convicted of tampering with evidence and may receive sentences as short as one year. Those who are convicted of human trafficking typically receive sentences of three to eight years, depending on factors such as the age of the victim, involvement of kidnapping, or rape. Even the longer human trafficking sentences are often shorter than sentences for comparable felonies that do not involve human trafficking. Being able to convict human traffickers and give them an appropriate length sentence is important to both deter people from trafficking and prevent traffickers from reoffending.

Community Resources

Community resources are the assets and services that are available to individuals and groups living within a specific geographic area. These resources can include physical resources like public parks, libraries, community centers, and transportation systems, or social resources like community organizations, religious institutions, and volunteer groups. Community resources

are an important aspect of social infrastructure, as they help to provide individuals with various tools and support services they need to thrive within their local community. By providing access to resources like education, healthcare, and social services, community resources can help to address issues like poverty, inequality, and social isolation, and promote the overall well-being of the community.

Community resources play an important role in anti-trafficking efforts because they can address issues that may be specific to their local area. There are many different types of resources that are already present in a community that can be useful, including social work organizations, domestic abuse intervention centers, public health agencies, youth services, and religious organizations. These resources can be altered to best address the needs of the community they serve as problems arise.

Resources for Prevention and Intervention

Community resources for crime prevention and intervention include the programs, services, and initiatives that are designed to reduce crime and promote safety within a local community. These resources may be provided by various organizations, including law enforcement agencies, community groups, and nonprofit organizations. One example of a resource that could be beneficial is education. Educating the general public on human trafficking, and how to recognize it is an important part of preventing it. This would help prepare people to spot the signs of grooming or manipulation and tell them who to reach out to if they suspect trafficking. By providing these resources, communities can work together to prevent crime and promote safety, building a stronger and more resilient community.

Resources for Survivors

Resources for survivors are designed to provide support and resources to those who have been affected by crime, including counseling, advocacy, and crisis intervention. Survivors of human trafficking may need many different types of resources to help them readjust to everyday life and establish themselves. These resources can come from established organizations and community groups with few alterations to fit the needs of survivors.

Non-profit organizations and social work organizations can be helpful in supporting trafficking victims and raising awareness in the community (Okech et al., 2012). These types of organizations often try to provide services that are necessary for those in need but may not always be available to them. These organizations often focus on meeting the basic physical needs of trafficking victims, such as providing food and clothing, and therefore primarily contribute to the protection aspect of anti-trafficking efforts. They may also be considered as part of the prevention category due to their efforts in educating the public and raising awareness about trafficking (Hodge, 2014).

In a paper by Bernadin (2010), it is demonstrated that Christian organizations can serve as a type of community resource for anti-trafficking efforts. Bernadin (2010) examines the various ways that Christian organizations, such as the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops/Migration and Refugee Services, support anti-trafficking efforts by providing resources and assistance to victims of human trafficking. These organizations focus on helping foreign victims of trafficking by offering them places to stay and helping them obtain refugee status, which gives them access to other public resources and support during legal proceedings against traffickers. The Covenant House is another example of a religious organization that works to raise awareness about human

trafficking and provide victims with housing, food, and medical services. While these examples operate at a national level, local religious clubs or church groups could provide similar services at a community level.

Walsh (2016) suggests that domestic abuse intervention centers could be used to help victims of sex trafficking, as these centers already exist in many communities. This approach would allow for the extension of an existing resource rather than creating new ones specifically for human trafficking victims. Human trafficking and domestic abuse have some similarities, such as the use of coercive control and other abusive and manipulative behaviors, as well as the tendency for society to blame the victim and for the victim to not see themselves as a victim. Domestic abuse resources that use victim-centered approaches and address the abuse and trauma experienced by each person could potentially be used to help human trafficking victims, who may have experienced similar types of abuse. These resources often also provide basic needs such as food and shelter, which would also be necessary for human trafficking victims. Using domestic abuse resources in this way would be more efficient and cost-effective than creating new resources specifically for human trafficking victims.

In an article by Sprang & Cole (2018), the authors examine the various factors that impact minors who are victims of sex trafficking, and the resources that are necessary to support them. They note that it is common for minors who are victims of sex trafficking to have been trafficked by a family member, which can result in more severe trauma and psychological issues due to the betrayal of trust. These victims may also require additional services because of their age and the involvement of their family. In these cases, community resources such as child protective services, schools, juvenile justice, and healthcare may be necessary, in addition to other resources like mental health care and physical resources like food and clothing.

Law Enforcement

The relationship between law enforcement and communities is also an important part of anti-trafficking efforts. Law enforcement is often involved in intervening in human trafficking cases and plays a crucial role in prosecuting human trafficking cases, although the likelihood of prosecution is low, due to challenges in identifying victims and traffickers. Law enforcement may also be guided by policies and laws that are more focused on broader, federal or state-level issues rather than specific community needs. Increasing collaboration between communities and law enforcement can improve the identification of human trafficking cases and the application of federal policies at a local level, as well as address the unique needs of different communities. There also needs to be trust between law enforcement agencies and community members. This trust can help ensure that law enforcement will be notified when human trafficking is suspected.

