

6-2014

# A QUANTITATIVE STUDY: ON SOCIAL WORKERS' AWARENESS IN IDENTIFYING HUMAN TRAFFICKED VICTIMS

Graciela R. Wangsnes Mrs.

*Graciela Raya Wangsnes*, [gracieraya@aol.com](mailto:gracieraya@aol.com)

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd>

---

## Recommended Citation

Wangsnes, Graciela R. Mrs., "A QUANTITATIVE STUDY: ON SOCIAL WORKERS' AWARENESS IN IDENTIFYING HUMAN TRAFFICKED VICTIMS" (2014). *Electronic Theses, Projects, and Dissertations*. Paper 94.

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of Graduate Studies at CSUSB ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses, Projects, and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of CSUSB ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@csusb.edu](mailto:scholarworks@csusb.edu).



A QUANTITATIVE STUDY: ON SOCIAL WORKERS'  
AWARENESS IN IDENTIFYING  
HUMAN TRAFFICKED VICTIMS

---

A Project  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

---

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Social Work

---

by  
Gracie Raya Wangsnes

June 2014

A QUANTITATIVE STUDY: ON SOCIAL WORKERS'  
AWARENESS IN IDENTIFYING  
HUMAN TRAFFICKED VICTIMS

---

A Project  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

---

by  
Gracie Raya Wangsnes

June 2014

Approved by:

Dr. Janet Chang, M.S.W Faculty Supervisor

Dr. Rosemary McCaslin, M.S.W Research Coordinator

Copyright 2014 Gracie Raya Wangsnes

## ABSTRACT

Human trafficking of adolescents is estimated to be a multi-billion dollar industry in the United States. Adolescents (ages 12-18) are at a high risk for being the victims of human trafficking and being sexually exploited during the process of human trafficking. Social workers are one of the human services practitioners who often encounter potential or actual victims of human trafficking in their social work practice. Thus, it is very important for social workers to be able to identify, intervene, and advocate for this population. The purpose of this study was to examine social workers' knowledge about human trafficking and their awareness in identifying the human trafficking of young women and adolescents in the cities of San Bernardino and Riverside.

The study utilized a survey questionnaire design with the use of the online software Qualtrics. Data was collected from 30 social workers who belonged to the National Association of Social Workers, Region F. Participants were asked of their knowledge and awareness about human trafficking as well as demographic variables. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data collected.

Participants in the study indicated various levels of knowledge regarding human trafficking, with 80% of the participants identifying forced labor or forced prostitution as a major part of human trafficking. Just over half of participants (53.3%) indicated that young children were not the most trafficked persons in San Bernardino and Riverside counties. The study also found that there was an

ethnicity difference in the level of knowledge about human trafficking. White participants were likely to have more knowledge about human trafficking than those of other ethnicities.

In order to have better understanding of this crime, and to be better able to detect, and identify these victims, the findings of the study suggest that social workers need to increase their knowledge about human trafficking, as well as their skills to better build rapport and trust. Another recommendation is that more training and advanced comprehensive education should be provided to social workers to increase their knowledge, awareness about human trafficking, competence, and effectiveness.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and above all, I praise God for providing me this opportunity and granting me the ability to proceed successfully. I also would like to acknowledge the support and advice received from all of my social work professors, especially my thesis advisor Dr. Janet Chang. I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you, for walking me through the processor of completing this research project.

Special acknowledgement, to my internship supervisor, Paula Alvarez, who supported, believed and empowered me. I also would like to thank my Statistical Analyst, Christi Bell, for her assistance and guidance in completing my thesis. A special thank you to my wonderful, supportive husband, who was always able to help reduce my angst over completing this project. Additionally, I would like to thank all of the NASW participants of this study.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	v
LIST OF TABLES .....	viii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
Problem Statement .....	1
Purpose of the Study .....	4
Significance of the Project for Social Work Practice .....	5
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	
Introduction .....	7
Theories of Trafficking .....	8
Victims of Trafficking .....	9
Victims' Needs .....	11
Services for Victims .....	14
Summary .....	15
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS	
Introduction .....	17
Study Design .....	17
Sampling .....	18
Data Collection and Instrument .....	19
Procedures .....	20
Protection of Human Subjects .....	21

Data Analysis .....	21
Summary .....	22
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS	
Introduction .....	23
Data Results .....	23
Presentation of the Bivariate Statistics .....	35
Summary .....	38
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION	
Introduction .....	39
Discussion .....	39
Limitations .....	44
Recommendation for Social Work Practice, Policy and Research .....	44
Conclusion .....	45
APPENDIX A:QUESTIONNAIRE .....	47
APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT .....	55
APPENDIX C: DEBRIEFING STATEMENT .....	57
REFERENCES .....	59

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Demographics of the Participants .....	24
Table 2. Basic Trafficking Knowledge .....	25
Table 3. Knowledge of Trafficking Activities .....	27
Table 4. Most Trafficked Persons in San Bernardino/Riverside by Age and Gender .....	28
Table 5. Most Trafficked Persons in San Bernardino/Riverside .....	30
Table 6. Typical Recruiter - Gender .....	30
Table 7. Typical Recruiter – Relationship .....	32
Table 8. Recruitment Methods .....	33
Table 9. General Knowledge of Trafficking Experience .....	34
Table 10. T-Test Group Differences in Overall Knowledge .....	36
Table 11. Analysis of Variance Group Differences in Overall Knowledge .....	37
Table 12. Pearson r Correlation: Overall Knowledge and Age .....	37

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Problem Statement

The widespread exploitation of men, women, and children is unacceptable to people worldwide who have an awareness of the problem. Trafficking in humans is through forced abduction by inappropriate means; such as forced, fraud and deceit with the intent to profit from them (Robinson, 2011). According to VandeGlinde and Joost, (2011), trafficked and exploited humans have existed around the world for thousands of years and is ongoing. Human trafficking, which is also known as modern day slavery, heinously violates a human's basic rights (such as opportunity to decide one's own future), and is a crime. According to The Trafficked in Persons Report of 2012, it is estimated that there are 27 million men, women, and children being trafficked around the globe, including the United States (CdeBaca, 2013). This number has drastically increased from the 2010 report of 12.3 million victims worldwide, despite the Government of Nations' involvement in stopping this vice. As reported by the United Nations Human Rights, human trafficking is one of the world's largest and most pressing human rights concerns in the 21st century (UN GIFT, 2013).

In a recent Polaris Project report (2013) human trafficking is noted to be one of the rapidly expanding money- making unlawful commerce in the world (Polaris, 2013). This is the reason why the United States Government and other

researchers are working diligently to update the estimated amount of trafficked victims, so that we may be able to identify them. The United Nations have compiled a list of indicators which should be investigated further, such as the potential victim not being able to speak on their own behalf; being monitored; movements being watched; appearing frightened; cuts; bruises; recurring sexually transmitted diseases; as well as children traveling with persons who are not parents or legal guardians (Hardy, Compton, & Mcphatter, 2013). These are just a few indicators to look for; therefore, social workers can provide much needed services. However, the ability to be well trained in identifying victims is difficult due to the covertly hidden aspect of the crime (McClain, 2010). Social workers and social service practitioners should have in-depth training to further understand the signs and symptoms of trafficked victims, in order to identify and provide tangible services to strengthen and empower these victims.

The façade of human trafficking takes on many facets; sex is just one element of trafficking that may also include forced prostitution and other forced labor practices such as in agricultural labor, slavery, domestic servitude (Hodge, 2010). While it is commonly believed that trafficking only includes sexual prostitution and other forced labor practices, organ harvesting is on the rise and is also included as a form of human trafficking. According to the WHO (2012) estimates, approximately 7,000 kidneys are illegally harvested each year in the United States; these victims are typically killed or maimed. Furthermore, researchers such as Frundt (2013) indicate that women and children continue to

be the majority of victims of sex trafficking. It is estimated that 30 to 35 percent of the victims are girls less than 18 years of age.

