THE IMPACT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING ON THE ABILITY OF OFFICERS TO RECOGNIZE HUMAN TRAFFICKING SITUATIONS IN WEST TENNESSEE

by

Marie Angelena Garrett

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy in Criminal Justice Leadership

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APPROVED BY:

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Abstract

No one knows the true extent of human trafficking in America today, yet law enforcement officers may encounter victims during routine assignments. There exists a growing body of research associated with law enforcement officers and human trafficking. However, few researchers have explored the connection between human trafficking training and officers' ability to recognize human trafficking situations. Grounded in schema theory, this quantitative study surveys law enforcement officers in West Tennessee. Survey questions assess officers' awareness of human trafficking generalities, their ability to recognize possible locations of human trafficking, and training related to human trafficking. Questions then describe potential human trafficking indicators to elicit officer responses. This study fills gaps in the existing literature by examining connections between officers' training, assumptions, and ability to recognize human trafficking situations. A lack of human trafficking awareness and inappropriate officer responses are likely both associated with training deficits. With information identifying these deficits, law enforcement agencies and training organizations may better equip officers with the skills necessary to recognize human trafficking situations.

Keywords: human trafficking, survey research, law enforcement training, officer confidence, schema theory

Dedication

To God my Savior, who planted the seeds of desire in my heart to make a difference by fighting the atrocities of human trafficking. He gets all the glory. To my husband, Rich, for his never-ending supply of patience, and for going above and beyond to speak my love language so he could encourage me along the way. To my family and friends, who put up with random rantings of frustration and helped me clear my head and keep all those penguins in line. With their support, I never had to “pack a bag.”

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I also acknowledge all of those who walked alongside me on this journey. A special nod goes out to my husband, who endured more than his fair share of tears and meltdowns, yet kept gently reorienting me in the right direction and encouraging me to keep pushing forward. My love for him cannot be measured.

Also, those deserving acknowledgments include my children, parents, and in-laws, who encouraged me and helped me keep walking the path toward completion. Their support of me makes me smile. I love them all.

I must also mention my friends, my church family, and especially my coworkers at the Shelby County Sheriff's Office. I could not have gotten through data collection without you. A special nod to Susan, Flotyl, and Cindy. All the prayers were felt, and all the phone calls and encouragement were appreciated. Those penguins, the thoughts in my head, many times acted far too much like drunken sailors stomping around on the iceberg of my mind. With your help, by the end of this journey, they learned how to line dance and get along without pushing each other off into the abyss.

Most of all, the greatest acknowledgment goes to Jesus Christ, who placed in me the desire to do whatever I could to combat human trafficking. In this, and all things, I must say:

To GOD be the Glory!

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

Juneteenth, now a United States federal holiday, marks the freedom of the last African American slaves over two years after Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of 1865 (Biden, 2021). Yet, slavery still exists in America, as evidenced by the 63,380 human trafficking situations identified by the National Human Trafficking Hotline from December 2007 to December 2019 (Polaris, 2020a). This quantitative study assesses the ability of law enforcement officers in West Tennessee to correctly recognize human trafficking situations and examines the connections between officers' survey responses and adequate training. Following a broad overview of human trafficking, the focus shifts to the United States and then ultimately narrows to West Tennessee, the location of the sample population of law enforcement officers.

The purpose of this study and its significance in academic research guide its methodology and design. Theoretical justification informs the research questions and definitions of relevant terms. Assumptions and biases, as well as delimitations and limitations of the study, merit mention. The aforementioned foundational examination of human trafficking begins the process of obtaining a better understanding of the applicability of the present study.

Background

Today, almost 25 million individuals globally experience deprivation of their freedom and the stripping of their basic human dignity (US Department of State, 2020). This is contrary to the sanctity of life, or the understanding that all life has value (Engel et al., 2020). Those who enslave others are lawless and rebellious (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation,* 2007, 1 Timothy 1:9-10). They insult their Maker, who created them in His image (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation,* 2007, Genesis 1:27; Proverbs 14:31).

Although definitions of human trafficking vary, nearly all organizations and researchers agree on the foundational components of human trafficking. By most definitions, human trafficking involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to recruit, harbor, or obtain persons for nefarious purposes (Trafficking Victims Protection Act, 2000; see also Awerbuch et al., 2020; Blanton et al., 2020; Bracy et al., 2021; Browne-James et al., 2021; Burt, 2019; Dandurand, 2017; Donahue et al., 2019; Donnelly et al., 2019; Duncan & DeHart, 2019; Farrell et al., 2008; Farrell et al., 2010; Farrell et al., 2019a; Farrell et al., 2019b; Farrell et al., 2020; Gibbons & Stoklosa, 2016; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Hancock, 2019; Irwin, 2017; Kulig & Butler, 2019; Kulig et al., 2020; Litam & Lam, 2021; Logan et al., 2009; Mapp et al., 2016; Moreto et al., 2020; Mostajabian et al., 2019; Nsonwu et al., 2017; Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018; Preble et al., 2020; Renzetti et al., 2015; Rockinson-Szapkiw et al., 2017; Rothman et al., 2017; Thomas-Smith et al., 2020; Schwarz, 2019; Shandro et al., 2016; Twis & Praetorius, 2021; US Department of State, 2020; Valdovinos et al., 2020; Wilson & Dalton, 2008). Human trafficking includes using force, fear, or coercion to make someone perform sex acts, any type of forced labor, and involuntary domestic servitude, as well as a growing list of other lesser-known types of trafficking (Trafficking Victims Protection Act, 2000; US Department of State, 2020).

This elusive nature of human trafficking makes it difficult to accurately determine the number of victims in any given location (Bracy et al., 2021; Rothman et al., 2017). Traffickers have little regard for the human value of their victims, and often see them as cheap property to discard if it no longer brings a profit (Logan et al., 2009). It is important to maintain the rights of the oppressed, and those in authority act as God's servants to enforce justice and punish those who do wrong (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation,* 2007, Psalm 82:3; Romans 13:4). Yet law enforcement officers in positions of authority typically have established schemata associated

with their known experiences (Goodson et al., 2020; Robinson, 2000; Venema, 2016). These preconceptions often cause officers to fail to see beyond the perceived offenses to identify the person victimized by their trafficker (Logan et al., 2009).

Human Trafficking Worldwide

Human trafficking is a rapidly-growing human rights concern, made significantly more prevalent as globalization and migration increase (Awerbuch et al., 2020; Burt, 2019; Dandurand, 2017; Donahue et al., 2019; Farrell et al., 2015; Jurek & King, 2020; Nsonwu et al., 2017; Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018; Szablewska & Kubacki, 2018; Valdovinos et al., 2020). As the third-largest criminal endeavor worldwide, human trafficking now stands as one of the most lucrative criminal activities for organized crime groups (Awerbuch et al., 2020; Hancock, 2019; Donahue et al., 2019; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Szablewska & Kubacki, 2018; Van Buren et al., 2021). Human trafficking affects nearly every country in the world to some degree (Nsonwu et al., 2017; Szablewska & Kubacki, 2018). Around the world, traffickers exploit their victims both within their country of origin and across national boundaries, including the United States (Niemi & Aaltonen, 2017; Rockinson-Szapkiw et al., 2017; Valdovinos et al., 2020; US Department of State, 2019; US Department of State, 2020).

God warns that if someone exploits others, particularly widows and orphans, He will hear the cry of the oppressed and blaze with anger upon their oppressors (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation,* 2007, Exodus 22:22-23). The Lord is especially hard on those with twisted sexual desires like those involved in sex slavery, and who despise authority (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation,* 2007, 2 Peter 2:10). Those in authority, including law enforcement officers, obtain human authority from God to punish those who do wrong (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation,* 2007, 1 Peter 2:13-14). Law enforcement officers must be prepared to administer that authority.

Human Trafficking in the United States

The United States is not exempt from human trafficking; human trafficking is an unfortunate occurrence in the backyards of Americans across the country (Valdovinos et al., 2020). The true extent of human trafficking in the United States, however, remains elusive (Bracy et al., 2021; Duncan & Dehart, 2019; Farrell et al., 2015; Gibbons & Stoklosa, 2016; Jurek & King, 2020; Logan et al., 2009). Determining the prevalence of human trafficking activity in the United States is complex, and victim numbers vary drastically (Bracy et al., 2021; Duncan & Dehart, 2019; Farrell et al., 2015; Gibbons & Stoklosa, 2016; Jurek & King, 2020; Logan et al., 2009). Existing approaches to identifying the scope and magnitude of national human trafficking are prone to exhibit weak methods, gaps in data, and numerical discrepancies, resulting in a wide variation of questionable estimates (Wilson & Dalton, 2008).

Nevertheless, the known numbers related to human trafficking in America are staggering. In 2018 alone, the National Human Trafficking Hotline received 28,335 phone calls and had 12,753 combined additional contacts via text, webchat, webform reports, and email (Polaris, 2019). By 2019, those numbers increased to 30,506 phone calls and another 17,820 contacts by other means (Polaris, 2020a). Text is the fastest-growing method of communication (Polaris, 2020a). Citing the most recent statistics from the national hotline, Polaris (2020a) identified 22,326 survivors in 11,500 human trafficking cases. While working on these cases, authorities investigated 4,384 potential traffickers and 1,912 suspicious businesses (Polaris, 2020a). However, it is problematic to ascertain whether victim estimates provided by human trafficking service providers, agencies, and hotlines are underestimating or overestimating potential cases (Rothman et al., 2017).

Official government reports estimate that the number of individuals trafficked into America from other nations ranges from 14,500 to 50,000 persons annually (Gibbons & Stoklosa, 2016; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Shandro et al., 2016). These numbers of trafficked individuals do not include American citizens trafficked within US borders, and they severely underrepresent the total number of those trafficked in the United States (Shandro et al., 2016). The estimated number of juveniles trafficked in America each year varies from a low of 4,500 to a high of 400,000, with the most typical estimates hovering around 100,000 youth annually (Farrell et al., 2015; Hancock, 2019). Overall estimates of human trafficking in America suggest that traffickers currently exploit up to 300,000 individuals in a transnational industry that produces around $150 billion annually for the traffickers (Awerbuch et al., 2020; Burt, 2019; Shandro et al., 2016; Van Buren et al., 2021).

Some estimates show that 1.3 persons out of 1,000 in America have experienced the victimization of human trafficking (Preble et al., 2020). In 2019, Polaris, the organization that operates the National Human Trafficking Hotline, played a role in 11.500 reported cases of human trafficking, an increase of 5% over the previous year (Polaris, 2019; Polaris, 2020a). Cases from these two years involved over 10,200 potential traffickers and roughly 3,800 trafficking businesses (Polaris, 2019; Polaris, 2020a). Identified traffickers held a combined 46,000 victims in 2018-2019, some of which gained freedom during this period (Polaris, 2019; Polaris, 2020a). Many of these trafficking cases were at the state and local levels (Polaris, 2019). Federally, the Department of Homeland Security conducted 1,024 investigations in its Fiscal Year 2019 (US Department of State, 2020). The Department of Justice and the Department of State opened another 607 and 134 cases, respectively (US Department of State, 2020). The

Department of Defense investigated 65 cases involving military personnel, contractors, and civilians associated with the national defense (US Department of State, 2020).

Human Trafficking in Tennessee

Every state has documented evidence of trafficking situations (Rockinson-Szapkiw et al., 2017). State responses to human trafficking vary. Tennessee was an early leader in its response to human trafficking; in 2010, the state General Assembly tasked the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) and Vanderbilt University with researching the true extent of sex trafficking within the state (Quin et al., 2011). Study results showed that sex trafficking in Tennessee was far more prevalent than state leaders thought possible (Quin et al., 2011). Following the completion of the study, TBI Director Mark Gwyn stressed the need for stiffer human trafficking laws (Quin et al., 2011). Law enforcement leaders throughout the state echoed his sentiments (Quin et al., 2011).

A decade later, Tennessee has become the leading state in the US concerning anti-trafficking laws (Restore Corps, n.d.-b). Today, Tennessee is one of a few states with a dedicated sex trafficking court (Kulig & Butler, 2019). One of the reasons the Tennessee legislation is strong is due to the help of an agency known as Restore Corps (Restore Corps, n.d.-b). The dedicated anti-trafficking team at Restore Corps has written and sponsored 19 human trafficking legislative changes in the Tennessee government, all of which are now Tennessee law (Restore Corps, n.d.-b).

Restore Corps is a Gospel-centered and interdenominational organization that seeks to glorify God in its work (Restore Corps, n.d.-b). The Gospel refers to the good news about Jesus Christ, who Scripture says is the Messiah and Son of God (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation,* Mark 1:1). Founders of the non-governmental agency believe that God created everyone in His

image and that people fulfill their purpose through loving and glorifying God (Restore Corps, n.d.-b). Restore Corps team members believe that true restoration necessitates a personal identity with Christ and an understanding of the significance of His involvement with humanity (Restore Corps, n.d.-b).

In 2018 alone, Restore Corps provided services for 116 human trafficking survivors (Restore Corps, n.d.-a). The staff and volunteers at the anti-trafficking agency serve the 21 counties of West Tennessee, including the metropolitan area of Memphis (Restore Corps, n.d.-b). By state law, Tennessee has three grand divisions that split the state into areas known as eastern, middle, and western Tennessee (Tenn. Code. Ann. § 4-1-201, 1835/1836). Restore Corps now serves as the state-designated single point of contact in West Tennessee for human trafficking resources (Restore Corps, n.d.-b).

In 2014, the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation launched an awareness campaign to draw attention to human trafficking (Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, n.d.). Despite this campaign, Tennessee had no labor trafficking arrests between 2013 and 2016 (Bracy et al., 2021). Additional research released in 2013 by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation and Vanderbilt University showed that human trafficking remained more prevalent in Tennessee than expected (Restore Corps, n.d.-a). Data findings suggested that human trafficking in Tennessee was more prevalent than gang representation and involved more counties throughout the state (Restore Corps, n.d.-a).

Prostitution arrest rates in West Tennessee nearly tripled the year after the enactment of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, however, indicating a rocky start in the state's fight against human trafficking (Farrell & Cronin, 2015; Trafficking Victims Protection Act, 2000). In reaction to an increased awareness of prostitution following the passage

of the federal anti-trafficking legislation, officers in Memphis arrested far more women for prostitution than the previous year (Farrell & Cronin, 2015). Although prostitution arrests in Memphis had remained steady for twenty years previous, following the anti-trafficking legislation, officers heightened their enforcement of prostitution for more than a decade (Farrell & Cronin, 2015). The Memphis arrest increase was contrary to a national decline in prostitution arrests during the same period (Farrell & Cronin, 2015). It was also contrary to the intent of lawmakers seeking to protect trafficking victims (Farrell & Cronin, 2015).

Kulig et al. (2020) studied commercial sex events involving minors recorded in the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) from 2013 to 2016. Tennessee reported 92 minors as victims of prostitution during the study period, with 58 of those in Memphis and surrounding Shelby County (Kulig et al., 2020). Tennessee identified a substantially higher number of juvenile trafficking victims following the first year of the study, with no arrests of juveniles after 2013 (Kulig et al., 2020). These numbers coincide with the timing of new state legislation that prevented juveniles from giving consent for commercial sex (Kulig et al., 2020).

In 2019, the National Human Trafficking Hotline received 372 contacts from Tennessee, resulting in the identification of 337 trafficking victims and 100 traffickers (Polaris, 2020b). These identifications resulted in 180 total trafficking cases, some of which represented multiple victims (Polaris, 2020b). The overwhelming majority of these cases, 131, involved sex trafficking (Polaris, 2020b). Only 27 involved labor trafficking and 4 cases involved both sex and labor trafficking (Polaris, 2020b). The remainder of the cases, 18, did not specify the type of human trafficking (Polaris, 2020b). There remains scant knowledge regarding how these numbers reflect the human trafficking situation in Tennessee, nor how Tennessee law

enforcement officers' perceptions of human trafficking might affect the overall reporting of human trafficking cases.

Purpose of the Study

The call for officer training in human trafficking is undeniable (Bracy et al., 2021; Farrell et al., 2008; Farrell et al., 2019a; Farrell et al., 2020; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Hancock, 2019; Matos et al., 2018; Niemi & Aaltonen, 2017; Renzetti, 2015; Villacampa & Torres, 2017; Wilson & Dalton, 2008). In response to this call, the present study examines whether human trafficking training received by officers in West Tennessee positively affects their ability to recognize human trafficking scenarios. Armed with this understanding, training coordinators at law enforcement training academies would better have the ability to provide adequate human trafficking training for officers. Adequate training would then better equip officers with the skills necessary to recognize human trafficking situations.

Identifying the purpose of a research study is a critical first step in conducting academic research (Ratelle et al., 2019). Based on the information presented previously, the purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the connections between training and preparedness levels of law enforcement officers in West Tennessee to recognize human trafficking. Tennessee law requires law enforcement officers to receive at least two hours of human trafficking training (Tenn. Code Ann. § 38-6-114, 2015/2016/2017). The primary focus of this study investigated the association between officers' ability to correctly identify human trafficking scenarios based on their level of human trafficking training. Since there appears to be no way to confirm compliance with mandated training requirements, this study assumes that officers have completed this mandatory training and examines whether they have received any additional training.

Prior literature from multiple study designs suggests that law enforcement officers need additional training in human trafficking (Hancock, 2019; Irwin, 2017; Matos et al., 2018; Matos et al., 2019; Preble et al., 2020; Villacampa & Torres, 2017). Although many officers possess a basic understanding of human trafficking legislation, one qualitative study found that only 19% of officers felt their training was sufficient to guide them in recognizing human trafficking situations (Villacampa & Torres, 2017).

There exists a gap in the literature providing foundational quantitative data that better explains how officer perceptions correlate to training. Preble et al. (2020) called for more quantitative analysis to determine connections between training and officer response. It is necessary to compare the amount of training received against officers' ability to assess potential trafficking scenarios. If officers cannot recognize human trafficking or have no confidence in their abilities after training, then they will not have success in responding to human trafficking situations.

Significance of the Study

It is not enough to merely determine that officers received the mandatory training in West Tennessee or even ascertain training levels beyond the minimum requirements. If inadequate human trafficking training does not increase officers' ability to identify trafficking situations, then its application does little to change the plight of individuals held by traffickers. Officers who have received training may still exhibit gaps in knowledge (Mapp et al., 2016). The results of this study may reveal gaps in officer training that exist despite the required minimum training, indicating that two hours of training is not long enough to properly equip officers to recognize human trafficking scenarios.

As was the case following a similar study involving EMS personnel in Florida, results may additionally lead to training modifications that better prepare officers confronted with human trafficking scenarios (Donnelly et al., 2019). Researchers agree that specialized training improves officers' responses and attitudes regarding a given subject matter (Donnelly et al., 2019; Farrell et al., 2010; Franklin et al., 2020). However, this specialized training must approach human trafficking comprehensively and cover relevant issues such as victim identification and trafficking misconceptions (Mapp et al., 2016). Officers might also benefit from customized training based on rank, experience, and assigned division (Mapp et al., 2016; Renzetti et al., 2015). Results from the present study can inform these customizations in training and ensure that officers are prepared both in skills and confidence to recognize, and then respond to, human trafficking situations.

Problem Statement

The review of literature in chapter 2 exposes a gap in the literature regarding how law enforcement officer training and confidence levels affect officers' ability to recognize human trafficking situations. There is a need for a greater understanding of the correlation between training and officer response, beginning with the officer's recognition of the situation. The problem addressed in this quantitative study is examining the connection between West Tennessee law enforcement officers' recognition of human trafficking generalities, possible locations, and indicators, as well as the extent of topic-specific training they have received. Although several studies have examined relationships between law enforcement training and officer response in trafficking situations, the majority of these studies are several years old and occurred before Tennessee mandated human trafficking training for law enforcement officers (Farrell et al., 2010; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Irwin, 2017; Mapp et al., 2016; Renzetti et al.,

2015; Tenn. Code Ann. § 38-6-114, 2015/2016/2017). This study focuses on a sample population of West Tennessee law enforcement officers, selected in part due to the accessibility of participating officers.

Law enforcement officers tend to have difficulty identifying human trafficking victims, and this failure is perhaps caused by a lack of adequate training (Farrell et al., 2019b; Hancock, 2019). Although Tennessee requires a minimum of two hours of human trafficking training for all officers (Tenn. Code Ann. § 38-6-114, 2015/2016/2017), there is little indication of whether two hours is sufficient for equipping officers with the skills necessary to properly recognize human trafficking situations. By comparing officer training against preparedness, this study can lead to an understanding of the amount of training necessary for officers to recognize human trafficking so that they can respond appropriately. This study may also identify gaps in training associated with officers' confidence in their ability to recognize human trafficking.

Law enforcement officers may encounter trafficking victims who are uncooperative because of threats of violence, distrust of law enforcement, or an inability to see themselves as victims (Bracy et al., 2021; Burt, 2019; Farrell et al., 2019b; Reid, 2016). Victims from other nations might also fear deportation (Bracy et al., 2021). Since victims may not cooperate, officers must learn to recognize human trafficking indicators, such as methods of controlling victims (Rockinson-Szapkiw et al., 2017). Control methods might include emotional dependence, sleep deprivation, insufficient food and water, forced consumption of drugs or alcohol, and branding or tattooing to show ownership (Rockinson-Szapkiw et al., 2017).

At least 38 states now require human trafficking training for many employees across multiple fields, including law enforcement (Hancock, 2019). This newly-required training might impact officers' attitudes or alter their behavior when responding to potential trafficking

situations (Dandurand, 2017). Despite the growing interest in officer training, Mapp et al. (2016) found that only 17% of law enforcement officers surveyed had received training in human trafficking at all. Dandurand (2017) found that officers reported a general lack of awareness regarding crimes of human trafficking and indicated a deficit of training on how to investigate human trafficking cases.

Researchers have often recognized the need for additional training in human trafficking and questioned whether current law enforcement training improves officers' ability to identify human trafficking victims (Dandurand, 2017). Irwin (2017) suggested that inadequate police training in human trafficking translates into front-line officers remaining ill-prepared to recognize trafficking situations. Without formal training to guide them, officers rely upon frequently unreliable sources such as mass media to gather information about human trafficking (Mapp et al., 2016).

If officers rely upon human trafficking information from social media, the result is that officers develop a collection of preconceived ideas about human trafficking (Mapp et al., 2016; Preble et al., 2020). These ideas do not always provide a completely accurate assessment of trafficking victims and their captors and may lead to a misinterpretation of human trafficking situations (Mapp et al., 2016; Preble et al., 2020). Mapp et al. (2016) indicated that the media has far too much influence on officers who have not had adequate training.

Scripture warns people against searching with "itching ears" for teachers who will tell them what they want to hear because these teachers will cause them to chase after myths and reject the truth (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation,* 2 Timothy 4:3-4). Law enforcement officers cannot afford to rely upon media sources that may provide sensational stories at the expense of misrepresentation (Mapp et al., 2016; Preble et al., 2020).