Farrell (2009) investigated how law enforcement responds to human trafficking at both the state and local levels, and the importance of taking local context into account when developing anti-trafficking measures. Farrell (2009) found that various factors, such as population size, proximity to borders, and poverty levels, can impact the effectiveness of anti-trafficking efforts within a community. Because each community has its own unique characteristics, Farrell (2009) concludes that law enforcement must consider these characteristics when planning their anti-trafficking strategies in order to be more effective.

Jurek and King (2020) examine how human trafficking cases are identified and investigated. They determined that established responses to human trafficking are important for case identification. This includes having specialized human trafficking units to deal with the case. They found that social disorganization and the size of the law enforcement organization were significant to whether or not a specialized human trafficking unit was created. Communities

with higher levels of social disorganization were less likely to have specialized human trafficking units. Larger agencies were more likely to have specialized units.

Anti-trafficking efforts can be carried out at both the federal and community levels. In an article by Okech et al. (2012), it is explained how federal legislation can shape local law enforcement responses to human trafficking. One example is the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, which follows a prevention, protection, and prosecution approach. While the TVPA has helped to raise awareness and improve identification of trafficking cases, it has had a particularly significant impact in the areas of protection and prosecution. The TVPA created the T-visa, which allows foreign trafficking victims to remain in the United States after being rescued from a trafficking operation, rather than being immediately deported. These victims can access the same services as other refugees and may eventually become residents of the US. The T-visa is important because it provides protections for trafficking victims, regardless of their nationality, and can encourage more cases of human trafficking to be reported within a community. The TVPA also sought to increase prosecution by making human trafficking a federal offense and increasing the length of sentences. While the TVPA is a federal act, it does have an impact on law enforcement at the community level, as it can affect how local law enforcement investigates human trafficking cases.

The study by Dianiska et al. (2022) looked at interactions of law enforcement investigators and minors suspected of being involved in human trafficking. They had participants respond to a survey asking about practices when interviewing victims as well as training and knowledge. Investigators were also surveyed on evidence needed for the prosecution of traffickers. The researchers found that there was a lack of knowledge on adolescent development in investigators. This may make it more difficult to interview minor victims as they may respond

differently than an adult victim might. The survey showed that investigators looked at the minor's background, behavior, and physical state as indicators of potentially being a victim and were knowledgeable about indicators that have previously been identified by empirical research. Stereotypical characteristics that are not empirically supported were less reported by investigators. Challenges included the willingness of the victim to be interviewed or cooperate with authorities as well as distrust of the authorities. The type of relationship between the minor victim and the trafficker was also found to be a challenge for investigators. Overall, they found that investigators with training that covers sex trafficking, indicators for victimization, and adolescent development were better at interviewing minor victims of human trafficking. Learning what types of evidence are most important for prosecuting sex trafficking cases also led to better case outcomes.

Specialized Human Trafficking Courts

Human trafficking courts, also known as specialized human trafficking or commercial sex exploitation courts, are court systems designed to handle cases related to human trafficking and commercial sex exploitation. These courts focus on addressing the complicated issues surrounding human trafficking. Human trafficking courts are staffed by judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and support personnel with experience in human trafficking cases. They are trained to understand the specific dynamics of trafficking and the vulnerabilities of victims that are important to solving these cases.

Human trafficking courts prioritize the rights and well-being of the trafficking victims taking a human centered approach. They aim to create an environment in which victims feel safe and supported while participating in the legal process necessary to prosecute traffickers. These courts often collaborate with various agencies, including law enforcement, social services, victim

support organizations, and immigration authorities to provide comprehensive support to victims and ensure a coordinated response to cases. Working with social services, they try to help victims with rehabilitation and support. The specialized structure and operations of human trafficking courts may vary from one jurisdiction to another, depending on local laws and resources. Ultimately, the goal of these specialized courts is to combat human trafficking, protect victims, and ensure that those responsible for these heinous crimes face appropriate legal consequences (Stephens, 2020).

Godoy et al. (2022) studied literature on specialty courts for adolescents impacted by commercial sex exploitation. They evaluated forty articles on specialty commercial sex exploitation courts and found seven main differences. Components of commercial sex exploitation courts include trauma-informed protocols, assessment of risks and needs, behavior monitoring, and connections to specialized resources for victims. Commercial sex exploitation courts also provide training on commercial sex exploitation, multisystem collaboration, and interpersonal relationships. Overall, they found that these courts were beneficial to providing victims with a better criminal justice system experience than traditional courts (Godoy et al., 2022).