This paper will focus on how human trafficking impacts victims' physical and mental health, as well as social workers' knowledge of human trafficked victims. If social workers are going to advocate for clients, studying this problem is important (McClain, 2010). The United Nations has launched a Global Initiative to combat human trafficking and raise consciousness and cultivate collaboration with many entities to fight human trafficking (UN GIFT, 2013). It is important to understand that human trafficking is a global problem, which needs to stop and this type of human degradation of society must be abolished. In a recent Federal Bureau of Investigations report, Connell and Finnegan (2010) reported that the vulnerability of adolescent victims and their lack of decision-making abilities make adolescents between 11 and 19 years of age easily fall prey to online predators. These predators befriend and establish an emotional connection in the grooming process to appeal to their needs.

Adolescence is loosely defined as the years between 11 and 19, and it is a prime time in human development in which many physical and emotional changes occur. The developmental process of adolescence is a time of many rapid changes, such as cognitively, biologically, psychologically and becoming more aware of culture and society (Lesser and Pope, 2010). It is a difficult period because adolescents are not fully grown and yet not children either, they are trying to find their identity. Erick Erickson calls this a time of identity diffusion or

identity confusion, where they are not sure of their role. The goal is for adolescents to develop into a secure identity (Lesser & Pope 2010). This age group makes them more vulnerable, due to their trusting and uninformed nature. Online predators are using technology to facilitate their crime of preying on potential victims by identifying new markets (Harris, 2012). Trafficking is often also exacerbated by socio-economic problems, such as poverty, drugs, and runaways who are looking for a place to stay.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine social workers' awareness of and ability to identify and assess whether a person is a victim of human trafficking. It is important for social workers/clinicians to have the knowledge to identify victims and be able to intervene in response to the victims' needs; misidentification is a major barrier in providing provisions of services (Hardy, et al., 2013). The process of researching social workers and clinicians' awareness in identifying human trafficking victims may provide important insight for policy-making to prevent, protect, and prosecute human traffickers and eradicate this crime. The U.S. Department of State stated that, "victim identification is the critical first step in stopping this modern day slavery" (CdeBaca, 2013, p. 2). However, it was also noted that out of the estimated 27 million people living in slavery, only about 47,000 victims were identified and brought out of their enslavement.

Surveys are effective in collecting data; therefore, the researcher's instrument will utilize a multi-question survey to be completed by participants, who will be social workers from the NASW, Region F and at social service agencies in the Inland Empire. The instrument utilized will measure the respondents' ability to identify human trafficked victims. This study will be quantitative which will give the researcher an objective measure.

#### Significance of the Project for Social Work Practice

This study is important to social workers and other professionals who have the potential to come in contact with human trafficked victims. It is also of great importance to the unidentified trafficked victim; because social work is one of those unique professions that strives to place people ahead of profits. Identifying human trafficking victims, to liberate, rehabilitate and reintegrate into society is our goal. As a profession, social work values the importance of safeguarding the rights of others. Specifically, this research is also relevant for mental health providers at Family and Adolescent clinics in which clinicians can help with the psychological rehabilitation of human trafficked victims. As a profession we investigate and publish findings with respect for dignity and welfare of our clients. The social work Code of Ethics is meant to develop strategies that defend the rights of and establish justice for all people (NASW, 2008).

The theoretical framework which guides this research entails the merging of the economic theory, in which people commit crimes because they may have



perceived benefit which may outweigh the chance of being prosecuted.

Ecological theory is also a guiding framework for this research because of the person-in-environment perspective, the strength-based model, as well as social exchange theory, which describe the exchanges that take place between people (Liutya & Lanier, 2012).

Human trafficking can have devastating consequences for those who are being trafficked; therefore it is important to start with prevention, protection and prosecution of those who are the perpetrators of the unjust treatment of humans. Thus, it is important to start with social work professionals' ability to identify victims of trafficking so help can be provided to this very vulnerable population.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

In the last decade, there has been a growing awareness of the prevalence of human trafficking, particularly sex trafficking, of women and children, which include adolescents under the age of 18 in the United States (Hardy et al, 2013). The majority of human trafficking victims are minors with an average age of 14-15 years old (McClain, 2010). It is estimated that 27 million trafficked victims, of whom 50% are children, 80% of victims are female, (CdeBaca, 2013). This inhumane social problem has been brought to the surface since President Clinton signed a bill into law known as the Trafficking in Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, which helped victims who have been identified as being trafficked.

Societal influences of media, music and fashion magazines in The United States are tolerant and even supportive of human trafficking. According to Kotrla (2010), researchers theorized that American culture greatly influences the incidence and prevalence of human trafficking. The sex industry is glamorized through the media and incorporated into daily life through designer clothes, music, television, video games and the Internet. One can turn on the radio and hear songs about gangsters pimping girls and referring to them as businesswomen. United States sub-culture has grown tolerant of and portrays

sex as a societal norm (Pierce, 2012). Looking at theories of supply and demand and cultural tolerance can aid in understanding the human trafficking issue. In turn, this contributes in determining which services are needed to rehabilitate victims.

### Theories of Trafficking

Whitaker and Hinterlong (2008) provided a theory behind human trafficking. From an economic perspective, perpetrators look at victims as a way of making a profit. The human population is growing around the globe, “particularly in developing countries” (Whitaker and Hinterlong, 2008, p. 163). This creates a problem because there are more people than jobs available to support the people. Therefore, individuals who are very poor and need work become vulnerable to human trafficking predators and become susceptible to their exploitative business practices (Whitaker and Hinterlong).

Perpetrators of human trafficking offer employment opportunities in the United States, to which foreign and domestic victims fall prey. When they arrive, they are often put to work as laborers or as sex workers, such as prostitutes, actors in porn films, or strip clubs (Hodge, 2010; Whitaker & Hinterlong, 2008). While Whitaker and Hinterlong focused on international human trafficking, the problem is most prevalent in the United States. Runaway youth are an easy target to offer employment and perks to as enticement to lure these youth and then exploit them.

Kotrla (2010) adds to this theory with a supply-and-demand perspective, demonstrating that commercial sexual exploitation occurs because there is a demand for it. Human traffickers stand to gain a large profit for supplying human victims. It is estimated that the sex industry brings in between 32 and 91 billion dollars annually. Traffickers view workers as capital, commonly using them for prostitution, pornography, stripping, and escort services.

### Victims of Trafficking

Women and young girls have primarily been the main focus of human trafficking studies; however, men and boys can and do get trafficked as well. Rivers and Saewyc (2012) demonstrated awareness that “sex trafficking victimization is not limited by gender” (p. 163). There are limited studies on men and boys as victims of sex trafficking. Yet, population surveys involving youth on the streets has shown no inequality between male and female sexual exploitation. Although one particular study by Rafferty (2013) points out, “...girls are more likely than boys to be trafficked into domestic servitude, and boys are more likely than girls to be trafficked for commercial work...” (p. 564). More research needs to be conducted to understand male victims of sex trafficking so that effective interventions can be designed to help this overlooked population. It is also important to understand if social workers are able to identify male victims of sex trafficking.

Due to the fact that many of these victims of human trafficking are adolescents, the majority of adolescent victims are taken to juvenile detention centers. According to Kotra (2010), this is due to staff lacking proper training; therefore human trafficked victims are often not recognized. When the adolescent victims are released they are often placed in group homes, foster care or a residential treatment center for possible drug addiction. Due to many of the victims being from other countries, it is difficult if not impossible to locate their families so that they can be returned home. According to Jones, Engrstrom, Hillard, and Diaz (2007), globalization has made it easier to transport goods, service and labor into every continent throughout the world, as well as the moving of people for exploitation, such as emigrants. Especially, countries where there is widespread poverty, political unrest and have corrupt systems can become breeding grounds for human trafficking. Many of the vulnerable victims are promised entrance into the United States under the pretense of gaining employment and a false promise of a better life.

