Sex Trafficked Juveniles:
An Analysis with Recommendations for Effective Intervention and Treatment

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I would like to thank my family and friends for being supportive of my decision to continue my education by earning my Master’s Degree in Criminal Justice. Thank you to my boyfriend, Tom, for reminding me to be strong, for your understanding, and reminding me to breathe when I’m anxious and overwhelmed.

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It has been a very long and stressful process. Earning my Master’s Degree has been by far one of the most difficult experiences in my life but also the most gratifying. I am very excited to see what the next chapter of my life holds for me.
Abstract

This seminar research paper will discuss recommendations for efficient and successful intervention techniques and effective forms of treatment for children who have been victims of child sex trafficking and other forms of sexual exploitation.

Statement of the Problem

Child sex trafficking is a multibillion dollar industry that involves minors who are coerced and exploited sexually worldwide for profit. Despite the increase in awareness of sex trafficking that has occurred over the past few years and the creation of more effective policies being implemented, the number of people being sex trafficked is still extremely high and continues to be on the rise (UNODC, 2012). As of 2014, per the International Labor Organization (ILO), there were about 21 million victims being trafficked with about 22% of those victims (roughly 4.5 million people) who were sexually exploited (Human Rights First, 2014). Of the 21 million people that were trafficked in 2014, it was estimated that 15.4 million victims (74%) are youths until the age of 18 years old. Moreover, in 2016, it was reported that one in six youths that are runaways are likely to become victims of sex trafficking (Polaris, 2016). Most victims of child sex trafficking suffer from adverse childhood experiences that can negatively impact children’s behaviors (e.g., attachment disorder, oppositional defiance disorder), mental health issues (e.g., PTSD, anxiety, depression), physical health concerns (e.g., bruising, broken bones, chronic illnesses) as well as many other issues regarding children’s emotional, mental, and physical wellness (Hargreaves-Cormany and Patterson, 2016). Intervention and treatment are not only necessary but vital to rehabilitate juveniles as well ensure they receive the most appropriate treatment for the abuse and trauma they have endured.

Purpose of Study

This paper will review and discuss techniques to intervene in sex trafficking youths and will make recommendations for effective forms of treatment for sexually exploited children based on the findings of this review. Currently, there are several forms of treatment available for victims of trafficking that generally include identifying and rescuing the victims and then providing them with medical and mental health treatment in addition to other support systems. Due to the intense sexual, physical, and psychological abuse that many victims experience while being trafficked, immediate intervention and treatment are key components for rehabilitating these children in need to prevent further problems. Generally, the first 24-hours after a youth is found and detained is the most critical because it includes police intervention with identifying the victim and ensuring their safety, contacting child protective services to notify family or shelters, and setting up a proper support system that includes family/guardians, therapy, education, and medical care (Inner City Visions, 2016). There are many challenges that can arise while treating children for such abuse which may include lack of self-advocacy skills or misperception about how services work/what programs are available, services may be hard to access, lack of family-focused services, cultural or religious barriers, restrictions on shelter stays, lack of housing available or discrimination against certain victims, or victims refusing to receive treatment (Edmund & Bland, 2011). Furthermore, by collecting and analyzing demographics and conducting studies related to the heinous crime that is trafficking, it will not only raise awareness of the issue but with support with further research which could prove to be supplemental to creating new laws and policies, interventions, trainings, and improve treatment techniques.
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Introduction

Definitions

*Human trafficking* is commonly considered as the modern-day form of slavery that includes the use of force, fraud, or intimidation (Polaris, 2016). More specifically, *child sex trafficking* is when a child under the age of 18 years old is recruited, transported, harbored, or received for a profitable element and is forced to engage in child pornography, prostitution, commercial sex acts, or other sex related crimes and exploitation (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). Sex trafficking children for profit has been a continuous problem that unfortunately is still on the rise. The high demand among adults, generally men, wanting to pay to rape children has been consistent. Though some offenders may not consider engaging in sexual acts with a minor “rape”. Nevertheless, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on a federal level, *sexual abuse* is defined as engaging in sexual acts with a child under the age of 18 (children are not able to consent to any form of sexual activities). Sexual abuse includes fondling, penetration, exhibitionism, masturbation, and exposing a child to other sex-related activities (CDC, 2017). Sexually exploiting children is very lucrative and with rates of child sex trafficking continues to rise. Though it is an illegal crime, it is a very profitable industry (UNODC, 2012).

Prevalence

As of 2017, the International Labour Organization (ILO) conducted a study that determined there approximately 20.9 million victims who are currently being trafficked with 26% of those victims being children (Polaris, 2016). Furthermore, ILO determined that between forced labor and human trafficking that an illegal $150 billion industry has been created worldwide (Polaris, 2016). Moreover, in 2016, it was reported that one in six youths that are
runaways are likely to become victims of sex trafficking (Polaris, 2017B). Specifically, with youth, intervention and treatment are not only necessary but vital to rehabilitate juveniles as well ensure they receive the most appropriate treatment for the abuse and trauma they have endured.

Though the issue of child sex trafficking is widespread and recognized by the public, there are many barriers that challenge government and law enforcements’ efforts to intervene. Polaris (2017B) reports that more than 31,600 cases of human trafficking have been reported in the last eight years alone. In some regions, it may seem like a meek task; save the children and prosecute the offenders. But the intervention and prosecution processes are much more complex. Each state and each country for that matter has their own policies and procedures created by local, state, and federal governments that determine how to deal with children who have been victims of sex trafficking.

Although in the United Stated, most children are considered victims who are entitled to treatment, in some regions those same victims of sexual exploitation are considered offenders themselves. Not all trafficking laws are the same in all 50 states let alone in other regions of the world. This makes prosecuting traffickers, pimps, and other similar offenders more difficult. When juveniles are sex trafficked, law enforcement agencies encounter issues associated with prosecuting traffickers and how to properly intervene and treatment children who have been sexually exploited for money (Finklea, 2014). Furthermore, in child sex trafficking cases there are not always clear-cut evidence, the victim may refuse to testify against the offender or may be too young to testify, sometimes the offenders are not found at all, the victim could have been misidentified, and so on. The criminal justice system is very complex and although most would like justice for the victims of the children that were victimized, but it does not always turn out that way.
Causes of Child Sex Trafficking

Child sex trafficking is a very profitable and relatively a low-risk crime (Van Doorninck, 2017). There are several causes of child sex trafficking that is commonly associated with poverty, women and children are targets, lack of education, lack of birth or identification documents, trafficking is profitable, inadequate legislation, varying social or cultural practices. Poverty is commonly associated with child sex trafficking because of a lack of employment opportunities, a result of natural disaster, or some youths prostitute to obtain money. Targeting and women and children and sexually exploiting them for profit is very common (Simon, 2016). Generally, men either profit or receive pleasure from sexually exploiting women and children because there is such a high demand for it (Simon, 2016). Teenagers or women are usually deceived in some way or another by insinuating employment or modeling opportunities which usually results in the victims being threatened or coerced into sex trafficking. Whereas child victims that are younger in age are usually abducted or easily manipulated into sex trafficking and then they become sex-slaves (Simon, 2016).

Additionally, a lack of education can aid in sexually exploiting children for profit. In some countries, children are even more vulnerable due to a lack of education and make lack common sense or not sense danger when it comes to being targeted for trafficking purposes (Busuttil, 2011). If children are educated about what indicators to look for when traffickers or pimps are trying to recruit children or at least teach them not to talk to or leave with strangers, it may prevent some children from being misled or manipulated by traffickers (Busuttil, 2011). Youths that do not possess identification documents such as a birth certificate or state ID can cause or aid in child sex trafficking. Victims of trafficking are extremely hard to find and
identify in general but when youths lack some form of identification it makes it more difficult because the child’s appearance or name could have changed.

Moreover, most traffickers, pimps, and other similar perpetrators view child sex trafficking has a very profitable “plan” with little to no risks (Busuttil, 2011). Generally, offenders think sexually exploiting children for profit is not risky because their victims are young, easy to hide, and hard to identify. Correspondingly, many pimps and traffickers are never found and if they are found and if the children are rescued and if they are found it is common for traffickers to not be prosecuted or to receive a minimal sentence for their sex-related crimes (Van Doorninck, 2017). When this occurs, the offenders are not being held accountable for their actions and the victims are left unprotected (Busuttil, 2011). In some cases, the victims themselves are considered offenders instead of the people that initially manipulated or forced them into sexually exploiting themselves.

Furthermore, a lack of effective legislation can cause and contribute to the sex trafficking of children. Although the United States has numerous laws, policies, initiatives, and advocacy programs related to anti-trafficking and helping victims of trafficking, not all countries have efficient programming or legal procedures associated with how to prosecute traffickers (Van Doorninck, 2017). Some countries may not have any laws regarding child sex trafficking at all. If countries have a lack of legal policies regarding child sex trafficking in addition to a variation of cultural or social practices, it makes protecting victims and prosecuting offenders complex (Busuttil, 2011). In some countries, child marriages or arranged marriages occur, youths that are underage and having sex for money is viewed as “acceptable” in some regions, or it may be socially or culturally acceptable depending on the region’s religion or community norms.
Conclusively, there can be many factors that cause or unintentionally aid in contributing to child sex trafficking, no single factor is responsible for the causes behind this heinous crime.

**Literature Review: History of Sex Trafficking, Feminism, and Child Labor Laws**

*White Slave Trade*

In 1885, the National Vigilance Association (NVA) was established to fight against sex trafficking in the beginning of the 19th century. The NVA helped facilitate as well as set the precedent for the first international multidenominational anti-trafficking task force in 1899. The NVA supported and assisted with of the more significant advancements of anti-trafficking while raising awareness of the dangers of trafficking (Attwood, 2015). The NVA was created after there was hysteria and public outcry after some local journalists wrote about the revelations of juvenile prostitution occurring in London during the turn of the century following the 18th century. This occurrence led to the creation of the Criminal Law Amendment (CLA) in 1885. The act was created to protect women and children as well as suppress brothels and other similar matters that would result in punishment for sexual offenses against women and children in the Britain. The CLA then changed the age of consent from age 13 to age 16 in addition to criminalizing male homosexuality with the belief that it would assist in the decline of sexual offenses committed against women and children. The NVA’s focus and the main purpose behind the CLA was to protect the more vulnerable populations against sexual offenses by creating harsher legislation that limited and suppressed criminals and their sex-related vices (Attwood, 2015).

Additionally, the NVA helped create preemptive initiatives to help combat sex trafficking, inspected employment agencies that seemed to only employ young women (e.g., barmaids, house keepers, dancers, etc.), held community meetings associated with concerns
about brothels/sex trafficking, and handed out informational material regarding immoral conduct related to sex workers and prostitutes (Attwood, 2015). Moreover, some women were viewed as and considered by many to be *double criminals*. *Double criminals* were defined as individuals who were immigrants and females that worked voluntarily as sex workers and prostitutes who victimized themselves and were responsible for subjecting themselves to sexual abuse and violence based on their ‘line of work’ (Attwood, 2015). However, these women were categorized differently from women and children who were subjected to sex trafficking but were viewed as *pure trafficking victims* because they were held responsible for the abuse (Attwood, 2015).

Realistically, both groups of women and children were experiencing the same forms of abuse and exploitation but one group was being treated as victims and the other group were being criminalized based on society’s view of them (Attwood, 2015). During that era, there was unquestionably a double-standard for trafficking victims that led to unfair assumptions and convictions which resulted from society judging the victims based on the victims’ traits such as their immigration status.