Survivors and Criminal Records

Due to the illegality of prostitution, many victims of human trafficking may receive criminal charges for being involved in commercial sex acts or other crimes even when it is against their will. The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA, 2000) aims to protect trafficking victims from legal issues as well as better prosecute traffickers and train law enforcement to handle human trafficking cases. However, research has shown that many survivors are still failed by the system. Mutter (2018) looked at the criminalization of sex

trafficking survivors in D.C. The study found that despite legal protections such as the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (2000), human trafficking survivors are often arrested and charged for participating in commercial sex. These survivors are deemed to be criminals, rather than receiving the help they need. Mutter (2018) found that the fear of prosecution may also prevent trafficking victims from seeking help from law enforcement.

Owens (2020) explains the need for widespread vacatur laws for human trafficking survivors. Vacatur laws allow for the criminal charges against human trafficking victims to be annulled. A criminal record is often a barricade to being able to recover from being trafficked. Criminal records can prevent someone from obtaining important public resources or things such as housing or employment. Vacatur laws would also allow victims to move past their criminal records without the cost that may be associated with expungement (Kimpel, 2022). However, both expungement and vacatur laws would be beneficial to survivors of human trafficking who have been charged for their involvement in crimes.

Obstacles for Anti-Trafficking Efforts

One major problem in existing human trafficking research is the narrow scope of the field and the use of unreliable or inaccurate measures of human trafficking in a given area. An article by Kleemans (2011) discusses the narrow focus of human trafficking research, which has traditionally centered on sex trafficking and the victims of sex trafficking. The article notes that human trafficking research has become more comprehensive in recent years, with some studies examining a broad range of topics: the overall processes and procedures of human trafficking operations, victim willingness to make a statement, difficulties in law enforcement investigations of human trafficking cases, financial incentives and distribution in human trafficking, and the economic sectors that may be more closely tied to non-sexual exploitation forms of human

trafficking. However, individual studies in these topics are not sufficient, and further research is needed to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the full range of experiences that encompass human trafficking (Kleemans, 2011). Research by Hodge (2014) emphasizes the importance of considering labor trafficking and the experiences of non-female victims in anti-trafficking efforts and research. Labor trafficking has often been overlooked in research and intervention design, which can be problematic for communities with higher rates of labor trafficking. Additionally, research on sex trafficking often focuses solely on female victims, however it is important to also consider the experience and needs of non-female victims. Although much of the existing research on human trafficking focuses on sex trafficking, Hodge notes that some research on victim-centered approaches, which prioritize individual needs rather than general resources, is applicable to all forms of trafficking.

McAdam (2021) studied the detention of human trafficking victims after being trafficked. Victims may be held for a variety of reasons. If the victim is a foreign national, they may be detained under immigration policies. Victims may also be detained for being involved in illegal activities such as prostitution. Incorrect identification of victims can also be a cause for detention. Victims may also end up in shelters that prevent victims from leaving at will to try as a method of providing help for the victim. More research needs to be done on how to best assist all types of victims without unnecessary detention.

The beliefs and values a community holds can also hinder local anti-trafficking efforts. Societal attitudes towards sex, crime, and human trafficking can impact a community's efforts to address and prevent trafficking and provide support for victims. According to Todres (2011), these attitudes may discourage community involvement in anti-trafficking initiatives and limit the availability of resources for victims. Examining the public perception of human trafficking is

crucial for implementing effective public health programs that inform residents, though communities with negative attitudes towards victims may be less likely to implement these programs. A lack of knowledge on the subject can perpetuate harmful attitudes and make it more difficult to address human trafficking in these communities.

An article by Hepburn and Simon (2010) discusses how societal attitudes and political administrations with varying views can impact efforts to address human trafficking in the United States. They note that different administrations can have significant effects on anti-trafficking efforts through the creation of laws and regulations. Hepburn and Simon also highlight the issue of conflating sex trafficking with prostitution. This means that victims of sex trafficking are often criminalized under harsh prostitution laws, which can deter victims from seeking help. This can impact the ability to effectively combat human trafficking in states with administrations that do not differentiate between sex trafficking and prostitution.

Another problem is the perception that human trafficking is primarily a federal issue. This may prevent efforts to address the problem at the local level. A survey by Farrell (2009) found that law enforcement leaders in larger communities were more likely to view human trafficking as a problem in their area compared to leaders in smaller communities. Still, most leaders, regardless of the size of their community, did not believe that human trafficking was a widespread problem in their area. Furthermore, many communities, except for the largest ones, did not have specialized units, training, or protocols in place to address human trafficking cases. This suggests that even though human trafficking is seen as a significant problem at the national level, many local law enforcement agencies may not recognize it as a problem in their community and may be unprepared to properly identify and respond to human trafficking cases.

