

**Training Considerations for the Identification and Investigation of Human
Trafficking Cases in Law Enforcement: A Case Study**

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December 3, 2023

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I have no known conflict of interest to disclose.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to identify the need for specialized training in identifying and investigating human trafficking cases to be provided to law enforcement officers. Approximately 40 million people are victims of human trafficking, and the numbers continue to grow each year. Front-line officers are generally under-prepared to recognize and handle human trafficking cases which shows the need to provide effective and appropriate training to help identify victims and investigate human trafficking cases. Research to provide a solution is guided by a qualitative case study investigation for the purpose of developing and proposing actionable changes law enforcement agencies may take when training officers on human trafficking. A collective case study was used to answer two central research questions; What and how much training are law enforcement officers currently receiving on identifying and investigating human trafficking? What are the recommendations for training law enforcement officers in identifying and investigating human trafficking? Yin's cross-case synthesis method of analysis is utilized.

Keywords: human trafficking, officers, training, research

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The human trafficking industry profits from the commoditization of people enslaved for sex work, forced labor, forced marriage, forced militia, and organ harvesting (Muraya & Fry, 2015; Schauer & Wheaton, 2006). Approximately 40 million people are victimized annually- 71% are women and girls whereas 29% are men and boys (International Labour Office, 2017). It is one of the fastest-growing forms of organized crime (United Nations, 2014 & Crane, 2014 as cited in McKnight, 2022) and is expected to occur more frequently and be more profitable than the drug and arms trades by 2023 (Jordan, et al., 2013, as cited in McKnight, 2022). It is prevalent worldwide in common sectors such as the commercial sex industry and labor industries that rely on low-skilled labor (Gopal, 2019; U.S. States Department of State, 2019).

Background

Human trafficking, also referred to as trafficking-in-persons and modern-day slavery, refers to the act of someone obtaining or holding another person in compulsory service. It includes bonded and forced labor, debt bondage, sex trafficking, domestic servitude, organ harvesting, and child soldiering (Cockbain & Bowers, 2019; Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative, 2023; U.S. Department of State, 2019; 2020; 2022; McKnight, 2022). Human trafficking is also increasingly widespread as almost every country is involved in the recruitment, transit, and/or receives the services provided by those trafficked (McKnight, 2022). It is hidden and has recently begun drawing the attention of law enforcement, advocates, and policy makers (McKnight, 2022). Research

has focused solely on victimology and little testing has been conducted to improve investigations and partnerships in order to improve identification and rehabilitation.

Law enforcement officers have a responsibility to defend human trafficking victims by helping them feel safe and by affording them the opportunities to tell their stories without revictimization and further trauma (Farrell, et al., 2019). Yet, officers struggle with the ability to recognize signs of human trafficking (Alvarez & Cañas-Moreira, 2015; Clawson, et al., 2006; Farrell, et al., 2010; Meekins, 2014). Instead, these cases are often identified as human smuggling, organized crime, and prostitution crimes (Craig, 2019; Meekins, 2014; Schauer & Wheaton, 2006). Victims may also be criminalized in calls related to domestic violence, robbery, theft, fraud, drugs, or assault and battery cases (Meekins, 2014).

Identification is the first, necessary step to combatting human trafficking because unidentified cases cannot be investigated. This allows human trafficking to run rampant which puts victims and others at risk. Front-line officers are the first line of defense when it comes to identifying victims of human trafficking. They are hampered in their ability to identify, assist, classify, recover, and provide needed resources to victims which limits successful investigations and prosecutions (Mace, 2013; McKnight, 2022). Reportedly, 48 percent of law enforcement personnel state that they learned about human trafficking on the job (Clawson, et al., 2006). Today, many learn from media instead of in a classroom (Mapp, et al., 2016).

There is a need to improve law enforcement officers' knowledge, understanding, and ability to identify human trafficking cases. This can be accomplished through

training. When provided, basic training sessions have reportedly increased knowledge on the topic, the number of cases identified, and successful prosecutions (Renzetti, et al., 2015).

Situation to Self

The purpose of this study is to analyze existing work on law enforcement's ability to identify human trafficking cases. Front-line officers are the most likely to interact with trafficking victims in their normal patrol routines (Mapp, et al., 2016). The issue of under-identification continues to be an issue. Implementing changes that improve law enforcement's ability to identify potential victims is necessary to begin correcting the issue. The United States focuses their efforts around the "3Ps" which stands for prevention, protection, and prosecution (Craig, 2019; Schwarz, et al., 2016, as cited in McKnight, 2022). Several studies have attempted to provide recommendations that may improve victim identification but have little testing to support these recommendations. Simultaneously, the under-identification of victims has increased significantly and of the victims that are identified, the likelihood they testify against their traffickers and cooperate with law enforcement is minimal.

The collective case study approach allows for the "exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources" which ensures multiple facets can be revealed and understood as needed (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 544). It follows Robert Yin's (2003) idea that collective case studies can be used to predict similar results and contrasting results for predictable reasons (p. 47, as cited in Baxter & Jack, 2008). Therefore, gathering suggestions from other sources allows for common themes to be

identified. Discussion of these themes may assist with the under-identification of human trafficking cases.

The unit of analysis within this collective case study is law enforcement training. Available training has been analyzed by previous sources. These sources were the base of the data collection for this study. This is because data could be gathered from many different agencies with different backgrounds efficiently, allowing for differing problems and attempted solutions. Often, officers are interviewed in these studies in addition to the researchers personal analysis of any training sessions which provides differing opinions from the officers themselves which allows for their confidence levels and beliefs to be included as well.

Problem Statement

Further training for all law enforcement officers is necessary to help identify human trafficking victims and investigate human trafficking cases. Training is non-existent or vague, leaving officers unprepared when these cases arise (McKnight, 2022). Without the right training, law enforcement officers are unlikely to look for signs of trafficking and are even less likely to successfully identify or investigate (Craig, 2019). Further, law enforcement officers may unknowingly be using inappropriate investigative methods which can unwittingly compromise a case (Farrell & Pfeffer, 2014; McKnight, 2022). There are also law enforcement agencies that do not believe human trafficking is an issue either because it is deemed prostitution with a pimp or because human trafficking is not a local crime because it is a “big city problem” (Farrell, et al., 2010, McKnight, 2022; Meekins, 2014, para. 3; Renzetti, et al., 2015).

Many other authors have identified the need for future training, and a few have analyzed how receptive and responsive officers are to said training (Clarke, 2020, Craig, 2019, Farrell, et al., 2019; McKnight, 2022). However, outside of this, little research is conducted to provide actionable steps to correct this. The purpose of this thesis is to analyze these studies and suggestions and to create actionable changes that can be made to improve the identification of trafficking situations. These changes should provide law enforcement officers with the skills and belief that they can successfully identify and investigate a human trafficking case.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this case study is to develop and propose actionable changes for law enforcement agencies to take when training officers on human trafficking. At this stage, a training session is generally defined as a meeting or series of meetings that focus on the process of learning the skills needed to do a particular job. This collective case study utilizes a thematic analysis based on the data collected from existing studies to develop common themes for training improvements.

Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the field of human trafficking by utilizing existing research to provide actionable suggestions agencies can implement to train their officers and improve the identification and investigation of human trafficking cases. This is necessary because officers can misidentify victims of trafficking (Farrell & Reichert, 2017), officers may rely on stereotypes to identify victims of trafficking which can lead to further misidentification (Barrick, et al., 2020, as cited in McKnight, 2022), and poor

investigation techniques can solidify victim’s mistrust in police and ruin an investigation (Brandon, 2018; Farrell & Pfeffer, 2014; McKnight, 2022). This study serves as a collective resource and provides a full discussion of suggestions by other sources and provides recommendations to implement which should improve identification and investigation techniques. Without this study, the field would lack a qualitative case study that has gathered and discussed these suggestions. These insights may assist in the identification and investigation of human trafficking cases which may, in turn, reduce the number of trafficking victims and increase the number of successful prosecutions.

Research Questions

This thesis was written to discuss the best ways to improve law enforcement training and understanding of human trafficking to improve the identification and investigation of human trafficking cases. The following research questions are investigated:

RQ1: What and how much training are law enforcement officers currently receiving on identifying and investigating human trafficking?

RQ2: What are the recommendations for training law enforcement officers in identifying and investigating human trafficking?

Definitions

There are various definitions for “trafficking in persons” that are considered acceptable. The Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 defines it as:

“(a) sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has

not attained 18 years of age; or (b) the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subsection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery” (p. 8).

The level of consent refers to whether the victim was forced, coerced, or frauded, or if they are under the age of 18. Coercion is defined as:

“(a) threats of serious harm to or physical restraint against any person; (b) any scheme, plan, or pattern intended to cause a person to believe that failure to perform an act would result in serious harm to or physical restraint against any person; or (c) the abuse or threatened abuse of the legal process” (Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act, 2000, p. 7).

Sex trafficking is defined as “the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act” (Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act, 2000, p. 8).

A commercial sex act is “any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person” (Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act, 2000, p. 6).

Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST) is defined as “the commercial sexual abuse of children through buying, selling, or trading their sexual services” (Shared Hope International, 2007, p. 1, as cited in Kotrla, 2010).

Labor trafficking is any “involuntary transactions between the traffickers and the trafficked crossing an international border” (Doherty & Harris, 2015, p. 25). The different types of labor trafficking are involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, and slavery.

Involuntary servitude is defined as when the act:

“includes a condition of servitude induced by means of – (a) any scheme, plan, or pattern intended to cause a person to believe that, if the person did not enter into or continue in such condition, that person or another person would suffer serious harm or physical restraint; or (b) the abuse or threatened abuse of the legal process” (Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act, 2000, p. 7).

Whereas debt bondage is defined as:

“the status or condition of a debtor arising from a pledge by the debtor of his or her personal services or of those of a person under his or her control as a security for debt, if the value of those services as reasonably assessed is not applied toward the liquidation of the debt or the length and nature of those services are not respectively limited and defined” (Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act, 2000, p. 7).

Forced labor is when people are “compelled against their will to provide work or service through the use of force, fraud, or coercion” (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2022; para. 1).

A victim of human trafficking is “a person subjected to an act or practice described in the definitions” (p. 8) for “severe forms of trafficking in persons” (p.

7) and/or “sex trafficking” (Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act, 2000, p. 7).

Summary

Recently there has been a surge in public awareness and activism noted for human trafficking. This surge has not carried into research and law enforcement understanding as evidence to support their increased engagement is lacking (Weitzer, 2011, 2014a, as cited in McKnight, 2022). Further research and evaluation are necessary to overcome problems of under-identification and problems with investigation techniques. Previous research has primarily focused on identifying issues within a small, geographic subset of law enforcement officers. Through the collection and analysis of this data, common themes can be identified which will allow for actionable changes that can be implemented across multiple jurisdictions. These changes in training programs can then assist by increasing the odds of an officer successfully identifying trafficking situations and improving investigative techniques.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

This thesis intends to understand what and how much training are law enforcement officers currently receiving on identifying and investigating human trafficking. It also attempts to utilize these results to provide recommendations for training law enforcement officers in identifying and investigating human trafficking. It seeks to provide an action plan for the implementation of recommendations in order to reduce or eliminate the under-identification and to improve investigative techniques and strategies of human trafficking. To do this, this case study analyzed the results provided by studies that primarily focused on smaller jurisdictional areas and their training and recommendations. The literature summarized in this chapter discusses the history of trafficking, the current context of trafficking, anti-trafficking legislation, policies, and organizations, and victimology.

Essential Elements

The definition of human trafficking can be confusing as various necessary terminology is ambiguous. The ambiguity of these terms has caused issues in identifying and investigating cases (Clarke, 2020; Jones, 2012; McKnight, 2022). This is because it is common to rule out potential trafficking situations if there is no obvious lack of consent or physical transportation (Clarke, 2020; Doherty & Harris, 2015; Farrell, et al., 2015). To resolve this, an in-depth discussion and understanding of various concepts is necessary.

