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Where is the Survivor's Voice? An Examination of the Individual and Structural Challenges to the Reintegration of Immigrant Human Trafficking Survivors

Michelle Cristina Angelo Dantas Rocha
University of South Florida, amichelledantas@gmail.com

Where is the Survivor's Voice?

An Examination of the Individual and Structural Challenges to the Reintegration of Immigrant Human Trafficking Survivors

by

Michelle Dantas Rocha

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Major Professor: Elizabeth Hordge-Freeman, Ph.D.
Bernd Reiter, Ph.D.
Rachel May, Ph.D.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to all women and men victims/survivors of human trafficking not just in the United States, but worldwide. Only they know all the suffering, difficulty and trauma that they have endured in order to achieve their recovery, peace, and happiness. Their stories are unique and valuable. They must be heard. Through their lived experiences, we can address the gaps in our social services and law enforcement system that affect the lives of many people who are living in the same situation, but who are invisible and afraid to seek help. Their experiences are not to be judged or stigmatized. They are here to teach us about life, how to change our society, and how to care more about those who have had their souls and heart broken.

I also want to dedicate this research to the service providers and law enforcement officials who are making a difference, by trying to understand and help human trafficking victims recover. Their care and patience are essential for the recovery of victims who have had their hope taken away through exploitation, cheap labor, servitude, and rape. Even though many changes still need to be implemented, I thank you for understanding their traumas and fears. Thank you for helping them and believing that they can build their lives and find enjoyment again.

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ABSTRACT

The United States is one of the top destination countries for human trafficking, and Florida has the third highest number of reported cases of human trafficking. Despite the severity of this issue, Florida anti-trafficking legislation, reintegration programs, and awareness campaigns tend to contribute to the invisibility of the victims and undermine their recovery and reintegration into society, especially when the victims are immigrants. This project uses a multi-method approach including content analysis of anti-human trafficking campaigns to argue that portrayals of a "perfect victim" only amplify stigmatization and discrimination against immigrant victims. Through in-depth interviews and ethnographic observation highlighting the voices of immigrant survivors, law enforcement and service providers, I analyze the individual and structural challenges to reintegration. Using these insights, I offer several recommendations about the type of services and training necessary to help trafficking victims recover from their trauma and rebuild their lives.

INTRODUCTION

> *"Every survivor needs to be heard. That is the biggest gap that we've got! There are councils and meetings that are taking place and making decisions for the survivors, without the survivor's voice." (Clara Maria, survivor and service provider)*

> *"I am tired of hearing just about sex trafficking in the news. And just about Asians as victims. They forget that trafficking people come from Africa, Latin America, Europe, and the U.S. There is not a particular place, race, class and ethnicity. You need to know that labor and sex trafficking are similar. We need to stop segregating and creating labels.'' (Lucia Lopez, immigrant survivor, 29 years old)*

According to the voices of human trafficking survivors quoted above, it is important to create a mechanism to incorporate the voices of human trafficking survivors in policies. There is also a need to better understand the widespread nature of trafficking, which impacts women of various backgrounds. Lucia Lopez was nine years old when her parents trusted one of their "friends" to take their daughter to the United States, with the promise that she was going to receive an American education, improve her life chances in comparison to her family, have a comfortable place to live, a job with a high wage, a secured future and a successful husband.

However, what they did not know was that they were giving her daughter to a trafficker. Taken into the U.S. with a false passport, from 9 through 18 years old, Lopez was forced to work as a nanny, to cook and clean for a middle class family from Cameroon. During those years, she was isolated because she was also not allowed to go to school, and had no friends in her small neighborhood in Maryland. Knowing how attached she was to her parents, her trafficker also restricted communication with her family.

After 8 years of living in domestic servitude, being beaten and sexually exploited, Lopez finally escaped. With the help of a Catholic church, she was accepted into foster care. Today, after years of trying to recover from her trauma and fears, Lopez has gotten married, has a two-year old child, and just graduated with a degree in Humanitarian work and Homeland Security from the Maryland University. Today, using her experience as a tool to promote awareness and fight for human rights, Lopez is an advocate on behalf of victims of human trafficking not just in Africa and in the United States, but worldwide.

I met Lopez during her talk at the 2015 Human Trafficking Summit in Tampa, FL, sponsored by the State of Florida and the University of South Florida. During our conversation, Lopez expressed her discontent with the stigmatization, victimization and lack of care that victims of human trafficking face every day in the American society - especially immigrants. Many victims are invisible and are criminalized instead of being seen as victims. This is due in part because, in many cases, the victims' narratives and life histories do not fit the labels and standards of the "perfect and innocent victim" which is defined implicitly by the U.S. federal and Florida's state laws.