According to Polaris (2013), the U.S. Government Accountability Office estimates 600,000 to 800,000 people are trafficked across international borders every year. The highest origin countries of trafficked victims are from countries such as Africa, Asia, Latin America, Central, Eastern European countries, and the Caribbean. Belgium, Germany, Greece, Israel, Japan, Netherlands, Thailand, Turkey, and the United States are considered the highest destination countries for human trafficked victims. Florida, Illinois, New York, Texas, and California

were five of the states with a high number of reported trafficking cases. This is due in part because of the high emigrant population, international borders, and a significant number of ports and airports, which attract forced labor. In California, slavery is found throughout the state, but major hubs are centered around San Diego, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Sex trafficking among children remains one of the most violent, and prevalent crimes in our society. According to the San Bernardino County Coalition Against Sexual Exploitation, this is happening throughout San Bernardino County, the largest county in the United States. This topic is of utmost importance to social workers in the Inland Empire, particularly the cities of San Bernardino and Riverside, where human trafficking has continued to grow and evolve over the past several years. In San Bernardino County, street gangs have gone from trafficking in drugs and guns to trafficking the vulnerable members of our community, robbing them of their youth and freedom. The coordinator for the San Bernardino Coalition Against Sexual Exploitation (CASE) adds that commercial sexual exploitation is a problem that affects all ages in all areas within San Bernardino County. The CASE goal is to coordinate services specifically targeted at children, educate and create awareness in the public of sexual exploitation (CASE, 2013).

### Victims' Needs

Trafficking victims are in dire need of services such as housing, food and clothing, translation services if they are unable to speak the language, and legal

guardianship if they are under age. In order to build their lives they need to experience a healthy life, free of intimidation and beatings from their exploiter. Hardy et al. (2013) summarizes, when human trafficking victims escape or are rescued from their perpetrators, they are in dire need of physical and mental services as a result of severe beatings with potentially life-threatening consequences. Human trafficking victims in the United States have difficulty securing services; this is due to the lack of available shelters (Polaris Project, 2013). The Polaris Group researched the availabilities of shelters throughout the United States with beds, and found only approximately 1,644 beds, 529 beds exclusively for human trafficked survivors; the remainder for other populations.

Human trafficking victims have other needs in addition to the basic necessities. These include services in areas of mental health and counseling. Physically, human sex trafficked victims are exposed to and forced to engage in sexual acts without any regard to safe sex or protection. Rivers and Saewyc (2012) also pointed out that there are health concerns regarding human trafficked victims. Because victims are exploited for prostitution and pornography, and trading sex for food and/or drugs, they are susceptible to contracting various sexually transmitted diseases, infections, pregnancies and unsafe abortions.

Kalmuss (2004) and Roy (2013) report that forced sexual behavior is defined as non-consensual sex. Therefore, sexual health is compromised directly, as well as indirectly. The direct effects of non-volitional sex include contracting serious illnesses, such as HIV/AIDS (Kalmuss, 2004). Children who

have been trafficked into prostitution often experience mental health problems such as low esteem, depression, anxiety, and hostility: the same symptoms identified in tortured victims. Additionally, they suffer physical and sexual assaults, and are put at risk for reproductive illnesses and other health problems. Victims receive a small compensation such as a piece of clothing or makeup in return for sexual performance. If they become pregnant, however, they may then receive an unsafe abortion that can cause harm to the mother's short and long term health. All of these conditions pose a threat to the victim's health and life.

Victims of sex trafficking often learn about sex in a negative light, such as the "sexploitation" of those who are struggling economically. They believe that sex is a way to have their basic needs met. Kalmuss (2004) examined data obtained from the National Survey of Family Growth. A large sample of women residing in the United States, ranging in age from 15 to 24, was surveyed to find areas to improve health and human services and develop effective educational programs by The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The data specifically focused on women ages 15 to 24 years of age. The women were asked if their first sexual experience was voluntary or not. Results showed that one-fourth of the women had sexual relations despite not really wanting to (Kalmuss, 2004). In essence, the women felt pressured to give their consent under duress. This can negatively affect women's self-esteem and overall mental health (Roy, 2013). Thus, victims of sex trafficking are in need of



therapeutic services (i.e. psychological counseling, mental health counseling and domestic abuse counseling).

Pierce (2012) conducted a study in collaboration with the Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center. This center, along with the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, and Alexandra Pierce worked together to gather data on appropriate services for human trafficking victims. They found that victims were most in need of basic necessities, advocacy to obtain other resources (housing, health, medical, legal aid, education, substance abuse treatment), and mental health services and counseling.

#### Services for Victims

Various agencies within communities, such as law enforcement, hospitals, women's clinics, resource centers, social services agencies and domestic abuse shelters have become well aware of human trafficking in the United States. According to Pierce (2012), law enforcement comes across victims of human trafficking when they are arrested for prostitution. The Minnesota Office of Justice Programs conducted a study to find the number of victims who had received any kind of services within the last three years. Of the 59 service providers who have served this population at the time indicated, there were 30 adult male, 206 adult female and 134 child sex trafficked victims. The majority of the providers indicated that these victims being served were not refugees or immigrants Pierce, (2012). Law enforcement, nurses and social service providers were

interviewed. The study revealed that most of the personnel had heard stories about girls being arrested for prostitution in certain cities. These results demonstrated that most service providers do not truly understand the prevalence of human trafficking, because of the clandestine nature of the crime (Pierce, 2012).

A case study conducted by Gozdiak and MacDonnel (2007) investigated the deficiency and service disparities in the established care for adolescence victims of trafficking in the United States. They state that typically, victimized children go nameless and do not receive the assistance planned to help them escape from their captors and restore themselves into mainstream society (Gozdiak & MacDonnel, 2007). Implementing and evaluating education in training that specifically focuses on human trafficking victims will lead to more informed policies to abolish modern day slavery. This again illustrates the importance of assessing social workers' knowledge and ability to identify victims of human trafficking.

### Summary

This chapter covered the important elements in understanding theories of human trafficking and the victims of human trafficking. The needs of trafficking victims were discussed, as were the agencies currently involved in providing service to this vulnerable population. The literature demonstrates a gap both in services and in the specific knowledge of victims of human trafficking, illustrating

the important for understanding social workers' knowledge of and ability to identify victims of human trafficking.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODS

#### Introduction

In this chapter, an overview of the research methods used during the course of the study is presented. The design of the study, the sampling methods used, the data collection process and specifics regarding the instrument will be discussed. Efforts to protect the anonymity of the participants and confidentiality of the data will be covered. Lastly, a discussion of the methods used to analyze the data will conclude this chapter.

#### Study Design

The purpose of this study was to examine social workers' awareness and ability to identify and assess victims of human trafficking. This particular study utilized a quantitative exploratory design, as previous research has not examined social workers' knowledge of and ability to identify this population. According to Rubin and Babbie (2010), the goal of a quantitative descriptive study is to describe the characteristics of a specific population, such as social workers. The quantitative approach is knowledge building, and its great strength is providing data that is descriptive, and gives us a better understanding of social reality (Rubin & Babbie) 2010). For the purpose of this study, the research question was: what is the level of social workers' knowledge and ability to identify victims

of human trafficking? The dependent variables were social workers' knowledge of victims of human trafficking as well as the social workers' ability to identify victims of human trafficking. Independent variables of interest were level of education such as BASW, MSW, and LCSW, years of practice, experience with this population, gender, level of training, and location of training.

The following hypotheses have been developed:

1. There is no difference in social workers' knowledge of trafficking victims based on level of education.
2. There is no relationship between years of practice and social workers' knowledge of trafficking victims .
3. There is no difference between training and experience and social workers' knowledge of trafficking victims.
4. There is no difference in knowledge of trafficking victims between genders.