Consent

An important consideration when discussing human trafficking is the concept of consent. Consent as a legal defense must be “both informed and freely given” (p. 22) and free from “obstructive agents such as coercion or fraud” (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2014, p. 22). The role of consent and coercion regarding this issue is much more complex than a written definition can encompass (Elliott, 2014). Certain other aspects are relevant to defining consent as some “are deemed to be incapable of delivering the necessary quality of consent” (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2014, p. 22). Certain vulnerabilities such as age, mental handicaps, and force can invalidate a person’s ability to legally provide consent. The definition of consent regarding the TVPA is based on any “force, fraud, or coercion” (Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act, 2000, p. 8). Fraud is the intentional distortion of truth to convince another person to provide something valuable that belongs to them (U.S. Customs and Border Protection, n.d.). Force refers to any active and physical or indirect and psychological form of manipulation to obtain something of value from someone else (U.S. Customs and Border Protection, n.d.). These incapacities can be more subtle- such as forms of duress or coercion that can be evident in a human trafficking situation- and can potentially reduce the value of consent (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2014). Threats, threats of force, abduction, fraud, deception, abuses of power, and the provision of payments or benefits in order to obtain consent are considered forms of coercion (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2014; U.S. Customs and Border Protection, n.d.). The only time proof of a lack of consent does not apply is if the victim

is a minor (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). The consent of a child victim is irrelevant despite any act of coercion (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2014).

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Transportation

The definition also includes an aspect of transportation. Victims are often moved between countries for the purpose of trafficking (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, n.d.). Due to this, it is commonly believed that the victim needs to be smuggled across borders to be trafficked (The Administration for Children and Families, n.d.).

Different municipalities state that the victim must be physically transported between at least two locations (Clarke, 2020). However, transportation does not need to be apparent for the crime to legally be trafficking (The Administration for Children and Families, n.d.; U.S. Department of State, 2019). Traffickers can traffic their victims in different countries or within the same neighborhoods they grew up in because it “is a crime of exploitation and coercion, and not movement” (U.S. Department of State, n.d., para. 23).

Related Literature

Types of Trafficking

The term human trafficking hardly addresses the myriad activities that sit within its scope. Many of these activities are overlooked because they are not prominent or common knowledge. For example, forced marriages and childbearing, organ harvesting, child militaries, and child labor are not as publicly acknowledged as sex trafficking is (Chester, et al., 2014; Gopal, 2019; International Labour Institute, 2017; United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, n.d). Additionally, these activities may mimic other, more common crime activities. The two overarching types of human trafficking are sex trafficking and labor trafficking.

Sex Trafficking

The sex trafficking industry is more widespread within the United States than people understand (Luttrell, 2020, as cited in McKnight, 2022). The United States is the second-largest destination for sexual exploitation (McKnight, 2022; Schauer & Wheaton, 2006) and is the only modern democratic country where the majority of its victims are its own citizens (Patel, 2015, as cited in McKnight, 2022). It is also the most prevalent in

media and legal conversations while other forms of trafficking are overlooked (Heil & Nichols, 2015, as cited in Farrell & Reichert, 2017; Malloch & Rigby, 2016; National Institute of Justice, 2016). Even within research, there is an overwhelming focus on sex trafficking (Cockbain & Bowers, 2019).

A commercial sex act can be any kind of prostitution, pornography, stripping, and escort services (Horner, 2015, as cited in McKnight, 2022), which also includes mail-order brides, live sex shows, sexual tourism, and military prostitution (Luzwick, 2017, as cited in McKnight, 2022). It is deemed a gender-based form of violence as it mainly affects women and girls (White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2016). This has been the understanding since the passing of the White Slave Traffic Act of 1910 and was carried through immigration acts such as the Emergency Quota Act of 1921 and the Immigration Act of 1924 (Donovan, 2006; Marinari, 2022). This has caused law enforcement's focus has been placed on the sexual exploitation of women and girls over other forms of trafficking (Cockbain & Bowers, 2019).

Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST)

Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST) “refers to the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a minor for the purpose of a commercial sex act.” (U.S. Department of Justice, n.d., para. 1). The nature of DMST is extremely underreported but estimates still show that approximately one million children are victims of DMST globally (International Labour Organization, 2017b, as cited in McKnight, 2022) and fifty percent of female trafficking victims are minors (Deshpande & Nour, 2013, as cited in McKnight, 2022). Within the United States,

150,000-300,000 children are estimated to be at risk for commercial sexual exploitation annually (Farrell, et al., 2015; Songs & Joseph, 2020, as cited in McKnight, 2022).

DMST victims are extremely vulnerable and often end up in trafficking situations because of a lack of support and love in other facets of their lives (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, n.d.). They are also disproportionately involved in the foster care system or the juvenile justice system (Clawson, n.d.; Cole & Sprang, 2020; Copley, 2014; Farrell, et al., 2019; Gopal, 2019; Mace, 2013; McKnight, 2022; Nichols, et al., 2022; U.S. Department of State, 2019) and often run away or are sold by their legal guardians (Brandon, 2018; Gopal, 2019; Mace, 2013; McKnight, 2022; Nichols, et al., 2022; Polaris, 2021; U.S. Department of Justice, n.d). They may also experience sexual exploitation at a higher level because of previous abuse or neglect that they experienced with their biological families or legal guardians (McKnight, 2022; Nichols, et al., 2022).

Consent and Safe Harbor Laws

An important caveat to the requirement of consent is that sex trafficking cases involving minor victims are a form of sex trafficking regardless of if there is evidence of force, fraud, or coercion (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). This distinction is meant to protect child victims from federal prosecution. The Federal law's definition of consent, however, does not prevent prosecution at the state level.

Instead, some states have safe harbor laws that are designed to keep victims from being arrested for the crimes they committed as a result of their victimization. It essentially allows minors to be identified as victims instead of prostitutes or delinquents (Mehlman-Orozco, 2015, as cited in Coleman, 2016). DMST victims are often not

recognized as victims and can face arrest and jail time instead of being rescued from their traffickers (U.S. Department of Justice, n.d.). Safe harbor laws vary by state. In Connecticut, victims ages 16 to 17 can be prosecuted for prostitution if there is no belief of force (Coleman, 2016). With the safe harbor laws in New York, all juveniles under the age of 18 are deemed to be trafficking victims instead of being prosecuted (Coleman, 2016). Thirty-five states have safe harbor laws to prevent DMST victims from being prosecuted for commercial sex trafficking (U.S. Department of State, 2021). However, some child victims are still arrested as they can still be charged with prostitution in 19 states (U.S. Department of State, 2021).

Prostitution vs. Sex Trafficking

There is overlap in the definition of sex trafficking and prostitution and they are often incorrectly combined into the same group. Prostitution is defined as “the act of engaging in sex acts or sexual contact for money” (Farrell, et al., 2015, p. 316). The difference between these definitions is consent. A sex worker has provided consent to the sex act in exchange for compensation. Whereas a trafficking victim either has not or cannot provide consent. It is easy to quickly brush off potential sex trafficking cases as prostitution because the situation does not meet certain stigmas. Meekins (2014) describes a conversation he had with a detective where he was asked if the potential victim was a minor or chained to the bed and because both answers were no, the case was not investigated thoroughly.

Labor Trafficking

Labor trafficking “refers to involuntary transactions between the traffickers and the trafficked” (Doherty & Harris, 2015, p. 25). Different types of labor trafficking are involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, and slavery. Approximately, 24.9 million people worldwide are engaged in forced labor as of 2016 (International Labour Organization, 2016, as cited in U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2022). Meaning, more people worldwide are labor trafficked than sex trafficked even though it is less recognized, researched, and understood (Choi-Fitzpatrick & Brysk, 2013; International Labour Organization, 2016; as cited in U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2022). This area of trafficking is largely under-researched, under-documented, and under-discussed as it does not look like what the ideal of human trafficking seems to be (Nazer & Greenbaum, 2020). This may be because legislation, awareness, and training focus more on sex trafficking (Walts, 2017, as cited in McKnight, 2022). It may also be because survivors tend to escape on their own and find new work without being connected to law enforcement officers or specialized service providers (Heil & Nichols, 2015, as cited in Farrell & Reichert, 2017; Malloch & Rigby, 2016; National Institute of Justice, 2016).

Labor trafficking may not be prioritized or easily identified by local law enforcement agencies (Heil & Nichols, 2015, as cited in, Farrell & Reichert, 2017; Malloch & Rigby, 2016; National Institute of Justice, 2016). These trafficking cases cover a variety of industries. The National Human Trafficking Hotline identified likely victims in the United States in agriculture (1,377 victims), carnivals (80 victims),

construction (372 victims), domestic work and commercial cleaning services (302 victims and 24 victims), factories and manufacturing (206 victims), health, beauty services, and massage parlors (27 victims and 1,055 victims), outdoor solicitation (324 victims), begging or peddling (135 victims), restaurants and food service (198 victims; Polaris, 2021).

Forced Child Labor

Forced child labor describes such labor trafficking schemes where children are the compelled victims (U.S. Department of Labor, n.d.). It results from the sale or trading of children, forced or compulsory child labor, debt bondage, or the serfdom of children (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). The International Labour Organization estimates there are between 160 million and 246 million children between the ages of 5 and 17 exploited for labor worldwide in illegal arms and drug trades, forced recruitment for armed conflict, debt bondage, and other illicit activities (Health and Human Services, 2015, as cited in McKnight, 2022; U.S. Department of Labor, n.d.).

Involuntary/Domestic Servitude

Involuntary or domestic servitude is a type of forced labor in which the victim is required to perform work in a private residence (U.S. Department of State). Domestic workers are often isolated, and their employers control their access to food, transportation, and housing (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). This creates unique vulnerabilities and investigative concerns (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). The things that happen in a private residence are hidden from the world and law enforcement agencies (U.S. Department of State, n.d.).

Debt Bondage

Debt bondage is the most common type of labor trafficking. Yet it is one of the least understood (McKnight, 2022). Essentially, it requires the victim to work to pay off a loan or service. The debt binding the victim may not be well defined and the work provided to repay the debt may be in abundance of an adequate repayment amount (Health and Human Services, 2015, as cited in McKnight, 2022).

Human Smuggling vs. Human Trafficking

It is important to discuss the relationship between human trafficking and human smuggling as it is often blurred. “Misunderstandings regarding the distinction between human trafficking and migrant smuggling... tend to impede law enforcement processes” (Jones, 2012, p. 487). Human smuggling places its focus on the actual transportation of the person and is defined as the “importation of people into the United States involving deliberate evasion of immigration laws” (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2013, para. 5). Smuggling involves physically moving illegal immigrants into and around the United States without exploiting those being moved for work whereas labor trafficking does not. People who have been smuggled provide consent to the transportation so they are not legally considered a victim (Jones, 2012; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, n.d.).

While inherently different, human smuggling can quickly become human trafficking (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, n.d.; United Nations, 2019). Smugglers often target women that are alone and demand significant fees that cannot be easily paid by struggling individuals (Schauer & Wheaton, 2006; United Nations, 2019).

There is much overlap because the financial and conditional vulnerabilities make them more easily coerced into trafficking situations (Obokata, 2006, as cited in Doherty & Harris, 2015; Schauer & Wheaton, 2006). This makes distinguishing between human smuggling and human trafficking problematic because of the complication of victimhood (Doherty & Harris, 2015). However, recognizing the difference between human smuggling and human trafficking can make the difference between someone being free and being enslaved (Jones, 2012).

Slavery and Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is commonly referred to as trafficking-in-persons or modern-day slavery. Slavery is defined as “a social and economic relationship in which an individual is held against his or her will, through violence or threats of violence with little or no pay, for the purpose of economic exploitation” (Bales, 2004, as cited in Choi-Fitzpatrick & Brysk, 2013, p. 16). Historically, slavery has been legal and even regulated by governments (Choi-Fitzpatrick, 2013). One group perpetrated it against another, and the perpetrators have differed vastly based on social, economic, and legal circumstances (Klein & Vinson, 2007). Compare this to human trafficking situations where the basic, most fundamental understanding also requires someone to hold another person in compulsory work for little to no pay. This common, core factor remains despite how other circumstances of slavery have changed (Choi-Fitzpatrick & Brysk, 2013).