Furthermore, the NVA implemented additional legislations that were established to help combat sex trafficking associated with ‘white slave trade’ concerns in Britain. The Vagrancy Act (1898) was formed to prevent males from profiting from female sex workers and prostitutes’ earnings (Attwood, 2015). Later in 1902, the British Congress established the first International Agreement on Sex Trafficking. The policy focused on the creation of effective, preventative actions, exposing individuals and businesses responsible for sex trafficking, as well as returning immigrants to their homes. Also, in 1905, the Aliens Act was created to fight against high and increasing levels of immigration that was considered at that time to be dangerous and concerning to the United Nations (Attwood, 2015).
The NVA is responsible for raising awareness and establishing international sex trafficking as a global concern that had been an ignored crime for quite some time. Additionally, the NVA advocated for victims of sex trafficking for need of equality, rehabilitation for women and children who had been sexually exploited and abused regardless of the individual’s age, ethnicity, or immigration status (Attwood, 2015). The NVA wanted to raise consciousness about women being discriminated against and explained that all victims of sex trafficking are abused and vulnerable and need assistance and care no matter who they are or where they are from (Attwood, 2015).

Although the NVA played an important role during the turn of the century leading into the 1900s, a few decades later, another key affair that had a major impact on the ‘white slave trade’ was the 1930s Music Hall Affair in Malta, a small nation in Europe (Knepper, 2009). Malta had to address the issue of English women being sexually exploited after London journalists exposed that women who came to Malta to work as ‘music hall artistes’ were not working as artistes but as sex workers. The main concern of the British government was that it was creating a health threat to the public by having foreigners sexually exploiting themselves for profit under the guise of working as bartenders or performers in cabarets (Knepper, 2009).

Shortly after the music hall artistes came about in Malta, organizations such as the British government, religious figures, and women’s groups protested and campaigned against international migration in hopes that it would prevent women from prostituting in Europe (Knepper, 2009). Though the issue of artistes in Malta came to light in the 1930s, the government was successful in linguistically changing ‘white slave trading’ to trafficking women and children during the early 1920s which was a vast accomplishment to achieve during that time (Knepper, 2009). In some areas of Europe, some sex workers were licensed as prostitutes.
The British government also succeeded in providing licensed prostitutes with regular medical exams during that same decade assist in protecting the public’s health as well as the prostitutes’ well-being (Knepper, 2009).

The government did make attempts to expel prostitution from Malta through creating new legislation and campaigns to rid the island of sex workers. For example, the government enacted a policy the prostitutes could not live nor ‘work’ churches, wine shops, near other sex workers, or in houses without blinds on the windows. Moving forward, the legislation was changed four separate times between 1912-1928 adding more and more restrictions to where prostitutes could be housed as well as which locations banned sex trade (Knepper, 2009). In addition to limited housing options, sex workers also experienced excessive rent charges, poor and uncleanly housing, avaricious clients, and were being exploited in other ways than just being sexually exploited (Knepper, 2009).

Despite the government and religious organizations attempts to rid Malta of prostitutes, their attempts were in vain until late in 1930. Late in 1930, the Suppression of White Slave Traffic Emergency Ordinances was established and allowed law enforcement to shut down or close any establishments that were suspected of and activities that were sex trade related (e.g., wine shops, hotels, cabarets) (Knepper, 2009). The government began to prosecute sex workers and those who exploited the women for profit as well, but proved also to be unsuccessful. Only a small number of individuals were being held accountable and prosecuted for sex trade related crimes. The average of individuals who were being prosecuted annually were between four to fifteen individuals which did not seem to make a difference (Knepper, 2009).

Eventually, after many changes in legislation and police enforcement to outlaw sex trade, help from the local churches, and deporting many sex workers, Malta gained control of its
own nation again and had mostly eradicated the prostitutes from the area. By 1932, journalists were claiming the whole “Music Hall Artiste Affair of 1930” was fake (Knepper, 2009). Though law enforcement had been aware of the concerns and potentially dangers of the high rates of sex trade that was occurring in Malta, the issue was ignored until British journalists published revelations of sex workers and prostitutes disguising themselves as bartenders or dancers to create public outcry and communal concern (Knepper, 2009).

*Three Waves of Feminism (1830s-present day)*

The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2016) defines feminism as promoting or advocating for the rights of women based on the equality of sexes in all facets of society while seeking justice for women to end sexism. *Feminism movements* or *Women’s Liberation Movements* began as a succession of campaigns and protests involving political issues involving women’s rights regarding domestic violence, equal pay, women’s suffrage, reproductive rights and maternity leave, having the right to vote, sexual harassment, etc. to fight for and achieve the equality between men and women (Crook & Allen, 2013). The concentration and emphasis of these feminist movements were to raise awareness of women’s inequality and get people’s attention and convince them to take the time to listen as to why equality for both sexes are so important.

*First-Wave Feminism*

For centuries, many cultures have considered women to be the weaker and more vulnerable of the two sexes. It has been an ongoing issue for women to be taken advantage of, overlooked for education achievements or employment advancements, and generally perceived to be of lesser significance. Between the 1830s-1900s is when the first wave of feminism occurred. Women worldwide sought out change; women during that era wanted to bring about
issues and concerns that had previously been deemed unimportant and taboo such as reproductive rights. Women wanted the public to know that a woman not having the same rights as a man was no longer going to be acceptable (Dorey-Stein, 2015). The first wave of feminism focused predominantly on women’s suffrage (e.g., the right to vote). This era of radicalism where women shared their opinions, desires, and needs was extraordinary. Women were speaking open-mindedly about their thoughts and about what was considered fair and what they thought should be reformed. The beginning of feminism was in motion and women were raising awareness and were demanding to be heard.

Internationally, women wanted to prove they have could contribute just as much as men could (Dorey-Stein, 2015). To further discuss such issues, 300 female activists held the First Women’s Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, NY in 1848 (The Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics, 2016). The progression of feminism can be related to sex trafficking in many ways. Feminists advocate and fight for their rights and for the equality of women. Generally, women have been perceived as the weaker of the two sexes. Traffickers target women and children because they are viewed as weak and vulnerable individuals associated with experiences of helplessness, poverty, cultural values, and gender-based discrimination (Cree, 2008). The targeting of these specific populations is exactly why feminists strive to empower women to fight back and stand up for themselves to decrease the chances of being victimized by predators, traffickers, pimps, etc.

*Second-Wave Feminism*

About a decade after World War II had ended, the second wave of feminism began. The second wave of feminism took place between the 1960s-1980s. During this time, women advocates and female protesters were fighting for their rights primarily associated with equality.
in the workplace (e.g., equal pay), sexuality, family, and reproductive privileges (Dorey-Stein, 2015). Many thought women had achieved equal rights despite the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) not yet being passed. The ERA was initially supposed to become official during the 1970s but since the issue brought about much debate, the amendment was not approved until 1982 (Miller, 2015). A prime example of how women were discriminated against in the workplace during this era was their job choices were extremely limited. Before the 1970s, typical jobs deemed for women were nurses, receptionists, and teaching positions (Unger, 2010). Women weren’t really considered for higher paying positions or positions of importance such as being a college professor or a CEO of a company.

According to Dorey-Stein (2015), the era of second-wave feminism was often considered offensive and solely focused on ‘white women issues” subsequently because during the same era other movements of suffrage and equality were occurring including the Black Civil Rights Movement, the Gay and Lesbian Movement, and the Chicano Rights Movement. Not only was it a time that women felt unheard but it was also a time where many other minority groups and people of diversity felt they were being disregarded as well. The second-wave of feminism however, was not in vain.

During this era feminism led to change and improvements in legislation. Foremost, the Equal Pay Act (1963) was passed and declared that all men and women were to be paid the same rates for the same job (Zeitz, 2008). A major accomplishment included Title IX of the Education Amendment Act (1972) being ratified. This amendment allowed women to no longer be discriminated against regarding federal funds for education institutes (Zeitz, 2008). Another stride in the progression of equality for women was the approval of the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (1794) that had previously not allowed women to lend money from financial institutes. The
two major changes in policies led to the reconstruction and modification of marriage, divorce, and rape laws in many states (Zeitz, 2008).

**Third-Wave Feminism**

The third wave of feminism began in the 1990s and extends to present day. Unlike in the past, feminism and women empowerment is common. Semantically, the word ‘feminist’ has changed quite a bit and varies from culture to culture through different perspectives. Numerous individuals of various backgrounds including men considered themselves feminists in present day. The word ‘feminism’ has expanded and is reaches more audiences nowadays. Dorey-Stein (2015) confers that some of the different types of feminists in present day include but are not limited to ecofeminists, electorals, radicals, liberal reformists, etc.

Although inequality between men and women currently does not propose as much of a threat as it did decades ago, inequalities and inconsistencies between the two sexes still exist in some areas. Some examples of major issues that women are still struggling with today are directly associated with domestic violence, female genital mutilation (FGM), breast feeding, sex-selective abortions, sex trafficking, stalking and harassment, low rape conviction rates, and gender pay gaps (Moss, 2015).

Today, women are still being oversexualized, victimized, and targeted. To aid in reducing the rates of victimization and sex-related crimes (e.g., trafficking) involving women and children, society must keep the public aware of the issues that are occurring in addition to creating new and more effective laws and penalties for those who prey on and exploit women and children. Though women have made tremendous strides and have achieved numerous accomplishments with eliminating many disparities between men and women to create equality, there is always room for advancement.

The United Nations created the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), a human rights treaty that was initially established in 1990. The treaty outlined the rights of children associated with civil, political, social, health, and cultural rights that the youth is entitled to (Ruck et al., 2014). The treaty applies to all children under the age of 18 years old, but excludes select countries that possess a different age of majority; the age of majority in Cuba is 17 years old (UNICEF, 2017). The CRC applies to countries that meet the age of majority criteria as well as the countries that have ratified the CRC policy. As of 2014, the only countries in the UN that had not ratified the CRC were South Sudan, Somalia, and the United States (Attiah, 2014). However, as of 2015, Somalia (OHCHR, 2015) and South Sudan (Sudan Tribune, 2015) both ratified the CRC policy leaving the United States as the only country in the UN to not approve the policy.

The CRC was created to protect the rights of children and to protect them from discrimination based on their guardian or parent’s sex, race, religion, etc. Moreover, the CRC protects children by banning forced labor, child marriage, trafficking, deprivation of a legal identity (Attiah, 2014). The reason why the United States hasn’t ratified the CRC is because the United States requires a two-thirds majority vote in the Senate to ratify the CRC and thus far members of the US Senate have opposed the ratification of the convention. According to Attiah (2014), some Americans view the CRC as being a potential threat to parental rights in the United States as well as denying American self-government. The consensus from the organization, ParentalRights.org, appears to be that the group firmly believes Americans are better off continuing with constitutional democracy instead of implementing international law (Attiah, 2014).
United Nations World Conferences for Women (1975-1995)

Over the course of two decades, the United Nations organized four world conferences for women that took place in Mexico City (1975), Copenhagen (1980), Nairobi (1985), and Beijing (1995). The purpose of the conferences was for women to learn about other women’s struggles worldwide, women’s rights, equality, empowerment, to share education or employment opportunities, in addition to discussing activism and feminism associated with women’s movements (Bunch, 2012).

The first conference in Mexico City, Mexico, in 1975, was also considered the International Women’s Year (IWY) World Conference. This assembly of about 8000 activists, UN members, and women movement leaders from around the world (Bunch, 2012). This conference resulted in the Mexico City establishing a declaration of equality between men and women which was known as the Declaration of Mexico on the equality of Women and Their Contribution to Development and Peace, which was ratified later that same year. The focus on this conference was to analyze and evaluate the current set of policies and how the regulations were effecting women (Bunch, 2012). This meeting was very successful; it was the first official meeting that eventually became the basis for other women’s groups to form conferences regarding women’s rights worldwide.