### Sampling

The sample was comprised of 3 social workers employed at mental and social service agencies in the cities of San Bernardino and Riverside, California. The survey was administered through Qualtrics and was distributed on- line to the NASW, Inland Empire Chapter F. An ideal sample size would have comprised of 100 participants; however, due to time constraints a sample of 30 was obtained and participants completed the survey completely. Participants

were chosen based on their profession within social service agencies in the aforementioned cities. The participants were recruited through the use of notification of the study through email, which contained a link to the online survey. Permission to contact social workers within the aforementioned agencies will be obtained from the National Association of Social Worker, Inland Empire Chapter F.

### Data Collection and Instrument

The specific data that was collected, by a self-administered online survey questionnaire, included social workers' knowledge of human trafficking victims; additionally, their ability to identify these victims was assessed. A questionnaire to measure the participants' knowledge and ability to identify this population was used (Test your knowledge about trafficking, 2003). The participants were asked several questions to assess social workers' knowledge, created for the purposes of this study. Due to time constraints the reliability and validity of this instrument was not tested.

Participants answered multiple-choice questions in which they could choose all of the answers that applied. The instrument measured knowledge of this population. The survey was posted online using Qualtrics online survey questionnaire, and the data was collected through this online survey software. I used the SPSS software design to analyze my data.

The benefit of using an online survey is that participants have the ability to respond from any computer available and may do so at a time of convenience. This makes the prospective participants more likely to participate. One limitation of using an online survey is the possibility of technical difficulties, which may arise while a participant is completing the survey, see Appendix A for the complete Data Collection Instrument. This study is designed to learn more about social workers' awareness of human trafficking. There were no right or wrong answers, and all responses remained anonymous.

### Procedures

An email containing the recruitment script was sent to the NASW Chair of the Inland Empire region. Prospective participants were provided with a link to the online survey through the assistance of Jan Griffith, the co-chair of NASW, Region F. Upon clicking the link, participants were directed to an informed consent disclosing the nature of the study and were asked to indicate their consent by checking a box. Once the participants checked the box, they were directed to a demographics page asking questions about their job title, level of education including professional licenses, number of years in the profession, and if they have, to their knowledge, ever worked with human trafficking victims. Participants were then directed to the questionnaire. Once the participants completed the questionnaire they were directed to a debriefing statement and thanked for their participation (Appendix C).

Participants were able to choose the time and place they took the survey. The data was collected via Qualtrics and was stored on a secure flash drive in the possession of the researcher. The estimated time for collecting data was approximately one month.

### Protection of Human Subjects

Before embarking on the study, the researcher obtained informed consent from the participants. This process is a vital component in the research process. Researchers must educate potential subjects to ensure that they can reach a truly informed decision about whether or not to participate in the research. Their informed consent must be given freely, without coercion, and must be based on a clear understanding of what participation involves. The informed consent was uploaded to the NASW Regional co-Chairperson, who distributed it to its members. The participants were able to read the informed consent document before taking the survey (see Appendix B).

### Data Analysis

The study utilized descriptive quantitative data analysis techniques to analyze the participants' response. It included frequency distribution and measures of the means. The data analyzed includes univariate data to describe the characteristics of the sample. Additionally, the data evaluated social workers' knowledge of and ability to identify victims of human trafficking.



The variables of interest were social workers' knowledge regarding human trafficking victims, social workers' ability to identify human trafficking victims, level of education, years of practice, experience working with clients, training, and gender.

### Summary

This chapter covered the important aspects of study design and sampling. A description of the sample was provided as well as the variables under examination. The methods of data collection and the procedure to be used were discussed as well. A discussion of the instrument to be designed and used was discussed as well as the methods employed to protect the participants. Lastly, the methods, which will be used to interpret and analyze the data, were included.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

#### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine social workers' knowledge in identifying trafficked victims. This researcher will discuss the results from various analyses that were performed. First the researcher will discuss the demographic characteristics of the participants. Second, the researcher will look at social workers knowledge of trafficked victims as well as social workers education level. Third, the researcher will discuss the age of the participants and the number of years employed as a social worker. Findings for this data analysis were generated from SPSS.

#### Data Results

The sample was comprised of NASW members from Region F. The sample was largely comprised of females (70.0%) with six males (20.0%). Three participants (10.0%) chose not to answer that question. The ages of the participants ranged from 23 to 77 ( $M = 40.21$ ,  $SD = 15.85$ ) with the average age being 40 years old. At least half (50.0%) of the participants had their MSW or other Master's Degree, with 33% having their BSW or Bachelor's Degree (33.3%). The sample was predominately Latino (60.0%). The average number of years in practice was just under 11 years ( $M = 11.00$ ,  $SD = 11.30$ ), with one

year being the minimum number of years in practice and 45 years being the maximum number of years (See Table 1).

Table 1. *Demographics of the Participants*

	Frequency N	Percent %	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>Gender</b>				
No Response	3	10.0		
Male	6	20.0		
Female	21	70.0		
<b>Age (in years)</b>			40.21	15.847
<b>Highest Level of Education</b>				
BASW/BA	10	33.3		
MSW/MA	15	50.0		
Other	1	3.3		
No Response	4	13.3		
<b>Ethnicity</b>				
Latino	18	60.0		
White	5	16.7		
Other	4	13.3		
No Response	3	10.0		
<b>Number of Years Working in Social Work Field</b>			10.90	11.291

The great majority of participants (96.7%) did not agree with this statement, meaning that they do not feel the definition of trafficking is confusing or unclear;

they understand it. Only one person (3.3%) felt that the term was confusing and unclear. Additionally, twenty-nine people (96.7%) did not agree with the question as to whether they know the difference between trafficking and forced migration. They are sure about the difference between trafficking and forced migration. Only one person (3.3%) isn't sure about the difference between trafficking and forced migration. Eighteen people (60.0%) don't think of trafficking in persons as synonymous with smuggling. Twelve people (40.0%) do think of trafficking in persons as synonymous with smuggling. Fourteen people (46.7%) answered false to this question meaning that they do not understand the act that "trafficking in persons" defines. Over half (53.3%) of participants answered true to this statement meaning that they do understand the act that the term "trafficking in persons" defines (See Table 2).

Table 2. *Basic Trafficking Knowledge*

	Frequency N	Percent %
Trafficking in Persons – Definition Unclear		
False	29	96.7
True	1	3.3
Trafficking and Forced Migration		
False	29	96.7
True	1	3.3
Trafficking and Smuggling		
False	18	60.0
True	12	40
Understand the Act of Trafficking		
False	14	46.7
True	16	53.3

The questionnaire examined participants' knowledge regarding the different types of activities involved in human trafficking. Most of the participants (80.0%) identified exploitation as being part of human trafficking. Most of the participants (76.7%) identified that trafficking involves abuse of power on the part of the trafficker and a position of vulnerability for the trafficked person. Nearly 87.0% of participants identified as a transfer of reception as being part of human trafficking, which means, receiving, and relocating of the exploited victims. Most of the participants (76.7%) identified crossing of international borders as being part of trafficking.

Slightly over half (56.7%) of participants did not identify gaining consent to cross an international border as being part of trafficking. Twenty-one (70.0%) participants identified movement within borders as being part of trafficking. One half (50.0%) of the participants identified trafficking as including voluntary migration for sex work. A majority of participants (80.0%) of participants identified as trafficking including forced labor or forced prostitution. Seventy-six percent identified trafficking as involving restriction of personal freedom.

Confiscation of legal identity was identified by a majority (76.7%) of participants as being part of trafficking. Twenty-three participants (76.7%) identified trafficking as including involuntary servitude or slavery, and 80.0% of participants identified violence or threat of violence as being part of trafficking. Debt bondage was identified by twenty-two (73.3%) of participants as being part of trafficking (See Table 3).