Research Questions

Researchers have expressed the importance of human trafficking training for law enforcement officers (Bracy et al., 2021; Farrell et al., 2019a; Farrell et al., 2020; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Hancock, 2019; Matos et al., 2018; Niemi & Aaltonen, 2017; Renzetti, 2015; Villacampa & Torres, 2017; Wilson & Dalton, 2008). As of 2019, 39 states plus the District of Columbia require law enforcement officers to receive human trafficking training, including the state of Tennessee (Shared Hope International, 2019). All law enforcement officers in Tennessee should have received at least 2 hours of mandatory training by July 1, 2017, or within the first half-year of employment if hired afterward (Tenn. Code Ann. § 38-6-114, 2015/2016/2017). However, it appears that no safeguards ensure that officers have received the mandatory training, nor is it possible to ascertain whether officers have received additional training beyond the minimum requirements. Another unknown regarding law enforcement officers is the correlation between officers' actual and perceived abilities to recognize human trafficking situations. Based on the context stated thus far and within the literature review, two overarching research questions emerge that drive the current study.

RQ 1: What percentage of law enforcement officers in West Tennessee have received more than the state-mandated two hours of human trafficking training, and to what extent?

RQ 2: How does actual officer preparedness compare with the officers' perceptions of their ability to identify human trafficking situations?

The purpose of the first research question is twofold. The first purpose is to determine how many officers in West Tennessee have received human trafficking training. The second purpose is to evaluate the quantity, quality, and frequency of the training received. Regarding question two, officers need accurate perceptions of human trafficking to consistently recognize

human trafficking situations because a lack of understanding might lead to victim harm (Preble et al., 2020). An assessment of officers' knowledge about human trafficking will reveal whether their self-reported confidence levels align with their abilities to recognize human trafficking.

Overall, law enforcement officers frequently fail to identify victims of human trafficking, especially in labor trafficking situations, because they do not fully understand labor trafficking (Dandurand, 2017; Farrell et al., 2019b; Farrell et al., 2020). Public awareness campaigns might further complicate officers' responses and skew their perceptions of how victims and their captors might act (Preble et al., 2020). By discovering correlations between officers' perceptions of human trafficking and their ability to recognize human trafficking, this study can identify gaps in training that hinder responses.

Hypothesis

Quantitative studies often begin by establishing a hypothesis or hypotheses that predict certain inferences about the relationships between variables (Kelley-Quon, 2018; Laher, 2016; McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015; Ratelle et al., 2019). These inferences may then receive support during the analysis of statistical data (Kelley-Quon, 2018; McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). Based upon the two research questions in the present study, only one hypothesis is necessary, because the first research question merely assesses the extent of human trafficking training, which should be at 100% due to state mandates. For question 2, however, a hypothesis and related null hypothesis emerge.

H1: There is a statistically significant difference between officers' perceptions of preparedness and their ability to identify human trafficking situations.

$H_0$1: There is no statistically significant difference between officers' perceptions of preparedness and their ability to identify human trafficking situations.

General Overview of Research Methodology and Design

Research methodology is the combined strategy of methods a researcher develops to best answer a research question (Ratelle et al., 2019). Methodology guides the procedures the researcher intends to follow throughout the study (Mele et al., 2020). No methodologies are flawless and entirely devoid of the potential for bias (Ratelle et al., 2019). Researchers must determine the best methodology for their study based on its potential to answer the research question while maintaining validity (Ratelle et al., 2019). Qualitative methodologies allow for more flexible data collection methods that might transform as the study progresses (Boeren, 2018). By contrast, quantitative methodologies typically obtain data by fixed instruments such as surveys (Boeren, 2018). Due to the nature of the research questions in the present study, quantitative methodologies informed the survey design, data collection, and data analysis.

Research Methodology

As stated above, the present empirical study depends upon quantitative methods to gather data. Often, quantitative researchers state what they hope to discover through conducting their research (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). The goal of quantitative research studies is to prove the existence of a particular entity because positivism, the foundation of quantitative research, upholds the concept of singular reality (Claydon, 2015). A foundational goal of the present study was to determine whether law enforcement officers have received human trafficking training enabling them to better recognize human trafficking scenarios. The best method for obtaining this foundational goal is quantitative survey research.

Research Design and Rationale

Researchers develop their research design based on the specific questions they wish to answer with their study (Boeren, 2018). Utilizing a rigorous survey method such as that

employed in the present study allows researchers to examine participant perceptions and gather data tedious to assimilate into other types of research designs (Kelly-Quon, 2018). Ascertaining an understanding of officer perceptions of human trafficking is essential to identifying erroneous assumptions that might indicate inadequate training. Other inadequacies in training, such as the inability of officers to recognize human trafficking situations, might surface within gathered survey data.

Definition of Terms

The present study will utilize the following operational definitions:

Domestic servitude is the forced service within a private residence that prohibits the individual from leaving the employment, typically occurring under vulnerable circumstances where the individual experiences abuse and little or no payment for services (Bracy et al., 2021).

Human trafficking is the exploitation of others using force, fear, or coercion for purposes of labor, services, or commercial sex (Office on Trafficking in Persons, 2017).

Labor trafficking is the use of force, fraud, or coercion to subject others to debt bondage, peonage, involuntary servitude, or slavery to obtain labor or services (Shandro et al., 2016).

Sex trafficking is the exploitation of others, of any age or gender, for commercial sexual activities, including stripping and pornography, when there is the use of force, fraud, or coercion, or when the exploited person is under the age of 18 (Gibbons & Stoklosa, 2016; Mapp et al., 2016).

Assumptions and Biases

Since no identifying information accompanies survey results, this study assumes that all survey respondents serve as law enforcement officers in West Tennessee. These law enforcement officers are, by assumption, full-time, commissioned officers working in a law enforcement

capacity. The researcher further assumes that the officers responding to the survey have answered truthfully and accurately and that no officers have completed the survey more than once. The study assumes that all respondents participated voluntarily without coercion from others within their agency.

All research methodologies are susceptible to some form of bias (Ratelle et al., 2019). A significant issue of research involving surveys is design-level bias (Kelly-Quon, 2018). Researchers using survey methods must ensure that respondents can understand and answer questions (Kelly-Quon, 2018). Questions cannot lead respondents to respond in a certain way (Kelly-Quon, 2018). A pilot survey, conducted with a small group of individuals, helped reduce design-level biases, ensuring that survey questions were as unbiased and understandable as possible (Kelly-Quon, 2018).

Other potential biases pertain to the respondents. Selection bias, which deals with respondent characteristics, might occur due to differences between respondents that fall beyond the variables included in the study (Ratelle et al., 2019). Many studies do not consider volunteer bias, and those who volunteer to complete the survey may differ in some ways from those who decline (Claydon, 2015; Laher, 2016). It might be impossible to remove volunteer bias and assess differences between officers who responded and those who did not (Donnelly et al., 2019). Recall bias might also affect survey results, as the survey relies upon respondents' ability to remember pertinent information (Claydon, 2015).

Delimitations and Limitations

Delimitating a research study determines its boundaries and defines its context (Mele et al., 2020). In quantitative studies, these delimitations include identifying the sample population and units of analysis, such as a particular organization or set of individuals (Mele et al., 2020).

The present study focuses on active law enforcement officers commissioned at law enforcement agencies in West Tennessee, confining the research to a particular sample population. Delimitations also set the parameters for time and space, indicating the unique casing of the study (Mele et al., 2020). In the present study, officers must be full-time commissioned officers working in a law enforcement capacity. Retired officers or those working as deputy jailers do not qualify for the survey.

The present study is not without limitations in method, manner, and feasibility. Quantitative research utilizing surveys, for example, relies upon respondents' ability to recall information and comprehend survey questions (Kelly-Quon, 2018). Difficulties also arise from researcher bias, and poorly-worded questions lead to responder bias (Kelly-Quon, 2018). Researchers must also fashion questions so that respondents may reasonably select an answer (Kelly-Quon, 2018). Limitations also occur because the study relies upon volunteer respondents who are under no obligation to fully complete the survey.

The present study mitigated these limitations as much as possible. Despite extensive efforts to include all relevant literature, it also remains possible that some articles failed inclusion due to search limitations. Multiple search engines guided literature discovery in several databases. Still, a vast quantity of available research on human trafficking exists that is not necessarily relevant to the present study. Regardless of best attempts, the researcher may have inadvertently discarded or overlooked relevant literature.

Summary

All officers in West Tennessee are supposed to receive two hours of mandatory human trafficking training (Tenn. Code Ann. § 38-6-114, 2015/2016/2017). The first research question establishes the adherence to this mandate, while the second research question examines training

effectiveness. The problem driving the research questions is the correlation between law enforcement officers' training and their response to human trafficking.

The purpose of the present study is to identify deficits in human trafficking training for law enforcement officers that affect their ability to recognize human trafficking situations. Based on preparedness levels, generalizations should emerge related to the effectiveness of human trafficking training of officers in West Tennessee. These generalizations will provide a foundation upon which training academies within the state may improve human trafficking training. Study findings will contribute to the current literature on law enforcement officers' identification and response to human trafficking. Perhaps the information learned in West Tennessee may then inform officer training throughout the United States.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this quantitative study is to examine possible connections between training and preparedness levels of law enforcement officers in West Tennessee to recognize human trafficking. Few studies have researched the effect of specialized training in human trafficking on the behaviors and attitudes of law enforcement officers (Dandurand, 2017). Dandurand (2017) suggested that this deficit of studies indicates that researchers need to develop better methods for detecting training effectiveness. A search of the literature revealed a sparse body of knowledge connecting human trafficking training and officer responses to human trafficking and confirmed Dandurand's (2017) findings.

The following literature review compiles explanatory information and empirical research that relates to the present study. After providing a foundational human trafficking overview and discussing the profitability of human trafficking, the focus turns to an explanation of various types of human trafficking. The chapter then explains a theoretical proposal for the present study and summarizes existing literature that addresses human trafficking awareness, perceptions, and training. Following is an examination of foundational literature and a Biblical worldview of human trafficking. A concluding summary completes the chapter.

Literature Search Strategy

In preparation for the present study, databases and search engines utilized included Liberty University's online library, InterLibrary Loan, Google Scholar, Wiley Online Library, Elsevier, SAGE Journals, Springer, Emerald Insight, Medline, Taylor and Francis Online, EBSCOhost, ProQuest, JSTOR, GALE Academic OneFile, and CrossMark. Search terms included the following: *human trafficking, human trafficking training, human trafficking awareness, law enforcement perceptions*, *human trafficking law enforcement,* and *law*

enforcement training. Dozens of government documents and 300 to 400 scholarly articles underwent scrutiny for content pertinent to the present study. This literature review includes the most relevant journal articles and governmental documentation from past and current sources.

Human Trafficking

According to the US Department of State (2020), just under 25 million people worldwide are victims of human trafficking. Fighting human trafficking is a global concern (Blanton et al., 2020; Bracy et al., 2021; Dandurand, 2017; Donnelly et al., 2019; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Jurek & King, 2020; Matos et al., 2018; Nsonwu et al., 2017; Shandro et al., 2016; Shih, 2016; Szablewska & Kubacki, 2018; Thomas-Smith et al., 2020; Villacampa & Torres, 2017; US Department of State, 2020; Wilson & Dalton, 2008). In 2000, the United Nations adopted the "Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children" (US Department of State, 2019, p. 4). This Palermo Protocol supplemented the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and provided a foundation on which nations could build anti-human trafficking policies (US Department of State, 2019). As of March 31, 2019, 173 parties had ratified the Palermo Protocol, and 168 countries have enacted domestic legislation criminalizing human trafficking according to the framework provided by the Palermo Protocol (US Department of State, 2019).

Human trafficking is a multifaceted crime that entraps victims of any age, sex, race, gender, nationality, education level, socioeconomic level, or immigration status in trades both legal and illegal (Bracy et al., 2021; Shandro et al., 2016; US Department of State, 2019). Sometimes called modern-day slavery, human trafficking takes many forms through which traffickers exploit those who are vulnerable (Blanton, 2020; Bracy et al., 2021; Burt, 2019; Donahue et al., 2019; Donnelley et al., 2019; Farrell et al., 2008; Farrell et al., 2010; Farrell et

al., 2019a; Hancock, 2019; Litam & Lam, 2021; Mostajabian et al., 2019; Nsonwu et al., 2017; Paraskevas & Brookes, 2019; Rockinson-Szapkiw et al., 2017; Schwarz, 2019; Shih, 2016; Strauss, 2017; Szablewska & Kubacki, 2018; Twis & Praetorius, 2021; US State Department, 2019; Van Buren et al., 2021). Despite growing efforts to assist victims, the long-term effects of human trafficking programs and policies remain unknown (Rothman et al., 2017). Efforts to assist victims must continue, however, because human trafficking will continue as long as it is profitable for traffickers.

Human trafficking is also a hidden crime, and victims often do not self-identify (Awerbuch et al., 2020; Bracy et al., 2021; Dandurand, 2017; Farrell et al., 2008; Farrell et al., 2010; Farrell et al., 2019b; Farrell et al., 2020; Jurek & King, 2020; Logan et al., 2009; Mapp et al., 2016; Matos et al., 2018; Matos et al., 2019; Moreto et al., 2020; Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018; Rozas et al., 2018; Renzetti et al., 2015; Rockinson-Szapkiw et al., 2017; Shih, 2016; Shandro et al, 2016; Thomas-Smith et al., 2020; US Department of State, 2019; US Department of State, 2020; Villacampa & Torres, 2017). In some instances, the severe trauma associated with their situation renders victims unwilling or unable to escape their captor even if they are provided the opportunity (Farrell et al., 2010; Farrell et al., 2019b; Kulig & Butler, 2019). Victims may experience language barriers, or they may fear punishment, arrest, or deportation if they seek help (Awerbuch et al., 2020; Bracy et al., 2021; Dandurand, 2017; Farrell et al., 2008; Farrell et al., 2010; Farrell et al., 2019b; Farrell et al.,2020; Gibbons & Stoklosa, 2016; Jurek & King, 2020; Mapp et al., 2016; Matos et al., 2018; Matos et al., 2019; Mostajabian et al., 2019; Reid, 2016; Renzetti et al., 2015; Shandro et al., 2016; Villacampa & Torres, 2017). Some victims might hold themselves responsible for their situation, or they may form emotional and psychological bonds with their trafficker (Burt, 2019; Farrell et al., 2008; Farrell et al., 2010;

Mapp et al., 2016; Matos et al., 2018; Matos et al., 2019; Mostajabian et al., 2019; Reid, 2016; Rockinson-Szapkiw et al., 2017; Rozas et al., 2018; Villacampa & Torres, 2017).

Human traffickers often elude detection as well (Bracy et al., 2021; Burt, 2019; Rothman et al., 2017). Traffickers keep victims isolated from their communities and away from public scrutiny (Farrell et al., 2008; Farrell et al., 2010; Matos et al., 2018; Renzetti, 2015). Traffickers also remain transient and move their victims often (Bracy et al., 2021; Burt, 2019; Matos et al., 2018; Matos et al., 2019). Criminals often operate within an underground subculture that masks their criminal activity and makes identification challenging (Burt, 2019; Donahue et al., 2019; Duncan & DeHart, 2019). Further, traffickers often manipulate victims through violent and coercive methods such as torture and isolation, making them hesitant to seek help (Dandurand, 2017; Kulig & Butler, 2019; Matos et al., 2019; Rockinson-Szapkiw et al., 2017; Shandro et al., 2016).

Types of Human Trafficking

There is some debate over how to categorize types of trafficking (Strauss, 2017). Some, for example, treat domestic servitude as a type of labor trafficking, while others see it as a stand-alone trafficking category (Strauss, 2017). Human trafficking of nearly every form often places the victim at some level of debt bondage, making it a prevalent aspect of human trafficking (Bracy et al., 2021; Burt, 2019; Mapp et al., 2016; Moreto et al., 2020; Niemi & Aaltonen, 2017; Reid, 2016; Schwarz et al., 2017; Shandro et al., 2016; Villacampa & Torres, 2017). Regardless of the type of trafficking, no one deserves enslavement. Others must take measures to protect victims and intervene on their behalf. They must rescue those who are helpless under oppression and deliver them from evil people (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation,* 2007, Psalm 82:4). Individuals in certain professions, such as those in criminal justice, often find themselves

uniquely positioned to interact with both trafficking victims and their traffickers (Farrell et al., 2019b).

As first responders, law enforcement officers are significant front-line defenders for the ones oppressed by human trafficking (Farrell et al., 2019b). Officers must effectively respond when dealing with victimized individuals in trafficking situations (Farrell et al., 2019b). A significant first step to ensuring justice for human trafficking victims is to identify them as such (Farrell et al., 2019b). To identify victims, those who encounter trafficking victims must understand what constitutes human trafficking. Human trafficking includes sex trafficking, labor trafficking, domestic servitude, and other lesser-known types of trafficking.

Sex Trafficking

Sex trafficking involves a commercial sex act induced upon another person by force, fraud, or coercion (Office on Trafficking in Persons, 2017). Sex trafficking can include recruitment, transportation, harboring, provision, patronizing, obtaining, or soliciting the victim (Office on Trafficking in Persons, 2017). Any commercial sex act of a minor under the age of 18 is sex trafficking (Browne-James et al., 2021; Burt, 2019; Gibbons & Stoklosa, 2016; Hancock, 2019; Kulig et al., 2020; Litam & Lam, 2021; Mostajabian et al., 2019; Office on Trafficking in Persons, 2017; Rockinson-Szapkiw et al., 2017; Thomas-Smith et al., 2020). Before the passage of human trafficking legislation, minors in the United States faced criminal charges when arrested for prostitution (Rozas et al., 2018). Many in both public and private sectors remain reluctant to acknowledge the situation of minor sex trafficking in America (Rozas et al., 2018). This reluctance creates a problem with the potential to create barriers to identifying victims and providing them with the services they need (Rozas et al., 2018).

Sex trafficking is perhaps the most well-known type of human trafficking globally (Villacampa & Torres, 2017). Advocacy groups and activists speaking out against human trafficking often focus on sex trafficking over other forms of trafficking (Schwarz, 2019). This focus on sex trafficking is not without merit, however, because roughly 58% of all trafficking cases reported globally involve sex trafficking (Rockinson-Szapkiw et al, 2017). All 50 states and the District of Columbia have reported instances of sex trafficking (Rockinson-Szapkiw et al., 2017; US Department of State, 2020).

Labor Trafficking

Human trafficking is more than sex trafficking; it also includes labor trafficking, which is possibly even more prevalent and growing in attention (Bracy et al., 2021; Burt, 2019; Hancock, 2019; Mapp et al., 2016; Moreto et al., 2020; Shih, 2016; Strauss, 2017; Twis & Preble, 2020). Labor trafficking is the subjection of a person to peonage, involuntary servitude, slavery, or debt bondage, through force, fear, or coercion (Gibbons & Stoklosa, 2016; Mostajabian, et al., 2019; Office on Trafficking in Persons, 2017; Thomas-Smith et al., 2020; Schwarz, 2019). Labor trafficking can include the transportation, harboring, provision, recruitment, or obtaining of the victim (Gibbons & Stoklosa, 2016; Mostajabian, et al., 2019; Office on Trafficking in Persons, 2017; Thomas-Smith et al., 2020; Schwarz, 2019). Forced labor might include physical or psychological abuse (Bracy et al., 2021).

Children and adults from both the United States and other countries face exploitation by labor traffickers (Polaris, 2019; Polaris, 2020a; US Department of State, 2020). Labor trafficking of adults and children exists in many industries, including agriculture, manufacturing, janitorial services, and construction (Awerbuch et al., 2020; Bjelland, 2017; Blanton et al., 2020; Bracy et al., 2021; Burt, 2019; Donnelly et al., 2019; Farrell et al., 2008; Farrell et al., 2010; Farrell et al.,

2020; Gibbons & Stoklosa, 2016; Hancock, 2019; Irwin, 2017; Litam & Lam, 2021; Logan et al., 2009; Mapp et al., 2016; Rothman et al., 2017; Shandro et al., 2016; Shih, 2016; Strauss, 2017; Thomas-Smith et al., 2020; Twis & Preble, 2020; US Department of State, 2020; Van Buren et al., 2021). Nail salons and sales crews might harbor labor trafficking victims, as might home health care services and carnivals (Burt, 2019; Donnelly et al., 2019; Hancock, 2019; Shandro et al., 2016; US Department of State, 2020). Labor trafficking also plagues the hospitality and tourism industries, including restaurants and bars, and is especially prevalent in the fishing industry (Awerbuch et al., 2020; Bracy et al., 2021; Burt, 2019; Donnelly et al., 2019; Farrell et al., 2008; Farrell et al., 2020; Litam & Lam, 2021; Logan et al., 2009; Moreto et al., 2020; Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018; Shandro et al., 2016; Swartz, 2019; US Department of State, 2020; Wilson & Dalton, 2008).

Domestic Servitude

An estimated third of labor trafficking occurs in private homes, typically as domestic servitude (Blanton et al., 2020; Bracy et al., 2021; Burt, 2019; Dandurand, 2017; Donnelly et al., 2019; Farrell et al., 2008; Farrell et al., 2010; Farrell et al., 2020; Gibbons & Stoklosa, 2016; Hancock, 2019; Irwin, 2017; Kulig & Butler, 2019; Logan et al., 2009; Mapp et al., 2016; Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018; Rothman et al., 2017; Shandro et al., 2016; Shih, 2016; Strauss, 2017; Twis & Preble, 2020; US Department of State, 2020; Wilson & Dalton, 2008). Nearly 18% of labor trafficking cases reported to the National Human Trafficking Hotline in 2019 involved domestic work, making it the top form of labor trafficking identified for the year (Polaris, 2020a). Domestic servitude is particularly difficult to prosecute, however, because there is often only the word of the victim against that of their trafficker (Farrell et al., 2020).

Occasionally, domestic servitude extends to the privacy of hotel rooms as an extension to the trafficker's private residence (Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018).

Lesser-Known Types of Human Trafficking

Lesser-known forms of human trafficking include forced marriages and forced military service, including mail-order brides, child brides, and child soldiers (Bjelland, 2017; Cunningham & Cromer, 2016; Dandurand, 2017; Irwin, 2017; Logan et al., 2009; Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018; Rockinson-Szapkiw et al., 2017; US Department of State, 2020). A suspected 15.4 individuals globally live in forced marriages (Szablewska & Kubacki, 2018). Another lesser-known type of human trafficking, forced criminality, involves traffickers forcing their victims to participate in criminal activity such as selling drugs and theft (Hancock, 2019; Kulig & Butler, 2019; Matos et al., 2018; Matos et al., 2019; Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018; Reid, 2016; US Department of State, 2020; Villacampa & Torres, 2017). Additionally, each year traffickers around the world conscript thousands of individuals to begging, a prevalent and growing type of forced child labor (Bjelland, 2017; Blanton et al., 2020; Farrell et al., 2008; Farrell et al., 2010; Hancock, 2019; Logan et al., 2009; Matos et al., 2018; Matos et al., 2019; Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018; Shandro et al., 2016; US Department of State, 2020; Villacampa & Torres, 2017). Traffickers have even expanded their reach to trafficking athletes around the world, exploiting athletic talent for financial gain (US Department of State, 2020).

Although not formally defined in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (2000), another form of trafficking rising in awareness is organ harvesting (Bjelland, 2017; Blanton et al., 2020; Dandurand, 2017; Donnelly et al., 2019; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Hancock, 2019; Irwin, 2017; Mapp et al., 2016; Matos et al., 2018; Matos et al., 2019; Moreto et al., 2020; Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018; Szablewska & Kubacki, 2018; US Department of State, 2020; Valdovinos et al.,

2020). Illegal adoptions, again not defined by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (2000), can fall within the parameters of what many consider human trafficking (Mapp et al., 2016; Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018; US Department of State, 2020).