Five years later, the second conference took place during 1980 in Copenhagen, Denmth more than 15,000 participants (Bunch, 2012). The Copenhagen Conference fixated on the gap between men and women’s rights continued to be an issue in most countries. The assembly discussed their concerns with equal rights to education, employment, and health care to attempt to have success in equal rights like Mexico City had achieved years previously. Though it had occurred about a year prior to the second women’s world conference, a large emphasis was on
the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (Bunch, 2012). This policy was established in 1979 which many women considered to be a major accomplishment. The policy was essentially the international version of the bill of rights but for women. Women activists and world leaders were successful in having the, Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women principle approved (Bunch, 2012).

In 1985, the third women’s world conference was held in Nairobi, Kenya. The third conference took place towards the end of the second wave of feminism during the 1980s with about 15,000 participants in attendance which was about the same amount of people in attendance from the previously world conference (Bunch, 2012). The emphasis of this meeting was associated with violence against women, gender, political and social issues, and for the first time in an official setting, lesbian rights were discussed. Strategies and future movements were discussed and planned to try to create resolutions to the inequalities and disparities that were still occurring select areas that did not allow women the same opportunities as men (Bunch, 2012).

For example, during the 1980s, gender roles were common. Women dealt with sexism, stereotypes, and discrimination daily. Women often were put into gender roles such as caretakers, homemakers, teachers, and so on. Women did not have the same freedom and rights regarding employment and education opportunities as men did during that era (Bunch, 2012). Participants of the Nairobi conference discussed strategies for the advancement of women regarding how to overcome obstacles of sexism and disparities, implementing equal rights, establishing peace between both genders in struggling countries as well as those within the United Nations. In addition to overcoming issues related to lesbians, immigrant and urban women, elderly women or very young women, and females involved in trafficking (Bunch, 2012).
This Nairobi seminar raised awareness in associating with women who were still struggling for equality in many areas of life, acknowledge the changes that needed to be made to move forward and progress, and how women should not have a separate set of rights but that men and women should share the same rights, human rights (Bunch, 2012). Though women were making amazing strides in the development and advancement of women’s rights, women were still struggling to achieve equality of rights regarding all matters associated with finances, politics, culture, employment, education, reproductive rights, sexuality, and many other areas of life instead of receiving the bare minimum of approval from the government (Bunch, 2012).

The last women’s world conference was in Beijing, China, in 1995. Bunch (2012) stated the Beijing conference emphasized the advancements women had made in the UN agenda. The fourth and last women’s conference was the largest assembly with more than 17,000 people in attendance, from 189 governments, with an additional 35,000 people are at similar event in Huariou, China about 20 miles away (Bunch, 2012). This event also showed the increasing interest in women’s rights being viewed as general human rights and questioning women’s roles in society (Bunch, 2012).

An accomplishment that stemmed from the Beijing conference was the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) document. The women who created the document wanted to create and ensure equality, empowerment, and opportunities for women by creating a new and improved outline of women’s rights at civil, national, and international levels of government (Bunch, 2012). The document included concerns regarding women and poverty, education, healthcare, violence against women, women and armed conflict, the economy, decision-making and women being in power or in roles of authority, institutional mechanisms, human rights, media, the environment, and an issue African-women refer to as ‘the girl child problem’ (Bunch, 2012). The
girl child problem is associated with young females who experience harmful practices and violence such as female genital mutilation (FGM) and sexual abuse (Bunch, 2012). Though the Beijing conference in 1995 was the last official conference, three reviews in association to the last conference have been held (2000, 2005, 2010) in addition to 3,000 other events related to the continuation of progression associated with feminism, women’s rights, and empowerment.

Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention and International Labour Organization (1999)

In 1999, the International Labour Conference (ILC) created what was referred to as ‘Convention No.82’, which was the convention associated with the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. The agreement stated that no government will tolerate child labor associated with modern slavery, sex trafficking, drug trafficking, or any other work that is harmful to the child’s health, safety, or morals (Dennis, 1999). Before the ILC created ‘Convention No.82), almost three decades earlier, in 1973, the International Labour Organization (ILO) attempted to establish legislation, the ILO Minimum Age Convention (No. 138) that would categorize the different types of child labor and would classify the labor by age as well which would allow certain child labor depending on the form of labor and the child’s age (Dennis, 1999). The ILO Minimum Age Convention (No. 138) was revised 72 times over a course of three decades (Dennis, 1999).

These pieces of legislature were created to attempt to make the public aware that the most vulnerable children were being targeted and coerced into performing the most harmful forms of labor (Dennis, 1999). Though it would be easier for all countries to have the same laws regarding children’s rights, laws can vary greatly from country to country based on values, traditional practices, and legal ethics. When creating new legislature to protect children from harm, governments should consider different cultural and legal standards to assist other countries with
protecting the children’s rights and well-being (Dennis, 1999). Like previously mentioned, child protection laws vary from country to country also because the age of majority is different. The age of majority in the United States is 18 years old, however, in other countries, the age of majority varies from age 15 to age 21 (UNICEF, 2017).

Many nations including the United States have implemented mandatory school enrollment and attendance to ensure youths are receiving a proper education as well as protecting them from being forced into various forms of labor (Dennis, 1999). As of 2012, 174 countries had signed or sanctioned the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999). Because of implementing the act, all participating countries implemented laws the prohibit child labor that is harmful to children. Some examples of the type of labor that most of countries had banned included labor associated with sexual abuse, the use of machinery, hazardous locations, harmful materials, drugs, and any other form of labor that may cause physical or psychological harm to the child (Amon, Buchanan, & Kippenberg, 2012).

As of 2012, the ILO estimated that approximately 115 million children under the age of 17 were engaged into dangerous labor situations with rates of child labor being higher and worse in third world countries where children have less access to medical care and rudimentary information about health risks and ways to prevent injuries and illnesses (Amon et al., 2012). An example of the dangerous conditions that children are being forced into includes children as young as the age of 8 working in El Salvador at sugarcane plantations (Amon et al., 2012). Despite most countries having child labor laws in place today, human rights advocates continue to draw attention to the health risks linked to youths involved in various forms of child labor and child sex trafficking to make the current policies more effective.

The United Nations Commission for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice formed the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, in 2000, to assist with increasingly high rates of organized crime, primarily crimes related to trafficking. Hyland (2001) states this protocol was the first inclusive protocol to be established that included extensive guidelines on law enforcement intervention and policies regarding victim rights. The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (2000), includes a clear-cut definition of trafficking in persons, it contains law enforcement guidelines on how to intervene in trafficking cases, how to ban and prosecute trafficking, attempted trafficking, or an accomplice to trafficking (Hyland, 2001).

Moreover, the protocol includes the mandated border control laws to reduce fraud and transportation of victims, and addressing mandatory prevention procedures. Lastly, the policy contains a legal outline of victim rights associated with victim compensation, treatment, medical care, housing, legal assistance, and physical safety (Hyland, 2001).

The U.N. establishing this protocol was a large accomplishment but the policy was not created without flaws. Some adverse factors of the protocol include not being able to guarantee the victims will not be prosecuted that were coerced or forced into prostitution (this will vary on a case to case basis) (Hyland, 2001). Also, the protocol does not protect individuals from being deported. Additionally, it is possible that the victims that were witnesses to a crime that may be deported can be detained by law enforcement and the government for an unspecified time without vital services (e.g., counseling) or employment.

Lastly, if a victim is not a witness to a crime, there is no guarantee of their safety which is an unfortunate loophole in the protocol which can lead to further victimization for the victim if
they are not in a safe and secure environment (Hyland, 2001). This protocol unquestionably is a major achievement for the U.N. that has helped greatly with the prevention, assistance, and protection of victims as well as the prosecution of perpetrators. Further research and the continuation of growing advocacy organizations, the enhancement of government and law enforcement programs, and advancement of current policies and laws associated with trafficking will assist in improving the current protocol and expectantly will assist in eliminating any loopholes such as non-witness victims of trafficking not being guaranteed safety.


In 2000, the *Trafficing Victims Protection Act (TVPA)* was sanctioned by the United States to help fight against organized crime related to the illegal transport of persons across radical and geographical borders (Wooditch, DuPont-Morales, & Hummer, 2009). The TVPA was initially established in 2000, but has had many improvements since its initial creation with several documents apprises occurring in 2003, 2005, 2008, 2013, and 2015. The name of the act has also changed semantically as well. The act was originally deemed the, *Trafficing Victims Protection Act* but after many modifications, the act as of 2015, was renamed the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (JVTA) of 2015 (CWIG, 2014). The TVPA like the other anti-trafficking policies and acts previously mentioned focus on prevention, protection, and prosecution.

The U.N. has a similar policy that contains different definitions for sex and labor trafficking. The TVPA defines and differentiates sex trafficking from labor trafficking within the act. Each form of trafficking is treated and prosecuted differently depending on factors of the crime. The TVPA also defines involuntary servitude, debt bondage, coercion, and commercial sex act (Polaris, 2017B). The purpose of the TVPA is to improve the current criminal penalties
related to sex and labor trafficking in efforts to establish new and better protections for victims of trafficking in addition to making victim benefits and services more readily available (Wooditch et al., 2009).

One factor of the TVPA that differs from some of the other pieces of legislation is that the TVPA protects immigrants from being deported and allows them to remain in the U.S. by giving the victim a T-Visa. A T-Visa is a temporary visa that a victim of trafficking that can apply for that allows a three-year temporary visa, that can potentially become permanent, so that the victim can work for the time being in the U.S. or remain with their immediate family (Wooditch et al., 2009). The TVPA is immensely helpful when reuniting victims with their loved ones or assisting them with employment and finances before they must return to a country where they were born but may not be familiar with so this act helps the victim sort out their affairs before having to be deported, if they legally are to be deported and returned to the country where they were born.

Irrefutably, no single law or policy is accountable for the great achievements and massive strides the United Nations has accomplished. Collectively, the various waves of feminism involving conferences, movements, protests and campaigns has greatly assisted in the progression of women’s rights as well as empowering women to have laws reformed so that all men, women, and children receive the same rights, human rights. Additionally, the history of human and sex trafficking has greatly changed throughout the years. In the 1800s, trafficking regarding prostitution began with the history of the White Slave Trade and how mainly women were “working” as prostitutes (Attwood, 2015). Over the years, voluntarily prostitution and sex work changed from the woman being in charge to women and children becoming targets who
were being forced and coerced into committing sexual acts for profit with a trafficker or pimp overseeing the profits.

Though child sex trafficking is not by any means a new crime, there is very limited data and historical information regarding when child sex trafficking began and what nations were the first to trafficked children to be sexually exploited. While the history of child sex trafficking only is available as much as a few decades ago, the United Nations have made great strides in ratifying and modernizing child labor laws and child sex trafficking laws to effective protect the victims and ensure they receive the assistance and treatment they need while seeking justice for the victim by prosecuting all involved in the trafficking of the child victim.

**Literature Review: Profiling Victims and Traffickers**

*Profiling Traffickers and Buyers*

Understanding why traffickers abduct and sexually exploit children can potentially be very useful when establishing intervention techniques, forming treatment programs, and can be beneficial for future research and case studies to better under the reasoning behind why children are being exploited and how to effectively and appropriately support them in their recovery process. *Traffickers* are individuals who sexually exploit others (e.g., in this analysis traffickers exploit children) for profit (Jordan, Patel, & Rapp, 2013). The terminology regarding traffickers varies. *Traffickers* is a general term that refers to someone who supplies individuals who are willing to pay for sex with prostitute or child (victim). Traffickers are also referred to as pimps or madams (female pimps), gorillas, daddy, and some victims refer to traffickers as their “boyfriends” (Jordan, Patel, & Rapp, 2013).