Table 3. *Knowledge of Trafficking Activities*

	Frequency N	Percent %
<b>Exploitation</b>		
False	6	20.0
True	24	80.0
<b>Abuse of Power/Position of Vulnerability</b>		
False	7	23.3
True	23	76.7
<b>Transfer of Reception</b>		
False	4	13.3
True	26	86.7
<b>Crossing of International Borders</b>		
False	7	23.3
True	23	76.7
<b>Consent to Cross Border</b>		
False	17	56.7
True	13	43.3
<b>Movement within Borders</b>		
False	9	30.0
True	21	70.0
<b>Voluntary Migration for Sex Work</b>		
False	15	50.0
True	15	50.0
<b>Forced Labor/Forced Prostitution</b>		
False	6	20.0
True	24	80.0
<b>Restriction of Personal Freedom</b>		
False	7	23.3
True	23	76.7
<b>Confiscation of Legal Identity</b>		
False	7	23.3
True	23	76.7
<b>Involuntary servitude/Slavery</b>		
False	7	23.3
True	23	76.7
<b>Violence/Threat of Violence</b>		
False	6	20.0
True	24	80.0
<b>Debt Bondage</b>		
False	8	26.7
True	22	73.3

The majority of participants (80.0%) correctly identified that women over age 30 were not the most trafficked persons in San Bernardino and Riverside counties. The majority of participants (80.0%) were also able to correctly identify that teenage girls between the ages of 14 and 17 were the most trafficked persons in San Bernardino and Riverside counties. Twenty-five participants (83.3%) indicated that teenage boys between the ages of 14 – 17 were not the most trafficked persons in San Bernardino and Riverside counties. Additionally, twenty-five participants (83.3%) indicated that middle aged men were not the most trafficked persons in San Bernardino and Riverside counties. Just over half of participants (53.3%) indicated that young children are not the most trafficked persons in San Bernardino and Riverside counties (See Table 4).

Table 4. *Most Trafficked Persons in San Bernardino/Riverside by Age and Gender*

	Frequency N	Percentage %
<b>Women over 30</b>		
False	24	80.0
True	6	20.0
<b>Teenage Girls 14 – 17</b>		
False	6	20.0
True	24	80.0
<b>Teenage Boys 14 – 17</b>		
False	25	83.3
True	5	16.7
<b>Middle Aged Men</b>		
False	25	83.3
True	5	16.7
<b>Young Children</b>		
False	16	53.3
True	14	46.7

A majority of participants (70.0%) identified that uneducated persons were more trafficked than those with a university degree. Four (13.3%) participants identified that both levels of education were equally likely to be trafficked. Over half of respondents (53.3%) identified that a poor or low socioeconomic status was a consistent factor of the most trafficked persons in San Bernardino and Riverside counties. In terms of family status, 47.0% felt that the most trafficked persons in San Bernardino and Riverside counties could come from many different family situations. In regards to employment half (50.0%) of participants chose not to respond. Of those who did respond, 13 participants identified that those who had never worked before comprised the population of the most trafficked people in San Bernardino and Riverside counties (See Table 5).

A half of participants (50.0%) identified that both men and women were just as likely to be recruiters as a man (16.7%) or woman (6.7%). Two participants identified that a female or male and female team were likely to be typical trafficking recruiters. Another two participants identified that it could be any a man and woman singly or as a team could be typical recruiters of trafficked persons (See Table 6).



Table 5. *Most Trafficked Persons in San Bernardino/Riverside*

	Frequency N	Percentage %
<b>Education</b>		
No Response	4	13.3
Uneducated	21	70.0
University Graduates	1	3.3
Both	4	13.3
<b>Socioeconomic Status</b>		
No Response	3	10.0
Poor	16	53.3
Poor and Average	7	23.3
All of the Above (poor, average, well off)	4	13.3
<b>Family Status</b>		
No Response	9	30.0
Nuclear Family	5	16.7
Single Mothers	1	3.3
Multiple Family Status Options	14	46.7
All of the Above	1	3.3
<b>Employment</b>		
No Response	15	50.0
Never Worked Before	13	43.3
Professional Degree	0	0
Both	2	6.7

Table 6. *Typical Recruiter - Gender*

	Frequency N	Percentage %
No Response	4	13.3
Female	2	6.7
Male	5	16.7
Male and Female	15	50.0
Female and Male & Female	2	6.7
All of the Above	2	6.7

Slightly less than half (43.3%) of participants identified that an acquaintance of a person was a likely recruiter of trafficked persons. Fourteen participants (46.7%) thought it likely that a stranger would be a trafficking recruiter. Even fewer participants (26.7%) identified a friend as a possible recruiter, and just over half of participants (53.3%) identified a boyfriend as a possible recruiter. A majority of participants (70.0%) did not think it likely that a neighbor or a family friend would be trafficking recruiter. Even fewer participants (23.3%) thought it likely that a relative would be a recruiter of trafficked persons. Very few participants (16.7%) identified a husband as a likely recruiter of trafficked persons and even fewer participants (10.0%) thought a child would be a trafficking recruiter. Five participants thought a private company would recruit individuals for trafficking (Table 7).

The great majority of the participants (80.0%) answered “False Job Promise” to be the main method to recruit people for trafficking. Kidnapping (66.7%) followed second in choice as a recruitment style used by human traffickers. Two of the choices: “False Invitation Abroad” (63.3%) and “False Travel Arrangements” (60.0%) chose this as another method of luring their victim into human trafficking. The number of participants was closely divided with “Genuine Promise of Legal Employment” as a means to lure victims and “False Promise of Marriage” (See Table 8).

Table 7. *Typical Recruiter – Relationship*

	Frequency N	Percentage %
<b>Acquaintance</b>		
False	17	56.7
True	13	43.3
<b>Stranger</b>		
False	16	53.3
True	14	46.7
<b>Friend</b>		
False	22	73.3
True	8	26.7
<b>Boyfriend</b>		
False	14	46.7
True	16	53.3
<b>Neighbor/Family Friend</b>		
False	21	70.0
True	9	30.0
<b>Relative</b>		
False	23	76.7
True	7	23.3
<b>Husband</b>		
False	25	83.3
True	5	16.7
<b>Child</b>		
False	27	90.0
True	3	10.0
<b>Private Company</b>		
False	25	83.3
True	5	16.7

Table 8. *Recruitment Methods*

	Frequency N	Percentage %
<b>Kidnapping</b>		
False	10	33.3
True	20	66.7
<b>False Job Promise</b>		
False	6	20.0
True	24	80.0
<b>False Invitation Abroad</b>		
False	11	36.7
True	19	63.3
<b>False Travel Arrangements</b>		
False	12	40.0
True	18	60.0
<b>False Promise of Marriage</b>		
False	16	53.3
True	14	46.7
<b>Genuine Promise of Legal Employment</b>		
False	14	46.7
True	16	53.3

The participants believe there is always an element of mistreatment linked to human trafficking, even though their opinions vary as to what kind of abuse victims can, or do receive. The top two most utilized in human trafficking situations , as selected by the participants were: “Personal Belongings, Passports, and Money are Seized”, (80.0%), and “Experience Sexual Abuse by Traffickers or their Friends” (80.0%). Three other choices “Experience Mental Abuse”, “Forced to Share Poor Accommodations and Food”, and “Kept Locked in Accommodations When Not Working” equally shared the same opinion (76.7%) of True, victims can also experience these kinds of abuse (See Table 9).