Even though human trafficking and slavery have similar core factors, the definition has shifted some. Slavery requires the actual, legal ownership of the victim whereas to traffic someone only requires the involvement of coercion and an absence of

freedom (Kara, 2011). This difference is significant as some trafficker-victim relationships are paraded in the open as a normal, consensual relationship where both people involved still perform normal activities within society (Stephan & Patrick, 2021).

There is another informal separation between the “old” slavery and “new” slavery as “old” slavery is “tacitly assumed to have little or no direct causal connection to ongoing problems” (Quirk, as cited in Choi-Fitzpatrick, 2013, p. 41). “New” slavery is instead attributed to innovations, economic globalization, technological changes, war, government collapses, and demographic trends (Quirk, as cited in Choi-Fitzpatrick 2013).

The creation of “legitimate” trades did not limit the demand for trafficking. Increased demand for goods and services has only increased the demand for cheap labor (Choi-Fitzpatrick & Brysk, 2013). Traffickers profit from the illicit or highly exploitive activities that victims involuntarily conduct (Kelemen & Johansson, 2013) and trafficking victims are vastly more profitable than slaves have been in the past (Kara, 2011). This encourages businesses to continue utilizing forced labor provided by traffickers.

Often, victims of “traditional” slavery are kidnapped and held against their will (Quirk, as cited in Choi-Fitzpatrick, 2013). This is another difference as human trafficking can share this element but does not have to. Public stereotypes reinforce that trafficking victims are kidnapped and held, physically against their will (Withers & Blevins, 2023). While every situation is different and some begin with violent abductions, most do not (Polaris Project, 2021; Withers, 2016). Psychological abuse and manipulation from those the victim has a relationship with are much more common characteristics of human trafficking (Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative, 2023).

Since then, the understanding of human trafficking has continued to develop. Kalyani Gopal (2019) recalls a case she testified at and says, “Thirty years ago... no one said it was human trafficking right? So what we did was we called it child sexual abuse...” (para. 10). Today if the same circumstances, in this case, were discovered, the parents would be investigated and charged for sex trafficking of a minor instead of sexual abuse.

Trafficker control/manipulation

The three main phases of victimology are generally accepted as recruitment, maintenance, and rescue or escape (Preble, 2021). The recruitment phase is where the trafficker will target and initiate a relationship with the victim. “Traffickers are experts at finding those moments when people are vulnerable, of working angles, of manipulating reality and leveraging fears” (para. 3) which is the process referred to as grooming (Polaris Project, 2021; U.S. Department of Justice, n.d.). The traffickers begin by targeting victims with noticeable vulnerabilities or needs to be met- often at public places, on social media, or even within their friends or family circle (Polaris Project, 2021).

The trafficker then works on gaining the trust of the victim selected. They can bond over common interests or experiences, be good confidants, and work to frequently place themselves in the victim’s life (Polaris Project, 2021). Gaining the trust of and collecting information on the victim targeted will make manipulating them in the future easier (Polaris Project, 2021). Eventually, the trafficker begins meeting the needs of the victim, providing solutions to problems, housing, et cetera. Often when helping people

immigrate, traffickers may require a signed contract with hidden “recruitment fees” without providing adequate time for the victim to review it and discuss it with their family or representation (Preble, 2021). Less tangible concepts like love, belongingness, and comfort may also be utilized (Polaris Project, 2021). Then, the trafficker will start to isolate the person, placing them at the center of the victim’s life to solidify total dependency and in doing so, create distance between the victim targeted and anyone who may weaken the trafficker’s influence (Polaris Project, 2021). This makes it more difficult for the victim to reach out to others who may be able to help them (Polaris Project, 2021). This is similar to the Social Exchange Theory which refers to a non-physical form of abuse that is common with Intimate Partner Violence issues and has its own theories and prevention strategies (Karakurt & Silver, 2013). The specific symptoms of this abuse are isolation, property damage, physical harm to pets, and other forms of emotional abuse (Karakurt & Silver, 2013).

At this point, the trafficker begins to exploit the victim through guilt-tripping or force (Polaris Project, 2021; Preble, 2021). The trafficker pushes victims into new activities the victim is uncomfortable with- potentially by telling them it is to make some quick money (Polaris Project, 2021; United Nations, 2019). The asks become more frequent until the victim is comfortable or ambivalent to these “normal” requests (Polaris Project, 2021). Victims may feel they owe this work to their trafficker for the things traffickers have done for them or may feel as if it is their fault for letting the abuse get this far (Polaris Project, 2021).

Then, all the trafficker needs to do is maintain control. Victims may be physically controlled, lack free movement, and may show signs of physical or mental distress (Preble, 2021; Withers, 2016). However, psychological tactics are used much more frequently than physical restraints to maintain this control over victims (Withers, 2016). Traffickers will use dehumanization techniques, constant threats, worst-case scenarios, fear, and other forms of psychological abuse to put victims in a place of emotional distress (Withers, 2016). Victims may also lose their sense of identity as they have become dependent on their trafficker (Withers, 2016). They may also believe their abusive situation is their fault and that no one will help them because of it (Withers, 2016). Traffickers will typically keep a close watch on their victims, living close by, and could show up unannounced in an effort to remind the victim that they are always being watched (Withers, 2016). Traffickers may also provide a hopeful timeframe for victims to look forward to so the victim simply stays focused on the end in sight instead of focusing on how they can get out (Withers, 2016).

Risk Factors

Certain indicators can make individuals more vulnerable as potential trafficking victims. They are likely to be immigrants and therefore have limited records in the United States (Chester, et al., 2014; Nazer & Greenbaum, 2020). This may be because they have no or few identifying documents, have language barriers, or lack a social support system (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2022). Often, they are considered to have immigrated to the United States illegally, but this is not always the case. Georgia has facilitated labor trafficking investigations that helped successfully rescue 26 migrant

workers, all of whom had immigrated to the United States lawfully under H-2A and H-2B visas (Grinspan, 2022).

Other sociological groups may have different risk factors as well. For example, foster children- specifically teenage girls- are often labeled as runaways but many are probably being sex trafficked instead (Gopal, 2019; Kennedy, et al., 2019). However, law enforcement officers cannot focus solely on the at-risk population when investigating human trafficking. As anyone can be trafficked- especially in the age of social media (U.S. Department of Justice, n.d.).

Other at-risk factors include poverty, homelessness, psychological effects of past traumas, lack of basic needs, physical or developmental disorders (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2022), age, and minority status, (Chester, et al., 2014; Nazer & Greenbaum, 2020). Victims are also often trafficked by “friends”, under the impression they will travel or work abroad, will have modeling or acting jobs, or are even promised certain living arrangements from family members who then inform them of the work expected of them upon arrival (Gopal, 2019; United States Department of State, 2019; Viuhko, 2019).

Calls and arrest histories may indicate human trafficking as well. Trafficking victims can be involved in calls for prostitution, domestic violence, robbery, theft, fraud, drugs, and assault and battery (Meekins, 2014). Additionally, sex trafficking victims are also arrested in vice operations against prostitution meaning trafficking victims are identified as sex workers and are arrested as such (Schauer & Wheaton, 2006). Further, if the victim is found to be an undocumented immigrant, they are more likely to be arrested

or serve time in prison instead of getting the help they need (Schauer & Wheaton, 2006). Crimes, where victims fit into one of these categories, are less likely to be reported, investigated, or solved because of their at-risk status (International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2018, as cited in Farrell, et al., 2019; Lowery, et al., 2018; Martinez, 2019). This can be because no one noticed they went missing or because there was a distrust in the local police.

Red Flags of Human Trafficking

The red flags are a method of identification and list 8 red flags to look for in addition to any risk factors (McKnight, 2022). A specific set of targeted questions has been developed in order to assist in identifying these red flags (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). The potential red flags that may indicate a trafficking situation are issues with living situations, an inability to answer freely, not possessing identifying documents and/or income, signs of abuse, and the victim in question being a minor (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). These questions should be asked of the victim when they are separated from their traffickers and should be articulated in such a way that the victim's safety is not jeopardized in case the trafficker can overhear the conversation (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). The questions are (U.S. Department of State, n.d.):

1. Can you leave your job if you want to?
2. Can you come and go as you please?
3. Have you been hurt or threatened if you tried to leave?
4. Has your family been threatened?
5. Do you live with your employer?

6. Where do you sleep and eat?
7. Are you in debt to your employer?
8. Do you have your passport/identification? If not, who has it?

Victim Self-Identification

If an officer is unable to identify a potential trafficking situation, the victim would have to identify themselves to be rescued which is unlikely (Lavoie, et al., 2019). There is a level of deception, intimidation, and psychological abuse that traffickers enforce on trafficking victims that impairs their decision-making processes (U.S. Department of Justice, n.d.; Withers & Blevins, 2023). Victims face threats and struggle with feelings complicit in the abuse or shame felt (Lavoie, et al., 2019). Their experiences while being trafficked can cause reluctance to disclose as well. Trafficking or other abuse by a friend or family member can cause delays in their disclosures (Lavoie, et al., 2019). Other victims only disclosed their victimhood after several interactions with the police and trust was developed (Lavoie, et al., 2019). Victims also may not consider themselves victims and will refuse law enforcement assistance simply because they do not know any better (Mace, 2013). If the victim was enticed by gifts, activities, emotional fulfillment, or needed items may make them believe there is a relationship and cause feelings of love or loyalty (Lavoie, et al., 2019).

An alternative reason may be is because adolescents already tend to “experiment with new behaviors, combined with a tendency not to tell adults about those behaviors” (Lavoie, et al., 2019, p. 227). Risky experiences, increasing desires for autonomy, and attempts to keep their actions secret put children more at risk for manipulation tactics or

pressure from others (Grandpre, et al., 2003, as cited in Lavoit, et al., 2019). The desire for autonomy may also make them not feel any obligation to discuss their relationships with adults because their relationship is a personal matter (Smetana, et al., 2006, as cited in Lavoit, et al., 2019).

Victim-Centered Approach

Agencies tend to combat prostitution by focusing on the street-level sex trade through traditional vice enforcement techniques (Alvarez & Cañas-Moreira, 2015). These traditional methods generate the largest arrest numbers but do not provide victims with the resources they need to escape their trafficking situations (Alvarez & Cañas-Moreira, 2015). Instead, victims can be arrested as prostitutes, treated as nuisance offenders, and returned to the streets soon after which enables traffickers to continue manipulating other victims (Alvarez & Cañas-Moreira, 2015).

The victim-centered approach can be adopted to help break cycles of violence and control (Alvarez & Cañas-Moreira, 2015). This can be done by utilizing resources provided by social services, victim assistance, and non-government organizations to help victims rehabilitate so they can reenter society (Alvarez & Cañas-Moreira, 2015). This also includes assessing the victims' immediate needs, connecting the victims with service providers and healthcare professionals, and providing information about the justice process (Farrell, et al., 2019). An officer's response to the victim has consequences for crime detection and prevention as the investigation and prosecution rely heavily on testimony from the victim (Farrell, et al., 2019). When victims believe they have been treated respectfully, they are more likely to report their victimization, cooperate, and

participate in the criminal justice process (Koster, et al., 2015, as cited in Farrell, et al., 2019).

Legislation

Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA)

The TVPA of 2000 was written “to combat trafficking in persons, especially into the sex trade, slavery, and involuntary servitude” (p. 1) and “to reauthorize certain federal programs to prevent violence against women, and for other purposes” (p. 1). It establishes rules and guidelines for agencies to follow to prevent trafficking, promotes cooperation between agencies, protects and assists victims, and strengthens the prosecution and punishment of the traffickers (Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act, 2000). It also sets minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking that governments can adopt as well as lists the actions taken against governments that do not meet the minimum standards (Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act, 2000). Various renewals of TVPA have introduced additional amendments like border interdiction rules (Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act, 2003), the protection of vulnerable populations (Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005, 2006), the implementation of stricter penalties against traffickers, and additional victims assistance (William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act, 2008).

The TVPA renewal in 2017 included the Frederick Douglass Trafficking Prevention Act of 2017. This required the training of school resource officers and staff to recognize signs of human trafficking, improved support for missing and exploited children, forensic assistance, more grant programs, assessments, and implemented the

victim-centered approach for training purposes at the federal level (Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act, 2018; Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2017, 2018). Both were reauthorized in 2019 which provided more grant funding, improved domestic prevention based on foreign complaints received, ensured the United States did not fund any human trafficking organizations, implemented reduction strategies, designated specific labor trafficking prosecutors, provided more training for air carriers and school staff, and implemented crime reporting and data collection (Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act, 2018; Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2017, 2018).