Natural disasters can also inhibit anti-trafficking efforts. Natural disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina, can create opportunities for human trafficking and affect a community's ability to address the issue. Hepburn and Simon (2010) describe how the damage and disorganization caused by Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans led to increased labor trafficking. In this case, many foreign nationals were promised visas and employment in the US in exchange for helping with the rebuilding effort, but upon arriving in the US, they were forced to work without pay and live in damaged buildings. They were told that they were in debt to those who brought them to the US, but they were unable to pay off their debts as they were not being paid for their labor. The labor trafficking in this case went largely unnoticed because the area was heavily damaged and had few residents to observe it occurring. This illustrates how a specific event can significantly impact the amount of human trafficking in a community and how a community is able to respond to it.

Discussion

One approach for communities to improve their response to human trafficking is to establish collaboration between different community resources, such as social work organizations and law enforcement. Coordinating efforts between agencies can ensure that each case receives comprehensive support and can improve victim support, prosecution in cases where traffickers are identified, and understanding of the problem in the community. This increased knowledge can also inform law enforcement's intervention strategies and inform the development of regulations and laws related to human trafficking (Walsh, 2016).

To better understand the gaps in available resources for human trafficking prevention and intervention, it would be helpful to interview professionals working in these areas and with survivors. This could include a variety of professionals, such as police officers, social workers,

health care workers, and employees of non-profit organizations. By talking to people in different professions, we can get a range of perspectives on the human trafficking resources that are available. This can help us get a more complete picture of what resources are or are not available and what specific needs are not being met. Interviewing professionals can also ensure that the resources being provided are meeting the actual needs of survivors rather than assumed needs. This information can be used to create new resources or reform existing ones to fill the gaps in resources. While it may sometimes be necessary to create new resources, it can be expensive and difficult to do so. If professionals suggest that existing resources can be reformatted or supplemented to better meet the needs of victims, it would be a more feasible and cost-effective solution. By using interviews with professionals to guide the process of closing gaps in resources, we can make sure that the needs of victims are met efficiently.

Resources for human trafficking survivors should provide both physical and psychological support in the short and long term. Physical resources may include food, shelter, and clothing, while psychological resources may include mental health services and a sense of safety. It is especially important to provide ongoing support for younger victims and those without a safe place to return to. Gibbs et al. (2015) suggest separating services into immediate and long-term needs and organizing them around four goals: well-being, safety, connections, and self-sufficiency. Immediate needs, referred to as survival and stabilization, include physical resources such as housing and food for safety, counseling and medical care for well-being, case managers and family contacts for connections, and access to benefits for self-sufficiency. Long-term needs, focused on healing and thriving, include resources such as long-term housing for safety, mental health care and substance abuse treatment for well-being, community connections and peer relationships for connections, and education and employment for self-sufficiency.

Providing comprehensive, long-term support can help improve the long-term well-being of survivors and reduce the risk of revictimization.

Education about human trafficking is an important aspect of community efforts to address the issue. Providing accurate information about human trafficking can raise awareness, address misunderstandings, and challenge harmful societal attitudes. The involvement of influential community organizations or respected community members in spreading awareness can be particularly effective. For example, faith-based organizations can play a role in changing public perceptions about survivors of human trafficking, particularly sex trafficking victims, by providing support and demonstrating that their religion's teachings encourage helping others. This may encourage individuals to also follow their religion's teachings and support victims of human trafficking (Bernadin, 2010).

Within the criminal justice system, the creation of specialized human trafficking courts can provide better outcomes for human trafficking cases and survivors (Godoy et al., 2022). These courts have better processes and professionals trained in dealing with human trafficking cases and the legal complications that come along with it. The creation of expungement and vacatur laws for survivors of human trafficking would also greatly improve the livelihood of survivors after being rescued (Owens, 2020). Overall, additional legislation and judicial support is needed to better handle the complexities associated with human trafficking cases and survivors.

Conclusion

The challenges related to human trafficking can vary from community to community, due to societal attitudes, local issues, or other factors. These may also impact how a community tries to address or combat the issue of human trafficking. Identifying the different factors that are

involved can help a community know where to focus their efforts and how to improve their response to human trafficking. Human trafficking is a persistent problem that requires a comprehensive response at the community level to effectively address it. While federal initiatives against human trafficking and funding for victim resources can be helpful, a one-size-fits-all approach is not sufficient to address the unique challenges and needs of different communities. It is vital for local resources, law enforcement, and other agencies to work together and consider their community's specific problems to develop a multifaceted response that involves prevention, intervention, and support for victims. This type of collaboration and multi-agency involvement can help to improve a community's effectiveness in fighting human trafficking at a local level.

Chapter 3: Data Paper

Introduction

This paper will focus on exploring data collected about human trafficking victims. Based on previous research and criminological theories, an exploratory study was designed looking at human trafficking data. A literature review revealed that human trafficking research has often been focused on sex trafficking and primarily using qualitative methods. Quantitative research on human trafficking is somewhat limited as data needs to be collected before any analyses can be performed. As data collection on human trafficking increases, more quantitative methods can be used. This study explores data collected on human trafficking victims from a quantitative view.