Table 9. *General Knowledge of Trafficking Experience*

	Frequency N	Percentage %
<b>Maintain Control and Can Escape</b>		
False	28	93.3
True	2	6.7
<b>Experience Lack of Control Over Movements</b>		
False	8	26.7
True	22	73.3
<b>Treated Kindly and With Respect</b>		
False	30	100.0
True	0	0.0
<b>Personal Belongings, Passports, and Money are Seized</b>		
False	6	20.0
True	24	80.0
<b>Experience Mental Abuse</b>		
False	7	23.3
True	23	76.7
<b>Experience Sexual Abuse by Traffickers or their Friends</b>		
False	6	20.0
True	24	80.0
<b>Forced to Share Poor Accommodations and Food</b>		
False	7	23.3
True	23	76.7
<b>Kept Locked in Accommodations When Not Working</b>		
False	7	23.3
True	23	23.3
<b>Never Forced to Have Unprotected Sex</b>		
False	28	93.3
True	2	6.7
<b>Almost Never Physically Abused</b>		
False	28	93.3
True	2	6.7
<b>Make Conscious Decision to go Abroad for a Better Life</b>		
No Response	3	10.0
False	13	43.3
True	14	46.7
<b>Trafficked Persons are Partly or Fully Aware of the Possibility of Commercial Sex Work</b>		
No Response	3	10.0
False	20	66.7
True	7	23.3

<b>Expect to be Held as Slaves and Do Not Assume They Will Choose Working Conditions</b>		
No Response	3	10.0
False	23	76.7
True	4	13.3
<b>Want to go Abroad for Work</b>		
No Response	3	10.0
False	12	40.0
True	15	50.0
<b>Receive Good Pay and Generous Benefits</b>		
No Response	3	10.0
False	26	86.7
True	1	3.3
<b>Only Receive Medical Care When Symptoms Impede Ability to Work</b>		
No Response	3	10.0
False	11	36.7
True	16	53.3
<b>Mainly Young, Naïve, and Uneducated Women from Rural Areas</b>		
No Response	3	10.0
False	9	30.0
True	18	60.0

### Presentation of the Bivariate Statistics

In order to determine if there were group differences between the independent variables (gender, education level, and ethnicity) the dependent variable “Overall Knowledge” was computed from the totals of each section of the survey. Section One covered general knowledge with a possible total of 4, and Section Two tested knowledge on the specific actions involved in trafficking with a possible total score of 14. Section Three covered the demographic details of the most trafficked persons in the Inland Empire including: Age, Residence, Education, Income, Family Situation, and Employment; Section Three had a possible total of 21. Section Five tested knowledge about the types of “typical”

recruiters with a possible total of 12. Section Eight tested knowledge about recruitment methods and had a possible total of 6. Section 9 tested the experience of trafficked persons while they are being trafficked with a possible total of 10. Section eight consisted of seven true/false questions with a possible total of 7. When combined, the total possible score was 74. The minimum score was 30 and the maximum score was 56; the average score was 46 ( $M = 46.50$ ,  $SD = 5.99$ ).

To determine if there were significant differences between men and women in their level of trafficking knowledge, a t-test was conducted;  $t(25) = -.295$ ,  $p = .77$ . There were no significant differences between men and women and their level of trafficking knowledge. To determine if there were significant differences between education level and trafficking knowledge, a t-test was conducted:  $t(24) = .27$ ,  $p = .79$ . There were no significant differences between education level and trafficking knowledge (See Table 10).

Table 10. *T-Test Group Differences in Overall Knowledge*

Independent Variable	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Gender	-.292	25	.770
Level of Education	.272	24	.788

To examine differences between ethnicities and overall trafficking knowledge, a One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted:  $F(2, 24) = 6.58$ ,  $p < .05$ . It was found that there were significant differences between

ethnicities and overall trafficking knowledge. White participants scored higher ( $M = 53.80$ ) on overall knowledge than participants who identified their ethnicity as “Other” ( $M = 45.50$ ) and those who identified their ethnicity as “Other” scored higher on overall knowledge than Latino participants ( $M = 44.70$ ) (See Table 11).

Table 11. *Analysis of Variance Group Differences in Overall Knowledge*

Independent Variable	n	F	df	p	Mean
Ethnicity		6.577	2,24	.005	
White	5				53.8
Other	4				45.5
Latino	18				44.7

To determine if there was a significant relationship between the independent variable age and total overall trafficking knowledge, a Pearson’s  $r$  Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was conducted:  $r(22) = .500, p < .05$ . There was a significant positive relationship between age and overall trafficking knowledge; the older a person was, the higher they scored on overall trafficking knowledge (See Table 12).

Table 12. *Pearson  $r$  Correlation: Overall Knowledge and Age*

$r$	df	p
.500*	22	.013

\*Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).



## Summary

In this chapter the researcher utilized descriptive quantitative data analysis approach to analyze the participants' responses. The quantitative data utilized in this study included frequency distribution and measures of central tendencies. The demographic characteristics indicate an overrepresentation of Latinos and the underrepresentation of social work males. Upon examining the response rates of the participants, it was found that nearly 87.0% of participants identified as a transfer of reception as being part of human trafficking. Just over half of participants (53.3%) indicated that young children are not the most trafficked persons in San Bernardino and Riverside counties. This indicates that more training is needed in certain areas, however in certain areas participants had knowledge of the movement of human trafficking victims.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION

#### Introduction

In this final chapter I will discuss the findings as well as the implications of the findings to social work. Limitations of the study will be discussed as well as ideas for future research. A discussion of the recommendations for social work policy and practice will follow. The chapter will end with a brief conclusion of the study.

#### Discussion

The study's objective was to evaluate social workers' ability to identify victims of human trafficking in the cities of San Bernardino and Riverside. There were thirty participants surveyed in the study, who were members of the NASW Chapter F, in an effort to illustrate whether social workers have knowledge regarding the different types of activities involved in human trafficking. It is worth noting that the great majority of the sample was female, Latino, and had either a Bachelor's degree or Masters' Degree. The average number of years respondents' had worked in the social work field was 11. This amount of time working as social work clinicians make it likely that some of the respondents have worked with past victims of trafficking.

The study found that 87.0% of the participants understood the term “Transfer of Reception”, a large component of human trafficking, which means that victims were treated as commodities and were bought, sold and resold for sexual and labor exploitation (Hodge, 2008). This study has revealed that 53.3% of the participants’ state they have an understanding of the “Act of Trafficking”, and further questions show a variance of knowledge to this subject and may need further study, or education to create a solid understanding.

The study also found that most of the participants (80.0%) identified exploitation as being part of human trafficking. This study indicated that the majority, 73.3%, of participants were very much aware of the “Debt Bondage” dilemma and believed that “Indentured Servitude” is thriving, even with the laws of today. “Debt Bondage”, another term of exploitation used in trafficking is a newer term for an old practice commonly called “Indentured Servitude”. This was used throughout the history of the world including the immigration of many to America. People who were desperately unable to pay their debt agreed, or were forced into indentured servitude to pay the debt off, most often never escaping from that servitude. Many people who wish to move to another country are unable to pay for the documentation and transportation and are offered an opportunity to work off their debt at their “new job”; unfortunately, the situation becomes one of indentured servitude and many victims are never offered the opportunity to pay back their debt (Hepburn and Simon, 2010).

Along with Debt Bondage the majority of participants also showed adequate knowledge and scored high in different types of activities involved in human trafficking. For example it can take on a role of: Exploitation, Position of Vulnerability, Crossing of International Borders, Transfer of Reception, and Movement within Borders. These are some of the components the participants chose in saying these are true in Human Trafficking. Although the participants generally had adequate knowledge of trafficking activities, two categories show a deficit in clinicians' knowledge: "Consent to Cross Borders" and "Voluntary Migration for Sex Work". Slightly more than 40% of participants correctly identified that trafficking includes obtaining victims' consent to cross borders and 50% of participants incorrectly identified voluntary migration as part of trafficking. Social work clinicians need better training to learn about the activities that constitute trafficking so they can better identify victims of trafficking in their clients.

It is promising that 53.3% of the participants were able to correctly identify that victims in the "very young children's group" were not the most trafficked age group. However, just over 50% of clinicians being able to identify that "very young" children were not the most trafficked group still demonstrates a lack of knowledge about trafficking victims and the populations which are most vulnerable to being trafficked. The study also illustrated that the majority of participants (80.0%) were able to correctly identify that teenage girls between the ages of 14 and 17 were the most trafficked persons in San Bernardino and

Riverside counties. This finding was consistent with the study by Kotrla (2010), which stated that "...at least 70% of women involved in prostitution were introduced into the commercial sex industry before reaching the age of 18 years of age" (p. 145). This is a step in the right direction: having knowledge of this better prepares social workers to understand the population which is most affected.