The Profitability of Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is about profit (Donnelly et al., 2019; Moreto et al., 2020; Mostajabian et al, 2019). The evil of human trafficking supports the Biblical principle that "the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil" (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation,* 2007, 1 Timothy 6:10). In the eyes of a trafficker, the individuals they exploit are worth only what they can provide monetarily that profits the trafficker (Logan et al., 2009). For traffickers, human trafficking provides a low-risk method of producing high profits (Dandurand, 2017; Logan et al., 2009). The result is that traffickers see their victims as disposable commodities meant for repeated use until they no longer produce profit (Logan et al., 2009; Wilson & Dalton, 2008). A desire for profit dictates much of what happens in international and domestic commerce, leaving unscrupulous entrepreneurs tempted by the draw of cheap labor that human trafficking provides (Moreto et al., 2020; Van Buren et al., 2021). These unscrupulous entrepreneurs include organized crime leaders and gang members.

Organized Crime Involvement

In recent years, organized crime has played an increasing role in human trafficking, with criminal organizations participating in trafficking activities (Bracy et al., 2021). The practice of human trafficking in organized crime is so prevalent that human trafficking has become the third most lucrative endeavor for organized crime syndicates (Logan et al., 2009; Szablewska & Kubacki, 2018; Van Buren et al., 2021). Some groups engage in human trafficking as a means of

supplementing other criminal endeavors involving guns and drugs, or they may even replace other ventures for the ease of human trafficking (Farrell et al., 2010).

Due to the favorable context of organized crime in the global market, human trafficking might occur through channels of organized crime that operate in multiple countries (Dandurand, 2017; Farrell et al., 2010; Matos et al., 2018; Matos et al., 2019; Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018). Organized crime and human trafficking intersect to the point that law enforcement officers might assume the organized crime element and fail to recognize human trafficking situations not associated with organized crime (Villacampa and Torres, 2017).

Gang Involvement

Sex Trafficking can have links to gangs (Wilson & Dalton, 2008). To recruit girls for prostitution, gang members use a method sometimes called "love bombing" (Reid, 2016). The gang members seek out vulnerable girls, promising to love them and provide them with a better life (Reid, 2016). In exchange, the girls agree to prostitute themselves to raise money for the gang (Reid, 2016). These girls often believe they are doing their part to contribute what they perceive as family support from the gang members manipulating them (Reid, 2016). Often the girls crave the love and attention they feel from both their traffickers and their clients to the point they fail to see the danger of their situation (Reid, 2016). Sex trafficking that is linked to gangs is but one type of human trafficking that ensnares its victims.

Theoretical Justification for Research

Constructing a theoretical framework is essential to supporting research data (Kohler et al., 2017). Whenever researchers fail to construct this conceptional theoretical framework, their method of analysis may stem more from proficiency in that method as opposed to an adequate methodology for defining data (Kohler et al., 2017). Consequently, theoretical development

should inform methodology (Mele et al., 2020). Neglecting to build upon theory throughout the research jeopardizes the data validity and suggests a lack of academic rigor (Kohler et al., 2017; Ratelle et al., 2019).

Quantitative research often collects data to test and build upon a relevant theory (Claydon, 2015; Kohler et al., 2017; McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). The results of solid quantitative research produce generalizations researchers then apply to the selected theory (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). Findings from quantitative research often serve to support or disprove a theory (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). Understanding the theory contributes to empirical research and allows researchers to better understand human behavior (Kohler et al., 2017; McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015).

Researchers studying human trafficking topics often fail to associate theory with their work, an omission that others have criticized (Kulig & Butler, 2019; Twis & Preble, 2020). Kulig and Butler (2019) argued that human trafficking victims might suffer due to a deficit of theory-driven empirical evidence because inconsistent research creates difficulty in identifying successful trafficking interventions. This present study seeks to alleviate a portion of the inconsistencies that plague human trafficking research by proposing schema theory to explain the responses of law enforcement officers. Schema theory likely influences the response of law enforcement officers faced with trafficking scenarios.

Schema Theory

Schema theory pertains to the collection of schemata, or conceptual frameworks, that individuals possess to process the world around them based upon personal knowledge and past experiences (Farrell et al., 2015; Lurigio & Carroll, 1985; Robinson, 2000; Stalans & Finn, 1995; Stalans & Lurigio, 1990). Schema theory suggests that individuals act as independent decision-

makers to interpret events and form decisions that align with their established internal frames of reference (Goodson et al., 2020; Stalans & Finn, 1995; Stalans & Lurigio, 1990; Venema, 2016). People categorize new experiences into pre-existing mental groupings of other events, people, places, and things from their past, often modifying their schemata accordingly in response to new information (Farrell et al., 2015; Lurigio & Carroll, 1985; Robinson, 2000; Stalans & Lurigio, 1990). Individuals thus develop reference points based on internalizations of past experiences, and this schema then influences their ability to appropriately identify and respond to present circumstances (Farrell et al., 2015; Goodson et al., 2020; Irwin, 2017; Lurigio & Carroll, 1985; Robinson, 2000; Stalans & Finn, 1995; Stalans & Lurigio, 1990; Venema, 2016; Villacampa & Torres, 2017).

Schema Theory and Law Enforcement Officers

Factors from schema theory influence officer discretion because schema influences the decision-making process (Goodson et al., 2020; Lurigio & Carroll, 1985; Stalans & Finn, 1995; Stalans & Lurigio, 1990). Officer schema also influences how officers respond to individuals, and provides a basis for understanding that response (Robinson, 2000; Venema, 2016). Schemata further determine the questions officers ask (Stalans & Finn, 1995; Venema, 2016). Researchers have used schema theory to describe criminal justice professionals' responses to individuals and situations (Farrell et al., 2015; Robinson, 2000; Stalans & Finn, 1995).

There is a connection between schemata and training (Goodson et al., 2020; Robinson, 2000). Portions of officers' schema arise from past experiences and training, and the schemata structured through training may assist officers with making sound decisions (Goodson et al., 2020; Robinson, 2000). Schemata are variable, active representations of knowledge that expand with increased knowledge, and knowledge increases with training (Robinson, 2000). Officers

with more knowledge of criminal situations tend to have more accurate schemata than those without exposure to such situations (Robinson, 2000).

Past researchers have found schema theory useful for explaining the differences between lay persons' and officers' responses, officer responses to domestic violence and wife assaults, and probations officers' perceptions of offenders (Lurigio & Carroll, 1985; Stalans & Finn, 1995; Stalans & Lurigio, 1990; Robinson, 2000). Farrell et al. (2015) expanded the use of schema theory in law enforcement settings to apply to human trafficking responses. The present study will add to this expansion of schema theory as applied to officer responses to human trafficking. If human trafficking situations remain ambiguous because officers lack previous experience and adequate training, they will act according to previously-held biases and schemata (Irwin, 2017). When these schemata have developed in part from media influence, they are in jeopardy of misinterpretations and inaccuracies (Mapp et al., 2016; Preble et al., 2020).

Awareness of Human Trafficking

Human trafficking, especially labor trafficking, might remain undetected due to a lack of awareness (Bracy et al., 2021). Dozens of organizations in both the public and private sectors now provide materials designed to increase human trafficking awareness (Preble et al., 2016). Attempts to raise human trafficking awareness have met with mixed results, however. Following extensive awareness training about the sex trafficking of American youth, Rozas et al. (2018) reported a rise in the successful identification of victims and a higher appropriation of services provided for those victims.

In a systemic review of 44 public awareness videos collected from 33 agencies, Preble et al. (2016) concluded that awareness videos had relatively the same effect as media derived from news articles, movies, and documentaries. Through raising and maintaining awareness, however,

those at-risk and already in trafficking situations experience higher levels of well-being (Thomas-Smith et al., 2020). Some researchers even argue that everyone in American communities could benefit from awareness training (Bracy et al., 2021; Browne-James et al., 2021). When the community becomes aware of human trafficking, public pressure can invoke change (Bracy et al., 2021). A natural result of increased awareness is an increase in an individual's ability to recognize trafficking victims.

Identifying Victim Status

The first step in successfully assisting human trafficking victims is identifying their victim status (Farrell et al., 2019b). Trafficking cases are often unreported to law enforcement agencies or trafficking hotlines, in part because victims do not ask for help (Awerbuch et al., 2020). Victims often fear reporting their situation due to the expectation of punishment by their captors (Awerbuch et al., 2020; Bracy et al., 2021). Victims might also fail to self-identify as victims, causing them to see no reason to ask for help (Awerbuch et al., 2020; Bracy et al., 2021; Donahue et al., 2019; Donnelly et al., 2019; Gibbons & Stoklosa, 2016; Shandro et al., 2016; Thomas-Smith et al., 2020). Isolation, both structural and functional, might also prevent victims from seeking help because the trafficker makes the victim feel alone (Hagan et al., 2021). Structural isolation might involve a physical means of preventing victims from communicating and often involves force (Hagan et al., 2021). Functional isolation is more subtle and arises from coercive control through eliminating privacy, undermining social support, and similar methods (Hagan et al., 2021).

The Lack of Awareness

In the United States, there were less than 32,000 cases of human trafficking reported between the years 2006 and 2015 (Awerbuch et al., 2020). A lack of awareness of human

trafficking indicators by those in positions of authority partially explains these low numbers of human trafficking incidents (Awerbuch et al., 2020). The lack of awareness particularly hinders the identification of labor trafficking situations since many do not understand labor trafficking occurs in their communities (Bracy et al., 2021).

Many issues contribute to the lack of awareness. Individuals might confuse human trafficking with topics like migration or combine human trafficking with the sexualization of women and prostitution (Szablewska & Kubacki, 2018). People might confuse labor trafficking with smuggling or illegal immigration (Bracy et al., 2021). Law enforcement professionals, particularly those in rural areas, might also face limited awareness due to limited resources (Bracy et al., 2021; Preble et al., 2020). When officers fail to have official means such as training to increase awareness, they absorb incomplete information from sources within the general populace such as mass media (Mapp et al., 2016).

Media Influence

Mapp et al. (2016) indicated that the media has far too much influence on officers who have not had adequate training. Media information, however, is not always entirely accurate (Mapp et al., 2016; Preble et al., 2020). Accounts of human trafficking in the media often focus on sex trafficking with little emphasis on labor trafficking (Twis & Praetorius, 2021). Media sources often sensationalize human trafficking as well, essentially framing how the general public, and by extension, law enforcement officers, perceive victims and traffickers (Mapp et al., 2016).

The result is that individuals, including officers, form preconceived ideas of human trafficking which fail to provide a total picture of human trafficking (Preble et al., 2020). Public awareness efforts and media attention often lead to confusion, further complicating proper

responses (Preble et al., 2020). This confusion, for example, might lead officers to confuse human trafficking with smuggling (Mapp et al., 2016). Without a formal source for information such as established through training, law enforcement officers often allow the media to shape their understanding of human trafficking (Mapp et al., 2016).

Media-driven anti-human trafficking campaigns might also cause individuals to oversimplify human trafficking or develop stereotypes related to victims and their captors (Mapp et al., 2016; Szablewska & Kubacki, 2018). These media portrayals may distort officers' interpretations of how a captor or victim looks or acts (Mapp et al., 2016). Proper awareness training must challenge the preconceived notions individuals might hold about human trafficking, exploitation, and victim characteristics (Litam & Lam, 2021).

Law Enforcement Perceptions

Law enforcement officers nationwide recognize human trafficking to vastly varying degrees, and they often fail to identify trafficking victims (Farrell et al., 2019b; Gibbons & Stoklosa, 2016). The ability of officers to identify human trafficking situations and trafficking victims might stem from the erroneous perception that human trafficking is not an issue in their jurisdictions (Farrell et al., 2019b; Jurek & King, 2020). Many agencies fail to have written guidelines or policies for human trafficking offenses, further masking the presence of human trafficking in those jurisdictions (Grubb & Bennett, 2012).

Law enforcement officers tend to understand broad, legal definitions of human trafficking, and higher-ranking officers are more aware of specific laws (Irwin, 2017; Renzetti et al., 2015). Some officers understand the definitions of human trafficking but do not look for trafficking indicators during their investigations (Grubb & Bennett, 2012). Safe harbor laws and proper training are helping officers better identify victims of human trafficking (Awerbuch et al.,

2020). Still, police agencies fall short in prioritizing human trafficking crimes, making the response to anti-trafficking laws challenging (Duncan & DeHart, 2019; Farrell et al., 2020). Response to anti-trafficking laws is also challenging because law enforcement officers tend to respond more to their agencies' commitment to change than because of legislation (Matusiak & Jurek, 2019). Law enforcement agency leaders must be open to adopting anti-trafficking policies and policing measures (Matusiak & Jurek, 2019). Inadequate training and weak policy also cause anti-trafficking measures to remain ineffective (Hancock, 2019; Irwin, 2017).

Law Enforcement Officers and Labor Trafficking

Bjelland (2017) discovered that law enforcement officers initiated a mere third of human trafficking complaints spanning a decade of police registry data, despite an increasing number of complaints. Even though officer-initiated cases more often resulted in prosecution, the low number of initiations might have resulted from officer discretion (Bjelland, 2017). Regarding labor trafficking, officers tend to hold vastly different perceptions than the realities reported by labor trafficking victims (Dandurand, 2017). Officers particularly struggle to recognize labor trafficking situations, and there is not a clear understanding of what constitutes labor trafficking (Dandurand, 2017; Farrell et al., 2020). Pointing to this lack of understanding is that there were far fewer national cases of labor trafficking in 2018 and 2019, and officers in only 20 states arrested and charged labor traffickers from 2013 to 2016 (Bracy et al., 2021; Polaris, 2019; Polaris, 2020a).

Law Enforcement Officers and Sex Trafficking

As for sex trafficking, law enforcement officers traditionally saw sex workers as voluntarily working in the sex industry (Awerbuch et al., 2020). Officers must understand that many sex trafficking victims suffer a loss of autonomy and become isolated, often distrusting

anyone who can help them (Hagan et al., 2021). Officers especially fail to identify child victims and might mistake older teens for criminals instead of victims (Dandurand, 2017; Kulig et al., 2020; Rozas et al., 2018).

The Influence of Training on Perceptions

When individuals lack understanding and awareness of human trafficking, they might respond in ways that are inappropriate or even harmful to victims (Preble et al., 2020). Human trafficking awareness must increase, particularly for those in a position to act on behalf of trafficking victims (Valdovinos et al., 2020). The most viable method for enhancing awareness and perceptions might lie in better training, particularly for law enforcement officers. Training helps individuals develop the skills necessary to recognize differences between right and wrong (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation,* Hebrews 5:14). The ability to recognize human trafficking certainly involves discerning the wrong behavior of captors extorting victims in trafficking situations.

Overall, criminal justice professionals lack sufficient training in identifying trafficking victims, gathering trafficking evidence, and protecting victims (Matos et al., 2018; Matos et al., 2019). In 2014, the US Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Administration reported that over 85,000 law enforcement officers and other criminal justice personnel had received training in identifying victims of human trafficking (Preble et al., 2016). Human trafficking training is vital, yet current training is often incomplete and heavily focused on sex trafficking with little regard for labor trafficking (Matos et al., 2019; Niemi & Aaltonen, 2017; Villacampa & Torres, 2017). Deprived of necessary training, officers fill training deficits with personal preexisting expectations often formed through mass media accounts (Manjarrez, 2021; Mapp et al., 2016; Preble et al., 2020).

Law Enforcement Officer Training

Formal law enforcement training has existed for well over a century, as evidenced by a training school implemented by the Pennsylvania State Police in 1906 (Brereton, 1961). Other law enforcement academies followed, first by the Detroit Police Department in 1911, and then by the New York State Police in 1917 (Brereton, 1961). Soon there were training academies established across the nation, including the New Jersey State Police and Michigan State Police, as well as municipal agencies in Los Angeles and Portland, Oregon (Brereton, 1961). A national survey of 300 law enforcement agencies in 1931, however, reported that not a single agency serving jurisdictions with less than 10,000 residents provided formal training for officers (Brereton, 1961). Over two-thirds of the agencies never asked if the officer had ever handled a weapon, and nearly two-thirds placed officers on duty without any instructions (Brereton, 1961).

By comparison, today's law enforcement officers receive an average of 840 hours of formal training (Blumberg et al., 2019). Still, there is no uniformity of training practices amongst America's roughly 18,000 different law enforcement agencies (Blumberg et al., 2019; Engel et al., 2020). Even training academies within the same state may offer different curricula (Blumberg et al., 2019). Further, the majority of law enforcement training programs have not undergone rigorous scientific assessment, resulting in a deficit in understanding its impact (Engel et al., 2020). Law enforcement training, however, is a meaningful research topic that should receive additional interest in academia (Engel et al., 2020).

One method of building officers' confidence in identifying human trafficking is to reference an existing schema, such as officers might have for prostitution (Farrell et al., 2015; Mapp et al., 2016). However, to make effective decisions, law enforcement officers need specialized training that will allow them to develop new schemata associated specifically with

human trafficking (Farrell et al., 2015; Mapp et al., 2016; Renzetti et al., 2015; Robinson, 2000). When officers have the necessary tools to confidently recognize and then respond to human trafficking situations, they should rely upon preexisting schemata less often (Farrell et al., 2015).

Applying a relatively new concept such as human trafficking in this manner, however, might limit officers because they feel reluctant to apply new information to established schemata (Farrell et al., 2015). Referencing a schema such as prostitution during human trafficking instruction might also prove problematic because officers may develop a narrow view of human trafficking situations (Farrell et al., 2015). Additionally, officers might fail to recognize victims and may entirely overlook other forms of human trafficking such as labor trafficking and domestic servitude (Farrell et al., 2015).

Current Law Enforcement Human Trafficking Training

From the earliest studies, researchers have called for additional training for officers in areas such as human trafficking awareness, victim identification, response, and relevant legislation (Bracy et al., 2021; Farrell et al., 2019a; Farrell et al., 2020; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Hancock, 2019; Matos et al., 2018; Niemi & Aaltonen, 2017; Renzetti, 2015; Villacampa & Torres, 2017; Wilson & Dalton, 2008). Although many agencies provide training, not every officer receives training, and a third of officers would refer potential human trafficking cases to a supervisor (Hancock, 2019; Irwin, 2017). In Tennessee, state law required all officers hired before July 2017 to receive a mandatory 2 hours of human trafficking training, and all officers hired after July 2017 should receive 2 hours of training within the first 6 months of employment (Tenn. Code Ann. § 38-6-114, 2015/2016/2017). The Tennessee statute requiring training, however, does not include a method for following up to ensure that officers receive mandatory training (Tenn. Code Ann. § 38-6-114, 2015/2016/2017).

Suggested Law Enforcement Human Trafficking Training

Law enforcement officers would benefit from basic training that distinguishes human trafficking from other crimes, such as the types of human trafficking, common misconceptions about trafficking, and why victims might not seek help (Bracy et al., 2021; Farrell et al., 2019b; Farrell et al., 2020; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Mapp et al., 2016; Villacampa & Torres, 2017; Wilson & Dalton, 2008). Other areas of potential training improvement are how to identify trafficking situations based on red flag indicators of trafficking, how to approach human trafficking victims, and the unique needs of trafficking victims (Bracy et al., 2021; Farrell et al., 2019b; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Hancock, 2019; Kulig & Butler, 2019; Logan et al., 2009; Mapp et al., 2016; Matos et al., 2019; Wilson & Dalton, 2008).

Additionally, officers need training on available resources for trafficking victims, including social services and human trafficking hotlines (Hancock, 2019; Mapp et al., 2016; Wilson & Dalton, 2008). Officers would also benefit from training elements that improved their overall awareness of human trafficking, as well as training that provided information on how to investigate human trafficking cases (Farrell et al., 2010; Farrell & Cronin, 2015; Farrell et al., 2020; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Kulig et al., 2020; Mapp et al., 2016; Matos et al., 2019; Wilson & Dalton, 2008). Training must additionally address the perception that many officers hold that human trafficking does not occur in their jurisdictions since these perceptions about the prevalence of human trafficking significantly correspond to officers' training levels (Farrell et al., 2010).

Foundational Literature

Eight research studies discovered in the literature review are of special relevance to the present study due to their subject matter (Donnelly et. Al., 2019; Farrell et al., 2010; Franklin et

al., 2020; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Irwin, 2017; Mapp et al., 2016; Nsonwu et al., 2017; Renzetti et al, 2015). This literature most informed the research design in the present study. Although a few of these studies are somewhat older, they demonstrate the foundation of research related to law enforcement training and effectiveness. Some of these studies are similar in design or target population. Each of these studies shares similarities and dissimilarities with the present study, and each guides the present study in some manner. A summarization of pertinent information from these studies, as well as their relevance to the present study, follows, beginning with establishing a precedent for examining law enforcement officers.

Emphasis on Law Enforcement Officers

Six studies focused on law enforcement officers (Farrell et al., 2010; Franklin et al., 2020; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Irwin, 2017; Mapp et al., 2016; Renzetti et al, 2015). Irwin (2017) explored law enforcement officers' perceptions and knowledge of human trafficking issues. Mapp et al. (2016) surveyed 175 law enforcement officers, and Renzetti et al. (2015) administered pre-training and post-training surveys to law enforcement officers attending a statewide training event in Kentucky.

Farrell et al. (2010) conducted one of the earliest significant studies related to human trafficking and law enforcement perceptions. As part of their research, Farrell et al. (2010) created the National Law-Enforcement Human Trafficking Survey and administered it to agency heads of 3,189 law enforcement agencies nationwide. In another early study on a smaller scale than Farrell et al. (2010), Grubb and Bennett (2012) surveyed local, county, and state law enforcement officers in Georgia. Franklin et al. (2020) used survey methods to explore police training and its relationship to misconceptions and responses to trauma. Essential to human trafficking studies is the emphasis on officers' awareness, perceptions, and responses.

Emphasis on Awareness, Perceptions, and Responses

Although Franklin et al. (2020) did not focus on human traffic awareness and response, the other seven studies researched respondents' human trafficking awareness and response (Donnelly et. Al., 2019; Farrell et al., 2010; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Irwin, 2017; Mapp et al., 2016; Nsonwu et al., 2017; Renzetti et al, 2015). Two of the studies did not focus on law enforcement officers and human trafficking (Donnelly et al., 2019; Nsonwu et al., 2017). Understanding that front-line workers like emergency medical services (EMS) personnel often encounter human trafficking, Donnelly et al. (2019) sought to explore emergency medical services (EMS) personnel's perceptions and knowledge of human trafficking. Donnelly et al. (2019) surveyed EMS personnel to specifically assess their ability to recognize, report, and accurately define human trafficking. Nsonwu et al. (2017) surveyed social work students to assess their perceptions, knowledge, and attitudes related to human trafficking.

Farrell et al. (2010) administered their national survey to determine law enforcement perceptions about human trafficking and assess their experience with investigating trafficking cases (Farrell et al., 2010). In his native Australia, Irwin (2017) assessed officers' understanding of human trafficking, their awareness of trafficking legislation and policy, and their likely response to trafficking situations. Grubb and Bennett (2012) and Mapp et al., (2016) assessed the readiness of officers to respond to human trafficking cases. Renzetti et al. (2015) gathered data regarding the effectiveness of human trafficking training. The emphasis on training is understandable.