Traffickers consider the supply and demand of child trafficking and then supply *buyers* (individuals who pay for sex-related acts) with victims who are coerced into having sex with
adults so that the trafficker benefits financially from the situation (Jordan et al., 2013). Though many sex traffickers and pimps exploit minors to obtain large amount of money, some prey on children and exploit them simply to have power and control of their victims (Jordan et al., 2013). Trafficking victims are bought by buyers for sexual motives and rarely collect any of the profits.

Traffickers threaten and abuse their victims physically, psychologically, and sexually to force their victims into cooperating and engaging in sex-related acts with buyers. Traffickers will threaten and harm their victims, or may threaten to harm the victims’ families, so that the victims will give into the demands of the trafficker or pimp (Blue Campaign, 2017). Many perpetrators do so by depriving the child victims of necessities such as food, water, sleep, fresh air, hygiene products, medicine, or weather-appropriate clothing (Blue Campaign, 2017). Individuals who traffic minors habitually make false promises of companionship, employment, offering to pay off debts, or provide shelter to manipulate and persuade the child into engaging in sex-related acts for profit.

Previously it was mentioned that buyers are individuals who pay to have sex with others; buyers are also sometimes referred to as “tricks” or “johns” (Shared Hope, 2017A). Researchers have found the children who are sex trafficked are more desirable than adults for two main reasons. First, the younger the child, the more likely the child is to be a virgin. Secondly, if the child is a virgin, the likelihood of the buyer becoming infected with an STD is extremely unlikely. Moreover, regarding female child victims, if the child hasn’t reached puberty yet, the child cannot become pregnant which is a major concern both buyers and traffickers avoid at any cost (Jordan et al., 2013). Since the use of contraceptives is not common amongst buyers, pregnancy and STDs are not uncommon amongst sex trafficking victims. Likewise, most studies have found that buyers do not usually view victims of sex trafficking as vulnerable children but
instead view them as objects; things to be bought (Meshkovska, Siegel, Stutterheim, & Bos, 2015).

Learning about the various ways in which juveniles are sex trafficked, reasons why offenders sexually exploit children, and studying the thought processes of these adults who prey on children can be useful for future research, intervention techniques, and possibly treatment methods for child victims. The more information that is obtained about the trafficker, the victim, and the abuse the child endured, the easier it will be for professionals to find the proper treatment for abused children ensure their safety and well-being.

Profiling Victims and Recruitment

Educating law enforcement, social workers, teachers, and other mandated reporters about what indicators to look for to be able to recognize victims of child sex trafficking is vital. Being able to identify victims or potential victims of sex trafficking can help with law enforcement intervening to help rescue victims or to stop children who are being groomed to be trafficked by knowing what signs to look for.

Child sex trafficking victims can be any age, race, gender, nationality, or economic status. Generally, there is no specific “type” of individual that traffickers look for when recruiting for sex trafficking such as appearances or ethnicity. The main factor that traffickers look for when recruiting children to sexually exploit are youths that are vulnerable (Blue Campaign, 2017). However, studies have found that 80% of sex trafficking victims are women and children and 50% of those victims are children (Deshpande & Nour, 2013). Traffickers typically seek out children who are unsupervised, have low self-esteem, who are easily persuaded or manipulated, or youths that are exposed due to homelessness (Deshpande & Nour, 2013). Homeless youth may turn to sex work “voluntarily” to survive meaning minors are having
sex with others to obtain food, money, shelter or drugs which is commonly referred to as, “survival sex” (Varma et al., 2015). Moreover, Varma, Gillespie, McCracken, & Greenbaum (2015) states children who have been abused prior to being exploitation and children whose parents have substance abuse issues are more likely to become victims of sex trafficking.

According to Varma and colleagues (2015) about 14% of runway or throwaway (children that have been kicked out of their homes by their parents) youths identify as LBGTQ and either left home or were thrown out due to conflict associated with their sexual preferences and self-identification predilections. African-American youths and youths that identify as LGBTQ tend to have higher rates of homeless youths engaging in survival sex (Varma et al., 2015).

Moreover, although women and young girls are primarily targeted by traffickers to be sexually exploited for profit, many boys who are abducted and exploited often are overlooked. Many assume only females are sex trafficked therefore there is little to no research or case studies regarding the numbers in which young males are being trafficked (Varma et al., 2015).

The following indicators are some of the more common red flags to look for. To start with, a main indicator that a child may be involved in sex trafficking is changes in their behavior. Typically, children that are being sex trafficked may appear to be anxious, depressed, nervous, fearful, withdrawn, submissive, or paranoid (Blue Campaign, 2017). Other physical and social factors that may indicate the child may be involved in sex trafficking could include: signs of restraints, abuse, injuries, the victim deferring to another person to speak for them, malnutrition, sleep deprivation, or lack of hygiene (Deshpande & Nour, 2013). Trafficked children may also make changes in clothing, will not have any personal possessions of their own, will not be able to leave by themselves or will not be able to interact with family or friends or may have an older boyfriend or girlfriend. Lastly, some final factors that may indicate a child is involved in
trafficking could also include having unexplained absences at school, frequently running away from home, lack of control over schedule, no identification or travel documents, or has coached/rehearsed responses (U.S. Department of Education, 2013).

According to the U.S. Department of Education (2013) some examples where victims of child sex trafficking have been identified have been associated with stripping, commercial sex, pornography, nannies, restaurants, forced begging, hair/nail salons, drug sales, and cultivation. In association with victims’ perceptions of themselves, perspectives will vary depending on the situation. Most trafficking victims do not consider themselves victims (Jordan et al., 2013). In situations where youths, usually teens, that voluntarily engage in sex work in exchange for items. Common items that are exchanged for sex include money, shelter, gifts, etc. Moreover, child prostitutes and many minors that are trafficked generally do not view themselves as victims (Jordan et al., 2013). Commonly, the victim considers the trafficker or pimp to be their “boyfriend” who provides the victim with incentives in exchange for sex-related acts. But youths that do consider themselves victims, engaging in sex work generally not a result of their choosing (Jordan et al., 2013).

The demand for sex with minors is still extremely high. According to Jordan et al. (2013), victims of child sex trafficking are sold an average of 10-15 times a day, almost daily, and usually do not get to keep any of the profits from being sexually exploited. The rate in which a child is trafficked in a single day may increase. For example, a child may have up to 45 potential buyers in a single day if there is a large event going on such as a sporting event (Jordan et al., 2013). With children being abused and raped that many times by various adults is not only extremely traumatic for the victim but makes them even more susceptible to sexually transmitted infections (STIs) because of being forced to have sex with multiple people (Jordan et al., 2013).
Victims of child sex trafficking suffer from numerous implications stemming from the abuse and trauma they have endured over time which will be discussed later in this analysis.

**Grooming and Trafficking Process**

Traffickers target minors through a variety of ways that includes social media, phone-chat apps, after school programs or clubs, malls, bus stops and depots, or through acquaintances that recruit for traffickers on school campuses and other public areas that youths are commonly found at that includes airports, hotels, or rest stops (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). Traffickers are opportunistic offenders. If they see a vulnerable youth near a shelter, a park, or even a store, it is likely the trafficker will either try to manipulate the minor into leaving with them or will abduct the child and force them into trafficking if they are targeting that specific child (Jordan et al., 2013). Traffickers used to be more discrete many years ago but today since the demand for sex with children is so high, traffickers will abduct children in public, during the daytime, and sometimes right in front of the families because the perpetrators believe the reward (money) is greater than the risk of being caught (Jordan et al., 2013).

Traffickers will *groom* their victims which means they are preparing them so they can sexually exploit them for profit (Shared Hope, 2017B). The grooming stage of child sex trafficking includes targeting a victim, obtaining information about the victim and gaining their trust, fulfilling a need or role, isolation, and abuse (Shared Hope, 2017B). Once a trafficker picks a child to target the individual will try to learn about the child then the trafficker will prey on the child and try to play a role in their life whether it be a boyfriend who profits money and gifts or perhaps as a caregiver who provides the victim with food or shelter. If the perpetrator is not able to play a role in the victim’s life and discretely engage them in trafficking, generally the situation will escalate to abducting the minor (Kotrla, 2010). The child is then isolated and “trained or
prepared” to traffic which may include sexy clothing, teaching them inappropriate things related to sexual acts, what or what not to say to “clients”, etc. Lastly, the abuse occurs, whether it is rape or some other form of sexual assault by a buyer or the trafficker themselves which generally includes other methods of abuse as well (Kotrla, 2010).

Commonly, when a child first enters sex slavery or are being groomed to be trafficked the pimp or captor will try to make the victim unrecognizable (Jordan et al., 2013). This may include changing the child’s appearance (e.g., clothes or hair color), their name, destroying anything that may be used to help the authorities or their families identify the child, and cutting off all communication from the outside world to keep the victim isolated which in turn makes the child more vulnerable, feel helpless, and less likely to alert others for help (Jordan et al., 2013). There are different ways a minor can be sexually exploited which may include escort services, prostitution, child pornography, inappropriate photo shoots, and stripping. Kotrla’s (2010) findings suggest in some cultures prostitution and engaging in sexual acts with minors is “culturally tolerable” or “socially acceptable” in regions such as Japan, the Netherlands, and even some parts of the United States.

In some regions youths, generally teenagers, engage in prostitution and other sexual acts in engage for gifts, money, and other luxuries because of the media glamorizing pimping and prostitution. Today’s media exaggerates and embellishes different forms of sex trafficking such as prostitution by including it in music, television and movies, video games, clothing trends, social media, and other forms of entertainment that is readily available to underage children to be exposed to (Kotrla, 2010). Like previously mentioned in the profiling victims section of this analysis, not all victims of child sex trafficking consider themselves victims. Many youths that are engaging in inappropriate and underage sexually activities in exchange for money, drugs,
gifts, etc. may not view themselves as victims or prostitutes or may not even consider what they are doing to be sex trafficking. Many youths that engage in sexual activities in exchange for something of value generally consider the “client” or “pimp” their “boyfriend” who gives them things in exchange for sex (Kotrla, 2010).

Although it is illegal and immoral for youths to being engaging in sexual relations for profit, because many minors that are voluntarily engaging in sexual acts are focused on the benefits such as money, they may not consider themselves to be victims. While there are many resources that contain information about the different perspectives that adult prostitutes and victims of sex trafficking view themselves, there is very limited research on the perspectives of how juveniles view themselves regarding prostitution and child sex trafficking. To deter youths from voluntarily engaging in sex trafficking, educating youths and the community (e.g., schools, social workers, parents, etc.) is important so teenagers are aware of the dangers and negative implications of trafficking (e.g., abuse, STDs, unexpected pregnancies, trauma).