The Palermo Protocol

The protocol to prevent, suppress, and punish trafficking in persons, especially women, and children (2000; The Palermo Protocol) provided an important transition into the modern understanding of human trafficking. As a supplement to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), it serves as a global treaty on human trafficking and covers trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, forced labor, servitude, and organ harvesting (Kelemen & Johansson, 2013; United Nations General Assembly, 2001; U.S. Department of State, 2019).

The Palermo Protocol provided clarity, and insight into human trafficking, how traffickers commit trafficking crimes, and a foundation for other governments to build their own human trafficking policies (Suchecky, 2019; U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime, 2000; U.S. Department of State, 2019). This resulted in a more crafted and explicit consensus on the definition of human trafficking (Gozdziak & Collett, n.d., as cited in

Craig, 2019). As of 2023, most countries have passed some form of anti-trafficking legislation and have established legal protocols to prosecute traffickers, prevent victimization, protect and assist victims, and promote inter-government cooperation (Suchecki, 2019; UN Office on Drugs and Crime, 2000; U.S. Department of State, 2019; Zhang, 2022).

3Ps and 4Ps

The Palermo Protocol also advancements led to the creation of a plan called the 3Ps which addresses trafficking through prevention, protection, and prosecution (Craig, 2019). The 3Ps are a systematic way to evaluate anti-trafficking measures and allow for easier learning from cities and countries that address human trafficking issues (Craig, 2019). Each “P” has its own significance in the fight against human trafficking (Craig, 2019).

Prevention refers to any outreach and education within the community (Craig, 2019; U.S. Department of State, n.d.). Disseminating accurate and targeted information allows communities to be better prepared to respond to human trafficking threats and can reach at-risk populations before they face any deceitful recruitment practices (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). Prevention also includes cross-cutting endeavors that reduce vulnerabilities and exploitation, and strengthen partnerships between law enforcement agencies, governments, and non-government organizations (U.S. Department of State, n.d.).

Protection refers to the actions taken to identify victims, provide referrals, and provide support to non-government organizations that support victims as they recover

and reintegrate (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). The proactive identification and prioritization of the victim's rights and needs are essential to ensuring the proper care of the victim (Craig, 2019; U.S. Department of State, n.d.). This includes allowing victims to legally remain in the country instead of being deported, encouraging victims to seek legal status in the United States, and mandating cooperation between service providers and law enforcement organizations (Craig, 2019; U.S. Department of State, n.d.).

The prosecution is the legal process of holding human traffickers accountable for their actions in a court of law (Craig, 2019; U.S. Department of State, n.d.). This requires anti-trafficking laws to be an integral part of combating human trafficking by creating strong legislation and stiff penalties that should reduce the number of active human traffickers (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). The prosecution teams rely on the investigative skills of law enforcement officials to ensure traffickers are imprisoned.

A fourth P has been added and stands for partnership. Partnership was added to complement the other 3Ps so each is utilized effectively together (Craig, 2019; U.S. Department of State, n.d.; Zhu, et al., 2020). Specifically, it creates lines of communication between the private and public sectors at all government levels so information and resources can be maximized (Craig, 2019).

The AMP Model

Another essential part of The Palermo Protocol (2000) established three elements to make identifying human trafficking situations easier: action, means, and purpose. The Action-Means-Purpose (AMP) model is utilized to help differentiate labor trafficking from other forms of exploitation or labor law violations (National Human Trafficking

Hotline, n.d.; U.S. Department of State, n.d.). An element of action, means, and purpose is required to establish a potential human trafficking situation (National Human Trafficking Hotline, n.d.). The “Action” is the inducement, recruitment, harboring, transporting, providing, or obtaining of the victim (National Human Trafficking Hotline, n.d.). There must also be a form of force, fraud, or coercion unless the victim is a minor which serves as the “means” (National Human Trafficking Hotline, n.d.). Third, an element of “purpose” requires the trafficking to occur in order to sex or labor traffic the victim (National Human Trafficking Hotline, n.d.; U.S. Department of State, n.d.).

For sex trafficking, the “action” would be when the trafficker recruits or solicits another person to engage in commercial sex (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). The “means” occurs when various forms of coercion- including threats of or actual physical or psychological harm, reputational harm, threats to others, confiscation of identity documents, the manipulation of the use of addictive substances, and debt manipulation, and other forms of manipulation or coercion (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). The “purpose” is a commercial sex act and can take place in private homes, massage parlors, hotels, brothels, internet-based sex work, et cetera (U.S. Department of State, n.d.).

Regarding labor trafficking, the “action” would be the trafficker obtaining a person for labor or services (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). The “means” involves various forms of coercion including threats of force, debt manipulation, withholding of pay, confiscation of identity documents, the manipulation of the use of addictive substances, or other forms of coercion, et cetera (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). The

“purpose” element focuses on the goal to exploit work from the victim in any industry or setting (U.S. Department of State, n.d.).

Abolish Human Trafficking Act

The Abolish Human Trafficking Act of 2017 (2018) is to provide support for the abolishment of human trafficking. It reauthorizes and supplements the Domestic Trafficking Victims’ Fund through the 2023 financial year, mandates victims' restitution in addition to other penalties, and allows for reward money to be provided to those who provide valuable information (Abolish Human Trafficking Act of 2017, 2018). Grants are allotted for direct services to minor victims of severe forms of trafficking as authorized through the DOJ’s Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency and to improve services for trafficking survivors (Abolish Human Trafficking Act of 2017, 2018).

Additionally, this act increases the prison terms available for offenses related to peonage, slavery, involuntary servitude, forced labor, and trafficking, as well as an enhanced 10-year prison term for street gang members who commit or conspire to commit human trafficking, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or transportation for prostitution or illegal sexual activity (Abolish Human Trafficking Act of 2017, 2018). It also expands the DOJ’s authority to wire, oral, or electronic communications when investigating related offenses (Abolish Human Trafficking Act of 2017, 2018).

It also requires the DHS issue a directive that provides instructions on how to investigate individuals who solicit victims and minimize the arrests and prosecutions of victims to all task force members and law enforcement officials that investigate human trafficking (Abolish Human Trafficking Act of 2017, 2018). This is carried on as a

requirement for all human trafficking training programs and requires an emphasis that any commercial sex act with a minor constitutes a human trafficking offense (Abolish Human Trafficking Act of 2017, 2018). The DOJ was also tasked with issuing guidance that emphasizes any commercial sex act with a minor is a human trafficking offense, implements best practices for collecting additional assessments and investigating offenses related to human trafficking, sexual abuse, exploitation, or smuggling, and emphasizes that commercial sexual exploitation is a form of gender-based violence (Abolish Human Trafficking Act of 2017, 2018).

Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act of 2017

The Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act amends the Communications Act of 1934 by imposing penalties via fine or up to 10 years of imprisonment for any person who attempts to, conspires to, or does own, manage, or operate a computer in order to promote or facilitate sexual exploitation or prostitution (Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act of 2017, 2018). If sex trafficking or the prostitution of 5 or more people is involved, the penalties are increased to a prison term of up to 25 years (Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act of 2017, 2018). It also mandates court-ordered restitution and protects a victim's right to recover damages and attorney's fees (Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act of 2017, 2018).

Government Involvement

President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat TIP (PITF)

The President's Interagency Task Force (PFIT) is a cabinet-level task force chaired by the Secretary of State that consists of 20 agencies across the federal government to combat trafficking in persons by “leveraging resources more effectively and developing robust whole-of-agency responses” (U.S. Department of State, 2020; White House, 2016, para. 3). Several federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies are tasked with eliminating human trafficking in the United States and impacting other countries' law enforcement responses to human trafficking.

Department of Justice (DOJ)

The Department of Justice (DOJ) primarily focuses on prosecuting federal human trafficking cases. They also incorporate victim assistance specialists, connect victims with victim service providers, create enforcement initiatives to strengthen anti-trafficking partnerships, provide funding to state and local law enforcement agencies, and advance survivor-centered anti-trafficking strategies (McKnight, 2022; United States Department of State, 2020).

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

Other agencies, such as the Department of Homeland Security, Department of State, and Department of Defense, are the principal investigative agencies for federal human trafficking cases (McKnight, 2022). The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) focuses on preventing citizens from becoming human trafficking victims and provides immigration relief for foreign victims (McKnight, 2022). The DHS also

sponsors various campaigns- such as The Blue Campaign- that strive to raise awareness and educate the public, law enforcement, and other partners (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, n.d.). The campaigns and enforcement agencies under the DHS coordinate to show a unified front against human trafficking.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is the largest federal law enforcement agency nested within DHS and is solely responsible for securing the United States' borders. Regarding human trafficking, their focus is to prevent trafficking and to identify victims along the border and ports of entry (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, n.d.). Additionally, Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) investigative branch, Homeland Security Investigations (ICE HSI), investigates and provides support to victims of international and domestic human trafficking cases. ICE HSI can seize the trafficker's assets and profit incentives through collaborations with U.S. and foreign assets and non-government organizations to identify, rescue, and aid victims as well as help provide Continues Presence which is short-term immigration relief (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, n.d.). U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) provides immigration relief through T Visa and U Visas (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, n.d.). These sub-organizations collaborate to combat human trafficking.

The Blue Campaign

The Blue Campaign is a campaign sponsored by the DHS to educate the public, law enforcement, and other industry partners on how to recognize and appropriately respond to potential human trafficking cases (U.S. Department of Homeland Security,

n.d.). The Blue Campaign assists in the development of training for general awareness of specific educational resources that help reduce victimizations within vulnerable populations (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, n.d.). General awareness is conducted by making awareness resources- such as online training courses and fliers for businesses to display- available to the public to educate them on recognizing and reporting potential human trafficking situations (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, n.d.).

Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC)

The Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC; 2023; n.d.) is developed by the DHS to provide training to law enforcement professions throughout their career to help them fulfill their responsibilities. FLETC's human trafficking training "provides law enforcement with an in-depth understanding of the crime of human trafficking and highlights many of the primary indicators they may encounter throughout their shifts" (Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers, 2023, para. 3). Human trafficking training started being incorporated in FLETC's basic programs in 2015 and the training development was completed in 2019 (Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers, 2023). A training session in Texas included a panel of subject matter experts and representatives at the federal, state, and local levels to introduce Texas-based resources for assistance with suspected human-trafficking situations, case studies, videos, and student-centered activities that enhanced the learning experience (Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers, 2023).

Department of State (DOS)

Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (TIP Office)

The Department of State (DOS) leads the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (TIP Office) and the National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking (NAP). The TIP Office leads the DOS’ “global efforts to combat human trafficking through the prosecution of traffickers, the protection of victims, and the prevention of human trafficking” (U.S. Department of State, n.d., para. 1). This is done through the analysis of government efforts and global trends and encouraging cooperation between various diplomacies, private and public entities (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). The TIP Office also releases a Trafficking in Persons Report annually to address the impact human trafficking has globally and any actions individuals and societies can take to combat human trafficking (U.S. Department of State, n.d.).

National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking (The NAP)

The National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking (The NAP) requires U.S. government agencies to conduct actions that strengthen the prevention of human trafficking, protect victims through intervention and support, and hold traffickers criminally accountable (Office on Trafficking in Persons, 2020). It allows the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to certify victims of human trafficking which enables them to be eligible to apply for federal and state benefits (Office on Trafficking in Persons, 2020). Additionally, it requires the HHS, Office on Trafficking in Persons (OTIP), Children’s Bureau (CB), and Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) to provide aid through grants, programs, training, resources, and partnerships for

communities and other organizations that may interact with high-risk groups (Office on Trafficking in Persons, 2020). Requirements for inter-agency cooperation are also created to implement methods to decrease demand- through the Senior Policy Operating Group (SPOG)- and increase the scale of trafficking prevention- through the HHS's Administration for Children and Families (ACF; Office on Trafficking in Persons, 2020). Training programs developed by the DOJ and HHS are to be made available to any United States law enforcement agency that elects to utilize them (Office on Trafficking in Persons, 2020). The NAP also acknowledges the importance of mental health professionals in a human trafficking investigation and treatment of trafficking victims and requires such training for federal agency officials (Office on Trafficking in Persons, 2020).