Emphasis on Training Importance

Six studies emphasized the importance of training (Donnelly et. Al., 2019; Farrell et al., 2010; Franklin et al., 2020; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Mapp et al., 2016; Renzetti et al, 2015).

Franklin et al. (2020) explored police training and its relationship to misconceptions and responses to trauma. Officers with training specific to trauma had significantly lower beliefs in trauma misconceptions (Franklin et al., 2020). Grubb and Bennett (2012) stressed the practicality of training to help officers identify victims in trafficking situations. In light of their findings, Grubb and Bennett (2012) called for mandatory human trafficking training for all certified law enforcement agencies.

Strengthening agency leaders' perception of human trafficking prevalence was associated with an increase in the number of identified human trafficking cases (Farrell et al., 2010). One response to perceived problems is for agency leaders to increase training (Farrell et al., 2010). As agency leaders increasingly perceived human trafficking as a problem in their communities, officers in their command were in turn more likely to both identify and investigate possible incidents of human trafficking (Farrell et al., 2010). Based on these findings, Farrell et al. (2010) concluded that low numbers of human trafficking cases identified in America's law enforcement agencies are in part due to their leaders' lack of perceived human trafficking problems. The lack of perception indicated a deficit in training and guidance on how to properly identify and investigate human trafficking cases (Farrell et al., 2010).

Renzetti et al. (2015) supported Farrell et al. (2010) by determining that agencies employing officers who had received human trafficking training were more likely to report instances of human trafficking investigations. Executive-level commanders were most knowledgeable about human trafficking following training, but this knowledge did not transfer to patrol officers under their command (Renzetti et al., 2015). Renzetti et al. (2015) suggested that future research should assess the efficacy of human trafficking training to determine the effectiveness of applying the same training for officers of all levels.

Mapp et al. (2016) also stressed the importance of training and determined that human trafficking training significantly increased the ability of officers to define human trafficking, identify human trafficking situations, and assist human trafficking victims. Without training, law enforcement officers often relied upon mass media to shape their perceptions of human trafficking (Mapp et al., 2016).

While their emphasis was on EMS personnel instead of law enforcement, Donnelley et al. (2019) also emphasized the importance of human trafficking training. Donnelly et al. (2019) had a significant impact on EMS professionals. As a result of the Donnelly et al. (2019) study, the Florida Attorney General sponsored free online, interactive training for EMS personnel. The present study has the potential to have an equally significant impact on law enforcement officers. To guide the present study, the emphasis on training present in these related studies led to the precedence of study design.

Precedence of Study Design

Despite their differences, these eight studies had similar study designs (Donnelly et. Al., 2019; Farrell et al., 2010; Franklin et al., 2020; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Irwin, 2017; Mapp et al., 2016; Nsonwu et al., 2017; Renzetti et al, 2015). All eight researchers utilized surveys in quantitative studies (Donnelly et. Al., 2019; Farrell et al., 2010; Franklin et al., 2020; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Irwin, 2017; Mapp et al., 2016; Nsonwu et al., 2017; Renzetti et al, 2015). Six studies designed surveys that included Likert scales to assess responses (Donnelly et. Al., 2019; Franklin et al., 2020; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Irwin, 2017; Nsonwu et al., 2017; Renzetti et al, 2015). Elements from these study designs guided the development of the present study. Of particular interest are the surveys the researchers utilized, some of which guided the development of a survey for the present study.

Survey Instruments

Renzetti (2015) and Farrell et al. (2010) both utilized the *National Law-Enforcement Human Trafficking Survey* as their survey instrument (see Farrell et al., 2008, for more detail). Farrell et al. (2010) studied previously collected data, selecting a sample size of 1,515 surveys from the 3,189 originally collected from across the nation. Renzetti (2015) utilized the *National Law-Enforcement Human Trafficking Survey* to gather data from law enforcement officers attending human trafficking training. Grubb and Bennett (2012) also used portions of the *National Law-Enforcement Human Trafficking Survey*. Farrell et al. (2008) contained a copy of the *National Law-Enforcement Human Trafficking Survey* in its entirety. This *National Law-Enforcement Human Trafficking Survey* informed questions for the survey in the present study.

Nsonwu et al. (2017) developed the Perceptions, Knowledge, and Attitudes about Human Trafficking Questionnaire (PKA-HTQ). This 32-item questionnaire measured agreement or disagreement with human trafficking statements (Nsonwu et al., 2017). Nsonwu et al. (2017) first administered the questionnaire to undergraduate social work students at two public universities using a convenience sampling technique and a two-site cross-sectional survey design. The authors admit that the questionnaire may require additional development and refinement (Nsonwu et al., 2017). However, it appears that the questionnaire is useful for the self-evaluation of human trafficking understanding by social work students and practitioners (Nsonwu et al., 2017). Nsonwu et al. (2017) listed all survey questions within their literature, and these questions also informed questions for the survey in the present study.

Donnelly et al. (2019) created a survey that assessed the ability of respondents to recognize, report, and accurately define human trafficking. Their survey contained questions related to attitudes and myths about human trafficking, followed by questions regarding

recognition of trafficking scenarios and how to report suspected victimization (Donnelly et al., 2019). Specifically, the survey utilized the Human Trafficking Myths Scale (Cunningham & Cromer, 2016; Donnelly et al., 2019). Cunningham and Cromer (2016) created the Human Trafficking Myths Scale in their study surveying attitudes about human trafficking among undergraduate students. The survey also asked respondents to consider human trafficking indicators and rate their suspicions of human trafficking. Donnelly et al. (2019) summarized the responses to each of the survey questions. These questions additionally informed questions for the survey in the present study (see Appendix A; see Appendix B).

Survey Questions

Survey questions utilized in the relevant studies tended to include demographic questions (Donnelly et. Al., 2019; Farrell et al., 2010; Franklin et al., 2020; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Irwin, 2017; Nsonwu et al., 2017; Renzetti et al, 2015). Mapp et al. (2016) did not include demographic questions. Likert-scale questions were common (Donnelly et. al., 2019; Farrell et al., 2010; Franklin et al., 2020; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Irwin, 2017; Mapp et al., 2016; Nsonwu et al., 2017; Renzetti et al, 2015). Those studies utilizing the *National Law-Enforcement Human Trafficking Survey* also included yes/no questions (Farrell et al., 2008; Ferrell et al., 2010; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Renzetti et al., 2015). The survey questions from these earlier studies guided the present survey design. A large portion of the questions mirror those asked by Donnelly et al. (2019; see Appendix A; see Appendix B). Other studies informed additional questions, particularly related to demographics.

Biblical Worldview Concerning Human Trafficking

Faith-based organizations have long played a leading role in providing necessary services to others, so it is not surprising to find Christian non-governmental agencies alongside secular

and governmental agencies in the movement to eradicate human trafficking (Frame, 2017). Unhindered by borders and jurisdictions, faith-based organizations have a unique positioning that allows them to join networks of volunteers around the world (US Department of State, 2020). These organizations can establish trust and build relationships with flexibility not afforded to government entities and can provide a level of protection for vulnerable individuals at risk of becoming trafficking victims (US Department of State, 2020).

United States Secretary of State Michael Pompeo, as well as Ambassador-at-Large John C. Richmond, encourage faith-based communities to fight for freedom (US Department of State, 2020). Unexpectedly, the movement to end human trafficking has exposed a common ground for progressive Democrats and evangelical Christians (Schwarz et al., 2017). Conservative Republicans, who often identify closely with evangelicals, and their Democratic counterparts appear united in their sentiments to end human trafficking, particularly regarding the exploitation of women in sex trafficking (Schwarz et al., 2017).

Preble et al. (2020) indicated a need for additional research on the involvement of faith-based organizations in anti-trafficking endeavors. Faith-based organizations tend to approach victim needs in the same way as secular agencies, but Christian agencies also seek to meet spiritual needs in addition to physical (Frame, 2017). In some ways, the movement to eradicate human trafficking has teamed Christians with unlikely allies such as feminists and progressives, as both evangelical and secular organizations unite against traffickers (Schwarz, 2019; Twis & Praetorius, 2021).

Frame (2017) interviewed 41 leaders of 12 secular non-governmental organizations and 13 Christian agencies, all committed to serving Cambodian victims of human trafficking and exploitation. While leaders at all of the agencies had similar approaches to providing care for

trafficking survivors, Frame (2017) reports that staff at Christian organizations significantly valued the importance of infusing faith into their work, ministering to the spiritual needs of victims alongside their physical needs.

Not everyone agrees with evangelical anti-trafficking interventions, however. These critics point to the tendency of Christians to focus on rescue at all costs (Swartz, 2019). Swartz (2019) blamed conservative Christian non-governmental agencies like the International Justice Mission (IJM) for promoting a picture of rescuing women from sex trafficking that has narrowly framed human trafficking. A non-government organization now on the global scene as an advocate for trafficking victims, IJM seeks fair justice and strives to eradicate human trafficking in all parts of the world (Swartz, 2019). Swartz (2019), however, accused IJM leaders of creating a narrow mindset focused on rescuing victims regardless of cost. Swartz (2019) also suggested that organizations such as IJM have sensationalized their human trafficking rescues to raise funding for future rescue endeavors.

According to Swartz (2019), sensationalized images of human trafficking promoted by faith-based organizations have become the standard for secular non-governmental agencies and Hollywood alike. Swartz (2019) argued young Christian Americans working with IJM and other agencies act as naïve missionaries who arrive in foreign countries with the sole intent of rescuing victims. These young believers supposedly follow IJM's lead to conclude that human trafficking is little more than personal failings victims and traffickers can overcome with friendship and love (Swartz, 2019). However, IJM champions fair justice for trafficking victims beyond their rescue (Swartz, 2019). As another example of good intentions, IJM increasingly relies upon indigenous leadership in its overseas endeavors (Swartz, 2019).

Twis and Praetorius (2021) also disagree with faith-based involvement in human trafficking interventions. Twis and Praetorius (2021) accused faith-based organizations of following a script when addressing sex trafficking. This script describes the perfect victim as pure and helpless and then objectifies sex work as slavery and trafficking (Twis & Praetorius, 2021). Faith-based organizations then swoop in with rescue and redemption (Twis & Praetorius, 2021). Narratives follow appropriated for different purposes such as moral agendas, abolition cultivating warfare, and even divine plans (Twis & Praetorius, 2021).

Shih (2016) belittled vigilante rescues by compassionate Christians in the United States. Without assistance from law enforcement, these believers set up sting operations to rescue perceived human trafficking victims (Shih, 2016). Shih (2016) claimed that these rescue attempts stemmed from bias against others because rescues occurred in areas where the rescuers had little knowledge of or stake in the communities. After two years of participant observation with two evangelical Christian agencies formed to combat human trafficking, Shih (2016) labeled such organizations as vigilante groups. These groups acted not with legal authority or professional skill but merely out of moral panic against perceived human trafficking markers targeting working-class immigrants (Shih, 2016).

When well-meaning Christians act without regard for the long-term care of trafficking victims, or when they fail to enlist aid from law enforcement and other trained professionals, they might merit such criticism. Jesus called His followers the salt and light of the world (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation,* 2007, Matthew 5:13-14). Christians must also strive to act in the proper order because God is a God of peace instead of disorder (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation*, 1 Corinthians 14:33).

Following Jesus requires exposing darkness, so it seems fitting that Christians would desire to expose the darkness of human trafficking. However, Christians must do everything in submission to authorities such as law enforcement officers, remembering that God grants all authority (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation*, 2007, Romans 13:1). As bearers of authority, law enforcement officers serve as God's vessels to bring justice to those under oppression, so that man may terrify them no longer (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation,* 2007, Psalm 10:18).

Summary

The present study will contribute to human trafficking research by connecting the quantity and quality of law enforcement training to offices' perceptions and responses to human trafficking scenarios. Researchers found significant gaps in the current literature related to human trafficking training, including its effectiveness (Donnelly et al., 2019; Farrell et al., 2019a; Hancock, 2019; Irwin, 2017; Matos et al., 2018; Villacampa & Torres, 2017). Although Donnelly et al. (2019) conducted a similar study to the present study, their focus was on emergency medical services personnel instead of law enforcement. Other published studies, although similar, have not held the same research goal as the present study.

This literature review assimilated information from peer-reviewed sources significant to the present study. This literature review began by explaining the search strategy. The literature review provided an overview of human trafficking, including its profitability and the types of human trafficking. The literature review presented a theoretical justification for the study and surveyed perceptions and training both inside and outside of the criminal justice system. Lastly, the literature review identified foundational literature before presenting a Biblical worldview and summarizing the chapter. From the information in this literature review, one may ascertain the relevance of the present study in human trafficking research.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

Identifying the purpose of a research study is a critical first step in conducting academic research (Ratelle et al., 2019). The purpose of the present research is to examine the connections between training and preparedness levels of law enforcement officers in West Tennessee to recognize human trafficking. Tennessee law requires law enforcement officers to receive at least two hours of human trafficking training (Tenn. Code Ann. § 38-6-114, 2015/2016/2017). The first portion of this study confirms that officers have completed this mandatory training and examines any additional training received in human trafficking. The second portion of the study investigates the effectiveness of training by comparing training levels with officers' ability to correctly identify human trafficking scenarios and the appropriate response to each.

There exists a gap in the literature providing foundational quantitative data that better explains how officer perceptions correlate to training. It is necessary to compare the amount of training received against the ability to assess potential trafficking scenarios. Following is an explanation of the present study's research methodology, a summation of the research design and rationale, and a restating of the research questions and hypotheses. Attention then turns to the participants and setting for the study, as well as the instrumentation, procedures, and data analysis.

Research Methodology

The present study relies upon quantitative methods for data collection. Studies using a quantitative approach are deductive and explanatory, and researchers often design all aspects of their research before beginning data collection (Claydon, 2015; McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). Quantitative researchers employ numerical data instead of narrative data found in qualitative

studies (Claydon, 2015). Quantitative studies provide critical data necessary to test and support theories developed within previous qualitative studies (Claydon, 2015). Since many human trafficking research studies rely upon qualitative techniques, quantitative research studies can confirm and develop any theory suggested in earlier studies.

The use of quantitative methodology is not without precedent in similar studies. The eight studies identified as most relevant to the present study all rely upon quantitative empirical findings. In their quantitative research, Renzetti et al. (2015) and Donnelley et al. (2019) utilized a similar data collection method to determine human trafficking training effectiveness. Other researchers employed a comparable methodology examining the human trafficking responses of law enforcement officers (Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Irwin, 2017; Mapp et al., 2016). Franklin et al. (2020) utilized a similar procedure while comparing law enforcement officers' training and response to trauma.

Research Design and Rationale

Experimental research design depends upon manipulating variables within experiment and control groups (Ratelle et al., 2019). Research that focuses on groups of individuals instead relies upon a non-experimental design (Boyle et al., 2017). Non-experimental studies, known as correlational studies, do not utilize comparable groups yet allow researchers to examine associations between variables (McCarthy et al., 2017). Research studies with cross-sectional designs observe groups at a single point in time (Ratelle et al., 2019). These definitions identify the present study as a non-experimental, correlational, cross-sectional study. The present study does not assign groups to participants and does not manipulate variables. This study examines associations between the variables of human trafficking training and law enforcement officers' ability to identify trafficking situations at present.

The atrocities associated with human trafficking demand the identification of sub-par training so that trainers might alleviate deficits. It is not enough to merely determine that officers received the mandatory training in West Tennessee or even ascertain training levels beyond the minimum requirements. If inadequate human trafficking training does not increase officers' ability to identify trafficking situations, then its application does little to change the plight of individuals held by traffickers. The present study will contribute to an assessment of human trafficking training in West Tennessee.

Research Questions

As stated previously, past studies have long expressed the importance of human trafficking training for law enforcement officers (Bracy et al., 2021; Farrell et al., 2019a; Farrell et al., 2020; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Hancock, 2019; Matos et al., 2018; Niemi & Aaltonen, 2017; Renzetti, 2015; Villacampa & Torres, 2017; Wilson & Dalton, 2008). By state law, all current law enforcement officers in Tennessee should have received a minimum of 2 hours of training on human trafficking (Tenn. Code Ann. § 38-6-114, 2015/2016/2017). Every newly-hired officer must receive at least 2 hours of mandatory training within their first half-year of employment (Tenn. Code Ann. § 38-6-114, 2015/2016/2017). Since it appears that no measures are in place to ascertain the full extent of human trafficking training obtained by officers in West Tennessee, two overarching research questions drive the current study within the context of the literature review.

RQ 1: What percentage of law enforcement officers in West Tennessee have received more than the state-mandated two hours of human trafficking training, and to what extent?

RQ 2: How does actual officer preparedness compare with the officers' perceptions of their ability to identify human trafficking situations?

The first research question ascertains the amount of human trafficking received by law enforcement officers in West Tennessee. This question also determines the percentage of officers who have received more than the mandatory 2 hours of training. Past research has shown that officers fail to identify human trafficking victims, in part due to skewed perceptions and a lack of complete understanding of human trafficking (Dandurand, 2017; Farrell et al., 2019b; Farrell et al., 2020; Preble et al., 2020.) The second research question evaluates how well officers accurately identify human trafficking situations compared to their perceptions about their level of human trafficking readiness. This study may reveal patterns of misperceptions and thus identify gaps in officer training that might hinder appropriate responses in human trafficking situations.

Hypothesis

As stated previously, this study requires only one hypothesis. The first research question does not necessitate a hypothesis. From the second research question, the need arises for a hypothesis and its related null hypothesis.

H1: There is a statistically significant difference between officers' perceptions of preparedness and their ability to identify human trafficking situations.

$H_0$1: There is no statistically significant difference between officers' perceptions of preparedness and their ability to identify human trafficking situations.

This proposed research study scrutinizes correlations between officer training and response to human trafficking situations. Multiple studies tout the importance of individualized training to increase human trafficking awareness (Awerbuch et al., 2020; Dandurand, 2017; Duncan & DeHart, 2019; Farrell et al., 2019a; Farrell et al., 2020; Hancock, 2019; Jurek & King, 2020; Matos et al., 2018; Matos et al., 2019; Niemi & Aaltonen, 2017; Sprang et al., 2020; Villacampa & Torres, 2017). The present study draws from previous research to predict that

officers who have received human trafficking training are more prepared to recognize and then respond to trafficking scenarios than those who have not (Jurek & King, 2020). Farrell et al. (2019a) proposed that law enforcement officers would increase human trafficking awareness and understanding as they received additional training. The proposed study, therefore, expects that additional training corresponds to higher levels of preparedness.

Data Collection Method

One method of collecting data in quantitative research is conducting surveys (Datta & Vaid, 2018; Specht, 2019). Surveys are a well-known method for gathering large amounts of data from a particular group or target population (Datta & Vaid, 2018; Specht, 2019). Whether in quantitative or qualitative studies, some authors consider the use of surveys as a research tool as a growing genre of study known as survey research (Boeren, 2018; Boyle et al., 2017; Claydon, 2015; Datta & Vaid, 2018; Kelly-Quon, 2018; Mele et al., 2020; Ratelle et al., 2019).

Survey research, or the process of collecting information from a particular group to identify and measure trends, is a primary justification for quantitative research (Boeren, 2018). Descriptive survey research assumes no hypotheses and instead focuses on obtaining information that guides understanding of the research topic and associated trends (Kelly-Quon, 2018). The use of descriptive surveys affords a better understanding of behavior and perception (Kelly-Quon, 2018). The proposed study used a descriptive survey to conduct quantitative research designed to reveal a greater understanding of how law enforcement officer training affects officers' perceptions of human trafficking.

Researchers must consider ethical issues such as consent and anonymity (Franklin et al., 2020; Laher, 2016; Mele et al., 2020; Specht, 2019). At all times during the study and following, all survey answers will remain anonymous, and no identifying information accompanied survey

results (Donnelly et al., 2019; Franklin et al., 2020; Mapp et al., 2016). Completing the survey afforded no compensation, and all participation was voluntary (Donnelly et al., 2019; Franklin et al., 2020). Respondents could cease answering survey questions at any time without penalty (Specht, 2019).

Researchers use online survey platforms to obtain more diverse samples of larger sizes (Laher, 2016). In the present study, respondents accessed a provided website link to the survey employing an online software designed for surveys (Franklin et al., 2020). The online software platform utilized for this study was SurveyMonkey. The number of completed surveys submitted determines the length of survey availability, and surveys typically remain available to respondents for three to four months (Irwin, 2017). In this study, the daily number of surveys peaked just after 3 months before dropping off precipitously. It appeared that few respondents completed the survey after this peak, indicating a natural time to complete data collection. This survey remained active for approximately four months.

All forms of methodological reporting must receive institutional review board (IRB) approval from the primary researcher's university (Franklin et al., 2020; Mele et al., 2020). Every component of the present research study, including the survey, received approval from the IRB at Liberty University and met IRB requirements (Franklin et al., 2020). According to IRB standards, all survey respondents reviewed an informed consent disclaimer at the beginning of the survey (Franklin et al., 2020; see Appendix C). To protect the anonymity and the privacy of law enforcement officers, survey respondents did not sign this informed consent disclaimer.

Survey respondents instead had the option to accept or reject the informed consent disclaimer. By acknowledging that they agreed with the disclaimer, all respondents confirmed that they were taking the survey without coercion (Franklin et al., 2020). Their acknowledgment

also confirmed that respondents understood there would be no links between their survey answers and identifying characteristics (Franklin et al., 2020). No respondents rejected the informed consent disclaimer. Had respondents refused to agree to the informed consent disclaimer, the survey would have closed, blocking them from answering further questions.

Population and Recruitment

The population for the present study is law enforcement officers in West Tennessee with an active peace officer commission. West Tennessee has a total of 21 counties. By constitutional law, the residents of each county elect a sheriff, who then commissions deputies to assist in enforcing the law (Office of the Chief Clerk of the Senate, 2014). Additionally, leaders in urban and rural municipalities in West Tennessee appoint police chiefs who hire officers.

An extensive internet search yielded evidence of a total of 94 law enforcement agencies in West Tennessee. For two agencies, however, there was no contact information, indicating that these are likely former agencies that no longer employ officers. The exclusion of these two agencies leaves 92 agencies operating in West Tennessee. Information about these agencies came from individual agency websites, agency Facebook pages, and government sources encompassing agency jurisdictions.

All combined West Tennessee law enforcement agencies employ an estimated 4,300 officers (*N=4,300*). Over half of the agencies employ less than 25 officers. All but four of the agencies have less than 100 officers. The Shelby County Sheriff's Office and the Memphis Police Department are located in the largest urban region of West Tennessee. Together, these two agencies employ roughly 2,500 of the 4,300 estimated law enforcement officers in West Tennessee. Table 1 shows a comparison of agency employment by their estimated range of law enforcement officers.