**Literature Review: Consequences of Juveniles Who are Trafficked**

Everyday children are forced into sex trafficking and suffer by being raped, physically and emotionally abused on a regular basis (Deshpande & Nour, 2013). Although sex trafficking children is illegal, it occurs globally. It is an atrocious crime that takes away the youth’s freedom, rights, and many other things such as being able to enjoy childhood. The trafficking of children is a major social issue with many negative effects. There are numerous implications that victims of child sex trafficking are burdened by that stem from being sexually exploited. Sex trafficked children may be troubled by negative and harmful consequences that affect the youth physically, psychologically, socially, and economically (Deshpande & Nour, 2013).
Physical Implications

Traffickers commonly use physical violence to control their victims. Physical health issues can be either short-term or long-lasting consequences of physical and sexual abuse (Meshkovska et al., 2015). Some of the approaches traffickers will use to control and manipulate their victims to make them “compliant” include starvation, beatings, rape, exposure to extreme weather conditions (e.g., freezing temperatures), or withholding medical assistance when needed, etc. (WHO, 2012). Common injuries victims may experience if they are trafficked include broken bones or fractures, bruising, concussions, brain damage, unsafe abortions, or scarring (WHO, 2012). Additionally, other injuries and health issues that are less severe but common amongst children who are trafficked may also include burns, headaches, dizziness, tooth pain, scratches, or loss of appetite, (Meshkovska et al., 2015).

Victims of child sex trafficking are also at high risk of contracting sexually transmitted infections such as gonorrhea, HIV, herpes, chlamydia in additional to other gynecologic health issues (e.g., menstrual pain or irregularities) (WHO, 2012). Victims are also vulnerable and often exposed to alcohol and substance abuse by being forced to take drugs by their trafficker or pimp. Sometimes the drugs are used to calm the victims down to make them more “cooperative” or some traffickers will intentionally get the victim addicted to drugs (WHO, 2012). This often leads to issues regarding withdrawal from lack of availability of drugs or traffickers withholding drugs from the victim. Victims will sometimes overdose on drugs whether it is accidentally or intentionally (WHO, 2012).

When trafficking victims are rescued, generally they are in a vulnerable state of shock, confusion and fear (Kotrla, 2010). Ensuring victims receive medical treatment and other services to guarantee their safety and provide any assistance they may need to make the recovery process
as stress-free as possible (Kotrla, 2010). Physical and sexual abuse creates a tremendous amount of strain on a victim of sex trafficking which often leads to other multifaceted issues that often result in substantial adverse behavioral effects associated with psychological disorders and other mental health concerns (Varma et al., 2015).

*Psychological Concerns*

Psychological or emotional abuse can be just as harmful as physical abuse (Kotrla, 2010). Traffickers constantly deprive their victims of necessities which results in malnourishment, medical issues, negative emotions stemming from isolation, drug or alcohol dependency, and mental issues from being threatened or having their family members threatened on a regular basis (Jordan et al., 2013). Trauma and abuse prevents the child from having a health state of mind and makes them extremely vulnerable. Victims are susceptible to developing psychological issues and mental disorders. Common mental illnesses and psychological symptoms associated with sex trafficking victimization includes: anxiety, depression, mood swings, post-traumatic stress disorder, lack of self-esteem, sleep disorders, panic disorders, suicidal ideations, Stockholm syndrome, substance abuse issues, etc. (WHO, 2012). The longer the victim is held captive and exploited, the greater the risk of experiencing trauma and developing mental health issues increases (Jordan et al, 2013).

Treatment is vital for victims that suffer from psychological implications stemming from trafficking and other abuse to prevent the victims from responding in a “fight or flight” mode. *Fight or flight* mode means if the child does not receive appropriate suitable treatment for their needs within a reasonable amount of time they will most likely respond with anger or by mentally disengaging or by running away (Jordan et al., 2013). Jordan and colleagues (2013) found 76% of sex trafficking victims (no just child victims), suffer from PTSD which was found
to be coexisting with feelings of anxiety and depression. Kotrla (2014) recommends that treatment be established as soon as possible for the victim to assist with the trauma they have experienced to attempt to prevent symptoms from getting worse.

Social Issues

During the 19th century prostitution and trafficking (e.g., mainly women during this era), was concerned with “sex workers” and prostitutes damaging the overall health of the nation in the United States (Cree, 2008). At the time, many blamed women that were involved in sex work, whether it was voluntarily or not, for many of the social issues occurring at the time since they were thought of as immoral and were viewed and labeled as being wicked and corrupt (Cree, 2008). Though sex trafficking is still a major concern of public health, it is not viewed as being as taboo as it once was many years ago, depending on the region, since there is such a high demand for buyers to pay to have sex or rape children.

In addition to social issues regarding public health concerns, the transportation of trafficking victims is comparatively just as concerning. Although some children are trafficked in their hometown region, most children are transported to other states or countries (U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources, 2017). Traffickers will confiscate passports, state IDs, military IDs, and migration paper work to essentially make the victim immobile to prevent them from leaving by taking away their forms of identification (U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources, 2017). A major issue with victims that have been trafficked for a while is that it is more difficult to identify them and often law enforcement will mistake them for trafficking accomplice instead of victims. Moreover, victims are generally housed in poor conditions including sub-standard food, inadequate clothing, and unsanitary living conditions (U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources, 2017).
Not only are these children living in poor conditions but they are also being deprived of education and their human rights. Moreover, many children that are rescued continue to live with the stigma of being a child prostitute or trafficking victim and often struggle with receiving acceptance from peers and their community (Clawson, Dutch, Solomon, & Goldblatt Grace, 2009). Also, with trafficking victims being transported across state or national lines, it creates illegal immigration issues which causes concern for governments and law enforcement worldwide. Trafficking victims have little to no resources and limited options which are even more restricted for children which generally makes the victims more susceptible to abuse (Deshpande & Nour, 2013).

Economic Effects

Human sex trafficking has substantial economic effects for victims (IWPR, 2017). Like previously stated, child sex trafficking is a very profitable industry. The ILO has estimated that approximately between forced labor and human trafficking combined that traffickers have created a $150 billion industry has been created globally with about 20.9 million victims are currently being trafficked (Polaris, 2016). Of those millions of victims about a quarter of them are victims of child sex trafficking. The average trafficker generates about $250,000 in revenue from trafficking annually which goes towards the payment of debts or expenses for food, clothing, housing, and materialistic items. The victims received very small amounts of money if any (Polaris, 2017A).

Since trafficking has created cheap forms of labor and has resulted in sex becoming readily available to anyone. This then results in reduces per capita income of the nation and hinders employment opportunities, more so for laborers than sex trafficking victims (Human Rights First, 2017). Children are exploited for low wages but are forced into working so many
hours a day results in great financial gain for the trafficker, cheap labor or easy opportunities and access to sex with children for buyers. Meanwhile, the children suffer from various forms of abuse. Trafficking children in some regions contributes to poverty, homelessness, unemployment rates, high populations, high crime rates, and slow economic development (Deshpande & Nour, 2013).

Human sex trafficking produces great amounts of illegal profits which is powered by low arrest and prosecution rates essentially making the crime of human sex trafficking a low-risk crime (IWPR, 2017). Some of the ways in which trafficking effects victims economically includes wage theft, economic costs associated with various forms of abuse, lack of work history, restricts their already limited resources, and becoming involved in the criminal justice system. Economic effects associated with trafficking can also contribute to physical, psychological, and social consequences that victims of trafficking may experience (IWPR, 2017). For instance, if a victim is receiving only a small portion of money from being trafficked and they are experiencing depression and suicidal ideations from being the trauma of being trafficked that may lead to a drug addiction as a way of coping. Now instead of the victim using what little money they have for food or clothing, it is feeding their drug addiction. There are many obstacles and implications that arise for children who have been sex trafficked that may affect the children in more ways than one. The best way to help a victim recover is providing assistance programs for medical care, housing, education, treatment, and employment (Meshkovska et al., 2015).
Combating Trafficking: Agencies, Programs, and Legislation

Law Enforcement

Law enforcement agencies have a vital role in anti-sex trafficking efforts to deter, rehabilitate, and reprimand people who violate laws and norms determined by a governing society. Generally, law enforcement is the first point of contact related to the legal system regarding victims, survivors, and offenders associated with child sex trafficking (Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, 2014). When law enforcement intervenes with possible trafficking situation involving children, they are responsible for identifying victims of trafficking or children who may be at risk, informing victims of their rights, and identifying and investigating criminal elements related to trafficking. Other responsibilities of law enforcement include assisting victims with referrals for support services through the government and non-government organizations, providing protection, and conducting risk assessments to ensure safety of child and their family during investigation process (UNODC, 2011).

Ensuring that police officers are properly educated and trained to respond to child sex trafficking situations is critical. To guarantee the safety and well-being of the minor, many police departments are changing their policies so that victims are not being criminalized and offenders responsible for trafficking the minors are being arrested and prosecuted for their crimes. Moreover, police are trained to look for specific signs of trafficking and abuse to help identify victims (Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, 2014). With proper education and training, law enforcement can develop intervention techniques and procedures that are more effective and efficient along with having a better sense of what services to recommend to victims of trafficking.
Health Care Providers

Sex trafficking is a serious health issue that occurs worldwide that commonly involves other forms of child abuse as well (U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources, 2016). Health care professionals are medically trained specialists that diagnose causes of underlying injuries, diseases, and other ailments. Once the doctor has diagnosed the issue or concern in question, the doctor will make an informed decision about what treatment of services would best benefit their patient (the victim of trafficking) (U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources, 2016). Health care providers play a critical role in identifying victims or children at risk of child sex trafficking as well assisting victims medically and psychologically by providing different forms of treatment to meet their needs (Dovydaitis, 2010). Victims of trafficking are often raped, beaten, and threatened on a regular basis which can lead to some serious injuries and chronic illnesses.

Many health providers receive a specific training called SOAR training that assists in identifying signs and symptoms related to child sex trafficking (U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources, 2016). Social workers and any professionals involved in public health or mental health care can benefit from receiving SOAR training to assist their practice. The SOAR in SOAR training stands for stop (and describe the scope of trafficking), observe (and recognize verbal and non-verbal signs of trafficking), ask (identify and interact with the child who has been trafficked by using a trauma-informed approach) and respond (effectively to meet the needs of the child to provide critical support and assistance programs) (U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources, 2016).

SOAR training can be extremely helpful to professionals in identifying victims of child sex trafficking. Signs and symptoms are always obvious and can be overlooked if the medical
professional is not aware of what to look for specifically (Schmidt, 2016). SOAR training and other procedures and protocols have been established to help professionals determine if a child is at risk of trafficking or may already be involved (Schmidt, 2016). Common indicators that health care professionals look for during routine check-ups and examinations are malnutrition, signs of physical or sexual abuse, if the child is avoiding eye contact, not verbally communicating, lack of identification documents, or clothing that seems out of place (e.g., dirty, the wrong size, provocative, etc.) (Schmidt, 2016).

Although professionals such as law enforcement and social workers are encouraged to get educated about sex trafficking, some are required to, health care professionals can help with diagnoses by identifying illnesses (e.g., PTSD), possible broken bones (e.g., hair line fracture in an arm from being hit with an object, or infections (e.g., STD from being forced to have sex with multiple adults) (Schmidt, 2016). Health care professionals are great at detecting medical concerns but are also great resources to find appropriate and effective treatment that may include counseling, group therapy, AODA recovery programs, physical therapy, or regular dental or medical visits (Schmidt, 2016). Regardless of the victim’s needs, health care professionals are a vital part of the recovery process and are key in establishing a treatment care plan to prevent more trauma from occurring as well as illnesses or infections from worsening (Dovydaitis, 2010).

Social Workers

Social workers are a tremendous part of the recovery process for victims of child sex trafficking because they aid in raising awareness about children who are trafficked and assist with the needs of the child. Reardon (2016) advocates that social workers raise awareness by conducting presentations, trainings and conferences related to trafficking as well as sharing
important intervention or treatment information techniques with anti-trafficking agencies and advocates. Additionally, social workers are generally the point of contact for raising awareness in the community and professionally along with establishing multidisciplinary teams involving advocates, legal staff, law enforcement, and other professionals to assist trafficking victims as needed (Reardon, 2016). According to Kozak (2017), a social worker’s main responsibility when working with a client is to find a safe placement or reunify the child with their family if possible in addition to finding treatment programs deemed appropriate for the child to assist in their recovery process. Common resources that social workers help children with include placement/finding their relatives, education, transportation, employment (e.g., for older youths), setting up medical care, and counseling (Kozak, 2017).