The NAP of 2021 is altered to address the needs of underserved individuals by addressing the disproportionate impacts against them (The White House, 2021; The White House, 2022). Updates were made to the policy to reflect the Biden "administration's commitments to gender and racial equity" (para. 2), protect "worker's rights and ending forced labor in global supply chains, which the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated" (para. 4), and "of ensuring safe, orderly, and humane migration (para. 4, The White House, 2021). The 2022 NAP is focused on developing better data-sharing practices among various agencies and the public (The White House, 2022).

Department of Defense (DOD)

The Department of Defense (DOD) leads the Combating Trafficking in Persons (CTIP) program (Hicks, 2023). The DOD's current focus is "on expanding trainings,

preventing the sale of goods produced by forced or child labor in DOD outlets, and encouraging and empowering survivors” (Hicks, 2023, para. 4). The DOD is developing specialized training for first responders outside of law enforcement- specifically healthcare professionals and chaplains which should help them appropriately respond with trauma-informed care (Hicks, 2023).

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) emphasizes the most effective way to address trafficking is through a collaborative, multi-agency approach and has a variety of programs designed to assist (Federal Bureau of Investigation, n.d.). The FBI Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking Task Force's premise is to investigate human traffickers and recover trafficking victims at the state and federal levels (Federal Bureau of Investigation, n.d.). The task force exists within nearly every FBI field office (Federal Bureau of Investigations, n.d.).

There is also the Anti-Trafficking Coordination Team Initiative which works to develop enforcement efforts and enhance access to specialized human trafficking subject matter experts, leads, and intelligence (Federal Bureau of Investigations, n.d.). They develop and implement strategic action plans which should generate high-impact investigations and prosecutions federally (Federal Bureau of Investigation, n.d.). This initiative is a collaborative effort amongst twelve FBI field offices, the DOJ, DHS, and DOL (Federal Bureau of Investigation, n.d.).

The Enhanced Collaborative Model Human Trafficking Program supports the development and enhancement of multi-disciplinary human trafficking task forces

(Federal Bureau of Investigation, n.d.). These programs are responsible for implementing collaborative approaches amongst the U.S. Attorney's Office, local prosecutor's offices, federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, and community service providers to proactively identify and recover victims of trafficking (Federal Bureau of Investigation, n.d.). This initiative is funded through the DOJ's Office for Victims of Crime and the Bureau of Justice Assistance (Federal Bureau of Investigation, n.d.).

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Overview

McKnight (2022) says, “research has shown that local police and sheriffs are often unaware of human trafficking in their jurisdictions and commonly lack the training necessary to investigate these crimes” (p. 198). Law enforcement training regarding human trafficking is limited. This leads to the inaccurate estimation of the number of victims (McKnight, 2022) and emphasizes how “victim identification needs to be strengthened to better help human trafficking victims” (McKnight, 2022, p. 198). What training is available often leaves officers unprepared to protect the general public from human trafficking. Additionally, it reduces the seeking of justice, negating the United States standard of “justice for all”.

A survey conducted by Clawson and colleagues (2006) found that 28 percent of officers, victim advocates, agents, and supervisors had no knowledge of human trafficking. The remaining officers showed that 48 percent learned on the job and only 27 percent learned through government or non-government training sessions they elected to take (Clawson, et al., 2006). More recently, Mapp and colleagues (2016) discovered that only 17 percent of officers reported receiving human trafficking training. This major reduction of officers receiving training can massively increase the number of trafficking cases missed or misidentified. If only 17 percent of officers received training, many of these cases may be identified as another issue such as prostitution, abuse or domestic violence, or smuggling for example. Sixty-six percent of the surveyed officers reported that their knowledge came from mass media (Mapp, et al., 2016). Misidentification of

cases may occur because of an understanding based on inaccurate stereotypes perpetuated by the media (Mapp, et al., 2016). Forcing officers to rely on this limited understanding of trafficking is simply setting them up for failure.

Further, these inadequacies leave victims in situations where they can be continually exploited, harmed, and abused. Training has been proven to adequately improve how officers perform in the skillset being trained (Farrell, et al., 2019). This shows that training sessions incorporated at the appropriate level should be utilized to ensure law enforcement officers are prepared to handle potential trafficking situations once they arise. Factual context proves training is essential in improving officers' ability to perform their respective roles despite being deemed unnecessary for human trafficking cases. The purpose of this thesis is to explore how training sessions for law enforcement personnel can be improved upon to assist in the identification and investigations of human trafficking cases.

Research Design

This thesis is qualitative in nature and provides a collective case study approach to understanding the human trafficking training law enforcement officers participate in. Qualitative case study management allows for complex phenomena to be studied through the deconstruction and reconstruction of said phenomena. This approach was selected because the research seeks to identify how law enforcement training on human trafficking can be improved by analyzing existing literature and identifying common themes and issues discovered (Baxter & Jack, 2008). This case study is collective in nature because it

allows for the assimilation and identification of similar and contrasting themes (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Common themes amongst these sources show that the issue is common across larger jurisdictions and may be addressed with the same general corrections. Whereas opposing themes allow for greater discussion of various solutions and their applicability and ability to be implemented.

There are concerns with the case study methodology that should be addressed. First, case study analysis' carries concerns about predetermining the result of the study and manipulating the data to confirm this conclusion. This is because of "a lack of trust in the credibility of a case study researcher's procedures, which do not seem to protect sufficiently against such biases as a researcher seeming to find what she or he had set out to find" (Yin, 2012, p. 144). "Rival explanations directly compete with each other and cannot coexist" (Yin, 2012, p. 150). Addressing each side to every suggestion can allow for the most, well-rounded discussion and logical, data driven solution.

Appealing to rival explanations allows the research to develop from a sense of skepticism. Countering every point possible ensures the most well-rounded discussion and solution based on logic and data. Upon discussing every potential solution, we can easily compare ideas and their results to see what is most effective to ensure the best suggestions are being applied. "Data collection should involve a deliberate and vigorous search from 'discrepant evidence'" (Patton, 2002, p. 553, as cited in Yin, 2014, p. 150). "Finding no such evidence despite diligent search again increases confidence about a case study's later descriptions, explanations, and interpretations." (Yin, 2014, p. 150). If a rival explanation exists, it is addressed to ensure any bias is reduced.

A chain of evidence can also confirm that data is legitimate and honest. This can be accomplished by preserving evidence in a database. Keeping the evidence stored in a database allows data to be untainted and stored for future reference. This also ensures that the data can be easily retrieved and referenced to provide support for questions about the data.

Second, the use of qualitative data is deemed “to be based on less robust measures than those used to collect quantitative data” (Yin, 2012, p. 144). Despite this, “many case studies will and should rely on qualitative data... and procedures such as establishing a chain of evidence or an audit trail will increase the reliability of such data” (Yin, 2012, p. 144-145). However, Yin (2014) also says that multiple-case studies “is often considered more compelling, and the overall study is therefore regarded as being more robust (Herriott & Firestone, 1983)” (p. 57). This is because multiple-case studies require “extensive resources and time beyond the means of a single student” (Yin, 2014, p. 57). Therefore, multiple people’s work supports the conclusion.

The final concern is that there is a “perceived inability to generalize the findings from a case study to any broader level” (Yin, 2012, p. 144). Triangulation is “the intersection of three different reference points” in order to calculate a precise location (Yardley, 2009, p. 239, as cited in Yin, 2012, p. 149). Further, “pattern-matching logic compares an empirically based pattern with a predicted one” (Yin, 2012, p. 151). Utilizing triangulation seeks “confirmation from three contrasting sources” (p. 150) to collect and provide confirmation (Yin, 2012). Pattern-matching and examining these patterns with rival explanations show “support for the claimed results is strengthened

even further” (Yin, 2012, p. 151). Having multiple sources reference and support the same idea provides additional support behind the quality of the idea. Further, as the cases selected are from various locations and research backgrounds, any ideas that are supported from multiple sources have generally proven to be helpful in multiple jurisdictions and backgrounds. If a common occurrence occurs in multiple geographical locations despite all other differences, it logically confirms that it can be extremely applicable elsewhere.

Theory

A theory is designed “to suggest a simple set of relationships such as ‘a [hypothetical] story about why acts, events, structures, and thoughts occur” (Sutton & Staw, 1995, p. 372, as cited in Yin, 2012, p. 147). The theory is designed to address the police system as a whole to improve functions, performance, and partnerships. Therefore, it is an organizational theory which refers to “theories of bureaucracies, organizational structure and functions, excellence in organizational performance, and interorganizational partnerships” (Yin, 2014, p. 39)

Training improves officers’ ability to perform in their needed skillset (Farrell, et al., 2019). The goal is to make improvements to officers training in identifying and investigating human trafficking cases. Improving officers’ knowledge on human trafficking can improve their ability to identify and investigate human trafficking cases by improving officers’ ability to perform in their needed roles (Farrell, et al., 2019).

This presents the need to identify the best improvements to make to improve in these areas. Other researchers have studied this topic in their respective geographic areas. Comparing these studies can identify overlapping issues and recommendations for mass implementation according to the idea of triangulation. The discussion of suggested recommendations for training improvements can assist in the development of improvement suggestions. The focus of this study has been bound to training methodologies and content improvements. While other recommendations are important to consider as well, focusing solely on the implementation of training ensures the topic is thoroughly discussed and results are clear and easily implementable.

Utilizing the methods discussed above is necessary to support the credibility of this study. However, it does not address how the concepts selected are selected. For this, the researcher utilized analytic generalizations to identify the most applicable suggestions. Analytic generalizations are based on:

1. “corroborating, modifying, rejecting, or otherwise advancing theoretical concepts that you referenced in designing your case study” (Yin, 2014, p. 41) or;
2. “new concepts that arose upon the completion of your case study” (Yin, 2014, p. 41).

Research Questions

RQ1: What and how much training are law enforcement officers currently receiving on identifying and investigating human trafficking?

RQ2: What are the recommendations for training law enforcement officers in identifying and investigating human trafficking?

Data Collection

Electronic databases were utilized to locate these kinds of sources on the topic. The primary source was the Jerry Falwell Online Library at Liberty University. The secondary sources were Google Scholar and the Dudley Knox Library at the Naval Postgraduate School. The most successful keywords were: *human trafficking, sex trafficking, human trafficking training, sex trafficking training, human trafficking training for law enforcement officers, and sex trafficking training for law enforcement officers*. Searches focusing on *labor trafficking, labor trafficking training, and labor trafficking training for law enforcement officers*, yielded minimal and irrelevant results. These sources assisted in the location of full-text journal articles, government websites and reports, and whole and segments of books.

Data Sources

Qualitative studies are the primary data source for the articles utilized in this study. Many of the articles selected were located in the works cited section of other articles. A source was evaluated and included based on the relevance of the topic, credibility, and age to ensure the data is the most recent and relevant possible. The topic must have focused on training improvements but included qualitative and quantitative studies, other case studies, legislation, thesis, expert discussions, articles, interviews, government sources, and industry statistics. Each source has also been published within the last 10 years.

This requires external and internal validity. External validity is achieved through replication logic. This is to anticipate contrasting results designed by pursuing multiple different patterns and theories that can be discussed and rivaled. These patterns must “(a) predict similar results (a literal replication) or (b) predicts contrasting results but for anticipatable reasons (a theoretical replication)” (Yin, 2014, p. 57).

Data Analysis

Internal validity is addressed through the use of logic models and cross-case synthesis. A cross-case synthesis utilizes multiple, pre-existing studies to aggregate findings across each individual study (Yin, 2014). Other researchers have conducted studies on the topic for general exploration and focus on different communities. Much of the research into this topic is relatively recent so it is qualitative and theoretical. There is not a major focus on what types of training are most effective. Instead, topics are addressed and responses from law enforcement officers are utilized to emphasize the need for more inclusive and all-encompassing training sessions. Each source is treated as a separate case and is analyzed and coded in the form of word tables.