Table 1

Estimated Ranges of Officers Working at Law Enforcement Agencies in West Tennessee

Number of officers	Agencies	Total
1-5	Big Sandy PD, Brighton PD, Bruceton PD, Crump PD, Decaturville PD, Dresden PD, Gates PD, Gibson PD, Gleason PD, Grand Junction PD, Henry PD, Hollow Rock PD, Hornbeak PD, Kenton PD, Middleton PD, Moscow PD, Obion PD, Parsons PD, Puryear PD, Ridgely PD, Rossville PD, Rutherford PD, Samburg PD, Scotts Hill PD, Sharon PD, Tiptonville PD, Trezevant PD, Trimble PD, Troy PD	104
6-25	Adamsville PD, Atoka PD, Benton County SO, Bethel Springs PD, Bolivar PD, Bradford PD, Camden PD, Chester County SO, Crockett County SO, Decatur County SO, Dyer PD, Gallaway City PD, Greenfield PD, Halls PD, Hardin County SO, Haywood County SO, Henderson PD, Henning PD, Huntingdon PD, Lake County SO, Lauderdale County SO, Mason PD, McKenzie PD, McNairy County SO, Medina PD, Milan PD, Munford PD, Newbern PD, Oakland PD, Paris PD, Piperton PD, Savannah PD, Selmer PD, Somerville PD, South Fulton PD, Trenton PD, Weakley County SO, Whiteville PD	519
26-50	Brownsville PD, Carroll County SO, Covington PD, Dyer County SO, Fayette County SO, Gibson County SO, Hardeman County SO, Henderson County SO, Henry County SO, Humboldt PD, Lexington PD, Martin PD, Millington PD, Obion County SO, Ripley PD, Union City PD	506
51-100	Bartlett PD, Collierville PD, Dyersburg PD, Germantown PD, Tipton County SO	355
101-500	Madison County SO, Jackson PD	314
Over 500 Officers	Shelby County SO, Memphis PD	2,538

Note. Table 1 represents a total of 92 law enforcement agencies in West Tennessee employing an estimated 4,336 officers. PD = Police Department, SO = Sheriff's Office.

Recruitment for respondents included posting seven times in a private, hidden Facebook group specifically for law enforcement officers in West Tennessee (West TN Law Officers, n.d.). This social media group currently has between 2,200 and 2,300 members who are active or retired law enforcement officers from jurisdictions of varying populations in the western region of Tennessee (West TN Law Officers, n.d.). The Facebook posts occurred at intervals throughout the time that the survey was active. Due to numerous connections with law enforcement officers in West Tennessee, the primary researcher also posted two announcements on LinkedIn.

In addition to the posts on social media, notification of the survey occurred via an email sent to the leaders of 57 of the 92 agencies that listed email addresses. This email requested that agency heads promote the survey, and included an offer to assist in recruiting agency officers. The IRB approved the content of the email. An additional 10 agency leaders received the same message via online messaging forms on their agency's website, and another 14 received notification through Facebook Messenger. The remaining 11 of the 92 agencies received no contact due to no electronic means to contact them.

Other recruitment efforts focused on law enforcement deputies from the Shelby County Sheriff's Office. Following approval from the sheriff, recruitment of these respondents included personal emails to known officers, word-of-mouth, text, and printed flyers. The Shelby County Sheriff's Office alone has approximately 600 deputies serving in law enforcement capacities (Memphis Shelby Crime Commission, 2018). Respondents from Shelby County will be from divisions such as patrol, narcotics, DUI, traffic, general investigations, and SWAT (Shelby County Sheriff's Office, n.d.). Officers responding from other agencies in West Tennessee likely hold similar positions in their agencies.

Four screening questions, located at the beginning of the survey, ensured the eligibility of survey respondents (see Appendix D). The first question asked if the respondent is a fully commissioned law enforcement officer, and the second question ensured that the commission and employment were with a law enforcement agency in West Tennessee. Question three asked if the respondent worked full time, and question four asked if the respondent worked in a law enforcement capacity. Each of these questions required an answer of yes or no. A response of no to any of these four questions closed the survey and did not allow the respondent to continue with the remainder of the survey questions.

Sample Population

A sample size indicates the number of participants in a study (Boyle et al., 2017). Determining an acceptable sample size is difficult, and simple rules do not exist for how to ascertain if a sample is large enough to reflect a given population (Boyle et al., 2017; Kohler et al., 2017; Laher, 2016). It is important, however, for researchers to obtain a sufficient sample size to avoid kurtosis and skewness in their results (Laher, 2016). Obtaining a larger population sample also increases the precision and power of statistical data (Boyle et al., 2017; McCarthy et al., 2017). Sample size produces a significant impact on power, or the ability of statistical testing to indicate the presence of differences in data (Boyle et al., 2017; McCarthy et al., 2017).

Sample size calculators allow researchers to easily determine a sample size that is sufficient for eliminating false results caused by too small of a sample (Laher, 2016). These calculators typically rely upon the researcher to input the desired significance level, effect size, and power level for the sample (Laher, 2016). Based on the total number of law enforcement officers estimated for West Tennessee, four online sample size calculators suggested a sample size of 353 survey respondents (CheckMarket, 2021; Creative Research Systems, 2012;

Qualtrics, 2020; SurveyMonkey, n.d.). These sample size calculators depended upon a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%.

A suggestion of 353 survey respondents also arrives from using the following formula:

$$Sample\ size = \frac{\frac{z^2 \times p(1-p)}{e^2}}{1 + \left(\frac{z^2 \times p(1-p)}{e^2 N}\right)}$$

In this formula, *z* equals the z-score for a 95% confidence level, or 1.96 (SurveyMonkey, n.d.). Additionally, *p* equals the standard deviation of .5, an interval typically sufficient to ensure that the sample represents the entire population (Qualtrics, 2020; SurveyMonkey, n.d.). In this example, *e* represents the margin of error or 5%, and the *N* represents the total population of law enforcement officers, or 4,300 (SurveyMonkey, n.d.). The calculations for the above formula equal 352.654, indicating a suggested sample size of 353. To account for the likelihood that a portion of the survey respondents would not complete the entire survey for various reasons, the collection goal was at least 400 completed surveys, or approximately 10% of the estimated 4,300 law enforcement officers in West Tennessee.

Instrumentation

The Human Trafficking Survey of Law Enforcement Officers in West Tennessee began with basic demographic categorizations that designate characteristics (Donnelly et al., 2019; Franklin et al., 2020; Hancock, 2019; Irwin, 2017; Kelly-Quon, 2018; Mapp et al., 2016; Mele et al., 2020; see Appendix A). Six demographic questions categorized each officer's number of years in law enforcement, their number of years at their present agency, size of agency and type of jurisdiction, gender, and hours of human trafficking training, (Franklin et al., 2020; Hancock, 2019; Mapp et al., 2016). Two additional demographic questions asked officers if they felt they

could identify human trafficking situations, and whether their agency had a formal policy or procedure for responding to human trafficking.

The survey then asked 9 true/false questions related to human trafficking generalities. Question 10 provided 16 locations where human trafficking may occur and asked officers to identify which location(s) they thought might involve human trafficking. This question listed each of the locations and instructed officers to mark all that applied to human trafficking.

Survey questions then transition to 30 Likert-scale type questions (Boeren, 2018, Donnelly et al., 2019; Franklin et al., 2020; Hancock, 2019; Irwin, 2017; Kelly-Quon, 2018; Sullivan & Artino, 2013). These questions assessed the officer's ability to identify human trafficking situations (Franklin et al., 2020; Hancock, 2019; Irwin, 2017). Three of the Likert-scale questions were reverse coded.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The present study processed statistical data using IMB SPSS Statistics 28. Analysis of the demographic data included a comparison between the amount of human trafficking training officers received and their level of confidence. Results for this comparison were the same using Pearson's r and a two-tailed paired samples t-test. To test officers' knowledge of human trafficking generalities, data analysis also included a summation of selected answers to true/false questions. Respondents selected potential locations of human trafficking from a list of 16 known trafficking locations. Data analysis summarized each location individually to ascertain officers' understanding of where human trafficking could occur.

The survey contained 30 Likert scale questions. Responses on Likert scales often cluster at extremes, leading research experts to assert that mean scores may not accurately characterize data (Sullivan & Artino, 2013). For survey research, a median score may more precisely

articulate central tendencies (Sullivan & Artino, 2013). Analysis of the 30 Likert scale questions included notation of both the mean and median scores for each question.

Donnelly et al. (2019), who conducted a similar study with emergency medical services professionals, utilized independent samples t-tests for bivariate and descriptive analyses on the Likert scale questions. The current study, however, was not aptly suited to independent samples t-tests. Officers had three selection choices for their confidence levels, and there were multiple levels of training, so t-tests were not suitable for the present study. Pearson's r yielded comparisons between Likert scale questions and both training and confidence levels. In studies that contain an adequate number of samples, Pearson's r is suitable for determining linear associations between variables (Ratelle et al., 2019; Specht, 2019; Sullivan & Artino, 2013).

Ethical Considerations

By obligation, researchers seek high ethical standards (Köhler et al., 2017). Situations of ethical consideration include protecting potentially vulnerable subjects, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity, avoiding invasions of privacy, providing informed consent, allowing feedback, and scheduling debriefing as necessary (Köhler et al., 2017; Laher, 2016). None of the officers of the sample population needed protection as potentially vulnerable subjects, yet data collection addressed all other ethical considerations.

The survey design protected confidentiality and anonymity by not obtaining any personal information or data that would specifically link the responses to an individual. Invasions of privacy did not occur because respondents completed the survey on personal electronic devices, such as a phone or laptop, with the option to complete the survey in solitude. An informed consent document provided the first page of the survey, and to further protect anonymity, this

document did not require a signature (see Appendix C). No debriefing was necessary, although respondents could contact the primary researcher with any feedback or questions.

Summary

The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine correlations between officer training and responses to human trafficking. Chapter 3 explained the research methodology, design, and rationale selected for best obtaining the study purpose. The chapter then reiterated the research questions and hypothesis, as well as the null hypothesis. A section followed that explained the data collection method of soliciting respondents for a human trafficking survey directed at the target population.

The population targeted for this study was law enforcement officers in West Tennessee. Recruitment for these officers occurred through social media and law enforcement agencies within the region. A sample population arose primarily from members of a private Facebook group for law enforcement officers in West Tennessee, and from deputies employed by the Shelby County Sheriff's Office. Ethical considerations included ensuring confidentiality and anonymity, avoiding invasions of privacy, providing informed consent, and allowing feedback.

Information obtained from survey data can inform lawmakers and law enforcement training academies regarding the effectiveness of human trafficking training. Research findings may also reveal a potential need for additional training by exposing gaps in officers' understanding of human trafficking. Chapter 4 presents statistical analyses and results from survey data, as well as a brief evaluation of the findings. This chapter also establishes the validity and reliability of the research data.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

This quantitative study attempted to answer two research questions related to human trafficking. The first question asked whether officers received state-mandated human trafficking training. Research question 2 asked how the amount of human trafficking training correlated with officers' confidence in their ability to identify human trafficking situations.

RQ 1: What percentage of law enforcement officers in West Tennessee have received more than the state-mandated two hours of human trafficking training, and to what extent?

RQ 2: How does actual officer preparedness compare with the officers' perceptions of their ability to identify human trafficking situations?

Based upon the second research question, a single hypothesis and its related null hypothesis emerged. Data analysis that rejects the null hypothesis would suggest that the schema officers have related to human trafficking may not be accurate. Further training might adjust this schema so that officers feel better prepared in human trafficking situations.

H1: There is a statistically significant difference between officers' perceptions of preparedness and their ability to identify human trafficking situations.

$H_0$1: There is no statistically significant difference between officers' perceptions of preparedness and their ability to identify human trafficking situations.

Responses to a volunteer survey of law enforcement officers in West Tennessee provided data for the study. Results from the surveys informed analyses. The survey contained basic demographic questions followed by questions designed to assess the respondent's understanding of human trafficking. This chapter begins with an explanation of the final sample size. The chapter next provides a summary of the survey's demographic questions by officer and agency

types, beginning with. A comparison of officers' training levels and confidence to recognize human trafficking is included as part of the demographics section.

Chapter 4 also reports findings from survey questions related to human trafficking. These questions asked officers about human trafficking generalities, potential human trafficking locations, and possible human trafficking indicators. The chapter then summarizes major findings from the data, assesses the research study's validity and reliability, and discusses study assumptions of normality. This chapter ends with a summary of the chapter contents.

Final Sample Size

The final number of respondents fell short of the 353 surveys required for determining a representation of the total population with a confidence level of 95%. At the end of the survey period, 270 respondents had given consent and started the survey. However, 54 of those respondents did not pass the required screening questions and were thus not allowed to complete the actual survey (see Appendix D). An additional six respondents successfully answered all screening questions but did not continue with the survey. The final result was 210 surveys (n=210). A portion of respondents did not complete the survey, opting to not answer the Likert-scale questions. These omissions placed that portion of the survey with 193-194 respondents.

Demographics

An examination of the demographics reveals a wide range of experience among the officers who responded. These officers work at agencies in rural and urban settings, from a staff of fewer than five officers to over 500 officers. Table 2 provides a summary of information related to the law enforcement officers. Table 4 summarizes the law enforcement agencies in West Tennessee where these officers work. Demographic data shows evidence of representation of all types and sizes of law enforcement agencies in West Tennessee.

Table 2

Law Enforcement Officer Demographics

Demographic	Variable	Total	Percentage
Gender (*n* = 210)	Male	181	86.2
	Female	25	11.9
	Prefer not to say	4	1.9
Years as a law enforcement officer (*n* = 210)	< 1 year	8	3.8
	1-5 years	55	26.2
	6-10 years	44	21.0
	11-15 years	40	19.0
	16-20 years	24	11.4
	> 20 years	39	18.6
Years at current law enforcement agency in West Tennessee (*n* = 210)	< 1 year	13	6.2
	1-5 years	67	31.9
	6-10 years	49	23.3
	11-15 years	31	14.8
	16-20 years	22	10.5
	> 20 years	28	13.3
Amount of human trafficking training (*n* = 210)	No training	15	7.1
	2 hours	51	24.3
	3-6 hours	44	21.0
	7-10 hours	21	10.0
	> 10 hours	45	21.4
	Unsure	34	16.2
Confident in recognizing human trafficking (*n* = 210)	Yes	114	54.3
	No	26	12.4
	Unsure	70	33.3

Note. If they answered correctly, the 15 officers who said they received no human trafficking training have violated Tennessee law.

Law Enforcement Officers

Of the 210 respondents answering the demographic questions, 3.8% had been in law enforcement for less than a year. Another 26.2% had worked 1-5 years, and 21.0% had 11-15 years of experience. Officers with 16-20 years of experience comprised 11.4% of the respondents, and officers with over 20 years of experience made up 18.6% of the total group. Most of the respondents, 86.2%, were male, and 11.9% were female.

Respondents additionally reported the amount of time served at their current agency. Thirteen officers, or 6.2%, had served less than one year. The largest category of officers, 31.9%, have been at their agencies for 1-5 years. Officers additionally reported serving at their current agencies for 6-10 years (23.3%), 11-15 years (14.8%), 16-20 years (10.5%), and over 20 years (13.3%).

Human Trafficking and Law Enforcement Officers

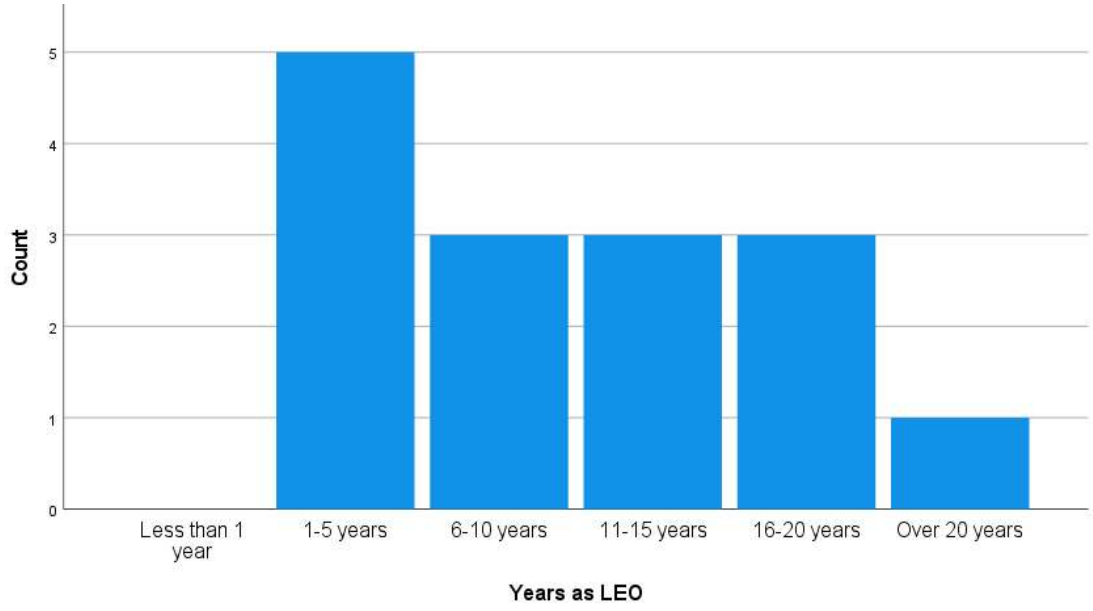
Research Question 1 asked what percentage of officers had received two hours of mandatory human trafficking training. All officers hired before July 1, 2017, were required to receive the training by that date, and all officers hired afterward are required to receive training within six months of their hire date (Tenn. Code Ann. § 38-6-114, 2015/2016/2017). The largest category of officers, 24.3%, had received only the two required hours of human trafficking training. A combined 52.4% had received greater than three hours of training, and 16.2% were unsure of their amount of training.

Fifteen respondents (7.1%) had received no human trafficking training. None of these officers were new hires, indicating that they violated the state law requiring two hours of human trafficking training. Although it remains possible that these officers had received the required two hours of training and forgot, data analysis must assume that they correctly reported their

training. Five officers had 1-5 years of experience, six had 6-15 years of experience, and four had over 15 years of experience. Three officers were at agencies with 26-50 officers, seven were at agencies with 101-500 officers, and 5 were at agencies with more than 500 officers. Figure 1 represents a comparison of officers' years as law enforcement officers as compared with the amount of human trafficking training.

Figure 1

Simple Bar Chart of Years as Law Enforcement Officer, No Human Trafficking Training



Officers assessed their level of confidence in recognizing human trafficking situations. Slightly more than half of the officers, 54.3%, felt confident in recognizing and responding to human trafficking. A third, 33.3%, felt unsure of their ability to recognize human trafficking, and 12.4% of officers indicated that they were not confident of their abilities. Figure 2 displays officer responses based on the amount of training received. As the amount of training increased, the level of confidence also increased. This information will help to inform Research Question 2, which asks how actual preparedness compares to officers' perceptions of their ability to recognize human trafficking situations.

Figure 2

Stacked Histogram Count of Training Amount by Confidence to Recognize Human Trafficking

To better ascertain respondents' confidence levels compared to training received, data analysis of the two variables included a 2-tailed paired samples t-test and a Pearson's r test. Both tests showed a correlation of -.309 with a significance level of <.001. This is a strong indicator that as the amount of training increased, confidence levels increased.

Data analysis also included a comparison between officers' years in law enforcement and their confidence to recognize human trafficking, which indicated a significant increase in confidence as experience increased. Analysis showed a significant correlation between experience and confidence. This significance resulted in a correlation of -.140 with a significance level of .043. However, confidence increases with officers' overall experience, independent of the amount of human trafficking training officers received. Comparisons between agency size and agency jurisdiction yielded no significant correlations with confidence levels. Information regarding correlations with confidence levels is displayed in Table 3.

Table 3

Correlations Between Training, Confidence, and Years in Law Enforcement

	Training Amount	Confidence	Years as LEO
Training Amount	1	-.309**	.119
		sig. < .001	sig. .086
Confidence to Recognize HT	-.309**	1	-.140*
	sig. <.001		sig. .043
Years as Law Enforcement Officer	.119	-.140*	1
	sig. .086	sig. .043	
Agency Size	.087	.054	-.127
	sig. .212	sig. .434	sig. .067
Agency Jurisdiction	-.041	.026	1
	sig. .551	sig .714	

Note. HT = human trafficking; LEO = law enforcement officer; * = correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed); ** = correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Law Enforcement Agencies

Officers reported working for agencies in rural (43.5%) and urban (56. 5%) jurisdictions almost equally. These percentages are similar to the overall estimated demographics of agencies found in Table 1. In most range categories, the number of respondents from various agency sizes compares similarly to the number of estimated officers for each category in Table 1. The exception is agencies with 101-500 officers, which represent only 8% of the total agencies yet employs 23% of respondents.

Roughly one-third of officers, 36.7%, reported that their agencies had written policy on human trafficking. Another 28.6% of officers stated that their agencies did not have human trafficking policy. The remaining respondents, 34.8%, did not know if their agencies had policies related to human trafficking. All demographic statistics on law enforcement agencies, including agency jurisdictions, agency sizes, and agency policies, are reported in Table 4.

Table 4

Law Enforcement Agency Demographics

Demographic	Variable	Total	Percentage
Agency jurisdiction (n = 209)	Rural	91	43.5
	Urban	118	56.5
Agency size (n = 209)	< 10 officers	6	2.9
	11-25 officers	12	5.7
	26-50 officers	21	10.0
	51-100 officers	16	7.7
	101-500 officers	48	23.0
	> 500 officers	106	50.7
Agency has a policy on human trafficking (n = 210)	Yes	77	36.7
	No	60	28.6
	Unsure	73	34.8

Human Trafficking Survey Data

Respondents to the human trafficking survey answered nine questions with answers *true* or *false*. These questions are related to generalities about human trafficking. Next, one question directed respondents to select locations where they thought human trafficking might occur, drawing from a listing of 16 locations. All 16 locations were potential sites for human trafficking for either sex or labor trafficking. Then, respondents ranked 30 potential human trafficking indicators on a 6-point Likert scale. Possible responses ranged from 1 = *definitely not* to 6 = *definitely yes*. Three of the Likert scale questions were reversed coded and adjusted accordingly in analysis. The generalities and locations sections of the survey garnered a sample size of n = 208. The indicator section had a lower number of respondents, n = 194.

Summaries of the data from responses in each category appear in Table 5, Table 7, and Table 9. These tables provide raw data and percentages for generalities, locations, and indicators of human trafficking. Table 6, Table 8, and Table 10 provide correlations of survey data with officers' confidence in recognizing human trafficking. A synopsis of each table accompanies the discussion in each section.

Human Trafficking Generalities

Respondents appeared to have a basic understanding of the generalities of human trafficking. Of the nine true/false questions based on general knowledge of human trafficking, seven were answered correctly by all but a few of the officers. Every officer answered correctly that human trafficking victims could be of any age. Three questions had only one incorrect response, indicating that officers knew that human trafficking victims could be of any race or nationality, that victims were not always female, and that human trafficking can happen in both cities and rural areas. Two respondents did not know that U.S. citizens could be trafficking victims, and three erroneously indicated that human trafficking was not a problem in West Tennessee. These generalities are well known by officers.

Eleven officers (5.3%) did not know that human trafficking uses force, fear, or coercion to obtain victims. The final two questions had the most incorrect responses. A total of 37 (17.8%) respondents did not know that victims do not always ask for help. On the most frequently missed question, 42 (20.3%) did not know human trafficking is not the same as smuggling. Mapp et al. (2016) found the confusion between human trafficking and smuggling to occur in part due to misconceptions developed by gathering information from social media. Table 5 reflects officers' responses to generalities about human trafficking, including the percentage of officers who correctly answered each question.