Literature Review

Human trafficking is a broad term that covers a variety of different types of trafficking. Previous research has often been focused on investigating sex trafficking exclusively rather than including labor trafficking. Kleemans (2011) examines the areas of human trafficking research that needs to be expanded. The study finds that the current research on human trafficking often only covers a prototypical victim experience instead of the nuances of victimization. The relationship and interactions of victims and traffickers is also limited in research and is often oversimplified. The majority of data collected also focuses on sex trafficking and disregards the many types of labor trafficking present in different industries. Kleemans (2011) shows that human trafficking research is severely limited and needs to be expanded on greatly.

Kotrla (2010) researched domestic minor sex trafficking in the United States. The study found that there are many ways that a youth might enter the sex trafficking industry. Some are runaways living on the street in a vulnerable state and may become easy targets for traffickers.

Young girls may also enter sex trafficking through involvement in gangs, romantic interests, or even family members. Some factors that may increase vulnerability are poverty, housing instability, and lack of education. Problems with substance use and dysfunctional family dynamics can also make someone more vulnerable. Kotrla (2010) states that many sex trafficking victims who are identified as adults entered the industry as minors. The study also discusses the problem of identifying victims, as many are labeled as criminals by law enforcement. This article shows that although there are a large number of minors who are victims of human trafficking, there are still gaps in the research of this field.

Cockbain and Bowers (2019) analyzed a data set of human trafficking victims from the United Kingdom and looked at the differences between types of trafficking. They found that there were differences in the victim demographics depending on the types of human trafficking. Their results show that it is important identify the differences rather than conflate the types when researching human trafficking. This study demonstrates the lack of quantitative research on the differences between types of human trafficking and the importance increasing quantitative studies.

Data Set

The exploratory study looks at the Global K-anonymized data set from the Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative (CTDC, 2021). K-anonymized data protects victim identities by ensuring that cases cannot be singled out in the data set. In the data set used for analyses, any queries will return at least 10 cases. The original data set includes 97,750 individual cases from 77 different countries of exploitation. Cases were collected by partners of the CTDC (IOM, Polaris, OTSH, Liberty Shared, and A21) either through case management (victim received in person services) or counter-trafficking hotlines (victim received services or referrals over the

phone). Data in the set was collected between 2002 and 2021. Variables collected by the dataset include a victim's gender, age range, country of citizenship, country of exploitation, type of exploitation experienced, relationship to the trafficker, and the methods used by the trafficker to control them.

Final Study Sample

The analyses of this study will focus on the cases in which victims were exploited in United States (US). This allows for results to be compared to the ideas identified in the earlier literature reviews that focused on human trafficking and resources in the United States. Cases where the victim was exploited in the United States was collected from 2015 to 2019 and has 51,611 total cases. All cases were collected by counter-trafficking hotlines. For US cases, there were no cases where victims experienced forced marriage, forced military, organ removal, slavery, or other exploitation. US cases only listed forced labor, sexual exploitation, or forced labor and sexual exploitation as types of trafficking. Cases were reduced to exclude the 33,336 cases where the age of the victim was missing to reduce the amount of missing data in the study sample. Given that cases were reported over the phone to human trafficking hotlines, if the informants were unable to provide an age range for the victim, it is unlikely that more detailed data questions such as type of exploitation or methods of control would be answered. The final study sample includes 18,275 cases where the victim was exploited in the United States and the victims age was recorded.

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics are all from the study sample of 18,275 victims who were exploited in the United States. Of the 4,420 cases where a victim's country of citizenship was reported, 97.62% ($n = 4,315$) were citizens of the United States. The remaining 2.38% ($n = 105$)

victims with identified country of citizenship were from China ($n = 34$), Cuba ($n = 40$), Korea ($n = 12$), and Mexico ($n = 19$). Cases were collected between 2015 and 2019 with the majority of cases from 2018 ($n = 4980$) and 2019 ($n = 4938$).