The intent is to use this cross-case synthesis to create analytic generalizations that can be applied and potentially solve the common issues identified (Yin, 2012). The discussion will follow an organizational structure based on the themes identified within the research. This should lead to a well-developed, common ground that can generally be applied easily across most agencies without much need for customization. Suggestions on how the training should be improved are mostly based upon conversations and surveys. Themes and concepts are continually discovered across the available dataset instead of

simply utilizing data collected for the sole purpose of this study alone (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Thematic Analysis

Utilizing a thematic approach does require certain concepts to be defined before discussing the data. First, deciding what a theme is in relation to the research question is necessary (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Identifying a concept as a theme “represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82). Themes are identified by the number of sources that identified the issue because if multiple authors identified the same issue, there is commonality across multiple jurisdictions implying the issue is a mainstream issue. Additionally, each concept is measured by its ability to capture “something important in relation to the overall research question” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82). Therefore, if a concept was common but did not pertain to training sessions, it would not be included as a theme. Subsequently, this form of analysis is more theoretical than inductive as it is “driven by the researcher’s theoretical or analytic interest... and is thus more explicitly analyst-driven” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 84). The focus is solely on improving training, meaning the data is analyzed for a specific discussion instead of allowing the data to completely form the scope of the thesis.

The results are semantic because each theme is “identified within the explicit or surface level meaning of the data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 84). This data is then interpreted in order to theorize why these patterns are significant and what they mean and their implications. This implication is constructionist as the results are not inherent within

individuals but within a sociocultural group. The results are general and are meant to be applied at large instead of to a specific agency, department, or officer.

Codes

Codes are categories that represent themes or topics identified during analysis. They are meant to represent the researcher's interested topics as they relate to the particular study. The information within the selected surveys is organized by code for easy retrieval. This makes the data easy to organize and flexible to create, erase, modify, amalgamate, or browse as needed. This study utilized an inductive approach to coding-meaning codes are attached to the data as it is analyzed (Chandra & Shang, 2019). It follows the idea that "the research begins with an area of study and allows the theory to emerge from the data" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 12, as cited in Chandra & Shang, 2019, p. 8). This method supports the desire to create analytic generalizations instead of beginning with predetermined concepts being tested (Chandra & Shang, 2019). Coding the data this way allowed for clusters analysis which can assist in visualizing patterns based on word or coding similarities (Qualtrics, n.d.) to help develop themes.

Credibility of Data

Multiple Sources

The data must be credible and analyzed for reliability through case study protocol. This involves the external and internal variability discussed above as well as evidential credibility and reliability. Yin (2009) states that "case study evidence can come... documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation,

and physical artifacts” (p. 103, 105). Having multiple sources allows for dealing with a wide variety of evidence, addresses a broader range of historical and behavioral issues, and assists in the development of converging lines of inquiry (Yin, 2014). The studies selected for this case study involved a variety of these methods. The combination of these methods- when properly used- along with the proper data collection principles can maximize the benefits, construct validity, and reliability of the evidence presented. Utilizing multiple unrelated sources of evidence conveying the same principles leads to the credibility of the data through triangulation (Yin, 2009). The multiple sources of evidence essentially provide multiple measures of the same phenomenon.” (Yin, 2014, p. 121).

Triangulation

Triangulation lends to the credibility of this case study and studies that utilize it are generally rated with higher overall quality than those that rely on single sources (COSMOS Corporation, 1983, as cited in Yin, 2009). This development is referred to as “converging lines of inquiry” (p. 120) which is defined as “the principle in navigation, whereby the intersection of different reference points is used to calculate the precise location of an object” (Yardley, 2009, as cited in Yin, 2009, p. 120). This case study utilizes data triangulation because data is collected “from multiple sources but aimed at corroborating the same finding” (Yin, 2009, p 120-121). As it provides multiple measures of the same phenomenon, it strengthens construct validity by utilizing multiple research methods and interest phenomena to prove and increase confidence in a single reality. The

data triangulation of data sources is aimed at corroborating the same finding from multiple sources (Yin, 2014).

Database

The reliability of the evidence refers to the ability of a later researcher to follow the procedures described in this thesis so that if they conduct the same study they will arrive at the same conclusions (Yin, 2014). “The goal of reliability is to minimize the errors and biases in a study” (Yin, 2014, p. 48). This can be applied to this study by utilizing a database and by maintaining a solid chain of evidence to ensure all data is accurately coded and preserved.

Yin (2009) also discusses organizing and documenting the data collected for the case study through the data or evidentiary base and within this thesis itself. A database allows for ease with organizing and documenting data and the preservation of the raw data submitted to the database eliminating the comingling of the data and the researcher's opinions or interpretations (Yin, 2009). It also allows for the compilation of all sources and not just narrative or numeric information.

The utilization of a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) provides tools for word processing, data processing, and data organization (Yin, 2009). The use of computer files makes distinguishing between “the data or evidentiary base and the researcher’s report” even clearer (Yin, 2014, p. 123). This gives a critical reader “recourse for inspecting the raw data that had led to a case study’s conclusions, because the narrative in the case study report was commingled with the

author's interpretations of the data.” (Yin, 2014, p. 123) The researcher utilized QDA Miner to analyze and identify common themes based on the concept of thematic analysis. The data is analyzed via a cross-case synthesis to identify themes which is best utilized for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns found within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Yin, 2014).

Chain of Evidence

A database also provides a chain of evidence built into the system. A chain of evidence is to “allow an external observer ... to follow the derivation of any evidence from initial research questions to ultimate case study conclusions” (Yin, 2014, p. 127). Additional steps taken to ensure the chain of evidence include utilizing adequately cited relevant sources to arrive at specific findings, ensuring these specific sources contain the actual evidence presented, and ensuring the circumstances remain consistent with the specific procedures and questions contained in the protocol to ensure actions taken followed the procedures stipulated by the protocol (Yin, 2014). Reviewing the protocol listed should easily indicate the link between the protocol questions and the original study questions (Yin, 2014).

Chapter Four: Findings

This qualitative study is designed to explore the human trafficking training law enforcement officers participate in. It utilized a collective case study method to gather data to be analyzed thematically. The research questions are as follows:

RQ1: What and how much training are law enforcement officers currently receiving on identifying and investigating human trafficking?

RQ2: What are the recommendations for training law enforcement officers in identifying and investigating human trafficking?

The data was collected and analyzed using qualitative content and thematic analysis for the purpose of identifying the most significant patterns amongst the selected sources. It was manually coded in QDA Miner to identify clusters of codes. Then, the data was inspected for meaning and themes were generated through the software and manually. This ensures that the correct analysis was conducted to provide the most accurate data possible. The results of this study identified three main, relevant themes:

1. A call for more required training for law enforcement officers.
2. The need for existing training methods to be improved.
3. The need for existing training content to be improved.

Results and Discussion

Main Theme: Additional Training

The first, overarching theme is the requirement for more training for law enforcement officers. This specifically addresses research question one. The passage of TVPA set foundations for law enforcement which only mandates training at the federal

level. It has allowed a lack of training at the state and local levels of law enforcement (Franklin, 2017; McKnight, 2022). The TVPA of 2017 requires the DOJ, DHS, and Department of Labor (DOL) to provide human trafficking training to their employees. It also requires the DOJ and DHS to develop advanced training curriculums that supplement the basic curriculum, and to provide it to employees and task force members who investigate these offenses (Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2017, 2018).

This training does not automatically carry over to the states. Instead, states must sponsor their own training sessions or send specific law enforcement personnel to existing training sessions- such as FLETC classes (Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers, 2023). Only nineteen states and the District of Columbia mandate law enforcement officers receive human trafficking training and another 21 simply make training available to officers (Shared Hope International, 2017). For the most part, police recognize the potential existence of sex and labor trafficking in their communities but the “responsibility for the identification and investigation of trafficking is delegated to investigators in vice or child exploitation of minors” (Farrell, et al., 2015, p. 48) instead of being spread evenly across the police force. Further, the standard tactics in vice or child exploitation cases “are not particularly successful at identifying victims” (Farrell, et al., 2015, p. 48).

Despite this expectation, front-line officers are relied upon by investigators for identification purposes. Federal investigators and all prosecution teams need local officers to identify potential trafficking situations for in depth investigation. The community policing setup requires local police to be more familiar with their local

community as they are more likely to come into contact with human trafficking victims and their traffickers (Farrell, et al., 2010). Federal investigators do not have the ability to learn and connect in a local community like this. A detective on a human trafficking unit explained that an officer may identify or be assigned to a sex trafficking case during their routine duties (Farrell, et al., 2019). If that officer does not have the proper training to handle the case or reach out to the designated unit, the right officers that are trained may not know the case exists (Farrell, et al., 2019). Further exploration of what human trafficking is as well as the concepts of consent and exploitation is noted as particularly necessary (Clarke, 2020; Farrell, et al., 2019; McKnight, 2022).

Training Preservation

When providing training sessions, it is necessary to consider the long-term implications training provides. Clarke (2020) found that the impact of human trafficking training had shown immediate results. However, these results begin to dwindle after a 6-month period (Clarke, 2020). Considering this, how can training programs create longer-lasting results? One option is to provide more frequent training sessions, so officers are continually reminded of human trafficking (Clarke, 2020; Clawson, n.d.). This could be done in situations officers are obligated to or choose to participate in, in order to accomplish multiple goals such as roll call, classes in the academy, foreign language classes, and other in-service trainings (Clawson, n.d.). Additionally, online refresher courses could be provided to officers routinely to ensure the information is practiced regularly (Clarke, 2020). “Once the [in person] training session has finished online

training should be made available for officers to remind themselves of the information they have been taught” (Clarke, 2020, p. 90).

However, the goal is not to simply remind officers that human trafficking exists as an awareness campaign does. There is a difference between training or education and raising awareness (Clawson, n.d.). “Come-one-come-all” (p. 4) training programs provide less than stellar impacts on officers and their communities (Clawson, n.d.). “Investigators in charge of developing cases for prosecution should be included in a second tier of training” (Craig, 2019, p. 48).

Some agencies promote targeting their training sessions to certain groups within the agency, such as a certain level of hierarchy (Clawson, n.d.; Clawson, et al., 2006). This ensures the information is tailored to each specific class so the information is relevant to their specific tasks (Clawson, n.d.). Additionally, if management or supervisors are taught with the expectation that that information trickles down to front-line officers, those who need it most may miss out on the information (Clawson, et al., 2006). This trickle-down does not always happen as expected (Clawson, et al., 2006). Frontline officers tend to be trained with a higher frequency than upper management (Mapp, et al., 2016).

Main Theme: Improve Training Methods

The second theme discusses what training methods are beneficial for human trafficking training sessions. This addresses research question two by discussing the best recommended training methods. The three main methodologies utilized now are

nationally standardized training programs, task forces, and forms of hands-on training within these training sessions.

Nationally Standardized Training Program

The results show a consensus stating that training needs to be created and improved. “Law enforcement training is not standardized across the United States, and the curriculum often varies between states and between academies located in the same state” (McKnight, 2022, p. 205). There is, however, a variety of methods presented to complete this goal. A nationally standardized training session could be required for all law enforcement officials. This program should provide at least a general understanding of human trafficking for law enforcement officers (Clawson, et al., 2006; Farrell, et al., 2010; Farrell & Reichert, 2017; Farrell, et al., 2019; Gallagher & Holmes, 2008).

However, in a standardized, national training program, every topic cannot be addressed. Each state, city, and region will have unique characteristics that will affect how trafficking situations can be identified and handled (U.S. Department of State, 2022). Definitions of human trafficking are still new and evolving in many localities (Farrell, et al., 2015). Further, there must be considerations “of the roles of border and migration controls, labour market and supply chain dynamics and geographies of inequality” (Cockbain, et al., 2022).

Task Forces

An alternative way to facilitate geographically appropriate training is to provide task forces. This is a group of law enforcement officers that are trained in multiple related disciplines (Farrell, et al., 2010, 2019; Farrell & Reichert, 2017; Franklin, 2017;

Gallagher & Holmes, 2008). They have to ability to collaborate with multiple law enforcement agencies, medical organizations, housing organizations, legal aid, employment services, counseling services, and faith-based initiatives (Clawson, n.d.; Franklin, 2017).