An important thing for social workers to be mindful of is to not treat victims of child trafficking the same as victims of child abuse (Reardon, 2016). Social workers should not place trafficking victims in generalized group homes or foster homes deemed for children of child abuse without having the providers receive some type of training or experience associated with working with trafficking victims. Usually, generalized group and foster homes may not have adequate security or may lack appropriate programming services that meet the child’s needs (Reardon, 2016). Programming is critical, but therapy is not a one-size fits all. Victims of trafficking have a range of behaviors and responses to treatment. Group therapy may work for one child but art therapy may be more effective for another. It is also very important for social workers to remain patient, non-judgmental, and empathetic of victims of child sex trafficking (Reardon, 2016). For some it is hard to work with children who have experienced such trauma at a young age.
Conclusively, social workers and other agencies associated with social services assist with reuniting children with their families when possible. When reunification is not a possibility, social workers will exhaust every possible option to ensure safe environment is found for the child to live in. Social work is not an occupation for the weak-hearted, it takes a strong type of individual to help children who have experienced such trauma and abuse. Social workers assist with research and often conduct education trainings and present information about child sex trafficking to ensure others are aware of the prevalence of this issue and how it is effective children today. Though lack of funding can be a major barrier, social services ensures victims of trafficking are having their needs met to ensure the child’s overall safety and well-being. Another service and program that assists in combating child trafficking are juvenile courts and diversion programs.

*Juvenile Courts and Diversion Programs*

*Juvenile courts* are courts of law that have jurisdiction over cases involving children under the age of 18. In some states, juvenile courts are referred to as family courts that are responsible for presiding over delinquency and dependency court cases (JLC, 2017). For children that are first time offenders, non-violent, or whose behaviors stem from mental health issues generally are referred to diversion programs instead of juvenile courts. *Diversion programs* are an alternative to juvenile courts where the minors are still being held accountable for their actions but use rehabilitation and treatment instead of punishment to avoid the child having a delinquency record (JLC, 2017). Juvenile courts and diversion programs are generally associated with juvenile cases pertaining to prostitution, gang activity, drugs, theft, trafficking, delinquency, child abuse, neglect, and guardianship (CPPS, 2013).

Identifying victims of child sex trafficking can be complex. Traffickers and pimps target juveniles because they are a vulnerable and easily manipulated population to control (CPPS,
2013). Victims of sex trafficking are commonly forced into committing other crimes that may include theft, drugs, or recruiting other victims to be trafficked. When victims are committing crimes, it makes it difficult for law enforcement to distinguish whether the child’s delinquent behaviors are stemming from victimization or are a result of the individual’s own criminal intent (CPPS, 2013). Some factors related to delinquency or dependency cases that indicate a juvenile comes from a disruptive home environment usually includes lack of supervision at home, history of child welfare involvement, multiple out of home placements, family history involving domestic abuse, runs away, frequent truancies at school, alcohol or drug abuse, behavioral issues at school, and academic problems (CPPS, 2013).

The Center for Public Policy Studies (2013) states when a juvenile case is brought to a judge in juvenile or family court, the judge must consider all details of the case before deciding how to handle the situation; the judge must decide whether the child is a victim in the matter or should be charged as a criminal. The judge must consider all the facts of the case into deliberation that are related to the case of child sex trafficking or child prostitution which includes indicators and common signs of trafficking as well as screenings conducted by service providers (e.g., health providers, police, advocates) (CPPS, 2013).

Another factor a judge considers is who the trafficker is. The trafficker can be a “boyfriend” or pimp, a relative, or a stranger. It is important to identify the trafficker, especially in instances where the offender is a relative to ensure the abuse does not continue, that the child is safe, and to ensure their testimony in court is not manipulated (CPPS, 2013). Whether the victim (e.g., the child) enters a guilty plea or not to the trafficking charge is also considered when the judge is making decisions associated with the case. Additionally, certain protocols must be followed in juvenile cases involving trafficking (e.g., the child having an advocate present if
deemed necessary) and the judge should be utilizing local resources to assist with treatment and rehabilitation (CPPS, 2013).

After the judge takes all the details about the case into consideration, has followed proper protocols, reached out to local resources and services, and has heard the testimony from the child, then the judge can make an appropriate determination about whether the child is a victim or if they should be charged for trafficking (CPPS, 2013). Bean (2016) claims that despite legislation in the United States stating children are protected under various laws and policies such as the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (2000), some children still slip through the cracks of the criminal justice system and receive delinquency charges for child sex trafficking or child prostitution despite state and federal efforts to avoid such situations. In 31 out of 50 states children can be prosecuted for trafficking despite the current laws that exist that are supposed to be protecting children (Bean, 2016).

Moreover, if a child is adjudicated with delinquency charges related to child sex trafficking of child prostitution, a judge can order treatment and rehabilitation to occur in an out of home placement such as a group home or residential facility (CPPS, 2013). If a judge wants to avoid pressing delinquency charges but still seeks to assist the child with services and resources, the judge will utilize diversion programs such as community-based outreach programs that generally include some form of therapy, group activity, and a social worker/probation officer that checks in on the child frequently (CPPS, 2013).

Although a judge can place a court order for a juvenile to be placed in an out of home facility for rehabilitation or treatment services, there are many barriers and challenges that may occur that affect the child’s recovery process. The sort of barriers that can challenge a child’s
progress will be discussed in the program challenges and barriers section following forms of treatment for trafficking victims.

Advocacy Organizations


There are numerous advocacy organizations worldwide with similar objectives aimed at eliminating human trafficking. Some of the more well-known non-profit organizations associated with anti-trafficking include the Polaris Project, Not for Sale, the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST), and the A21 Campaign. The Polaris Project was established in 2002 and focuses on raising awareness to stop violence against women and girls who are involved in sex trafficking (Polaris, 2017C). The Polaris Project not only hopes to eliminate trafficking in its entirety but to assist with helping survivors, preventing more individuals from being victimized, collecting data, and utilizing technology to assist with identifying traffickers to destroy their trafficking rings and operations in the United States. Additionally, the Polaris Project also runs the National Human Trafficking Hotline that people can use to reports suspected or confirmed acts of trafficking or victims themselves can call for assistance (Polaris, 2017C).
Another well-known organization that fights against human trafficking is the advocacy group, Not for Sale. Not for Sale was founded in 2001 and originally began in Berkley, California at a small Indian restaurant after the issue of trafficking became more predominant which eventually led to the organization building a village in Northern Thailand (Not for Sale, 2017). Since then, the organization has expanded throughout the United States, Thailand, the Netherlands, Vietnam, Amsterdam, Romania, and Peru. The Not for Sale organization seeks to help women and children live freely without having to sell their bodies to support their families, save children from being forced into labor, and to have the freedom to eat and wear what they want as well possess their own values and respect for themselves and others (Not for Sale, 2017).

Not for Sale wants to help mothers, children, former sex-workers, and any other victim of trafficking become successful and remain safe without having to compromise their dignity or safety (Not for Sale, 2016). The most common way Not for Sale assists victims of trafficking is with the projects they conduct in various countries. In 2016, Not for Sale established a partnership with St. Clare coffee in Thailand to raise money for families who were struggling financially. The project was a success and resulted in 120 children being actively enrolled in school (Not for Sale, 2016).

The anti-trafficking organization, the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST) is also a large contributor to raising awareness of human trafficking and supporting efforts towards eradicating modern-day slavery (CAST, 2017). CAST was established in 1998 and are a Los-Angeles, California based organization that assists with services for victims, advocate for effective anti-trafficking policies and legislation, and support victims with their recovery process (e.g., counseling, legal services, housing, education) (CAST, 2017).
Additionally, CAST supports low-risk activism to raise awareness of human trafficking and seeks to make a positive impact in the lives of the victims they are assisting.

Lastly, the A21 Campaign is well-recognized anti-trafficking organization. The A21 Campaign was founded in 2008 and although the organization’s primary focus concerns human trafficking southeastern Europe, advocates from the foundation support teams in 11 countries including the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, and South Africa (A21, 2017). The organization’s mission and hope is to “rescue human beings everywhere from bondage and to abolish slavery, everywhere, forever” (A21 Campaign 2017). The A21 Campaign is best known for raising awareness about trafficking through their annual “Walk for Freedom” which is a global awareness event that occurs in more than 50 countries to support anti-trafficking efforts and to raise money for victims of trafficking (A21 Campaign, 2017).

Most advocacy organizations associated with trafficking tend to focus on specific regions or populations related to human trafficking. Some foundations focus solely on helping women and children while others may place their efforts towards helping sex-workers in third-world countries get away from the dangerous and unhealthy lifestyle of prostitution. Regardless, of what population of individuals the anti-trafficking organizations are helping, the advocates are placing emphasis on helping victims of trafficking who are in need to ensure their safety, well-being, refer services, share resources, and assist in any way possible to help victims of trafficking make a better life for themselves and their families.

Legislation

Anti-trafficking legislation is a key component of the fight against human trafficking, specifically child sex trafficking. Laws and policies are commonly updated and reformatted every couple of years to remain effective and efficient (U.S. Department of State, 2017).
However, there is very limited amount of laws that currently exist associated with anti-trafficking laws and the decriminalization of children associated with child sex trafficking. The legislation that the United States has in place right along with advocates, organizations, and agencies to support homeless youths, anti-trafficking, civil rights, and so forth is very broad and limited today (Human Rights Campaign, 2017). Although there are several laws and policies in place to assist with the prevention of trafficking, very few are explicit to child sex trafficking or human trafficking for that manner. Different regions also have different policies. For example, in the United States there are several federal laws associated with human trafficking but each state has their own laws as well. Currently, only 34 of the 50 states have safe harbor laws that prohibit the criminalization of victims of child sex trafficking and child prostitution and ensure specialized services for minors (Polaris, 2015). In early 2018, Wisconsin officials will be voting to try to pass a new policy, Assembly Bill 186, regarding Children and Families to also prohibit the criminalization of victims of child sex trafficking and prostitution also known as a safe harbor law (Wisconsin State Legislature, 2017). Safe harbor laws are laws that protect minors from being prosecuted for sex trafficking (Polaris, 2015). Current federal laws that assist with combatting human trafficking include the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, the Protect Act of 2003, and the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014. The following information summarizes the above-mentioned legislation as follows.

To begin with, one of the pieces of legislature that set the basis for anti-trafficking laws was the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000. Like previously mentioned, the TVPA (2000) was created to fight against organized crime related to the illegal transport of persons across radical and geographical borders (Wooditch et al., 2009). This law has been updated several times and as of 2015 it was renamed the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act.
(JVTA) of 2015 (CWIG, 2014). The TVPA like the other anti-trafficking policies and acts focus on prevention, protection, and prosecution (U.S. Department of State, 2017). The amendments to the TVPA policy has since made it accessible for U.S. citizens and permanent residents who have been victims of trafficking to obtain benefits and services without needing an official certification from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) (CWIG, 2014).