Table 5

Frequency of Responses to Human Trafficking Generalities

Question	Response	Total	Percentage
Human trafficking victims are of any age (*n* = 208)	True*	208	100.0
	False	0	0.0
U.S. citizens are not human trafficking victims (*n* = 208)	True	2	1.0
	False*	206	99.0
Human trafficking victims are of any race or nationality (*n* = 208)	True*	207	99.5
	False	1	0.5
Human trafficking victims are always female (*n* = 208)	True	1	0.5
	False*	207	99.5
Human trafficking happens only in cities, not in rural areas (*n* = 207)	True	1	0.5
	False*	206	99.5
Human trafficking uses force, fear, or coercion to obtain victims (*n* = 208)	True*	197	94.7
	False	11	5.3
Human trafficking victims are not a problem in West Tennessee (*n* = 208)	True	3	1.4
	False*	205	98.6
Human trafficking victims don't always ask for help (*n* = 208)	True*	171	82.2
	False	37	17.8
Human trafficking is the same as smuggling (*n* = 207)	True	42	20.3
	False*	165	79.7

Note. Correct answers are indicated with an asterisk (*).

Table 6 shows Pearson's r correlations between human trafficking generalities and officers' confidence levels for recognizing human trafficking. Seven of the generalities did not show a significant correlation with confidence levels. The statement that human trafficking victims do not always ask for help correlated with confidence at .158, indicating a significance of .023. A statement asking officers if human trafficking equated to smuggling correlated with confidence at -.188 with a significance of .007.

Table 6

Pearson's r Correlations of Human Trafficking Generalities

Generality	Training	Confidence
HT victims are any age (*n* = 208)	- N/S	- N/S
U.S. Citizens aren't HT victims (*n* = 208)	.008 N/S	-.022 N/S
HT victims are any race/nationality (*n* = 208)	.016 N/S	-.061 N/S
HT victims are always female (*n* = 208)	.114 N/S	-.091 N/S
HT is in cities only, not towns/rural (*n* = 207)	-.059 N/S	.061 N/S
HT uses force, fear, and coercion (*n* = 208)	-.120 N/S	.076 N/S
HT is not a problem in West Tennessee (*n* = 208)	.073 N/S	.017 N/S
HT victims don't always ask for help (*n* = 208)	-.098 N/S	.158* sig. .023
HT is the same as smuggling (*n* = 207)	.087 N/S	-.188** sig. .007

Note. HT = human trafficking; N/S = no significance; ** = correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); * = correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Human Trafficking Locations

A single question instructed officers to mark all locations that were potential sites for human trafficking. The question had 16 locations, and all 16 were locations where human trafficking could occur. Officers recognized eight of the locations with percentages greater than 90%. These locations were massage parlors (95.2%), traffic stops (94.8%), domestic disturbances (90.5%), hotels (96.7%), street corners (93.3%), spas and salons (90.5%), strip clubs (96.2%), and private residences (91.0%). These eight locations are more closely associated with sex trafficking than labor trafficking.

The remaining eight locations are more associated with labor trafficking than sex trafficking. These include farms (76.7%), medical facilities (73.3%), construction sites (72.9%), restaurants (81.4%), factories (76.7%), bars (88.6%), sales crews (69.5%), and janitorial services (72.4%). Less recognition of locations where labor trafficking may occur might indicate that officers need more training in labor trafficking. Table 7 summarizes information about locations.

Table 7

Frequency of Responses to Potential Locations for Human Trafficking

Location	Frequency	Percentage
Farms (*n* = 210)	161	76.7
Massage Parlors (*n* = 210)	200	95.2
Traffic Stops (*n* = 210)	199	94.8
Medical Facilities (*n* = 210)	154	73.3
Construction Sites (*n* = 210)	153	72.9
Domestic Disturbances (*n* = 210)	190	90.5
Hotels (*n* = 210)	203	96.7
Street Corners (*n* = 210)	196	93.3
Restaurants (*n* = 210)	171	81.4
Spas and Salons (*n* = 210)	190	90.5
Factories (*n* = 210)	161	76.7
Bars (*n* = 210)	186	88.6
Sales Crews (*n* = 210)	146	69.5
Strip Clubs (*n* = 210)	202	96.2
Private Residences (*n* = 210)	191	91.0
Janitorial Services (*n* = 210)	152	72.4

Table 8 offers a comparison of human trafficking locations by officers' level of confidence to recognize human trafficking. Overall, percentages for selected locations were higher for those who felt confident to recognize human trafficking than those who did not. Percentages of those unsure of their abilities were similar to those who expressed confidence. Although locations such as massage parlors, hotels, street corners, and strip clubs had a high percentage of selection at all confidence levels, each of these locations associates more often with sex trafficking. At all levels of confidence, officers selected locations more associated with

labor trafficking less often. Officers who did not feel confident recognizing human trafficking selected labor trafficking locations substantially less often than those who expressed confidence, particularly for construction sites and sales crews.

Table 8

Comparisons of Human Trafficking Locations by Confidence Level

Location	Confident to Recognize Human Trafficking		
	Yes (*n* = 114)	**No (*n* = 26)**	**Unsure (*n* = 70)**
Farms (n = 210)	90 (79%)	16 (62%)	55 (79%)
Massage Parlors (n = 210)	108 (95%)	24 (92%)	68 (97%)
Traffic Stops (n = 210)	108 (95%)	23 (89%)	68 (97%)
Medical Facilities (n = 210)	85 (75%)	14 (54%)	55 (79%)
Construction Sites (n = 210)	87 (76%)	13 (50%)	53 (76%)
Domestic Disturbances (n = 210)	106 (93%)	19 (73%)	65 (93%)
Hotels (n = 210)	110 (97%)	25 (96%)	68 (97%)
Street Corners (n = 210)	109 (96%)	21 (81%)	66 (94%)
Restaurants (n = 210)	96 (84%)	16 (62%)	59 (84%)
Spas and Salons (n = 210)	103 (90%)	22 (84%)	65 (93%)
Factories (n = 210)	91 (80%)	14 (54%)	56 (80%)
Bars (n = 210)	103 (90%)	18 (69%)	65 (93%)
Sales Crews (n = 210)	84 (74%)	10 (39%)	52 (74%)
Strip Clubs (n = 210)	109 (96%)	25 (96%)	68 (97%)
Private Residences (n = 210)	106 (93%)	20 (77%)	65 (93%)
Janitorial Services (n = 210)	85 (75%)	16 (62%)	51 (73%)

Human Trafficking Indicators

The study survey contained 30 Likert scale questions designed to assess officers' knowledge of potential human trafficking indicators. Three of these indicators, victims not being forced to do sex acts, not being overly timid or anxious, and not fearful of law enforcement officers, were reverse coded on the survey. Analysis for these three indicators was adjusted accordingly. Table 10 shows the mean and median of each of these 30 indicators.

Table 9 specifies the percentages of respondents' selections for each human trafficking indicator. For ease in understanding officers' Likert scale selections for indicators, the table groups like answers, combining *definitely not* with *probably not*, and *definitely yes* with *probably yes*. Table 10 additionally provides the Pearson's r correlation between each indicator and officers' confidence in recognizing human trafficking.

Each indicator was analyzed for significant correlations between the amount of human trafficking training and officers' confidence levels. Pearson's r was used for this portion of the analysis. Data analysis revealed no significant correlations between the amount of training received and the ability to identify indicators. These results suggest that respondents were capable of determining potential indicators of human trafficking and that training levels had no effect on ability. Indicators that failed to show significance are indicated by *N/S* in Table 10.

In the analysis comparing correlations between officers' confidence levels and their ability to identify human trafficking indicators, three correlations proved significant. Two indicators showed a correlation with confidence levels at the 0.05 confidence level on a 2-tailed test. The indicator of a victim carrying a large amount of cash or condoms revealed a significance of .010.

The second indicator, high-security measures at work and home, showed a significance of .039. One indicator, victims' reluctance to speak in their own defense, correlated with confidence levels at a significance level of 0.01 on a 2-tailed test. This indicator showed a significance of .008. On these three indicators showing significant correlation, officers did not feel confident enough to identify the indicators. For the remaining 27 indicators, there was no significant correlation between confidence and officers' ability to recognize indicators. Again, indicators that failed to show significance are indicated by *N/S* in Table 10.

Table 9

Percentages of Likert Scale Responses for Human Trafficking Indicators

Indicator	Definitely Not/ Probably Not	Unsure	Definitely Yes/ Probably Yes
Unstable living environment (*n* = 194)	3.1%	16.5%	80.4%
Cannot leave job/home (*n* = 194)	6.2%	12.4%	81.4%
Doesn't control ID (*n* = 194)	1.5%	3.1%	95.4%
Has tattoos or brands (*n* = 193) *	4.1%	11.4%	84.4%
Few/no belongings (*n* = 194)	6.7%	24.2%	69.1%
Not forced to do sex acts (*n* = 193) *	13.4%	0.0%	86.5%
Underage 18 sex work (*n* = 193)	1.6%	4.1%	94.3%
Not properly dressed (*n* = 193)	8.3%	42.5%	49.2%
Lots of cash/condoms (*n* = 192)	4.7%	23.4%	71.9%
Someone speaks for them (*n* = 193) *	4.7%	24.4%	71.0%
Scripted/coached answers (*n* = 194) *	1.0%	10.8%	88.1%
Not overly timid/anxious (*n* = 194)	36.6%	43.8%	19.6%
Doesn't know destination (*n* = 194)	2.1%	21.1%	76.8%
Doesn't know their address (*n* = 193) *	3.6%	29.5%	66.8%
Won't give name/birthdate (*n* = 194) *	12.3%	44.8%	42.8%
Doesn't know state/city (*n* = 194)	2.1%	15.5%	82.4%
Signs of abuse (*n* = 194)	2.1%	14.4%	83.5%
Signs of confinement/torture (*n* = 194)	0.5%	3.6%	95.9%
No contact with friends/family (*n* = 194)	0.5%	5.2%	94.3%
Under 18 without family (*n* = 193)	3.1%	22.8%	74.1%
Older person/boyfriend near (*n* = 194)	2.1%	18.0%	79.9%
Deprived of basic needs (*n* = 193)	2.1%	18.1%	79.8%
Inconsistencies in statement (*n* = 194)	4.6%	30.4%	65.0%
Employer threats (*n* = 194)	4.1%	17.0%	78.9%
High security at work/home (*n* = 194)	8.2%	26.3%	65.5%
Reluctant to defend self (*n* = 193) *	3.6%	26.9%	69.4%
Unusual work conditions (*n* = 194)	7.7%	42.3%	50.0%
Not anxious/fearful of officers (*n* = 194)	51.5%	28.9%	19.6%
Sex worker has pimp/manager (*n* = 194) *	1.0%	7.7%	91.2%
No control over finances (*n* = 193) *	1.6%	17.1%	81.4%

Note. * = percentages do not total 100% due to rounding.

Table 10

Mean, Median, and Pearson's r Correlations of Human Trafficking Indicators

Indicator	Mean	Median	Training	Confidence
Unstable living environment (*n* = 194)	3.9433	4.0000	.077 N/S	-.069 N/S
Cannot leave job/home (*n* = 194)	4.0309	4.0000	.030 N/S	-.068 N/S
Doesn't control ID (*n* = 194)	4.4897	5.0000	.028 N/S	.044 N/S
Has tattoos or brands (*n* = 193)	4.1865	4.0000	-.049 N/S	.085 N/S
Few/no belongings (*n* = 194)	3.7474	4.0000	.057 N/S	.016 N/S
Not forced to do sex acts (*n* = 193)	2.9689	3.0000	.070 N/S	-.122 N/S
Under age 18 sex work (*n* = 193)	4.4404	5.0000	-.070 N/S	-.083 N/S
Not properly dressed (*n* = 193)	3.4974	3.0000	-.055 N/S	-.037 N/S
Lots of cash/condoms (*n* = 192)	3.8906	4.0000	.022 N/S	-.185* sig. .010
Someone speaks for them (*n* = 193)	3.8394	4.0000	-.018 N/S	-.043 N/S
Scripted/coached answers (*n* = 194)	4.1031	4.0000	.039 N/S	-.080 N/S
Not overly timid/anxious (*n* = 194)	3.1443	3.0000	.034 N/S	.062 N/S
Doesn't know destination (*n* = 194)	3.9227	4.0000	-.020 N/S	-.044 N/S
Doesn't know their address (*n* = 193)	3.7720	4.0000	-.045 N/S	-.040 N/S
Won't give name/birthdate (*n* = 194)	3.3866	3.0000	.051 N/S	-.036 N/S
Doesn't know state/city (*n* = 194)	3.9845	4.0000	.024 N/S	.012 N/S
Signs of abuse (*n* = 194)	4.0825	4.0000	-.034 N/S	-.044 N/S
Signs of confinement/torture (*n* = 194)	4.4227	4.0000	-.104 N/S	.021 N/S
No contact with friends/family (*n* = 194)	4.3041	4.0000	-.002 N/S	-.028 N/S
Under 18 without family (*n* = 193)	3.8653	4.0000	-.032 N/S	-.005 N/S
Older person/boyfriend near (*n* = 194)	3.9691	4.0000	.002 N/S	-.096 N/S
Deprived of basic needs (*n* = 193)	4.0104	4.0000	-.038 N/S	-.061 N/S
Inconsistencies in statement (*n* = 194)	3.7010	4.0000	.068 N/S	-.031 N/S
Employer threats (*n* = 194)	4.0103	4.0000	-.001 N/S	-.112 N/S
High security at work/home (*n* = 194)	3.7474	4.0000	.021 N/S	-.148* sig. .039
Reluctant to defend self (*n* = 193)	3.7565	4.0000	.086 N/S	-.190** sig. .008
Unusual work conditions (*n* = 194)	3.5000	3.5000	.074 N/S	-.085 N/S
Not anxious/fearful of officers (*n* = 194)	3.3093	4.0000	.095 N/S	-.018 N/S
Sex worker has pimp/manager (*n* = 194)	4.3711	4.0000	.073 N/S	-.060 N/S
No control over finances (*n* = 193)	4.0466	4.0000	.051 N/S	-.066 N/S

Note. N/S = no significance; ** = correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed);

* = correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Summary of Major Findings

The primary purpose of this study is to identify how the perceptions of law enforcement officers in West Tennessee compare to their actual preparedness to recognize human trafficking situations. This study searched the survey data for the truth about law enforcement officers and human trafficking. It is imperative to stand for truth and not oppose it (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation,* 2007, 2 Corinthians 13:8).

An analysis of the data revealed several major findings relevant to the study. Major findings will inform answers to the research questions and help determine the acceptance or rejection of the null hypothesis. A summary of these findings follows. Chapter 5 will include a detailed discussion of the major findings.

Basic Demographics

Survey questions detailing the basic demographics of respondents and their law enforcement agencies revealed one major finding. Roughly one-third (34.8%) of officers were unsure if their agency had a formal policy or procedure for responding to human trafficking. Just under one-third (28.6%) of respondents stated that their agency had no formal human trafficking policy or procedures.

Officer Training and Confidence

Although Tennessee requires two hours of mandatory human trafficking training for all law enforcement officers, 15 (7.1%) had received no training. These officers were neither new hires nor officers from smaller agencies that might argue a lack of funding or availability of human trafficking training. These officers are in direct violation of state law mandating human trafficking training. These findings relate directly to research question 1, as the discussion on major findings in chapter 5 will reveal.

Data analysis revealed a strongly significant correlation between the amount of human trafficking training received and officers' confidence levels in recognizing human trafficking. As the amount of training increased, confidence levels also increased. The correlation between officer training and officer perceptions relates to research question 2 and the stated hypothesis and null hypothesis. A discussion of this relationship is in chapter 5.

Officer Preparedness

Identified levels of officer preparedness also relate to research question 2 and the stated hypothesis and null hypothesis. Overall, officers recognize generalized statements about human trafficking. Only a few officers (5.3%) did not identify the key components defining human trafficking, which are force, fear, and coercion. Approximately one in five officers did not correctly differentiate between human trafficking and smuggling and were not aware that human trafficking victims may not always ask for help.

Of the 16 locations officers were asked to identify on the survey, half identified more closely with sex trafficking while the other half associated more with labor trafficking. Officers were more aware of locations associated with sex trafficking, with 9 out of 10 officers marking the appropriate locations as potential locations for human trafficking to occur. Only 6-8 officers correctly identified the locations that held a larger association with labor trafficking.

Overall, officers correctly assessed indicators of human trafficking. None of the responses for these indicators were significantly linked to the amount of human trafficking training received. Three of the 30 indicators had a significant correlation with officers' confidence levels, indicating that officers with more confidence were better able to correctly identify the indicator. All major findings related to officer preparedness are discussed in chapter 5.

Validity and Reliability

In survey research, modifying and employing previously-used questions from validated surveys will strengthen the validity and reliability of the study (Boeren, 2018; Kelly-Quon, 2018). Previous surveys from similar research formed the foundation of the present study and guided survey questions (Donnelly et al., 2019; Franklin et al., 2020; Irwin, 2017; Mapp et al., 2016). This use of validated surveys strengthened the present study.

The use of pilot surveys strengthens validity, improves reliability, and allows researchers to identify and remedy problem questions (Boeren, 2018). In-depth pretesting evaluates the survey's understandability and objectivity (Kelly-Quon, 2018). A test group similar to the sample population completed a pilot survey before respondent recruitment (Donnelly et al., 2019). Following the pilot study, adjustments to survey content helped to remedy identified issues (Donnelly et al., 2019). After revisions, recruitment began and the larger sample population received access to the survey link.

External validity refers to the extent that which observations of the specific population within the study are applicable, or generalized, to other similar populations (Westreich et al., 2019). Generalized study results indicate that the sample population is a proper subset of a target population (Westreich et al., 2019). Although the total number of survey respondents (n = 210, 194) did not reflect the desired goal of 353 usable surveys, the sample size still exceeded the ideal sample size of 181 for a 90% confidence level with a 6% margin of error, thus ensuring sufficient statistical power.

Assumptions of Normality

Researchers desire normality in their samples so that results are better generalized to the target population (Laher, 2016). Normality is especially important when using parametric tests

such as t-tests and Pearson's r, to avoid a Type II error of accepting the null hypothesis when it should be rejected (Cohen, 1992; Laher, 2016; Sullivan, 2013). The Central Limit Theorem anticipates that variables are normally distributed across the population if the sample size is greater than 30 (Laher, 2016). The sample size for the present study is significantly greater than 30, indicating the likelihood of a normal distribution. Due to adequate sample size, skewness and kurtosis were not evaluated.

Additionally, a comparison of basic demographics of the total population with the sample population may demonstrate normality (Laher, 2016). Survey demographics for agency size and jurisdiction indicate that the sample population is similar to the total population. The overall population demographics for the amount of human trafficking training and years of experience is unknown, and therefore cannot be normalized.

Summary

The purpose of this quantitative survey study was to assess the ability of law enforcement officers in West Tennessee to recognize human trafficking, their confidence in their abilities, and the amount of human trafficking training received. This study analyzed data from voluntarily completed surveys within the target population of full-time, commissioned law enforcement officers in West Tennessee. Two research questions, along with a single hypothesis and its corresponding null hypothesis, guided the examination of data. The knowledge and understanding to interpret the data came from the Lord, for He alone grants wisdom (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation,* 2007, Proverbs 2:6).

This chapter explained the final sample size for the study and evaluated the resulting demographics. Basic demographics included information about the officers responding to the survey and their law enforcement agencies. The chapter then explained the results of the survey

data analysis. These findings included a summation of survey responses for human trafficking generalizations, possible locations, and potential indicators.

The chapter summarized major findings within the data. Major findings in demographics included the lack of training for a small percentage of officers, as well as a deficit of human trafficking policy at West Tennessee law enforcement agencies. Additionally, survey findings indicated that officers were knowledgeable of human trafficking and answered questions correctly. However, a significant finding is that despite accurate responses to survey questions, nearly half of officers lack confidence in their ability to recognize human trafficking situations.

One in eight officers indicated they were not at all confident in their abilities, and a third of all officers were unsure of their abilities. The amount of confidence grew as the level of training increased. A discussion of this significant finding appears in chapter 5, along with an explanation of the importance of schema theory in building officers' confidence.

Closing out chapter 4 were assessments of the study's validity and reliability, as well as assumptions of normality. The findings from this chapter provided the platform that supports discussion and recommendations in chapter 5. This final chapter will review the research problem and purpose and will discuss the study's research questions and the corresponding hypothesis. The chapter will summarize additional major findings from data analysis and report survey feedback from respondents before discussing generalizations to the greater population and suggesting potential implications for law enforcement officers. Before summarizing conclusions, the chapter will apply schema theory to study findings and make recommendations for law enforcement and further research.

CHAPTER FIVE: IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

Overview

Human trafficking exists in Tennessee (Polaris, 2020b). In 2019, the National Human Trafficking Hotline reported 372 contacts from Tennessee, resulting in 180 trafficking cases representing 337 trafficking victims (Polaris, 2020b). Law enforcement officers hold positions of authority and thus bear the responsibility of bringing justice to those under oppression (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation*, 2007, Psalm 10:18). It becomes the responsibility of law enforcement officers in West Tennessee to serve and protect human trafficking victims from oppression by their traffickers.

This quantitative study sought to determine correlations between human trafficking training and law enforcement officers' ability to identify human trafficking situations. The study analyzed data obtained from surveys taken by full-time, commissioned law enforcement officers in West Tennessee. Data analysis included tests to ascertain whether officers knew information about human trafficking, how much training officers had received, and whether officers felt confident in recognizing human trafficking.

Review of Research Problem and Purpose

Multiple studies suggest the importance of human trafficking training for law enforcement officers (Bracy et al., 2021; Farrell et al., 2008; Farrell et al., 2019a; Farrell et al., 2020; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Hancock, 2019; Matos et al., 2018; Niemi & Aaltonen, 2017; Renzetti, 2015; Villacampa & Torres, 2017; Wilson & Dalton, 2008). However, research studies which examined the relationship between law enforcement training and responses to human trafficking are outdated and may not accurately represent the position of officers in West Tennessee (Farrell et al., 2010; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Irwin, 2017; Mapp et al., 2016; Renzetti

et al., 2015). Since Tennessee requires two hours of human trafficking training, this study sought to determine whether two hours is sufficient for officers to feel prepared to recognize human trafficking (Tenn. Code Ann. §38-6-114, 2015/2016/2017). For officers to respond appropriately in trafficking situations, they must first feel confident in their ability to recognize situations where trafficking occurs.

Villacampa and Torres (2017) determined that a majority of law enforcement officers did not feel that their training prepared them for handling human trafficking situations. Their study gathered data from law enforcement officers in Europe, and this study sought to determine if similar results surfaced with American officers (Villacampa & Torres, 2017). A gap in the literature shows a deficit of studies questioning the amount of training sufficient to provide officers with the skills and confidence necessary to recognize human trafficking.

The purpose of the present study was twofold. First, the study sought to discover the extent of human trafficking training received by law enforcement officers in West Tennessee. By answering this question, the study also ascertained whether West Tennessee officers are compliant with the state-mandated training. Second, the study asked how actual officer preparedness compared with the officers' perceptions of their abilities. Two research questions, thus, guided the current study.

RQ 1: What percentage of law enforcement officers in West Tennessee have received more than the state-mandated two hours of human trafficking training, and to what extent?

RQ 2: How does actual officer preparedness compare with the officers' perceptions of their ability to identify human trafficking situations?

Additionally, from research question two a hypothesis and its null hypothesis arose. This hypothesis anticipated that law enforcement officers' perceptions of their preparedness to

identify human trafficking correlate negatively with their abilities and knowledge. This negative correlation would suggest evidence to reject the null hypothesis.