These task forces must demonstrate a willingness to work effectively with each component of the human trafficking investigation- especially in their relationship with front-line police officers (Gallagher & Holmes, 2008). As frontline officers are the most likely to encounter human trafficking situations in their normal patrol, it is essential for a task force and frontline officers to interact efficiently (McKnight, 2022). Existing task forces typically fit into one of two roles: a leading role or a training role.

Some existing task forces have taken the role of investigator where potential human trafficking cases are reported, and the task force analyzes and reports back whether they believe it is human trafficking or not (Farrell & Reichert, 2017). In Chicago, the police department's Bureau of Organized Crime has a specific human trafficking team in which a 5-person team receives reports from other officers and confirms whether it is a human trafficking offense or not (Farrell & Reichert, 2017). Various other cities and states have similar task forces- such as Alabama's U.S. Attorney's Office's (2023) task force which focuses on identifying, investigating, and prosecuting human trafficking crimes.

Utilizing a task force in this way carries certain benefits and liabilities. They can simplify the sharing of information between agencies and other organizations (Clawson, n.d.). Once the information is provided to the task force, it can be disseminated to any

other team who needs it (Clawson, n.d.). Yet, a task force runs the risk of becoming an unhelpful monopoly that either does not take advantage of any external resources or skills from other organizations or chooses to claim jurisdiction over every human trafficking case (Gallagher & Holmes, 2008). In this instance, the task force would not provide help, training, or information to other officers (Gallagher & Holmes, 2008). This hesitancy comes from “owners wanting to retain strict control over ‘their’ data” (p. 6) and other concerns about what might happen once it is shared (Hollywood & Winkelman, 2015, as cited in Greer, 2022).

Having a task force that relies on reports from other officers does not eliminate the need for training because the initial identification must occur before an investigation can begin. Alternatively, the task force can alternatively take on more of a training role where they cross-train multiple agencies and organizations (Clawson, et al., 2006; Craig, 2019). The Memphis Police Department’s Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Program (ICAC) hosts their human trafficking task force (Farrell & Reichert, 2017). The ICAC Unit Lieutenant travels to different departments in Tennessee to train their law enforcement agencies on human trafficking (Farrell & Reichert, 2017). Additionally, St. Petersburg’s Police Department in Florida (n.d.) has a task force similar to this where they prioritize “education and training to law enforcement as well as the public to build awareness” (para. 4) in addition to their rescue and enforcement efforts.

Tag Alongs or Case Studies

An alternative way to provide tangible situations law enforcement officers can experience and learn from is to allow them to “tag along” on previously identified human

trafficking cases (Clawson, et al., 2006; Clawson, n.d.). Hands-on training can be extremely beneficial. The implications of human trafficking training sessions provided are short-lived once officers are on the front line (Clarke, 2020), so providing case studies can teach the practical application of knowledge being disseminated in the classroom (Barnard, et al., 2001, as cited in Clarke, 2020). Presenting training officers with situations similar to those they may encounter will help them in recalling the training and identifying potential trafficking victims (Barnard, et al., 2001, as cited in Clarke, 2020).

Main Theme: Training Content Improvements

The third main theme is an improvement of the training content provided to officers. Officers have reported confusion about the various types of trafficking, consent, exploitation, and transportation (Clarke, 2020). To correct this, researchers suggest emphasizing the definition of the various types of human trafficking, risk factors, and emphasizing that this can happen to anyone, anywhere despite the common risk factors (Brandon, 2018; Donohue-Dioh, et al., 2020; Farrell, et al., 2010; Meekins, 2014). This standard training program should also include a heavy focus on the definition of exploitation and consent (Clarke, 2020; McKnight, 2022) and discuss human trafficking as a human rights issue because of the forced nature of the crime (Clawson, n.d.; Donohue-Dioh, et al., 2020).

Prostitution vs. Sex Trafficking

Prostitution and sex trafficking cases are often blended which can create gray areas (McKnight, 2022). Only 57% of male officers and 43% of female officers had received prostitution and human sex trafficking training at the academy” (McKnight,

2022). Further, sex trafficking and prostitution are often conflated because of disbelief, a lack of education, or confusion on a victims' ability to consent. Additional discussion on the differences between prostitution and sex trafficking "is needed during the initial academy training curriculum and through supplemental training" (McKnight, 2022, p. 220) to best equip law enforcement officers to investigate these crimes effectively.

Consent

A major component of the human trafficking discussion revolves around the level of consent in the trafficking situation. For consent to exist, there must be no force, fraud, or coercion and the person must be 18 years of age or older (Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act, 2000). Classifying a human trafficking victim is simple when there is an obvious act of physical violence, psychological violence, or kidnapping (Jones, 2012). The means of some trafficking situations are not as easily ascertained, and victims may consent to remain with their traffickers despite knowing of their inhumane conditions (Jones, 2012). This is common when the means is related to debt bondage or victims are otherwise in such a dire need of money, food, shelter, et cetera that they simply comply (Jones, 2012).

Improving law enforcement officers' ability to define consent may be difficult as there "will always have differing opinions on the matter" (McKnight, 2022, p. 217). Even after training sessions, officers remained unsure "on whether victims can consent and in doing so they confuse trafficking and smuggling together" (Clarke, 2020, p. 89). Implementing Jones' (2012) level of consent could provide an accurate description of "each scenario officers may face when dealing with a case of human trafficking" (Clarke,

2020, p. 89). This would help officers “widen [their] understanding on the topic of victim consent and would decrease the risk of misclassifying human trafficking victims” (Clarke, 2020, p. 89).

Jones’ Levels of Consent

Jones (2012) argues that some legal definitions and processes to decide whether someone gave consent can fail to account for “the moral rightness of consent, but also discounts the connection between human dignity and the exercise of personal autonomy” (p. 511). Simply put, some victims may believe certain acts, otherwise deemed as human trafficking acts, are moral despite their legality (Jones, 2012). Further, questionable decision-making- even when provided with good information, time to deliberate, and available reasonable alternatives- and conscious ignorance that limits the exercise of good judgment are grounds for legal protection from any crimes they committed (Jones, 2012). This approach to consent lines up with the foundations of the UN Protocol as the “consent of a victim of trafficking... to the intended exploitation... [is] irrelevant...” (Jones, 2012, p. 501-502; U.N. Women and Children Protocol, 2000).

However, simply viewing the effectiveness of consent as decisions and not as not tainted by fraud, force, or coercion is limiting as these factors alone are not the only ways to nullify consent (Jones, 2012). Jones (2012) instead argues the merit or validity of the victims’ consent be “inextricably connected to the factual context under which the consent is purportedly given” (p. 507-508). For consent to be “effective”, an evaluation of available and reasonable alternatives and a sequence of choices must be carefully considered (Jones, 2012). Therefore, the prioritization of consent comes from “applying

blame and moral culpability for the offense only under circumstances in which consent is negated by fraud, force, or coercion” (Jones, 2012, p. 500). This ensures that consent is relevant and considered, as needed, for each case. It aligns more with the TVPA guidelines as well as it requires an individual’s provided consent to preclude them from being classified as a victim (Jones, 2012; Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act, 2000).

Exploitation

Clarke (2020) emphasizes the need for a heavier focus on the exploitation aspect of human trafficking. She found that officers and researchers focus on the distance a trafficking victim has traveled in order to identify trafficking cases (Clarke, 2020). As the distance traveled has no bearing on a human trafficking case, focusing on the distance traveled takes the focus from victims that may still remain in the same country- which further solidifies various stereotypes. Moving the focus from the distance traveled to the exploitive nature was found to “prevent stereotypes against trafficking victims and decreases the chance of misclassification” (p. 89) and provided improvements in investigations quickly (Clarke, 2020). This helps shift the focus of the investigation on all human trafficking situations without exclusion.

Disbelief in Trafficking

Another consideration is the belief that many departments hold that human trafficking does not happen in their jurisdictions. Meekins (2014) reports that an officer in a small, affluent, Florida town requested to attend a human trafficking training session but was denied because “we don’t have that crime in this town” (para. 3). Law

enforcement officers' responses to victims are commonly complicated by officer biases which prove to be counterproductive to the victim's needs (Farrell, et al., 2019). Some officers are reported saying that "certain reports are a waste of police resources... that there is not enough evidence of a crime, or that the victimization experience was not a "true" crime incident" (Farrell, et al., 2019, p. 652). Correct sex trafficking identification requires a break from well-established routines that have historically been considered criminal prostitution (Cole & Sprang, 2020). Similarly for labor trafficking, correct labor trafficking identification requires a break from general labor violations (Cockbain, et al., 2019; Grinspan, 2022).

Issues with understanding, disbelief, and ignorance cause problems because human trafficking cases are identified at the state and local levels instead of at the federal level (Sheldon-Sherman, 2012, as cited in McKnight, 2022). An investigation can be harmed by untrained officers when they utilize inappropriate investigation methods- such as arrest for protection or arrest and release policies (Farrell & Pfeffer, 2014; McKnight, 2022). However, if utilizing the correct approach, law enforcement officers can positively impact the lives of sex trafficking victims (Alvarez & Cañas-Moreira, 2015) as seen through victim-centered approaches.

Supporting Theme: Victim-Centered Approach

Thirteen percent of law enforcement agencies have specialized victim assistance units and 12% have personnel dedicated to the assistance of victims (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2015, as cited in Farrell, et al., 2019). Typically, law enforcement agencies will partner with other service providers to work with victims (Farrell, et al., 2019). This

includes those in labor inspection, regulation, labor rights organizations, forensic interviewers, legal advocates, and other community agencies or providers that can bring a unique and helpful aspect (Clawson, n.d.; Rudisill, 2015, as cited in Farrell, et al., 2019). Collaboration and communication between police and service providers can be helpful in meeting the needs of the trafficking victims (Farrell, et al., 2019). “Understanding each other’s roles in supporting victims, respecting the differences, and identifying the areas for mutual assistance will promote victim centered responses” (Farrell, et al., 2019, p. 667).

Identification

It is assumed that there will be “a stark contrast” (p. 218) between a victim and their trafficker (McKnight, 2022, p. 218). This is not always the case as victims may believe and state they act independently despite relying on their trafficker for something making them vulnerable like drugs, money, shelter, or food (McKnight, 2022). It has been suggested that a numeric review consisting of “how often this particular individual has been arrested for prostitution, [with] whom this individual is known to associate with, and the individual’s attitude at the time of encounter” (p. 217) can help establish further markers for comparison (McKnight, 2022). The comparison would theoretically show that a “prostitute-by-choice appears to be arrested on prostitution charges with some regularity and shows a more untroubled attitude about it than a victim of human sex trafficking” (McKnight, 2022, p. 217).

While there may not be an obvious difference, calls and arrest histories can indicate human trafficking situations (Meekins, 2014). For example, calls regarding

prostitution may lead officers to potential trafficking situations if the same person has paid for multiple rooms for the same time frame at the same hotel (Meekins, 2014). If a victim is given a nightly quota they may commit robbery, theft, or fraud to obtain the money (Meekins, 2014). More specifically, sex trafficking victims may rob their johns and labor trafficking victims may commit petty theft at grocery stores or convenience stores (Meekins, 2014). A drug arrest when mixed with prostitution may also indicate a trafficking situation as victims may rely on their traffickers to fulfill their addiction (Meekins, 2014). Domestic violence or assault and battery cases can indicate trafficking as the victim may have been defending themselves from their trafficker (Meekins, 2014). Additional signs are signs of abuse, lack of concern about being arrested, multiple arrests within a short period of time, noticeable tattoos that could be brands, the recruitment of other women in prison, and multiple women being bonded out quickly and/or by the same person (Meekins, 2014).

Interviews and Interrogations

A major aspect of any human trafficking case is the victim's cooperation during the investigation (Brandon, 2018; Farrell, et al., 2010). Cases may 'die' during the interview process because of the victim's fear or lack of trust in law enforcement (Brandon, 2018). Officers are commonly critiqued because "victims do not feel that their voices are heard by police officers (Farrell, et al., 2019, p. 666). Farrell, et al. (2019) proposes a system that utilizes victims' feedback on their interactions with police during their investigations. That way, improvements can be made in law enforcement organization's procedures and practices (Farrell, et al., 2019).