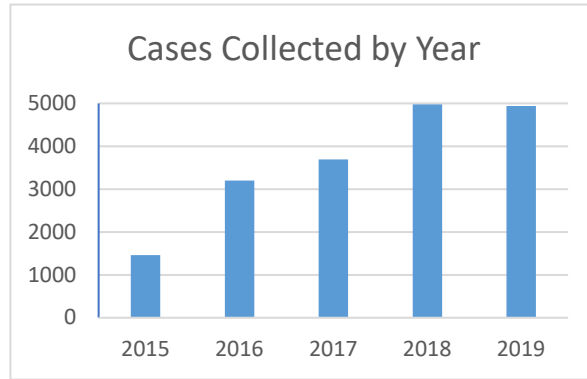
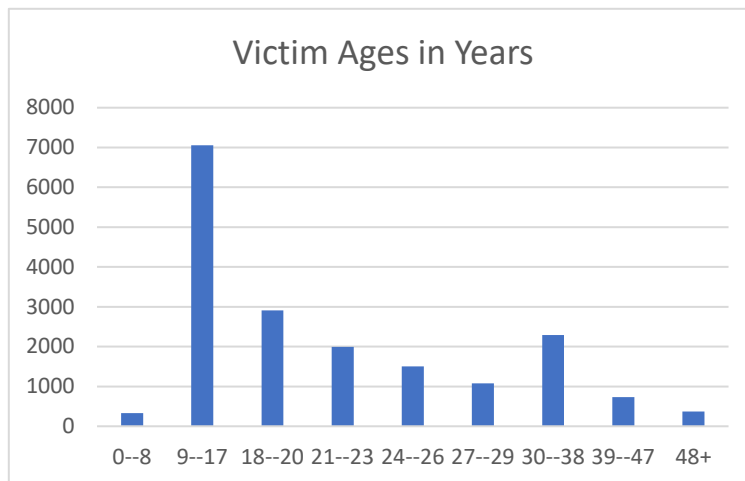


Fig.1

The US data set included 17,557 female victims, 648 male victims, and 70 victims whose gender was not identified. Victim ages were divided into nine age groups: 0-8 years, 9-17 years, 18-20 years, 21-23 years, 24-26 years, 27-29 years, 30-38 years, 39-47 years, and 48+ years of age. The largest age group was 9-17 years of age with 7,056 victims and the smallest groups were 0-8 years and 48+ years of age with 332 and 373 victims in each, respectively.



The variable “means of control” are the methods used by traffickers to keep victims from escaping or reporting to law enforcement. Means of control were reported by 10,120 individual victims. Victims who experienced more than one means of control are counted in each category they reported experiencing. This means that the total number of cases of means of control reported is 22,837. This does not include the cases reported as “other” or “not specified”.

Table 1 Means of control (*n* = 22,837)

	Cases	Percent
Debt Bondage	592	2.59%
Takes Earnings	1073	4.698%
Restricts Financial Access	163	0.71%
Threats	3297	14.44%
Psychological Abuse	4201	18.395%
Physical Abuse	3227	14.13%
Sexual Abuse	1815	7.95%
False Promises	453	1.98%
Psychoactive Substance	3039	13.31%
Restricts Movement	3294	14.42%
Restricts Medical Care	136	0.595%
Excessive Working Hours	117	0.51%
Uses Children	161	0.70%
Threats of Law Enforcement	141	0.62%
Withholds Necessities	744	3.26%
Withholds Documents	384	1.68%

Of the 10,120 victims who reported means of control they experienced, over half reported that they experienced more than one control type being used. One victim reported experiencing 12 different forms of control being used. The table below shows how many victims experienced multiple control types.

Table 2 Number of control types used ($n = 10,120$)

	Cases	Percent
1	4249	41.99%
2	2460	24.31%
3	1522	15.04%
4	1023	10.11%
5	481	4.75%
6	198	1.96%
7	119	1.18%
8	39	0.39%
9	21	0.21%
10	6	0.06%
11	1	0.009%
12	1	0.009%

Type of exploitation was reported by 17,321 victims in the study sample, not including the 954 cases with unreported type of exploitation. Exploitation was reported as either forced labor, sexual exploitation, or forced labor and sexual exploitation. Most victims reported experiencing sexual exploitation ($n = 16,947$).

Table 3 Type of exploitation ($n = 17,321$)

	Cases	Percent
Forced Labor Only	248	1.43%
Sexual Exploitation Only	16947	97.84%
Forced Labor and Sexual Exploitation	126	0.73%

Type of exploitation was then further broken down into types of labor exploitation and types of sexual exploitation. Of the 374 victims who reported experiencing forced labor, only 54.01% ($n = 202$) reported the type of forced labor that they experienced. For the 17,073 victims who experienced sexual exploitation, only 37.18% ($n = 6,348$) reported the type of sexual exploitation they experienced.

Table 4 Type of labor exploitation (*n* = 202)

	Cases	Percent
Agriculture	19	9.41%
Begging	22	10.89%
Construction	32	15.84%
Hospitality	52	25.74%
Peddling	77	38.12%

Table 5 Type of sexual exploitation (*n* = 6,348)

	Cases	Percent
Pornography	461	7.26%
Private Sexual Services	169	2.66%
Prostitution	5718	90.08%

Victim relationship to recruiter is another variable that can be explored with the data set. Among the 4,724 victims that reported their relationship to the person who recruited them to human trafficking as an intimate partner, friend, or family member. Intimate partner was reported the most, followed by family, and then friend.

Table 6 Victims relationship to recruiter (*n* = 4,724)

	Cases	Percent
Intimate Partner	2320	49.11%
Friend	745	15.77%
Family	1659	35.12%

Based on the exploratory descriptive statistics run on the data, it is evident that the primary type of victim are young women under 25 years of age who are US citizens and are sexually exploited. These victims are exploited through exploitation and controlled through methods such as psychological abuse, physical abuse, restrictions on movement, and the provision of psychoactive substances.