H1: There is a statistically significant difference between officers' perceptions of preparedness and their ability to identify human trafficking situations.

$H_0$1: There is no statistically significant difference between officers' perceptions of preparedness and their ability to identify human trafficking situations.

Discussion of Research Questions and Hypothesis

The primary findings in this study correspond to the two research questions, as well as to the hypothesis and its related null hypothesis. These research questions, hypothesis, and null hypothesis established the direction for the survey and served as a starting point for analysis. A discussion of major findings, therefore, must begin with a discussion of the research questions and hypothesis. Clear answers emerged for each of the two research questions, and survey evidence supported the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Findings from this study can inform human trafficking training for law enforcement officers, particularly in West Tennessee. By applying answers to the proposed research questions, entities that provide law enforcement training may adjust materials to better prepare officers. Such training entities, such as agency training academy staff, may determine that officers would benefit from additional training. The research questions, as well as the hypothesis and its corresponding null hypothesis, guided the present study. A clear answer for each question emerged in the survey data, and evidence indicated a rejection of the null hypothesis.

Research Question 1

RQ 1: What percentage of law enforcement officers in West Tennessee have received more than the state-mandated two hours of human trafficking training, and to what extent?

Survey data indicated that 76.7% of officers had at least the minimum amount of human trafficking training required by Tennessee state law (Tenn. Code Ann. §38-6-114, 2015/2016/2017). An additional 16.2% were unsure of the amount of training they had received, although the assumption is that they have received some amount of training because they had an option to select no training. These numbers indicate that the vast majority of survey law enforcement officers, or 92.9%, were trained to some extent. Roughly a quarter (24.3%) had received only the mandatory two hours of human trafficking training. Another 21.0% logged 3 to 6 hours of training. Ten percent of officers had received 7 to 10 hours of training, and 21.4% had greater than 10 hours of human trafficking training.

The remaining 15 law enforcement officers, 7.1% of respondents, stand in violation of state law that required all law enforcement officers to receive two hours of training before July 1, 2017, or within 6 months of hire if hired after July 1, 2017 (Tenn. Code Ann. § 38-6-114, 2015/2016/2017). None of the 15 officers indicated that they had been a commissioned officer less than a year, nor had any been at their current agency for less than a year. Five of the officers with no training had been in law enforcement, and at their current agency, for 1 to 5 years. Three officers had served in law enforcement for 6 to 10 years, three had served for 11 to 15 years, and three for 16 to 20 years. One officer claimed a career of over 20 years in law enforcement.

Three of the 15 respondents without human trafficking training indicated they worked at agencies with 26 to 50 officers. The remaining officers are employed at agencies with over 100 officers, which designates 12 of the officers with no training at one of only four agencies with that many officers. Since 154 of the 210 survey respondents work for these large agencies, and only 12 officers stated they had not had human trafficking training, one explanation is that these officers somehow missed departmental training and never made up the hours.

All but one of the 15 officers without training indicated that they were either unsure or not confident in their ability to recognize human trafficking situations. Six officers said they were not confident, and eight were unsure. Only one officer indicated confidence in identifying human trafficking. Although the identity of this officer is unknown, his survey answers reveal that he was unsure about 12 of the 30 human trafficking indicators. In this instance, his ability to recognize human trafficking may not have matched his confidence level, which may indicate his need for human trafficking training.

Research Question 2

RQ 2: How does actual officer preparedness compare with the officers' perceptions of their ability to identify human trafficking situations?

An assessment of what officers know about human trafficking was key to answering research question 2. Survey questions assessed respondents' knowledge of human trafficking generalities, locations, and possible scenarios. This information was then compared against the officers' perceptions of their ability, as based on their confidence to identify human trafficking.

Officers' Ability to Recognize Human Trafficking

Survey respondents answered questions about various elements of human trafficking. The survey began with elements related to human trafficking generalities such as who might become a trafficking victim and what constituted human trafficking. Next on the survey, officers selected locations where they thought human trafficking might occur, based on a list of 16 locations known for sex and labor trafficking. Thirty Likert scale questions then allowed officers to rate the probability of human trafficking occurring in various scenarios.

Overall, survey respondents were aware of the correct answers to the nine true/false questions related to human trafficking generalities. All officers correctly answered that human

trafficking victims could be of any age. An additional six generality questions yielded correct answers from 94.7% of officers or higher. A larger number of officers (17.8%) did not know that trafficking victims do not always ask for help, and 20.3% erroneously equated human trafficking with smuggling. Table 5 gives a summary of responses to the questions related to human trafficking generalities.

For the question regarding potential human trafficking locations, officers indicated which of 16 locations where they felt human trafficking might occur and victims may be found. Hotels, strip clubs, and massage parlors, three locations that more readily equate to sex trafficking received the highest number of marks. Construction sites, janitorial services, and sales crews, three locations more readily associated with labor trafficking, received the fewest marks. However, none of the locations scored lower than 69.5%, indicating that the majority of the officers understood locations where human trafficking might occur. Table 7 summarizes correct responses for potential human trafficking locations.

The last part of the survey asked officers to rate 30 potential human trafficking indicators on a Likert scale of *1 = definitely not* to *6 = definitely yes*. Five of the indicators received at least 90% correct answers. An additional eight indicators received at least 80% correct answers. At least 70% of officers correctly selected another seven indicators. The remaining 10 indicators received correct answers from less than 70% of respondents. Two of these indicators with low scores were reverse coded, which may have impacted a portion of the incorrect responses. Table 9 summarizes answer choices for the 30 trafficking indicators.

Although the scores for some of the trafficking indicators were fairly low, overall officers seemed knowledgeable of the generalities, locations, and indicators associated with human trafficking. No significant correlations emerged between training levels and officers' ability to

recognize human trafficking. Survey questions did not establish more than a basic understanding of human trafficking information that might appear within a mandated 2-hour class, however. On a longer survey with more advanced material, significant correlations between training levels and responses might surface.

Officers' Confidence in Recognizing Human Trafficking

Despite an apparent basic understanding of human trafficking and no significant correlations between training amounts and officers' ability to recognize trafficking, significant correlations emerged between officers' confidence in their ability to recognize human trafficking and their actual ability. These relationships inform research question two and indicate that officers have a skewed perception of their abilities to recognize human trafficking as compared to their actual ability. Data analysis of officers' responses to survey questions indicated significant correlations within all categories.

Two of the nine human trafficking generalities showed a significant correlation with confidence levels. Three of the 30 human trafficking indicators also showed a significant correlation with officers' confidence in their ability. Although the design of the question regarding possible human trafficking locations did not allow for correlation tests such as t-tests and Pearson's r, an analysis of the percentages of correct answers indicates the possibility of correlations for some locations. Respondents selected locations more closely related to labor trafficking less often when they did not feel confident as compared to officers who indicated confidence. Additional information about these correlations between confidence and the recognition of human trafficking appears in Table 6, Table 8, and Table 10.

Data analysis additionally revealed an overall correlation of -.309 between training and confidence. This correlation, significant at <.001 on a 2-tailed test, indicates a direct link

between the hours of training officers receive and the amount of confidence they feel in their abilities to recognize human trafficking. A secondary correlation of -.140 emerged between confidence levels and years as a law enforcement officer. Significant at .043 on a 2-tailed test, this finding suggests that overall experience may also improve officers' confidence. Table 3 displays information about these correlations.

The situation of the one officer without training who felt confident to recognize human trafficking situations was unique. Overall, survey data revealed the opposite. Of the 210 survey respondents, 114 (54.3%) reported they were confident in recognizing human trafficking. Another 70 (33.3%) indicated they were unsure of their ability to recognize human trafficking, and 26 respondents (12.4%) said they were not confident in recognizing human trafficking. It is important to note that to preserve clarity, survey respondents were only asked about their confidence to recognize human trafficking situations. The assumption is that officers who do not feel confident in recognizing human trafficking would also indicate a lack of confidence in responding to those situations.

Officers indicated an increase in confidence as the amount of human trafficking training increased. As stated previously, officers with no training overwhelming stated that they were either not confident or were unsure of their ability to recognize human trafficking. Of the 51 officers who received two hours of training, only 17 (33.3%) expressed confidence in recognizing human trafficking. At 3 to 6 hours of training, the percentage of confident officers rose to 50%, with 22 of 44 officers expressing confidence. For officers with 7 to 10 hours of human trafficking training, 16 out of 21 (76.2%) were confident. When training increased over 10 hours of training, 39 out of 45 officers (86.7%) stated they felt confident to recognize human trafficking.

Confidence is essential. Officers should not throw away their confidence because it carries great reward (*New American Standard Bible,* 1995, Hebrews 10:35). When officers had greater amounts of human trafficking training, they felt more confident to recognize human trafficking. This supports previous findings that training boosts confidence, particularly related to recognizing human trafficking (Gibbons and Stoklosa, 2016).

Hypothesis and Null Hypothesis

H1: There is a statistically significant difference between officers' perceptions of preparedness and their ability to identify human trafficking situations.

$H_0$1: There is no statistically significant difference between officers' perceptions of preparedness and their ability to identify human trafficking situations.

Survey data and instances of statistical significance presented in Table 3, Table 6, Table 8, and Table 10 indicate a difference between officers' preparedness and their perceptions of that preparedness. At least two responses in the generalities section and three in the indicators section reveal significant correlations between officers' ability to correctly identify human trafficking and their confidence in doing so. The locations section also points to differences between confidence and ability. For these reasons, this study rejects the null hypothesis and accepts the hypothesis.

Discussion of Additional Major Findings

In addition to the major findings associated with the study's two research questions and the hypothesis, three topics deserve mention. The first finding is that not all of the officers had completed the state-mandated two hours of human trafficking training as anticipated. A second finding is the seeming lack of human trafficking policy in law enforcement agencies. Third, the

discovery of a significant correlation between officers' confidence and the amount of human trafficking training received merits discussion.

Law Enforcement Officers Not Completing State-Mandated Training

Every law enforcement officer in Tennessee with over six months of law enforcement employment should have completed a minimum of two hours of human trafficking training as mandated by state law (Tenn. Code Ann. §38-6-114, 2015/2016/2017). Fifteen officers, representing 7.1% of survey respondents, indicated that they had not received any trafficking related to human trafficking. None of these lacking officers designated themselves as newly commissioned. All officers indicated at least one year of experience, and one officer had a law enforcement career spanning more than two decades.

This survey finding merits attention because officers who have not received training have violated state law. Additionally, these 15 survey respondents lacking training translates into 1 of every 14 officers without any human trafficking training. For the entire sample population of law enforcement officers in West Tennessee, 7.1% equates to over 300 officers. The vast majority of law enforcement agencies in West Tennessee employ fewer than 50 officers, and a quarter of the agencies have five or fewer officers. If over 300 officers do not have required training, this could equate to entire jurisdictions having no officers trained to even recognize human trafficking, much less respond to trafficking situations.

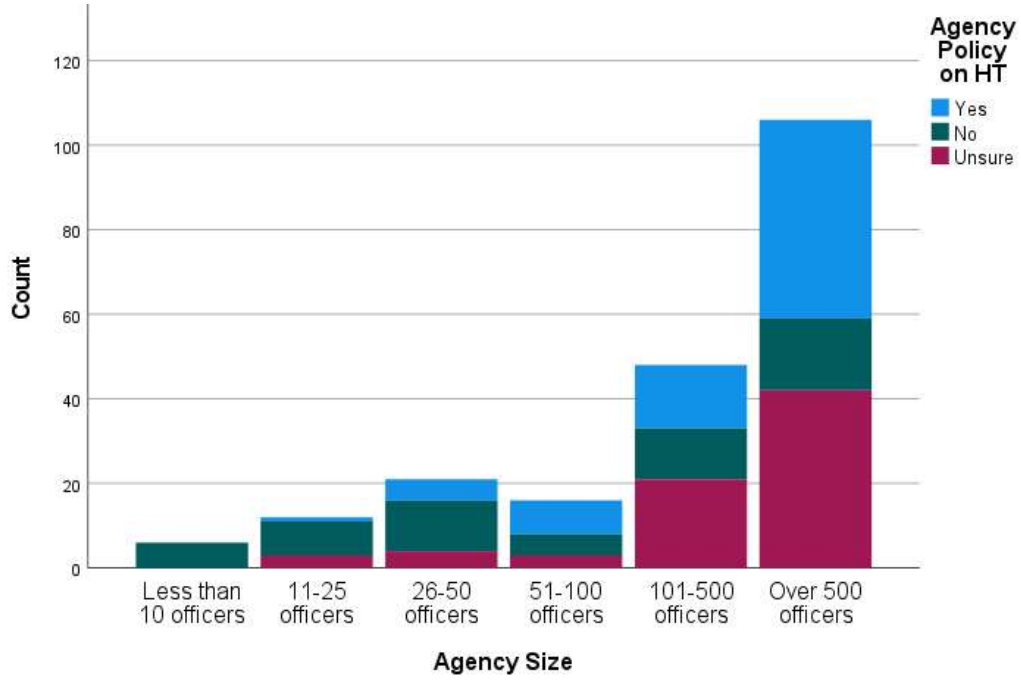
Law Enforcement Agency Policy on Human Trafficking

The seeming lack of law enforcement agency policy on human trafficking is another noteworthy finding revealed during data analysis. Only 36.7% of officers responded that they were aware of a formal policy or procedure at their agency about responding to human trafficking. Another 34.8% of respondents indicated that they were unsure of any existing policy

at their agency. The remainder of officers, 28.6%, reported that their agency did not have any sort of standardized policy or procedure related to human trafficking. Table 4 summarizes these statistics. Figure 3 compares respondents' answers by agency size.

Figure 3

Stacked Bar Count of Agency Size by Agency Policy on Human Trafficking



Law enforcement agencies need policies and procedures in place to effectively combat human trafficking. Agencies should follow Biblical advice and consult experts in human trafficking, then prepare plans for how officers should approach the war on trafficking (*New American Standard Bible,* 1995, Proverbs 20:18). When officers do not have a clear policy in place to guide their actions, they may not consistently recognize or respond to human trafficking situations despite extensive knowledge about human trafficking (Irwin, 2017).

Without an established policy on how to handle human trafficking, officers may fail to act when they suspect trafficking incidents (Irwin, 2017). Officers who devise personal plans for how to combat human trafficking will find that their plans go wrong due to a lack of advice

(*Holy Bible, New Living Translation,* 2007, Proverbs 15:22). Providing clear policy also assists officers by informing their development of human trafficking schemata and guiding investigative protocol (Farrell et al., 2015; Irwin, 2017; Renzetti et al., 2015).

Agencies with a formal policy regarding human trafficking are far more likely to report conducting human trafficking investigations than agencies without a set policy (Jurek & King, 2020; Renzetti et al., 2015). Law enforcement agencies in West Tennessee without existing human trafficking policies should put policy into place for the sake of their officers and those who are victims of human trafficking. These agencies would benefit from consulting other agencies for advice before establishing such a policy.

Officer Training and Confidence

Research question 2 sought to determine if officer confidence correlated with their ability to recognize human trafficking. During the process of analysis, a significant correlation emerged between the hours of training officers had received and their confidence levels. Data indicates that as officers' training levels increased, their confidence to recognize human trafficking also increased. Figure 2 and Table 3 demonstrate this correlation.

Evidence of this type of correlation exists in studies examining human trafficking and healthcare personnel. In a study about raising human trafficking awareness, Awerbuch et al. (2020) argued that a better understanding of human trafficking topics empowered physicians to identify and assist trafficking victims with greater confidence. Gibbons and Stoklosa (2016) determined that although basic training boosted doctors' confidence in identifying human trafficking victims, there remained a need for additional training before doctors confidently understood how to respond after they identified a victim. The significant correlation between

training and confidence demonstrated in this study suggests the importance of greater than two hours of mandated human trafficking training.

Survey Feedback

Three deputies from the Shelby County Sheriff's Office voluntarily provided feedback after taking the survey online. Each officer approached the primary researcher in person and instigated conversation. Individual themes arose from each officer's comments. A summarization of each conversation follows.

The first officer was a deputy assigned to the training academy who has completed more than 10 hours of human trafficking training. Despite this extensive training, he indicated that he did not feel like he knew all that he needed to know to successfully relay the information to officers attending the training academy. He stated that his training in human trafficking allowed him to know many of the correct answers on the survey, but that he still learned more information about human trafficking from merely completing the survey. This deputy indicated that he felt the overall survey responses would expose a need for more training for all officers.

Another deputy assigned to patrol felt a need to apologize after taking the survey because he did not recognize many of the correct answers. He indicated a need to guess at survey answers based on his limited knowledge. This officer further stated that he had learned most of what he knew about human trafficking from social media and other media outlets. Based on the questions he saw on the survey, he expressed concern that the media sources he encountered did not always have the best information about human trafficking. He also suggested that he knew far more about sex trafficking than labor trafficking. His statements aligned with studies discussed in the literature review regarding media influence over officers without adequate training (Litam

& Lam, 2021; Mapp et al., 2016; Preble et al., 2020; Szablewska & Kubacki, 2018; Twis & Praetorius, 2021).

The last officer was a deputy recently assigned to patrol from the gang unit. He indicated a lack of knowledge regarding portions of the survey and asked the primary researcher if there could be a way to set up additional training through the agency's training academy. This deputy stated that while he felt that all officers needed additional human trafficking training, officers assigned to the gang unit especially needed relevant training due to their frequent exposure to trafficking situations.

According to this officer, he could recall multiple incidents of human trafficking during his time in the gang unit that none of the involved deputies recognized at the time. He expressed concern that these victims did not receive help from the officers they encountered. Since the gang unit represents officers from multiple agencies, this deputy suggested an all-day or multiple-day training seminar available to officers from every agency in the county. He begged the primary researcher to use data gathered from the study survey as an argument to schedule training as quickly as possible.

Generalization to Greater Population

The sample population of law enforcement officers surveyed in the present study was part of a larger population of officers commissioned by 92 identified law enforcement agencies in West Tennessee. A comparison of survey demographics indicated that the sample population was indicative of the total population. Data collection efforts did not achieve the desired 353 surveys necessary to achieve a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5% for this sample population. However, external validity is sufficient to indicate that survey data generalize

to the entire population of West Tennessee law enforcement officers at a minimum 90% confidence level and 6% margin of error.

To achieve this level of statistical power, the study necessitated at least 181 surveys, and data collection exceeded this adjusted goal. The total number of valid surveys was 210, and 194 officers completed the entire survey. The findings from this study most likely generalize to the entire population of officers in West Tennessee. Similar surveys from officers within this population should fall within similar answer ranges 90% of the time with a 6% margin of error.

A study conducted entirely within one state, such as Tennessee, tends to hold sufficient external validation to generalize to the entire state due to similarities within state boundaries (Westreich et al., 2019). In this case, an argument exists for generalizing study findings to encompass all law enforcement officers in Tennessee. An additional argument for generalization across the state is an indication of normality due to a sufficient sample size (Cohen, 1992; Laher, 2016; Sullivan, 2013).

Application of Theory

Schema theory suggests that individuals utilize learned schemata, or conceptual frameworks, to interpret new experiences according to internal frames of reference formed from previous events and knowledge (Farrell et al., 2015; Goodson et al., 2020; Lurigio & Carroll, 1985; Robinson, 2000; Stalans & Finn, 1995; Stalans & Lurigio, 1990; Venema, 2016). For law enforcement officers, schema theory proposes that learned schemata influence officer discretion, including how officers understand and respond to new situations (Goodson et al, 2020; Lurigio & Carroll, 1985; Robinson, 2000; Stalans & Finn, 1995; Stalans & Lurigio, 1990; Robinson, 2000; Venema, 2016).

When officers do not have a fully-developed schema for human trafficking, their natural tendency will be to draw upon other schemata such as those developed to address sex and drug crimes (Farrell et al., 2015). This tendency may explain why officers scored higher for survey questions related to sex trafficking and not for labor trafficking. These officers likely have limited knowledge or experience of labor crimes. Unless officers build new schemata to alleviate the ambiguity surrounding human trafficking, they will continue to adhere to incorrect schemata and previously established schemata (Irwin, 2017).

A known connection exists between schemata and officer training (Goodson et al., 2020; Lurigio & Carroll, 1985; Robinson, 2020). Lurigio and Carroll (1985) determined that previously developed schemata influenced parole officers in their response to and treatment of their probationers. These schemata improved with experience, yet inaccurate information within a schema would not improve without a deliberate attempt to replace erroneous content (Lurigio & Carroll, 1985). Officers need this deliberate attempt afforded by training to build better schemata to recognize and then respond to, human trafficking situations.

Implications for Law Enforcement Officers

Two implications arise for law enforcement officers based on survey findings. The first implication is the need for better accountability of agencies in ensuring that their officers receive state-mandated human trafficking training. One suggestion for improving accountability is a training registration database where agencies can enter training information for each officer. Tennessee's Peace Officer Standards and Training Commission (POST) could maintain this database similar to how they regulate other law enforcement training. Another agency that might maintain a training database is the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) which coordinates a state-wide human trafficking task force.

The second implication of survey findings is the need for more human trafficking training. Data showed that officers knew the basics of recognizing human trafficking but did not feel confident in their abilities. Officers need additional training that prepares them for responding to human trafficking situations. Unless officers are confident in recognizing human trafficking, they may choose to ignore human trafficking. Additionally, simple recognition of trafficking generalities, locations, and indicators is not enough to eradicate human trafficking (Bjelland, 2017).

Few studies have sought to determine a connection between subject-specific training and officers' responses (Venema, 2016). Past studies researching the impact of specialized sexual assault training, for example, presented a wide range of results (Venema, 2016). Evidence exists in other occupations such as medicine, however, to suggest that human trafficking training will improve confidence levels (Donahue et al., 2019; Gibbons & Stoklosa, 2016). Emergency department staff greatly benefitted from human trafficking training, as did emergency medical service personnel (Donahue et al., 2019; Donnelly et al., 2019). Donahue et al. (2019) found that after extensive human trafficking training, the emergency department staff nearly doubled their confidence in identifying trafficking victims. Confidence in assisting and treating trafficking victims doubled (Donahue et al., 2019).

Recommendations

This quantitative survey research study yielded noteworthy findings by questioning law enforcement officers' understanding of human trafficking. Also of note were correlations between officers' human trafficking awareness and their confidence in their abilities to recognize human trafficking. Confidence levels also correlated with experience and the amount of human

trafficking training that officers had attended. Recommendations arise for both law enforcement practices and academia through further research.

Recommendations for Law Enforcement

This study echoes the call of previous studies for effective law enforcement training in human trafficking (Bracy et al., 2021; Farrell et al., 2008; Farrell et al., 2019a; Farrell et al., 2020; Grubb & Bennett, 2012; Hancock, 2019; Irwin, 2017; Matos et al., 2018; Matos et al., 2019; Niemi & Aaltonen, 2017; Preble et al., 2020; Renzetti, 2015; Villacampa & Torres, 2017; Wilson & Dalton, 2008). Although no significant correlations emerged between the amount of training received and officers' ability to recognize human trafficking, officers' confidence improved as training increased. The ability of officers to better recognize sex trafficking over labor trafficking may also indicate a need for additional training. Officers tend to rely upon existing schemata when they do not have sufficient information to process new experiences, and training improves schemata (Farrell et al., 2015; Goodson et al., 2020; Lurigio & Carroll, 1985; Robinson, 2020).