Another anti-trafficking law is the Protect Act of 2003. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (2017) defines the Protect Act of 2003 as a law that is intended to prevent child abuse in addition to having law enforcement investigate and prosecute violent crimes against children. Though this law is not specific to children who are being sex trafficked, it is specified to helping children who are abused like victims of child sex trafficking. This law also provides mandatory life imprisonment for sex offenders, is associated with the Amber Alert for missing children, implemented Suzanne’s law regarding missing reports for missing persons ages 18-21, prohibits child pornography, requires programs to run background checks on volunteers, etc. (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2017).

Lastly, the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014 is another law that assists in combating human trafficking. The Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014 was established to protect, prevent, and addresses the sex trafficking of children involved in foster care. The law was also created to assist with the extension and improvement of adoption incentives for foster children and improve child support recovery (CWIG, 2014). Most laws exclude individuals over the age of 18 but this specific policy applies to individuals until the age of 26 regardless if they are still considered to be in foster care. Additionally, this policy assists with identifying, tracking, documenting, and locating children suspected or confirmed of being sex trafficked (CWIG, 2014).
Though there are several anti-trafficking laws in existence, only two of the laws mentioned above are explicit to child sex trafficking victims. Most trafficking laws are generalized and include individuals who are trafficked instead of having different laws for children and adults who are trafficked or prostituted. Not all regions possess those laws and policies and some have exceptions. Some legislature that is pending and awaiting judgement and approval from congress includes the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevent Act (RHYTPA) that will be reintroduced in 2018 as the policy expired in 2013. The RHYTPA will reauthorize youth act programs funded by the government to assist with prevention, emergency shelter, transitional living, and resources (Human Rights Campaign, 2017). This act would be extremely helpful since many homeless and runaway youths because involved in trafficking and prostitution (which was discussed in the ‘profiling victims section’ of this analysis). With different regions having different state and federal laws it complicates certain processes. For instance, if a 16-year-old girl is arrested for prostitution, because of the laws varying from state to state, it will depend what state she is arrested in that will determine if she is decriminalized and considered a victim or if she is charged and prosecuted. Moreover, depending on the location, it will determine if the child will be charged as a minor or adult.

Concerns associated how variances in laws can be complex and will be discussed in the ‘common barriers’ section of this analysis. To make current laws associated with criminalizing human trafficking offenders and buyers and decriminalizing children who are being victimized more effective and efficient, it would be beneficial to many countries including the United States if the same set of laws were established across the board to rule out complications with arrest procedures, prosecutions, and other human rights and legal concerns associated with human trafficking cases.
Treatment Programs, Reintegration, Program Challenges, and Common Barriers

Though victims who have been trafficked may experience similar forms of abuse (e.g., beatings, starvation, verbal threats), not all individuals experience abuse or process it in the same way. Victims who have experienced abuse can have many negative effects because of the pain and trauma they have endured that puts strain on the individual physically and psychologically. The development of mental health issues is common amongst victims of abuse (Williamson, et al., 2010). In the ‘consequences of juveniles who are trafficked section’ of this analysis regarding implications related to child sex trafficking, several negative effects associated with physical implications, psychological concerns, social issues, and economic effects were discussed.

Children who are trafficked are commonly traumatized and left in a vulnerable state (Jordan et al., 2013). Some of the common disorders victims of trafficking are diagnosed with include substance-related disorders, conduct disorders, dissociative disorders, and anti-social personality disorders. To assist with behavioral issues, mental health disorders, and trauma in general, professionals utilize various forms of therapeutic treatment to assist victims with their recovery process (Williamson et al., 2010). Some of the common treatment programs used to treat trafficking victims include cognitive therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR), stress inoculation training, and group counseling (Williamson, Dutch, & Clawson, 2010). However, the current forms of treatment used for trafficking victims is not specific to juveniles only; there are general types of programming used for individuals who have been trafficked. There is no specific sex, gender, race, or age limit in which the following therapies are applicable.
Treatment Programs

_Cognitive therapy_ is defined as stimulating dysfunctional thoughts related to irrational or illogical assumptions (Williamson et al., 2010). _Cognitive-behavioral therapy_ (CBT) is like cognitive therapy except it combines cognitive therapy with the victim’s behaviors to create a therapeutic intervention to alter negative thoughts or behaviors (e.g., breathing techniques). Another form of treatment commonly used to treat trafficking victims is referred to as _eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR)._ EMDR is a technique that creates rapid eye movement by combining a combination of cognitive restructuring and image exposure (Williamson et al., 2010). Additionally, stress inoculation training is a form of therapeutic treatment that essentially is stress and anxiety management that uses various techniques including breathing exercises, relaxation training, and thought stopping (Williamson et al., 2010). Lastly, group counseling is a common form of treatment utilized. Litam (2017) defines group counseling as a form of psychological treatment where a small group of individuals who meet regularly with a therapist and interact and discuss their trauma and experiences with one another. Litam (2017) suggests group counseling is effective because it allows people to share their stories and gives them a sense of support and community.

Each form of treatment mentioned can be used for therapeutic purposes during a victim’s recovery process. Once a medical professional has completed a routine medical examination on their patient, the individual is further assessed for possible chronic conditions, dental needs, referral for sexual assault response teams, documenting an additional injuries or deficiencies, conducts a full psychological evaluation, testing for pregnancy or STDs, and then tests for substance use (Greenbaum & Crawford-Jakubiak, 2015). Once all assessments and evaluations are complete, the medical provider will make the appropriate referrals for medication or
treatments that are most appropriate for the needs of the patient. Ensuring a victim receives proper treatment as soon as possible is a vital part of the recovery process to help prevent conditions from worsening and to avoid further trauma (Williamson et al., 2010).

Program Challenges

There are many challenges that can arise while treating victims for abuse associated with child sex trafficking. This may include lack of self-advocacy skills or misperception about how services work or lack of knowledge regarding what programs are available (Edmund & Bland, 2011). Similarly, services may be hard to access or there may be a lack of family-focused services. Also, at time there are cultural or religious barriers that may make the process difficult such as a language barrier or disagreement associated with religious beliefs tied to a program (Edmund & Bland, 2011). There are also restrictions on shelter stays and a lack of housing available that is problematic but generally one of the most common challenges is when victims refuse to receive treatment (Edmund & Bland, 2011).

Furthermore, some additional challenges related to programming and treatment may include the appropriateness of services. Treatment programs are not a “one size fits all” for trafficking victims and professional need to ensure the individual is paired with a treatment program adequate to fit their specific needs (Clawson & Dutch, 2008). Also, the length of services may be a potential challenge. The program may be an effective program for most who enroll but if it is a short program, perhaps only a few weeks long, and an individual needs a long-term program that is more extensive, the length of the programs available may create potential challenges associated with the victim’s recovery process (Clawson & Dutch, 2008).

Moreover, lack of coordination of services can be problematic. This concern commonly goes hand in hand with misperception of available programs (Clawson & Dutch, 2008).
Generally, case managers are assigned to cases of child sex trafficking to find and assistance with programming for the juvenile. Moreover, the child may in care and receiving treatment for neglect, abuse, or mental health issues but the social worker may have failed to see that their client is involved in sex trafficking. If the child is being coerced into sex trafficking and being victimized, that is sometimes overlooked too by social workers (Kotrla, 2010). Occasionally, when social workers have high caseloads, case transfers, waitlists for programming or placements, do not know who to contact for referrals or consents for treatment, it increasingly makes the process of finding the child treatment all the more confusing and complex which can result in the child not receiving proper services or signs of trafficking being overlooked (Clawson & Dutch, 2008).

Lastly, many victims of trafficking and child prostitution return to their previous ‘lifestyles’ and continue trafficking. Victims may return to trafficking several times before any significant changes are seen. Juveniles involved in trafficking develop a certain pattern of behaviors and will continue to repeat those same behaviors until an effective intervention occurs (Greenbaum & Crawford-Jakubiak, 2015). Finding adequate treatment with preventative techniques to keep the child from running away or repeating past behaviors can be difficult which is why it is important to assess the child right away to find a program and placement that will keep them stabilized (Greenbaum & Crawford-Jakubiak, 2015). In addition, reintegrating victims of trafficking back into society with a ‘normal’ routine can be difficult. Ensuring the individual has a safe and secure environment that also meets their personal needs is critical (Jordan et al., 2013).

Generally, there is a combination of factors that prevent some victims from not receiving adequate or effective treatment. However, what can be done is professionals can continue to
conduct their research and obtain pertinent data and other resources to assist in improving ways to choose treatment for trafficking victims that is the most appropriate for that specific individual. When it comes to a lack of funding or program availability, professionals must ensure they are utilizing all resources properly so that resources and materials are not being wasted (Clawson & Dutch, 2008).

Determining what kind of services are needed helps immensely whether it is emergency services, short-term, or long-term. That is to ensure children with lesser needs are not using resources intended for long-term programming of children with immense trauma in comparison (Clawson & Dutch, 2008). Ensuring that all professionals involved (e.g., social workers, therapists, law enforcement, etc.) are educated about child sex trafficking is of utmost importance as well. If the individuals assisting a child is not aware of what programs are available or what processes they must complete, it cannot be expected that the child will receive proper treatment if the professionals themselves are uncertain of what do to.

**Common Barriers**

Barriers related to trafficking that commonly occur are often related to lack of knowledge associated with child sex trafficking, varying definitions, and alternate perceptions (Jordan et al., 2013). For example, it was previously mentioned in this analysis related to profiling victims that victims do not always perceived themselves as victims and therefore do not identify as such (Jordan et al., 2013). However, if a victim of child sex trafficking who is for instance, 15 years old, despite how the individual views themselves, most regions would consider the minor a victim of child sex trafficking because they are under the age of 18 years old and cannot legally consent (CDC, 2017).
One major barrier researchers experience regarding data is struggling to obtain an explicit number of child sex trafficking victims annually. Factors such as misidentification, tracking deficiencies, communication issues, in addition to low prosecution rates and high plea bargain percentages, all contribute to the complexity and complications associated with trying to estimate how many children are forced into sex traffickling each year (Jordan et al., 2013). Moreover, a very distinct challenge that law enforcement and social workers often come across in the field are minors who are not willing to disclose that they are being forced into and involved in child sex trafficking (Jordan et al., 2013). Juveniles often refrain from disclosing that they are involved in sex trafficking due to shame, fear, or trauma. However, when victims do not disclose their abuse, it can lead to further concerns that includes the victim to remain unidentified by state or federal agencies which prevents the child from being rescued or receiving assistance. It also can lead to the victim being treated inadequately or becoming at risk of being revictimized (Jordan et al., 2013).

Additionally, an issue that complicates things legally is the age of consent. The age of consent is problematic when determining whether to arrest and charge a minor for child prostitution because the age of consent varies state to state and region to region. For instance, the age of consent in the state of Alabama is 16 years old but in the state of Wisconsin the age of consent is 18 years old (Age of Consent, 2017). In most states, a 16-year-old is considered a child whereas an 18-year-old is considered an adult. With states and countries having varying ages of consent, it tends to make it complicated for law enforcement agencies and court systems when trying to determine if the juvenile should be charged or not and whether to be charged as a minor or adult (Jordan et al., 2013). Despite minors in most regions being unable to consent to sex if they are considered underage, in some areas juveniles can still be arrested and charged
with prostitution. Moreover, a study found that 40% of child sex trafficking victims and child prostitutes were treated as offenders (Jordan et al., 2013).

If all regions had a set of laws that were the definite across the board, for instance, all 50 states having the same laws and policies, it appears there would be less confusion when determining whether to prosecute a juvenile for prostitution in addition to charging them as a minor or adult (Polaris, 2015). As of now, the legal age of consent across the United States varies and like previously mentioned, although an individual may be considered a minor they still can be charged with prostitution in some states because of the varying ages of consent and because not all 50 states have the assembly bill that prohibits the criminalization of victims of child sex trafficking and child prostitution (Polaris, 2015). Only 34 out of 50 states have safe harbor laws to protect minors from being prosecuted for sex trafficking and guaranteed services (Polaris, 2015).