Exploratory Analyses

Due to the low number of labor exploitation cases and cases with male victims, further exploratory analyses will focus on female victims of sexual exploitation cases. After removing all labor exploitation cases and cases with male or unidentified victims, there are 16,448 cases remaining. In order to simplify the data for exploratory statistics, age groups were combined nine groups into three: minors (0-17), young adults (18-26), and adults (27+). This allowed for age groups to have more cases in each.

To analyze if there is a relationship between age and type of sexual exploitation, a crosstabulation and Chi-square test was performed. For this test, cases where the type of sexual exploitation was not reported were removed. There is a statistically significant $X^2(4, N = 6,207) = 280.22, p < .001$ relationship between age and type of sexual exploitation a victim experienced. Prostitution was the most common type of sexual exploitation among all age groups with 85.3% of cases for ages 0-17, 96.5% for 18-26, and 93% for 27+. Pornography was the second most common (12.1%) for ages 0-17, while private sexual services were the second most common for ages 18-26 (2.2%) and 27+ (4.1%). Pornography is likely more common for ages 0-17 due to the illegal child pornography industry.

Table 7 Age group and type of sexual exploitation ($n = 6,207$)

Type of Sexual Exploit		Age Group			Total
		0-17	18-26	26+	
Pornography	Count	355	29	28	412
	% within age group	12.1%	1.3%	2.8%	6.6%
Private Sexual Services	Count	78	50	41	169
	% within age group	2.7%	2.2%	4.1%	2.7%
Prostitution	Count	2505	2201	920	5626
	% within age group	85.3%	96.5%	93.0%	90.6%
Total		2938	2280	989	6207

The 9,381 cases with reported means of control analyzed for if there was an association between means of control and age. The number of means of control experienced by a victim were divided into three groups: 1-3 means of control, 4-6 means of control, and 7+ means of control. The chi-square showed that the relationship between variables is statistically significant $X^2(4, N = 9,381) = 229.55, p < .001$. 90% of victims in the 0-17 age group reported 1-3 means of control used, while the 18-26 and 27+ age group were more similar at 77.6% and 76.4% respectively. One potential reason for this may be that younger victims may not be able to understand or name the type of control being used.

Table 8 Age group and number of control types used ($n = 9,381$)

Number of Control Types		Age Group			Total
		0-17	18-26	26+	
1-3	Count	2735	2921	1971	7627
	% within age group	90.0%	77.6%	76.4%	81.3%
4-6	Count	286	761	552	1599
	% within age group	9.4%	20.2%	21.4%	17.0%
7+	Count	17	82	56	155
	% within age group	0.6%	2.2%	2.2%	1.7%
Total		3038	3764	2579	9381

To further look at the relationship between means of control and age groups, four groups were created: Financial Control, Physical and Mental Control, Substance Control, and Miscellaneous Control. These groups were created by looking at which control types seemed to have similarities.

Table 9 Types of control in groups

Group Name	Means of Control
Financial Control	Debt Bondage; Takes Earnings; Restricts Financial Access
Physical and Mental Control	Threats; Psychological Abuse; Physical Abuse; Sexual Abuse; False Promises; Restricts Movement
Substance Control	Psychoactive Substance
Miscellaneous Control	Restricts Medical Care; Excessive Working Hours; Uses Children; Threats of Law Enforcement; Withholds Necessities; Withholds Documents

Since many cases experienced multiple control groups, individual crosstabulations were performed between each control group and the age groups to remove the overlap. Each crosstabulation shows the percent of cases that experienced the control group in each age group. All the relationships between control groups and age groups were found to be statistically significant. Financial control was associated with age groups at $X^2(2, N = 9,381) = 244.12, p < .001$. The 18-26 age group had 20.6% of victims and the 27+ age group had 17.8% of victims experience financial control. However, the 0-17 age group only had 7.2% of victims experience financial control. Physical and mental control was associated with age groups at $X^2(2, N = 9,381) = 38.93, p < .001$. 90.6% of the 18-26 age group, 89% of the 27+ age group, and 85.8% of the 0-17 age group experienced physical and mental control. The association between age groups and substance control was $X^2(2, N = 9,381) = 13.23, p = .001$. Substance control was the most evenly experienced by the three age groups. Substance control was experienced by 30.3% of 0-17 age group, 29.5% of the 18-26 age group, and 33.7% of the 27+ age group. Miscellaneous control and age groups had an association of $X^2(2, N = 9,381) = 172.75, p < .001$. Only 6.7% of victims aged 0-17 experienced miscellaneous control while 15.5% of victims aged 18-26 and 17.7% of victims aged 27+ experienced miscellaneous control.