A second recommendation is the establishment of a process to verify the administration of state-mandated human trafficking training. One in 14 officers surveyed, or 7.1% of respondents, reported having received no human trafficking training. Suggestions for this oversight are through Tennessee's POST, which already maintains accountability for other types of training, or the TBI, which oversees Tennessee's human trafficking task forces. Tennessee legislators enacted the mandate for a minimum of two hours of human trafficking training for all officers (Tenn. Code Ann. §38-6-114, 2015/2016/2017). Law enforcement officers, sworn to maintain the law, should not be allowed to remain in violation of the law.

One additional recommendation for law enforcement practice is the creation of standardized policies and procedures to address human trafficking situations. Roughly one-third of officers knew of existing human trafficking policy at their agencies. Another 28.6% of officers acknowledged that their agency did not have a policy in place to address human trafficking. A clear policy is of benefit to officers because it informs the development of human trafficking schemata, guides trafficking investigative protocol, and increases the instigation of human trafficking investigations (Farrell et al., 2015; Irwin, 2017; Jurek & King, 2020; Renzetti et al., 2015). Law enforcement agencies with existing human trafficking policies and procedures might share their knowledge with sister agencies through a policy template, or entities such as a human trafficking task force may inform the creation of new policies for other agencies.

Recommendations for Further Research

The present study explored the ability of law enforcement officers in West Tennessee to recognize human trafficking. This study additionally searched for correlations between officers' perception of their abilities and actual ability. Several findings suggest recommendations for additional research related to human trafficking and law enforcement officers.

One recommendation for additional research relates to officers' confidence levels and their perception of their abilities to address human trafficking. In addition to supporting the hypothesis that there is a statistically significant difference between officers' perceptions of preparedness and their ability to identify human trafficking, this study revealed evidence of strong correlations between the amount of officer training and confidence levels. Despite evidence that officers overall understood basic generalities, locations, and indicators, confidence levels did not reflect this understanding. Further research should explore connections between officers' confidence in their abilities, training amounts, and preparedness. This study addressed

only officers' ability to identify human trafficking. A more in-depth study that delves into human trafficking responses may reveal the source of officers' lack of confidence.

Data analysis also suggested a significant correlation between officers' confidence and their years of service as commissioned law enforcement officers. This correlation gives evidence of established schemata that guide seasoned officers facing human trafficking situations. Further research should include an exploration of the connection between schema theory and officers' confidence levels and responses to human trafficking.

Researchers might explore connections between law enforcement officers' confidence and abilities to combat human trafficking and faith-based non-governmental agencies such as Restore Corps. Team members at Restore Corps are well-versed in human trafficking and might provide key support for officers and their agencies. Faith-based organizations could prove essential for strengthening officers' confidence and equipping law enforcement agencies with the tools they need to assist their officers. One law enforcement officer standing alone may be overpowered; agency support will assist, but the triple-braided cord of officers, agencies, and faith-based organizations is not easily broken (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation,* 2007, Ecclesiastes 4:12).

Conclusions

Interest in the present quantitative study began with a realization that modern-day slavery still existed globally and within the United States. Early study research explored the background and history of human trafficking, summarizing the extent of human trafficking first in the United States and then within Tennessee before focusing exclusively on West Tennessee. Knowledge of this background provided a foundation for the present study.

The purpose of the present study was to examine the connections between training and preparedness levels of law enforcement officers in West Tennessee to recognize human trafficking. Tennessee garnered attention for the study due to a state mandate requiring two hours of human trafficking training for all commissioned law enforcement officers (Tenn. Code Ann. § 38-6-114, 2015/2016/2017). As a subset of law enforcement officers across the state, officers in West Tennessee served as the sample population for the present study. The potential for determining gaps in West Tennessee officers' human trafficking training supported the significance of the study.

The extensive literature review in chapter 2 exposed a gap in existing literature regarding how law enforcement officer training affects their ability to recognize human trafficking situations. This gap informs the study's problem statement questioning whether officers' perceptions of their abilities to identify human trafficking correspond with their actual ability. Subsequently, the problem statement drives the research questions and hypothesis. The first research question examines whether officers in West Tennessee have received more than the required two hours of human trafficking training. Research question 2 then asks how actual officer preparedness compares with the officers' perceptions of their ability to identify human trafficking situations. The single hypothesis emerging from the second research question states that there is a statistically significant difference between officers' perceptions of preparedness and their ability to identify human trafficking situations, and the corresponding null hypothesis refutes this assumption.

A thorough literature review discussed the generalities of human trafficking. Although Strauss (2017) suggests lingering debate on how to categorize types of human trafficking, the literature review defined the generally-accepted types of human trafficking, including sex

trafficking, labor trafficking, domestic servitude, and other lesser-known types of human trafficking such as forced marriages (Szablewska & Kubacki, 2018). The literature review discussed the profitability of human trafficking that drives the involvement of organized crime establishments and gangs. An examination of existing literature also provided a theoretical foundation through an application of schema theory. The literature review discussed awareness of human trafficking and the influence of media on trafficking perceptions, examined known law enforcement perceptions of human trafficking, and explored how training might influence those perceptions. Lastly, the literature review established foundational literature of special relevance to the present study and provided a Biblical worldview of human trafficking.

The research methodology in the present study relied upon quantitative methods for data collection. Such studies are deductive and explanatory and require researchers to plan all phases of research before beginning data collection (Claydon, 2015; McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). An examination of the research design and rationale defined the study as a non-experimental, correlational, cross-sectional study (Boyle et al., 2017; McCarthy et al., 2017; Ratelle et al., 2019). Data collection relied upon anonymous online surveys taken by full-time commissioned law enforcement officers working at the identified 92 law enforcement agencies in West Tennessee. Recruitment for these officers occurred online through social media posts and in-person at patrol roll calls for the Shelby County Sheriff's Office. Although the study did not obtain the desired sample size of 353 officers, the 210 collected surveys exceeded the required sample size of 181 for a 90% confidence level with a 6% margin of error. Assumptions of normality supported the generalization of the survey sample group to the sample population (Cohen, 1992; Laher, 2016; Sullivan, 2013).

A survey administered to voluntary law enforcement respondents first recorded the basic demographics of officers and their agencies. Nine questions followed that assessed knowledge of human trafficking generalities, and a single question gauged officers' knowledge of 16 potential human trafficking locations. Thirty Likert scale questions assessed how well officers recognized potential indicators of human trafficking. The use of IMB SPSS Statistics 28 assisted with processing data. Data analysis and interpretation of statistical data included Pearson's r comparisons (Ratelle et al., 2019; Specht, 2019; Sullivan & Artino, 2013).

Research question 1 sought to discover the percentage of law enforcement officers in West Tennessee who had received more than the state-mandated two hours of human trafficking training. Nearly a quarter of respondents, or 24.3%, had taken only the required two hours of training. Just over half of all officers, or 52.4%, had received more than two hours of training, and an additional 16.2% received training but were unsure of the amount. Fifteen officers, however, representing 7.1% of respondents, indicated that they had received no training.

Research question 2 asked how actual officer preparedness compared with officers' perceptions of their ability to identify human trafficking situations. Officers seemed capable of answering questions related to human trafficking generalities, locations, and possible indicators, yet their levels of confidence remained low. The hypothesis emerging from the second research question suggested a statistically significant difference between officers' perceptions of preparedness and their ability to identify human trafficking situations, and the corresponding null hypothesis suggested no significant differences. Findings related to officers' ability to recognize human trafficking and their perceptions of that ability suggested a rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the hypothesis.

Additional major findings relevant to the study included the non-compliance of 7.1% of officers to state-mandated human trafficking training, as opposed to the anticipation of all officers having received at least the required two hours (Tenn. Code Ann. §38-6-114, 2015/2016/2017). A second additional major finding was the revelation of a lack of human trafficking policy at many West Tennessee law enforcement agencies since only 36.7% of respondents indicated that their agencies had established policies related to human trafficking. The last additional major finding was the significant correlation between the amount of human trafficking training received and confidence levels. This finding supports the need for more than two hours of human trafficking training.

Application of schema theory suggests that officers may have struggled more to answer survey questions more closely tied to labor trafficking because of their existing schemata. Without proper schemata associated with human trafficking, officers rely more upon developed schemata for other offenses such as sex crimes (Farrell et al., 2015). Schemata improve with experience, and experience develops in part through training (Goodson et al., 2020; Lurigio & Carroll, 1985; Robinson, 2020). Intentional training guides officers in replacing erroneous content within their developing schemata (Lurigio & Carroll, 1985).

Two implications for law enforcement officers arising from the survey findings were a need for better accountability of agencies to ensure that officers receive required human trafficking training, as well as a need for additional training. Recommendations for law enforcement include both more training and accountability, as implicated in the findings. Recommendations for further research include exploring officers' confidence in their ability to address human trafficking, specifically as related to training. Additional research that moves beyond recognizing human trafficking to proper responses to trafficking situations may reveal

additional correlations between training, ability, and perceptions of ability. Lastly, since data showed a significant correlation between years of service and confidence levels, schema theory should drive research to explore potential connections between existing schemata, officers' perceived ability to recognize and respond to human trafficking, and actual ability.

This quantitative study contributed to the body of knowledge related to law enforcement officers and human trafficking. The study helped fill the gap in the academic literature about how human trafficking training affects officers' ability to recognize human trafficking, and how confidence levels correlate with training and ability. Law enforcement officers need an adequate amount of human trafficking training to equip them with the skills and confidence necessary to combat human trafficking. An onus of responsibility lies upon law enforcement officers to be God's instruments of justice for the oppressed so that people will terrify them no longer (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation,* 2007, Psalm 10:18).

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APPENDIX A: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Human Trafficking Survey of Law Enforcement Officers in West Tennessee

Demographics.

1. Number of years as a full-time, commissioned law enforcement officer in West Tennessee:

   ___ Less than 1 year

   ___ 1-5 years

   ___ 6-10 years

   ___ 11-15 years

   ___ 16-20 years

   ___ Over 20 years

2. Number of years at current law enforcement agency:

   ___ Less than 1 year

   ___ 1-5 years

   ___ 6-10 years

   ___ 11-15 years

   ___ 16-20 years

   ___ Over 20 years

3. Size of law enforcement agency where commissioned:

   ___ 1-5 officers

   ___6-25 officers

   ___ 26-50 officers

   ___ 51-100 officers

___ 101-500 officers

___ over 500 officers

4. Agency jurisdiction:

___ Rural

___ Urban

5. Gender:

___ Male

___ Female

___ Prefer not to say

6. Amount of training received related to human trafficking training:

___ No training

___ 2 hours

___ 3-6 hours

___ 7-10 hours

___ More than 10 hours

___ Unsure

7 Do you feel you could recognize human trafficking situations?

___ Yes

___ No

___ Unsure

8. Does your agency have a formal policy or procedure about responding to human trafficking?

___ Yes

___ No

___ Unsure

Human Trafficking Situations (Donnelley et al., 2019; Blue Campaign, n.d.). Please mark the following statements as true or false.

1. Human trafficking victims can be any age, including children.

___ True ___ False

2. United States citizens do not become human trafficking victims.

___ True ___ False

3. Human trafficking victims can be any race or nationality.

___ True ___ False

4. Human trafficking victims are always female.

___ True ___ False

5. Human trafficking happens in cities, but not in towns or rural areas.

___ True ___ False

6. Human trafficking involves using force, fear, or coercion to ensnare vulnerable individuals.

___ True ___ False

7. Human trafficking is not a problem in West Tennessee.

___ True ___ False

8. Human trafficking victims do not always ask for help.

___ True ___ False

9. Human trafficking is the same as human smuggling.

___ True ___ False

10. Where can you find Human Trafficking? *(Mark all that apply.)*

___ Farms
___ Massage Parlors
___ Routine Traffic Stops
___ Medical Facilities
___ Construction Sites
___ Domestic Disturbances
___ Hotels
___ Street Corners
___ Restaurants
___ Spas and Salons
___ Factories
___ Bars
___ Sales Crews
___ Strip Clubs
___ Private Residences
___ Janitorial Services

Human Trafficking Indicators (Donnelley et al., 2019; Blue Campaign, n.d.).

The following statements are related to human trafficking. Mark each statement indicating whether or not you would suspect human trafficking if you saw the following: *(Use this scale: 1 = definitely not, 2 = probably not, 3 = unsure, 4 = probably yes, 6 = definitely yes.)*

	1 Definitely Not	2 Probably Not	3 Unsure	5 Probably Yes	6 Definitely Yes

1. Someone who has an unstable living environment, such as moving often or living with a large group of people who are not family.					
2. Someone who cannot freely leave their job or where they live.					
3. Someone who does not have control over their own identification or travel documents.					
4. Someone who has tattoos or brands that seem to indicate ownership.					
5. Someone who has few, if any, personal belongings.					
6. Someone who says they were not forced to perform sex acts. (REVERSE CODED)					
7. Someone under the age of 18 who is involved in sex work.					
8. Someone who does not seem properly dressed for their current situation or job.					
9. Someone who is carrying large amounts of cash or condoms.					
10. Someone who has another person insisting to speak or translate for them.					
11. Someone who gives answers that seem scripted or coached.					
12. Someone who does not seem overly timid, submissive, or anxious. (REVERSE CODED)					
13. Someone who says they are traveling but do not know where they are going.					

14. Someone who does not know the place or address where they are staying.					
15. Someone who refuses to give their name or birthdate.					
16. Someone who does not know what city or state they are in.					
17. Someone who has scars, burns, bruising, or other signs of physical or sexual abuse.					
18. Someone who shows signs of confinement or torture.					
19. Someone who says they are not allowed to contact their friends or family.					
20. Someone under age 18 who does not seem to be with a family member.					
21. Someone with an older person or “boyfriend” who insists on staying near them.					
22. Someone who seems deprived of sleep, medical care, food, water, or other basic need.					
23. Someone who gives a statement with multiple inconsistencies.					
24. Someone who says an employer has threatened them or their families with harm, law enforcement action, or deportation.					
25. Someone who lives or works where there are high security measures such as barbed wire, barricaded windows, or security cameras.					
26. Someone who is reluctant to speak in their own defense.					

27. Someone who has unusual work conditions, such as no breaks, long hours, or odd schedules.					
28. Someone who is not anxious or fearful around law enforcement. (REVERSE CODED)					
29. Someone who works in commercial sex and has a pimp or manager who controls their “dates.”					
30. Someone who has no control of their finances or earnings, and has no bank account or other financial record.					

APPENDIX B: PERMISSIONS

From: Elizabeth Donnelly
Sent: Tuesday, August 31, 2021 12:06 PM
To: Garrett, Marie Angelena
Cc: Oehme, Karen
Subject: RE: Human Trafficking Indicators Request

Ms. Garrett-
Of course you can use the indicators! We didn't originate the list, but cobbled the list together from other sources. We'd just ask you properly cite it. The copyright is currently held by JHT, so you'd have to ask them about replicating anything in our manuscript.

Best of luck with your research!!

Elizabeth Donnelly, PhD, MPH, LICSW, NREMT, FAEMS
Coordinator, MSW Program (On Campus)
Associate Professor
School of Social Work

The University of Windsor sits on the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations, comprised of the Ojibwa, the Odawa, and the Potawatomi.

From: Garrett, Marie Angelena
Sent: August 31, 2021 12:56 PM
To: Elizabeth Donnelly
Subject: Human Trafficking Indicators Request

Dr. Donnelly,

I am a doctoral student at Liberty University completing a dissertation in criminal justice. I am writing to ask for written permission to use in my research study a modified version of the human trafficking indicators that you and others developed for your 2019 study, *What do EMS Professionals Know about Human Trafficking? An Exploratory Study*. With certain modifications, I feel that it would be a good fit for a portion of my current study.

My dissertation focuses on human trafficking perceptions of law enforcement officers in West Tennessee and examines comparisons between officers' perceived awareness of human trafficking and their actual ability to respond to trafficking situations. The goal of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the mandatory two hours of human trafficking training that officers receive. My professor and dissertation chair, Dr. Jarrod S. Sadulski, is supervising my research.

With your permission, I would like to modify the indicators you list in Table 1 of your study to apply to law enforcement officers, and then include them as a portion of my online survey. The indicators would essentially remain the same, with substituting the word *person* for *patient* and adapting a few other words as appropriate. Since they would not apply in a study for

law enforcement officers, I plan to omit the indicator related to STIs, abortions, miscarriages, and other reproductive issues, as well as the indicator related to the mention of law enforcement officers. These indicators would serve as one part of three included in the survey. The online survey will limit respondents to full-time, commissioned law enforcement officers working at agencies located in West Tennessee.

Your study was the inspiration for my dissertation, as I would aspire to impact law enforcement training to a similar degree as your study impacted EMS training in Florida. I do not feel that the two hours of mandated training is sufficient to equip officers to respond appropriately to human trafficking situations. In addition to basic demographic questions, I am also seeking permission from Dr. Katherine C. Cunningham to utilize the "Human Trafficking Myths Scale" that you also used.

Although my research study is still in development, at the moment I am intending to use simple t-test analysis to examine results. I would also appreciate receiving any suggestions you might have for additional scoring procedures.

In addition to using the instrument, I also ask your permission to reproduce it in my dissertation appendix. The dissertation will be published in the UHCL Institutional Repository at https://uhcl-ir.tdl.org/uhcl-ir/ and deposited in the ProQuest Dissertations & Theses database.

I would like to use [and reproduce] your human trafficking indicators under the following conditions:

- I will use the human trafficking indicators only for my research study and will not sell or use it for any other purposes.
- I will include a statement of attribution and/or copyright on all copies of the instrument. If you have a specific statement of attribution that you would like for me to include, please provide it in your response.
- At your request, I will send a copy of my completed research study to you upon completion of the study and/or provide a hyperlink to the final manuscript.

If you do not control the copyright for these materials, I would appreciate any information you can provide concerning the proper person or organization I should contact.

If these are acceptable terms and conditions, please indicate so by replying to me through e-mail.

Sincerely,
Marie A. Garrett

From: noreply@salesforce.com <noreply@salesforce.com> **On Behalf Of** customercare@copyright.com
Sent: Tuesday, September 07, 2021 1:05 PM
To: Garrett, Marie Angelena
Subject: Case #01433926 - Permission for dissertation use
[ref:_00D30oeGz._5004Q2N2ZFe:ref]

Dear Ms. Garrett,
Thanks for your reply below and thanks so much for your patience, as I was out of the office at the end of last week.

The publishers generally understand that your university will post your dissertation and / or perhaps use a third party for the purpose of the academic sale of your dissertation. Their verbiage about the 'republishing' of the material *basically refers to journal or book use, or other commercial undertaking*. As a courtesy, I am attaching their verbiage, which you could use as your 'proof of permission'.

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I hope this helps a bit! If you have any further questions please don't hesitate to contact a Customer Account Specialist Monday-Friday, 24 hours/day.

Best Regards,
Lee

Ms. Lee Dion
Customer Account Specialist
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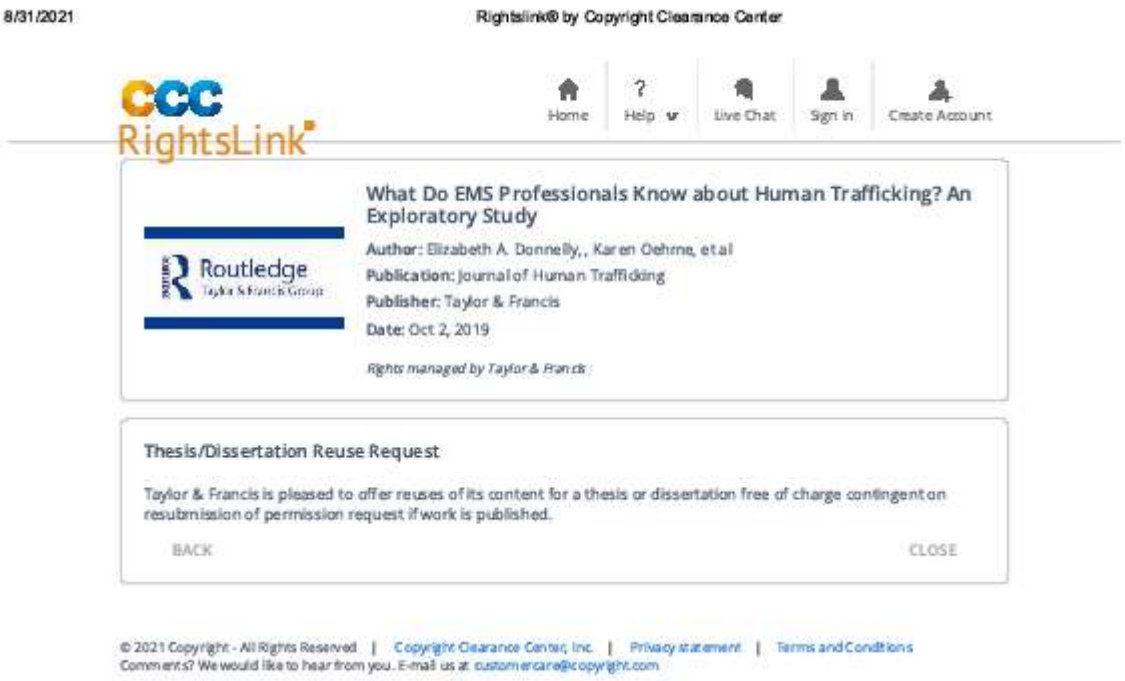

APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Consent

Title of the Project: The Impact of Law Enforcement Training on the Ability of Officers to Recognize and Respond to Human Trafficking Situations in West Tennessee
Principal Investigator: Marie A. Garrett, criminal justice doctoral candidate, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be a full-time, commissioned law enforcement officer working for an agency in West Tennessee. Taking part in this research project is voluntary. Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to examine connections between training and the ability of law enforcement officers in West Tennessee to recognize human trafficking. Although Tennessee law requires two hours of human trafficking training, it is unclear whether or not this training fully prepares officers to handle human trafficking situations.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following thing(s):

1. Complete an anonymous online survey that should take approximately 10-15 minutes.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study. Benefits to society may include a better understanding of how to prepare law enforcement officers to identify and respond to human trafficking situations.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. Data collected from you may be shared for use in future research studies or with other researchers. If data collected from you is shared, any information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed before the data is shared.

- Participant responses will be anonymous.

- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time prior to submitting the survey without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey and close your internet browser. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Marie A Garrett. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at and/or . You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Jarrod Sadulski, at .

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

Before agreeing to be part of the research, please be sure that you understand what the study is about. You can print a copy of the document for your records. If you have any questions about the study later, you can contact Marie A. Garrett using the information provided above.

APPENDIX D: SCREENING INSTRUMENT

Human Trafficking Screening of Law Enforcement Officers in West Tennessee

1. Are you currently a fully commissioned law enforcement officer?

   ___ Yes (allows respondent to continue)

   ___ No (closes survey)

2. Are you commissioned and employed by a law enforcement agency in West Tennessee:

   ___ Yes (allows respondent to continue)

   ___ No (closes survey)

3. Do you work full time in a paid position?

   ___ Yes (allows respondent to continue)

   ___ No (closes survey)

4. Do you work in an enforcement capacity? *(i.e., patrol, fugitive, investigations, narcotics, etc.; NOT in courts, jails, civil processing, or other non-enforcement role)*

   ___ Yes (allows respondent to continue)

   ___ No (closes survey)