“Officers referred to the victim-centered approach to human trafficking as a compassionate tool for empowering individuals who are powerless” (McKnight, 2020, p. 199-200). The initial encounter a victim has with law enforcement officers can set the tone for the relationship they share and break the cycle of control traffickers have over them (McKnight, 2020). Law enforcement personnel must convince victims that they are safer with the police than with their traffickers in order to elicit a testimony from them. Often, this can be done by focusing on their needs and concerns instead of immediately criminalizing them (Alvarez & Cañas-Moreira, 2015).

Interviews with victims- especially minor victims- are often slow or done in pieces (Farrell, et al., 2019). This happens when the victim is discovered- often in an unrelated situation (Meekins, 2014)- and as time goes on and trust is developed, victims may start to open up and discuss their situation more (Farrell, et al., 2019). Greer (2022) says, “it is crucial for law enforcement officers interviewing victims of trafficking to make a professional connection- one based on honesty, openness, and mutual trust” (p. 9). One of the most important ways to build this trust is to remain consistent in their interactions with a trafficking victim (Clawson, n.d.). Officers must follow through on their promises by doing what they say they will do to develop rapport (Clawson, n.d.).

Investigators should utilize red flag questions to help identify sex trafficking cases from prostitution cases and labor trafficking cases from regular labor violations or other crimes. Some jurisdictions involve mental health professionals in officers’ training sessions to assist in interview techniques with victims (Clawson, n.d.). This ensures victims are not revictimized while recovering and assisting in the criminal investigation.

This should also help ensure any judgmental behavior is removed which provides the foundation for a more beneficial conversation between the victim and the officer (McKnight, 2022).

Otherwise, officers must rely on self-identification from the victim. This can be a long process because of the trauma victims experience. As an interviewee stated, “I’ve worked with girls that were in our support groups and receiving counseling for two years before they finally realized what happened to them. The brainwashing piece of this is very difficult” (Anonymous, personal communication, February 12, 2018, as cited in Brandon, 2018, p. 76).

Implementing a victim-centered approach can be challenging. Officer pushback may come from a moral issue with identifying someone as a willing prostitute or as a manipulated sex trafficking victim, from victim mistrust, or other issues. Officers’ knowledge of the victim-centered approach “can become the cornerstone of a realistic approach to addressing trafficking” (Craig, 2019, p. 48). The implementation of the victim-centered approach when combined with an understanding of possible signs of a human trafficking victim as well as how to mitigate the layers of trauma victims experience can assist investigators in their cases (McKnight, 2022). “Police must continue developing their capacity to have positive interactions and working relationships with victims” (Farrell, et al., 2019, p. 666). This would require a basic understanding of how trauma impacts the victim’s ability to assist in the justice system (Farrell, et al., 2019).

The role of the police in this revolves around holding traffickers accountable via intelligence gathering, and the identification and arrest of traffickers (Farrell, et al., 2019). Even with the best intentions of any officer, sometimes developing the needed relationship takes time and other avenues need to be addressed in the meantime. This may require connecting victims with service providers before interviewing the victims and investigating (Clawson, n.d.). This may mean delaying victim interviews which can undermine most investigations (Farrell, et al., 2019). Sometimes, utilizing a victim-centered approach requires making the victim feel more comfortable. It “does not hold arrest and prosecution of the offender as the primary goals of the justice system (Farrell, et al., 2019, p. 667). This kind of “restorative justice” can go against the typical way law enforcement agencies serve and protect their community.

Additional Themes

Other themes were identified but were considered outside of the scope of this thesis but are worth noting. These include developing partnerships with the public, non-government organizations, medical facilities, other law enforcement agencies, and other first responders. Information sharing was also a major theme that many sources recommended. This could be conducted through partnerships, technology, and other reporting systems.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

The purpose of this research is designed to identify actionable changes to implement which should improve the human trafficking training law enforcement officers receive. Based on the analysis of various quantitative and qualitative research, it is evident that training improvements are needed to improve the law enforcement response to human trafficking. Making improvements to the training front-line officers receive can increase the number of people looking for human trafficking cases and the number of identified and investigated human trafficking cases.

Few studies have been conducted on officer's understanding of human trafficking and how the process to identify human trafficking cases can be improved. Previous studies showed that officers needed training because it was not being provided. Of those training sessions that were studied, it was discovered that improvements can be made in the teachings on what human trafficking is, the elements of human trafficking, and the meaning of consent and exploitation and the officers' reactions to cases. This research has organized these needs and methods of how to accomplish these needs through actionable changes.

Summary of Findings

This research illustrates the need for training to develop and improve officers' knowledge of human trafficking. However, it raises the question of how significantly training can be developed to benefit each officer individually and the department as a whole. For example, how effectively can front-line officers identify and report potential

trafficking situations if their supervisors do not believe human trafficking is a real issue? How can each officer's individual beliefs on consent affect whether a situation is a human trafficking situation? Finally, how would different areas or departments need to modify or specialize the trafficking training so it is most beneficial for their officers?

Practical Implications

Suggestion One: Basic Training

The first suggestion is to provide front-line officers and corrections officers with the knowledge and skills needed to identify human trafficking cases. Without improvements, human trafficking cases can continue to exist without investigation.

Providing these officers with the knowledge and skills to identify potential trafficking situations will seamlessly fit within their normal duties and will allow for more potential cases to be investigated. This is because front-line officers are the first to respond to all calls, resolve what they can, and request additional assistance or detectives as needed.

This should increase the number of potential cases but should also increase the number of victims recovered and traffickers prosecuted.

This training program can be nationalized and standardized, but some form needs to be included in all police academies, so all officers have training in the topic. It should focus on the legal definitions and each element of human trafficking. Providing case studies for the officers to review in the classroom setting and guidelines or questions to ask potential victims they meet can help them feel more comfortable discussing or questioning victims they meet.

Suggestion Two: Detectives or Task Forces

Further, each department needs to develop a policy on how to best report potential human trafficking cases to a team or task force that can investigate further. While front-line officers are expected to identify cases, they should not be expected to investigate and solve the trafficking cases themselves. Doing so is outside the realm of their responsibilities.

Detectives have taken additional classes to prepare themselves for the more in-depth investigative role. Also, especially in cities with larger police forces, each jurisdiction has specialized departments based on case types. This allows investigators to specialize their knowledge, skills, and investigative techniques based around their assigned focus. This should allow the detectives to have specialized knowledge of the human trafficking cases reported to them. Therefore, any procedure or tactic they utilize in their investigation is designed for a human trafficking case.

Suggestion Three: Content Changes

The training curriculum must define the types and elements of trafficking as clearly as possible. A trafficking training program should begin with a focus on what human trafficking is. This needs to emphasize the different types of trafficking and differentiate them from other crimes that appear to be similar. A focus on both labor trafficking and sex trafficking should be included to ensure one is not overlooked. Further discussion and clarification of these topics can begin to clarify the confusion officers may go through. Emphasis on the risk factors and potential for anyone to be trafficked will also help reduce this confusion as well.

There should also be an additional focus on the victim-centered approach. Often, victims of human trafficking have feelings of distrust in law enforcement (Alvarez & Cañas-Moreira, 2015; Brandon, 2018; Clawson H. J., n.d.; Donohue-Dioh, et al., 2020; Farrell, et al., 2019; Gallagher & Holmes, 2008; Kotrla, 2010; McKnight, 2022). Officers must know how to interview trafficking victims in order to investigate effectively. Further training on how to improve relationships between police departments and victims will assist with victim identification and trafficking investigations by securing victims' testimony.

Additional Suggestions

Traffickers do all they can to keep trafficking hidden and take advantage of jurisdictional boundaries to remain hidden. No task force or group can address human trafficking alone. To be most effective, law enforcement agencies need to utilize resources in addition to education or training. In addition to the above suggestions, other changes should be considered. These were not explicitly stated in the articles selected but are also essential improvements that will help combat human trafficking.

Technology

Consider how technology has progressed, making it easier to connect with others and facilitating the transfer of a person's activity from private to public. Cybercrimes have unique complications for domestic and international law enforcement agencies (Koziarski & Lee, 2019). It creates questions about what agency is responsible for responding to cybercrime calls (Koziarski & Lee, 2019). Often, cybercrimes are multi-jurisdictional, which can result in ineffective responses and prevention strategies

(Koziarski & Lee, 2019). Victims and traffickers can live in different jurisdictions which further complicates investigations as laws and procedures change between city, state, and country laws (Koziarski & Lee, 2019).

Thorn (2018) reported that the median age of a victim is 14 years old and 55% of victims met their trafficker through a website, text, or mobile application. Technological applications are the primary tool used by traffickers to recruit victims (Alvarez & Cañas-Moreira, 2015; THORN & Bouché, 2018). Educating about the dangers that come with social media and implementing technology as an investigative tool are necessary techniques to combat trafficking. With the majority of recruiting occurring online, it is important for investigations to be present online as well.

Traffic Jam is an analytical system that analyzes online sex ads to identify traffickers and victims (Alvarez & Cañas-Moreira, 2015; Marinus Analytics, n.d.). It helps law enforcement combat human trafficking and cyber fraud, find missing persons, and fight organized crime (Marinus Analytics, n.d.). An officer can enter a number known to be associated with a sex advertisement into the search field and Traffic Jam will explore all classified sites to determine when and where that number has been used, trails of advertisement movement, and pinpoint a victim's tracks by identifying where else the victim may have been sold (Alvarez & Cañas-Moreira, 2015). Programs like SAFER (n.d.) and THORN (n.d.) perform similar actions to identify child sexual abuse material specifically.

Information Sharing

There is great value in sharing information between law enforcement organizations. Some jurisdictions already have programs in order to share information—such as the National Data Exchange, National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System, San Diego Association of Governments’ Automated Regional Justice Information System, Alaska Law Enforcement Information Sharing System, Law Enforcement Information Exchange, and the Regional Information Sharing System (Hollywood & Winkelman, 2015). Criminal networks are aware of and take advantage of information-sharing limitations and have been doing so (Duval, 2008, as cited in Hollywood & Winkelman, 2015). The PFIT (2020) reported that traffickers will continue to exploit disjointed anti-trafficking responses until information sharing is standardized at the local, national, and international levels. The NAP (2020) detailed the importance of information sharing by developing strategic and tactical planning around it.

To correct this in the short term, agencies should comply with preexisting sharing programs and guidelines, connect with other jurisdictions as needed or as possible, and utilize any information-sharing capabilities available (Hollywood & Winkelman, 2015). Long-term, common practices that can streamline information sharing must be developed (Hollywood & Winkelman, 2015; International Association of Chiefs of Police, n.d.). There should then be an allowance so each partner understands “the requirements, limitations, and procedures for information sharing” (para. 4) and the opportunities to address any challenges that may arise when information is shared across partner organizations and disciplines (Hollywood & Winkelman, 2015).

Technology can also be utilized to improve information sharing. Hollywood and Winkelman (2015) suggest developing a framework to share information effectively. To do so, data must be exchanged in defined transactions and data must be fused to search for patterns (Grimes, 2013, as cited in Hollywood & Winkelman, 2015). It should be based upon policies that are standardized to ensure multiple jurisdictions can utilize the information effectively. Once the programs are developed and policies are standardized, there need to be actions to ensure those who need to use these programs can. A program like this will need time before it can be officially released to decide what data is legally protected and therefore cannot be used, to develop and teach the protocols on inputting and searching for data, and to resolve any potential issues or improvements provided in feedback (Hollywood & Winkelman, 2015).

Limitations

A limitation of this thesis is a lack of previous research available on the topic. The lack of available data made finding a meaningful relationship difficult. Minimal studies have been conducted on any sex trafficking training law enforcement officers received other than to identify that it is needed. The researcher was unable to locate any studies on training related to labor trafficking specifically.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research on the implications of human trafficking training for labor trafficking cases specifically as well as the long-term effects of human trafficking training will be extremely beneficial. Additionally, further research into labor trafficking will improve investigative tactics that will specifically benefit labor trafficking

investigations. As training sessions develop, additional research can be utilized to identify the best training options to create a better training curriculum.

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