Varying definitions, terms, and perceptions tend to make matters complex as well. Most fields (e.g., criminal justice, social work, psychology) have their own interpretations of terms or perceptions for information related to human trafficking. This creates confusion and complexity when determining something such as whether a child involved in trafficking is to be considered a victim or an offender themselves. Moreover, ensuring all professionals associated with child sex trafficking, whether they are law enforcement, doctors, or social workers, is vital to ensure the victims are safe and the programs and services they are receiving are meeting their individual needs. Lastly, with a lack of trafficking, misidentification, and lack of victim disclosures, combined it makes it extremely difficult for agencies and advocates to help victims of child sex trafficking (Greenbaum & Crawford-Jakubiak, 2015). The best way to help these children in need to keep professionals and communities educated about the dangers and what signs to look
for and to raise awareness through fundraisers that can help with programming and research related to victims in need.

**Recommendations for Effective Intervention and Treatment**

As of now, current research as well as resources for child sex trafficking is inadequate; it is more qualitative than quantitative. The following are recommendations for effective intervention and treatment linked to education and training, programming, legislation and future research.

Primarily, it is important that professionals that encounter trafficking victims are receiving adequate education and training associated with child sex trafficking. Professionals that have contact with victims of child sex trafficking generally include law enforcement agencies, health care providers, social workers, juvenile court program employees, school teachers/administration, and advocates. These types of professionals are considered mandated reporters who are required by law to report all suspected cases of neglect or abuse. Educating these professionals about what signs and symptoms to look for is vital to assist with identifying victims or child at risk of being trafficked. Not all social work or law enforcement agencies require this type of training but trainings linked to trafficking are becoming more prevalent within agencies and the community. By teaching professionals what to look for if trafficking is suspected, it will help minimize further harm and trauma because too often children and overlooked and unidentified (Kotrla, 2010). Additionally, it is important for medical providers and social workers to remind law enforcement that the child is a victim, not an offender; that the child needs treatment not punishment (Greenbaum & Crawford-Jakubiak, 2015). If the officer does not have trauma-informed training, it is also helpful for medical professionals and social workers to relay any concerns with the child’s cognitive abilities to help them understand what is
happening as well as to reduce any fear or anxiety that the child may be feeling about any uncertainty associated with their case.

Furthermore, intervention techniques that have been found to be effective is to build trust and rapport with children suspected of trafficking as well as those that are vulnerable and at risk of being targeted by traffickers. Communication is key; explaining your role, the process, and ensuring the child’s safety tend to help relieve fear and anxiety associated with the situation. Get to know the child and ask them non-interrogative questions (e.g., school, activities, family life, friends) to learn about the child’s life and family background if possible. Being trained in trauma informed care techniques generally helps with this process (Macy & Graham, 2012). It shows the child you are empathetic and you’re there to listen and help. If a relationship is established with the child and they feel safe, they are more likely to disclose information. Lastly, it is important to share resources availability and make the information accessible. For example, the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline (1-888-3737-888) offers information in 170 languages and is available 24/7 which is helpful when assisting a victim that may be from another region or speak a different language (Greenbaum & Crawford-Jakubiak, 2015).

Most programming for trafficking victims are for adults. Programming specific to needs of children who are trafficked are very limited. Programming should meet the needs of the child specifically but since the age of consent varies as well as the age of program eligibility, it would be a good idea to place children in programming according to age, preferably, children ages 15 and under in one category and ages 16 and older in another since the age of consent in most regions is 16-18 years old (Greenbaum & Crawford-Jakubiak, 2015). Finding an appropriate placement is the first step. Generally, if the family of the victim is not located or deemed appropriate due to the child’s mental health or physical needs, the child’s social worker will find
them an out of home care placement that provides a safe, stable environment that provides schooling and treatment such as a generalized or treatment foster home, group home, or residential facilities (CWIG, 2017).

Moreover, lack funding and limited placements creates strain on social workers trying to find proper placement for trafficking victims. For example, Wisconsin has several facilities including Grateful Girls group home, Milwaukee Academy Residential, and Eau Claire Academy residential that specifically provide shelter and treatment for children ages 12-17 who are involved with sex trafficking (DCF, 2017).

Though Wisconsin has different trafficking programming options for young girls suspected of trafficking, there is no explicit programming for young males or transgender youth. There are many general foster homes and general group homes that take placement of males and transgender youth suspected of trafficking but as of now, there are no specific out of home placements resources available for those populations of victims in need. To provide services to all minors in need, creating shelters, group homes, and residential facilities for children that are males and transgender youth with assist in providing adequate treatment for them. Though the rates of young females being trafficked are much higher, there is still a need for additional resources. Additionally, out of home care placements should utilize intervention techniques and programming based on age, extend of trauma, length of trafficking involvement, and education associated with life skills, school, self-care, and job training. Not all trafficking victims have the same needs. Though general education about the dangers of trafficking and the importance of treatment or perhaps group counseling is beneficial, the needs of a 12-year-old victim who is in elementary school generally are not the same as the needs of a 17-year-old that is seeking employment or independent living. Utilizing group programming such as counseling or art
therapy can rehabilitative, but ensuring the needs of the kids are being met on an individual level is more imperative.

Legislation also experiences lack of funding and generalization regarding too broad of scope of services and varying policies on eligibility of services, age of consent, and whether to criminalize minors suspected of trafficking. Laws and policies associated with anti-trafficking and the decriminalization of minors involved in trafficking are not the same in the United States let alone globally. This leads to issues with law enforcement and juvenile courts correlating with arrests, prosecutions, and treatment program referrals, associated with trafficking victims (Greenbaum & Crawford-Jakubiak, 2015). Having numerous policies across the country complicates the process and blurs the lines in some situations about whether a victim should be treated as a victim or offender or as a child or adult. Most of the current laws need to be amended because they are too broad. All fields of expertise pertaining to child trafficking (e.g., psychology, law, criminal justice, social work, etc.) have terms and definitions that vary greatly. Since there are many interpretations of the same terms depending on which field of expertise is conducting the research that complicates things as well. For law and policy making purposes, all legal and government agencies should utilize the same definitions and explanations of terms to lessen confusion and prevent misinterpretations.

Moreover, as of now, Safe Harbor laws only exist in 34 states and those policies also vary from state to state regarding the extent of the scope of services and age of eligibility (Polaris, 2015). It would be recommended that all states be required to possess safe harbor laws with the same guidelines and agree on the age of consent for all 50 states to protect minors from being criminalized and to provide them with specialized services. Victims of child sex trafficking have been neglected and abused and need treatment not punishment. Therefore, government agencies
and advocates should be promoting safe houses and shelters instead of juvenile detention centers which can further create trauma and diminish their progress and recovery process. Additionally, by utilizing alternative or diversion programs such as group homes specialized in trafficked youth, it will keep them out of detention centers in addition the children avoid having criminal or delinquency records that could affect their future employment and education endeavors.

Lastly, the following are recommendations to assist with future research on child sex trafficking. It was previously mentioned that research and statistics explicit to children involved in sex trafficking is limited and resources are sporadic despite the high rates and ongoing rise of child sex trafficking. Continuing to research this topic could assist in determining substantial and exclusive information regarding the effectiveness of safe harbor laws and if they are helping reduce recidivism rates when the juvenile is decriminalized (Mehlman-Orozco, 2015). Moreover, supplementary research would be beneficial in determining which elements of treatment are effective to assist establishing new or alternative treatment and intervention methods (Mehlman-Orozco, 2015). Furthermore, future research in general would be valuable because Meshkovska and colleagues (2015) suggest most research that currently exists associated with child sex trafficking is argumentative instead of academic. The best approach would be to conduct future research with a multidisciplinary team that includes professionals from law, psychology, criminal justice, social work, and medicinal fields in to create an extensive research approach that includes elements from all agencies that are generally involved and work with one another on cases involving child victims of sex trafficking.

**Summary and Conclusion**

Child sex trafficking is a multibillion dollar industry that involve minors who are coerced and exploited sexually worldwide for profit but it is also a dangerous epidemic. Despite the increase
in awareness of sex trafficking that has occurred over the past few years and the creation of additional policies being implemented, the number of people being sex trafficked continues to rise (UNODC, 2012). Although human sex trafficking has been prevalent since the 1800s, the awareness and frequency of children being forced and manipulated into sex trafficking is still considered to be new in comparison. Most history that exists regarding human sex trafficking is specific to adult females.

Through the centuries feminists, advocates, and policy makers have held World Conferences for Women, protests, and have advocated for policy changes to provide empowerment, basic human rights, and equality for women and children. Moreover, there are numerous literary resources that explain the profiling victims, recruitment, and grooming process associated with juvenile trafficking victims that can assist agencies and advocates with creating new intervention techniques. Though there is inadequate research on profiling traffickers and buyers related to child victims. Most offender profiling focuses on pimps and gang affiliated trafficking and prostitution which are generally not the main source of child trafficking globally.

Most victims of child sex trafficking suffer from adverse childhood experiences that can negatively impact children’s behaviors as well as many other issues relating to the child physically, psychologically, socially, and economically (Hargreaves-Cormany and Patterson, 2016). Intervention and treatment are not only necessary but vital to rehabilitate juveniles as well ensure they receive the most appropriate treatment for the abuse and trauma they have endured. Currently, there are several forms of treatment available for victims of trafficking that generally include identifying and rescuing the victims and then providing them with medical and mental health treatment in addition to other support systems. Trafficking victims have certain needs that
need to be met, specifically their mental and physical health needs that generally include a stable shelter or placement, food, clothing, and medical and psychological care.

Professionals that assist with combatting child sex trafficking include law enforcement, health care professionals, social workers, juvenile courts, diversion programs, and policy makers and legislation. Generally, law enforcement is the first point of contact. After the police officer decides whether the victim is an offender or victim, they will decide whether to arrest and prosecute the individual for sex trafficking or prostitution or they will refer them to child protective services. If child protective services become involved the child will then receive medical care and then based on the child’s assessment and evaluation, referrals for services will be given as needed. Nevertheless, there are many challenges that can arise while treating children for such abuse which may include lack of self-advocacy skills or misperception about how services work/what programs are available, services may be hard to access, lack of family-focused services, cultural or religious barriers, restrictions on shelter stays, lack of housing available or discrimination against certain victims, or victims refusing to receive treatment (Edmund & Bland, 2011).

Although there are several laws in places associated with anti-trafficking and decriminalizing children who have been victims of trafficking, lack of funding and inadequate and generalized policies associated with programming and treatment is a major challenge which at times makes it difficult to meet the child’s needs sufficiently. Still, by collecting and analyzing demographics surrounding child sex trafficking and conducting studies, it will raise awareness of the issue and support further research which could prove to be supplemental for creating new laws and policies, interventions, trainings, and improve treatment techniques. Too often victims are overlooked or go unidentified and sometimes are misidentified so it is critical that all
professionals working with youths at risk are educated and trained accordingly to help rescue and rehabilitate children in need of services and intervention.

Conclusively, to help the fight against diminishing child sex trafficking, professional agencies, organizations, and advocates can help by continuing to raise awareness through public advertisements, reports and briefs, trainings, and conferences that are available to professionals and community members. Additionally, make services and resources readily available to victims of trafficking so they are aware of their options. Lastly, victims recovering from such abuse need to feel safe and accepted which anyone can provide by being compassionate and empathic of their experience.
References


https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/outofhome/