Table 10 Control group and age group (*n* = 9,381)

Control Group		Age Group			Total
		0-17	18-26	27+	
Financial Control	No	2818	2987	2121	7926
	% within age group	92.8%	79.4%	82.2%	84.5%
	Yes	220	777	458	1455
	% within age group	7.2%	20.6%	17.8%	15.5%
	Total	3038	3764	2579	9381
Physical and Mental Control	No	430	352	284	1066
	% within age group	14.2%	9.4%	11.0%	11.4%
	Yes	2608	3412	2295	8315
	% within age group	85.8%	90.6%	89.0%	88.6%
	Total	3038	3764	2579	9381
Substance Control	No	2116	2653	1710	6479
	% within age group	69.7%	70.5%	66.3%	69.1%
	Yes	922	1111	869	2902
	% within age group	30.3%	29.5%	33.7%	30.9%
	Total	3038	3764	2579	9381
Miscellaneous Control	No	2833	3181	2122	8136
	% within age group	93.3%	84.5%	82.3%	86.7%
	Yes	205	583	457	1245
	% within age group	6.7%	15.5%	17.7%	13.3%
	Total	3038	3764	2579	9381

After removing relationships to recruiters reported as “other” or “not specified”, 4,368 cases remained for analysis. Some cases had more than one recruiter relationship reported. The chi-square showed that the association between age and recruiter relationship is statistically significant $X^2(10, N = 4,368) = 635.94, p < .001$. For ages 0-17, 53.9 % of victims were recruited to human trafficking by a family member. This is a drastic difference from the other two age groups, where only about 19% of victims were recruited by family members. Ages 18-

26 and 27+ were much more likely to be recruited by an intimate partner, at 60.3% and 65.5% respectively. The least common recruiter relationship were friends for all three age groups.

Table 11 Age group and recruiter relationship (*n* = 4,368)

Recruiter Relationship		Age Group			Total
		0-17	18-26	26+	
Family	Count	869	315	225	1409
	% within age group	53.9%	19.5%	19.7%	32.3%
Family; Friend	Count	10	7	3	20
	% within age group	0.6%	0.4%	0.3%	0.5%
Family; Intimate Partner	Count	16	22	24	62
	% within age group	1.0%	1.4%	2.1%	1.4%
Friend	Count	250	275	135	660
	% within age group	15.5%	17.1%	11.8%	15.1%
Friend; Intimate Partner	Count	9	21	9	39
	% within age group	0.6%	1.3%	0.8%	0.9%
Intimate Partner	Count	458	972	748	2178
	% within age group	28.4%	60.3%	65.4%	49.9%
Total		1612	1612	1144	4368

Limitations

There are many limitations to this exploratory study. One major limitation is the data set. Although the data set used for analyses is large, many variables are incomplete. In order to have a large data set, the data was collected by multiple sources. This means that there is some missing data and discrepancies in the attributes available for each case. The amount of missing data severely limits the type of analyses that can be performed.

There may also be biases present in the data set, as the identification of human trafficking victims is challenging. Victims who do not match stereotypes may not be identified as easily as those who do. Due to the problems identifying victims and that the population of human

trafficking victims remains unknown, the data used in this study is not a representative sample of all human trafficking victims.

There may also be biases in the data due to the methods of collecting data. For example, means of control may have biases due to the age of the victim. Since the data was collected by a hotline, younger victims may not have understood all of the types of means of control or been able to communicate clearly which means of control they experienced.

Another limitation is how data is collected. Although there were no reported cases in the US data of exploitation types such as slavery practices or forced marriage, this does not mean that none of the victims experienced this. Victims may have only been asked about if they experienced labor or sex trafficking by the agency that collected the data. Victims may also be hesitant to come forward if they are not US citizens. Those in the country illegally may be worried about deportation and chose to not identify themselves.

Discussion

There are certain characteristics that may make some one more vulnerable to becoming a victim. Girls and women are significantly more likely to be victims of human trafficking, particularly for sex trafficking. However, labor trafficking and the experience of male victims need more studies. Particularly, additional research needs more quantitative methods as many current studies are based in qualitative methods.

Future research could also use more detailed data about human trafficking cases and victims. More detailed data would provide more accurate analyses than the current public data can by analyzing individual variables rather than just trends. Quantitative studies could be performed by individual law enforcement agencies with any data they may have collected about

the victims and offenders in their area. This could provide insight into the human trafficking problem in their community and what additional anti-trafficking efforts they could add. Since different communities may have different types of human trafficking, identifying which type is prevalent in their jurisdiction could be greatly beneficial to reducing human trafficking.

Conclusion

Anyone can be a victim of human trafficking, regardless of their background. The impacts of human trafficking on individuals and communities are devastating. As research on human trafficking expands, more work needs to focus on using quantitative methods to identify important differences and predictors of different human trafficking types. Quantitative studies could be used to improve anti-human trafficking efforts and resources.

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