The study revealed that a majority of participants (70%) identified that education was a key factor to slowing and breaking the chain of human trafficking. One interesting finding was 53.3% of participants recognized that the poor were the most vulnerable to human trafficking, yet under "Employment" the participants (50%) chose not to answer the question. This seems to demonstrate a lack of knowledge about the employment status of those who are most commonly trafficked. Employment is a key factor in how people are recruited for trafficking and can help reduce poverty which would make some potential victims less vulnerable to traffickers.

There are many entities that can lure a victim into human trafficking. One such entity was listed on the survey as "Private Company". These are False-Front Agencies to facilitate the luring of victims into human trafficking by appearing to be a legitimate company or employment agency; however, 83.3% of participants felt that "Private Companies", are least likely to be involved in human trafficking. This demonstrates that there is less knowledge about this type of

recruiting tactic than other types such as drugging or kidnapping which have been the most discussed in popular media.

In terms of general knowledge of trafficking, most participants correctly identified the experiences that are common to trafficking; however, just over 40% of participants stated it was false that victims make a conscious decision to go abroad for a better life. This shows a lack of understanding about a key factor in recruiting trafficking victims. Many victims do unintentionally contact trafficking recruiters hoping for legitimate work in another country where they have hope of improving their life situation. In not understanding this as an element of trafficking, clinicians run the risk of not understanding the depth of betrayal and guilt that many victims may experience.

Bivariate analysis of social workers' knowledge of human trafficking revealed that there were no significant differences in the level of knowledge between genders or level of education. There was a significant difference in overall knowledge between the ethnicities. Although they did not comprise a majority of the participants', social workers who identified as white had a greater level of trafficking knowledge than social workers who identified their ethnicity as "other" and even greater knowledge than the Latino social workers who comprised the majority of the sample. This difference shows that trafficking education needs to be shaped in such a way as to reach social workers of ethnicities other than white as the demographic of social workers in this region is very diverse and is comprised of many different ethnicities other than white.

## Limitations

This participants in this study were members of the NASW , Region F. The NASW is one of the largest organizations of social workers. In this self-administered survey the limitations of the study were evident in the low response rate. Social workers are very busy people, with a large caseload, families, and other commitments, which might account for the lack of participation. In retrospect, the survey should have been distributed to front line responders, such as emergency rooms in hospitals, medical clinics, police departments, and mental health agencies. The study also was limited by the lack of time to collect the data. Additionally, the survey should have inquired about the connection of street gang affiliation with human trafficking, as well as possible question regarding organ harvesting and the connection with trafficking victims.

## Recommendations for Social Work Practice, Policy and Research

Despite the recent efforts in raising awareness of human trafficking, the need for extensive research on the topic is evident. While major risk factors have been explored, more investigation is needed. Additionally, in-depth systematic training, for all social workers, clinicians and police officers including workshops, agency presentations, and outreach community health fairs are needed to increase their knowledge and awareness of human trafficking. Social workers need to quickly build rapport and trust with a potential victim of exploitation, to provide much needed services, such as medical and mental health. Furthermore,

school based counselors or social workers should hold informational seminars for parents and students on the lure and entrapment of human trafficking.

Prevention, protection, and education are three key factors in which we need to focus on, to reduce or abolish this form of human right deprivation and exploitation. The current policies set forth in working to combat human trafficking needs to be further explored and revamped to better serve victims of human trafficking. A multidisciplinary collaboration is essential in bringing more awareness and services to these victims.

### Conclusion

This study examined social workers' awareness in identifying human trafficking of young women and adolescents, in the cities of San Bernardino and Riverside, and the importance being able to intervene and advocate for this population. It is estimated that between 30 to 35 percent of the victims are girls under 18 years old. Human trafficking in adolescents is calculated in being a multi-billion dollar industry in the United States. Studies continue to reveal that adolescents (ages 14- 17) are a high risk of being sexually exploited.

Regarding the participants' response rates to the overall survey, the demographic characteristics indicate an overrepresentation of Latinos, as well as an underrepresentation of male participants. White participants had more knowledge about human trafficking than those of other ethnicities. Participants in the study indicated various levels of knowledge regarding human trafficking with



80% of the participants identifying forced labor and forced prostitution as a dominant part of human trafficking. The findings further suggest that social workers need to increase their knowledge about human trafficking as well as their skills to build better rapport and trust, thus enabling social workers to better assist these victims and provide much needed services.

APPENDIX A  
QUESTIONNAIRE

1. When I think of the term 'trafficking in persons':

- I'm not sure what it is.
- The definition is confusing and unclear to me.
- I'm not sure about the difference between trafficking and forced migration.
- I think of trafficking in persons as synonymous with smuggling.
- understand the act it defines.

2. Trafficking in persons can involve which of the following (check all that apply):

- Voluntary migration with deception or coercion
- Exploitation
- Abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability
- Transfer or reception of people by force or threat
- Crossing of international borders
- Consent to be brought across the border
- Movement within borders
- Voluntary labor migration for sex work
- Forced labor/forced prostitution
- Restriction of personal freedom
- Confiscation of legal identity
- Involuntary servitude or slavery-like conditions
- Violence or threat of violence
- Debt bondage (i.e. a person is forced to work as a means of "repayment" of a loan, or fees for services. Generally, the fee is increased, making it impossible to pay, or the value of the labor exceeds the original debt.)

3. Most trafficked persons from the San Bernardino/Riverside region are/have

**(check all that apply):**

**Age**

- ☐ Women over 30
- ☐ Teenager girls between 14-17
- ☐ Teenage boys between 14-17
- ☐ Women between 18-24
- ☐ Middle-aged men
- ☐ Young children

**Residence**

- ☐ Residents of rural areas
- ☐ Residents of urban areas

**Education**

- ☐ University graduates
- ☐ Undereducated

**Socio-Economic Status**

- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Average Income
- ☐ Well-off

**Family Situation**

- ☐ Single
- ☐ Married
- ☐ Divorced
- ☐ Single mothers who are sole providers for their families

- Women, who come from nuclear families, have good relationships with their parents or their husband/partner
- Survivors of domestic violence, sexual abuse or sexual harassment

### **Employment**

- Never worked before
- A professional background

#### **4. The "typical" recruiter is (check all that apply):**

- Female
- Male
- Both, male and female
- Acquaintance
- Stranger
- Friend
- Boyfriend
- Neighbor/family friend
- Relative
- Husband
- Child
- Private companies

5. People are recruited into trafficking through which of the following methods

**(check all that apply):**

- Kidnapping
- False job promise (i.e.g. through advertisement in the newspapers)  
False invitation abroad
- False travel arrangements
- False promise of marriage
- Genuine promise of legal employment opportunities

6. Once victims find themselves in the middle of the trafficking process **(check all that apply):**

- It is easy to control it and escape when they chose to do so.
- They experience lack of control over the movement.
- They are treated kindly and with respect.
- Their personal belongings, passport and money are seized.
- In most cases, they experience mental abuse.
- Their traffickers/exploiters' or the traffickers/exploiters' friends sexually abuse more than half of the victims.
- They are often forced to live in shared accommodations with poor hygienic conditions and limited access to food.
- They are often kept locked up in their accommodations during the day and are forced into prostitution at night.
- They are never are forced to have unprotected sex with clients.
- They are almost never physically abused.

True or false (**Circle one**):

7. Trafficked persons often make a conscious decision to go abroad to find a better life.

T

F

8. Trafficked women are sometimes partly or fully aware of the possibility of being involved in commercial sex- work.

T

F

9. Trafficked women expect to be held as slaves and do not assume they will be choosing their working conditions.

T

F

10. Trafficked persons most often want to go abroad to find a job.

T

F

11. Trafficked persons receive good payments for their services and enjoy generous benefits.

T

F

12. Most trafficked women receive medical care on an emergency basis only, especially when the symptoms could affect their "performance."

T

F

13. Trafficked women are mostly young, naive and uneducated women from rural areas.

T

F

Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights (2003). *Test Your Knowledge About Trafficking* [Measurement instrument]. Retrieved from <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/svaw/trafficking/training/materials/TestKnowledge.PDF>



**Demographic Information (circle or write your answer).**

14.What is your Gender?

1.Male

2.Female

15.How old were you on your last  
birthday?\_\_\_\_\_years.

16.What is your ethnicity?

1. Latino

2. Black

3. White

4.Other

17. What is the highest education you have completed?

1.BASW/BA

2.MSW/MA

3.Other

18. How many years have you been working in the social work  
field?\_\_\_\_\_years.

APPENDIX B  
INFORMED CONSENT

## INFORMED CONSENT

The study in which you are asked to participate is designed to investigate social workers' knowledge of and awareness to identify victims of human trafficking.

This study is being conducted by Gracie R. Wangsnes, MSW student, under the supervision of professor Dr. Janet Chang, School of Social Work, California State University, San Bernardino.

This study has been approved by the School of Social Work Sub-Committee of the Institutional Review Board Social Work Sub-committee, California State University, San Bernardino.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the study is to investigate and learn about social workers' knowledge of and ability to identify victims of human trafficking and to work with human trafficked victims.

**DESCRIPTION:** Your participation would consist of completing an online questionnaire to measure participant's knowledge and or ability to identify this population. You will be asked of some background questions and knowledge.

**PARTCIPATION:** Your participation in the study is totally voluntary. You can refuse to participate in the study or withdraw your consent to participate in the study any time without penalty or loss.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Your response will remain anonymous and data will be reported in group form only.

**DURATION:** It will take 10- 20 minutes to complete the survey.

**RISKS:** There are no foreseeable risks to the participants.

**BENEFITS:** There will not be any direct benefits to the participants.

**CONTACT:** If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact Dr. Janet Chang at 909- 537-5184

**RESULTS:** Results can be obtained at the PFAU Library, California State University, San Bernardino, after December 2014.

This is to certify that I read the above and I am 18 years or older.

---

Place an X mark here

---

Date

APPENDIX C  
DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

**Study of Social Workers' Awareness in Identifying Human Trafficked Victims  
Debriefing Statement**

This study you have just completed was designed to investigate social workers' awareness and knowledge of human trafficking. We are particularly interested to work with human trafficked victims.

Thank you for your participation and for not discussing the contents of the question with other participants. If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact Gracie Wangsnes or Dr. Janet Chang at (909) 537-5184. If you would like to obtain a copy of the group results of this study, please contact Professor Dr. Janet Chang at (909) 537-5184 at the end of Fall Quarter of 2014.

## REFERENCES

CASE (2013). San Bernardino County's Coalition Against Sexual Exploitation.

Retrieved from:

<http://wp.sbcounty.gov/cao/countywire/?cat=30>

CdeBaca, L. (2013). Briefing on the 2013 trafficking in persons report.

Washington, Washington DC, USA.

Connel, C.S., & Finnegan, M.J. (2010). Interviewing compliant adolescent victims. Retrieved from [www.fbi.gov](http://www.fbi.gov)

Frundt, T. (2013). Enslaved in America: Sex trafficking in the United States.

Retrieved 10 01 2013, from Women Funding Network:

[www.womenfundingnetwork.org/resouce/past-artcles/enslaved-inamerica-sextraffing-in-the-united-states](http://www.womenfundingnetwork.org/resouce/past-artcles/enslaved-inamerica-sextraffing-in-the-united-states)

Gozdziak, E. M. & MacDonnel, M. (2007). Closing the gaps: The need to improve identification and services to child victims of trafficking. *Human Organization* , 66, 171-184.

Hardy,V., Compton, K., Mcphatter, V.(2013). Domestic minor sex trafficking: Practice implications for mental health professionals. *Journal of Women and Social Work*. Retrieved 10 25, 2013, from [affilia.sagepub.com](http://affilia.sagepub.com): [www.affilia.sagepub.com](http://www.affilia.sagepub.com)

Harris, K. C. (2012). Human Trafficking. Sacramento, Ca, USA.

Hepburn, S., & Simon, R. J. (2010). Hidden in plain sight: Human trafficking in the United States. *Gender Issues*, 27, 1-26.

- Hodge, D. R. (2010). Sexual trafficking in the United States: A domestic problem with transnational dimensions. *Journal of Social Work, 53* (2), 143-152.
- Jones, L., Engstrom, D. W., Hilliard, T., & Diaz, M. (2007). Globalization and human trafficking. *Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare, 34* (2), 107-122.
- Kalmuss, D. (2004). Non volitional sex and sexual health. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 33* (1), 197-198.
- Kotra, K. (2010). Domestic minor sex trafficking in the United States. *Social Work, 55* (2), 181-189.
- Lesser, J. G., & Pope, D. S. (2010). Human Behavior and the Social Environment (2nd ed.). New York: Allyn & Bacon.
- McClain, N. G. (2010, May 05). The Association of Women's Health and Neonatal Nurses. Retrieved 10 19, 2013, from jognn.awhonn.org:  
<http://jognn.awhonn.org>
- National Association of Social Workers. (2008). Code of Ethics. Retrieved 10 31, 2013, from [www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp](http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp)
- Pierce, A. (2012). Vulnerability to sex trafficking intervention strategies. *American Indian and Alaska Native Mental Health Research, 19*, 37-56.
- Polaris Project. (2013). 2013 Analysis of State Human Trafficking Laws. Retrieved 10 13, 2013, from Polaris Project: [www.polarisproject.org/policy](http://www.polarisproject.org/policy)
- Rafferty, Y. (2013). Child trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation: A review of promising prevention policies and programs. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 83* (4), 559-575.

- Rivers, R., & Saewyc, E. M. (2012). On sex trafficking and the exploitation of adolescents. *Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic, and Neonatal Nursing*, 41 (2), 163-165.
- Robinson, L. (2011). Newsroom Fact Sheet: Human Trafficking. Retrieved 10 25, 2013, from [www.ojp.gov](http://www.ojp.gov): [www.ojp.gov](http://www.ojp.gov)
- Roy, A. A. (2013). Human trafficking: Review of educational resources for health professionals. *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*, 44 (3), 283-289.
- Rubin, A. & Babbie, E.R. (2010). Research methods for Social Work, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Belmont, CA: Brooks Cole.
- San Bernardino County Coalition Against Sexual Exploitation. (2013). Retrieved 11 30, 2013, from San Bernardino County District Attorney in Pursuit of Justice: [www.sbcountyda.org/.../coalitionagainstsexualexploitation](http://www.sbcountyda.org/.../coalitionagainstsexualexploitation)
- Test your knowledge about trafficking. (2003). Advocates for Human Rights. Retrieved Feb. 2, 2014 from <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/svaw/trafficking/training/materials/TestKnowledge.PDF>
- UN GIFT (2013). Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking. Retrieved 11 01, 2013, from [www.ungift.org](http://www.ungift.org): [www.ungift.orgknowledgehub](http://www.ungift.orgknowledgehub)
- VandeGlind, H. & Koonman, J, (2008, May 20). Children and Society. Retrieved October 31, 2013, from [www.children&society.com](http://www.children&society.com):



Whitaker, M. & Hinterlong, J. (2008). Context of control: Modern slavery in the United States. *Social Development Issues*, 30, 27-42.

WHO International. (2010). Why Fight, There are 27 Million Reasons!. Retrieved 2013, from WHO International: [www.fightslaverynow.org/why-fight-there-are-27-million](http://www.fightslaverynow.org/why-fight-there-are-27-million)