Originally, I planned to develop a project focusing on how sex trafficking functions in Florida and how it impacts Latinas. But, in order to respond to the gaps that Lopez has articulated and to avoid the same mistakes that others have made, I decided to change the direction of my research. Therefore, this research aims to investigate: (1) What do human trafficking survivors, service-providers and law enforcement perceive as the greatest challenges trafficking victims (especially Latinas) face in Florida? (2) How does the notion of a "perfect victim" disadvantage human trafficking victims as they seek assistance? These questions are

important because most research focuses on broader causes of victimization, but I plan to extend current research to focus on immigrant victims' rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

Background

Since the 1990s, with the growth of reports in the number of victims of human trafficking and also with the creation of new anti-trafficking legislation – especially after the approval of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TPVA 2000) – numerous studies related to the causes and effects of human trafficking in the United States have developed (Gozdziak & MacDonnell 2007). However, more analysis related to the reintegration of the victims still needs to be conducted, especially related to the challenges that immigrants face trying to recover and reintegrate into society (Office of Women in Development 2007; Squillante 2014; Naro 2009). Once these questions are answered, we can create more effective support programs that address the real needs of immigrant victims (Bhuyan & Senturia 2005). Furthermore, scholars also have shown that the participation of the victims in decision making is essential to identify and improve those gaps, but to date, they are still being invisible (Hall 2011).

Focusing on the Latino population, studies show that there is a critical need for strategies to work with this particular community because currently polices and anti-trafficking programs tend to increase the vulnerability, marginalization, and re-victimization of human trafficking victims. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2015), it is estimated that from 2014 to 2060 the population in the United States will grow from 319 million to 417 million. The report also shows that Hispanics' will become the largest minority group in the country. Currently, there are 54 million Latinos living in the United States, consisting of 17.1 percent of the total U.S. population

(Pew Hispanic 2015). However, it is projected that the number of Latinos will increase 29 percent by 2060, becoming more than one-quarter of the total population (Colby & Ortman. 2015, p.9). Due to the considerable growth of the number of Latinos in this country, it is important to improve policies and programs that integrate them into the American society, rather than promote their criminalization and unfair treatment.

Copley (2014) explains that this wave of increasing Latino immigration is a consequence of the U.S. economic and social policies. Some of the reasons are the availability of low skill jobs in the poultry and agriculture fields, and in construction, domestic service, babysitting, and landscaping. As a result, many unemployed or underprivileged Latinos immigrate to the U.S. through human smuggling or trafficking, aiming to leave poverty, find a job and provide a better life for their families (Logan, Walker & Hunt 2009; Stuesse 2016). Philips (2009) elucidates that this dependence of the U.S. on low-wage labor, illegal employment practices through the NAFTA policies, extreme poverty, and corruption in Latin America have impacted and increased Latino immigration to the U.S. This dependence on informal jobs is also the cause of the high number of illegal immigrants and human trafficking victims within the country. Ribando (2008) points out that more than 1.5 million workers from Latin America and the Caribbean work in the agriculture fields in the U.S. The majority of these workers are Mexicans and illegal immigrants (Delgado & Covarrubias 2009). In terms of rates of sex trafficking, studies show that 10,000 women from Mexico are trafficked per year for sexual exploitation (Acharya 2004). In addition, at least 100,000 Latinas from Central and South America are trafficked internationally every year. Most of the victims enter in the United States illegally with the help of traffickers (U.S. Department of State 2009; Ribando 2015; Richard 1999; Copley 2014).

Based on those statistics, Bhuyan, Mell, Senturia, Sullivan, & Shui-Thornton (2005) explain that some of the barriers faced by immigrant trafficking victims are magnified because they are stigmatized and marginalized because of their ethnicity, race, class, gender, immigration status, and language barriers. As a result, they end up living in isolation and are afraid to seek help. Furthermore, due to their fear of being deported and difficulty in communication, many victims end up hiding themselves and are not aware of their legal rights (Bruno & Siskin 2001, Wells Golding, Hough, Burman, and Karmo 1989, Escarce & Kapur 2006). These barriers partially explain why immigrant women – especially Latinas - may have unequal access to protection and healthcare services.

Past studies (David and Rhee 1998; Brown, Liu and Hays 1999) reveal that even when services are available, they may not be accessible due to the lack of bilingual direct service staff and volunteers, absence of materials in Spanish that explain victims' rights and how to ask for help. There is also the absence of bilingual and trained professional who understand the Latino culture and socio-economic limitations that many Latinos suffer on their daily basis. There are also many cases where the service center describes itself as offering Spanish-language assistance; however, the quality and level of the materials and the professionals do not meet the demands of the Latino community. (U.S. Department of Justice, Exist Ayuda).

According to growing body of research, Latinas face several challenges in the U.S., especially on issues related to gender-based violence and trafficking. According to a survey distributed to Hispanic women in the Southeastern United States, scholars concluded that many Latinas do not seek help because of fear of their aggressor (Cortina 2001). Furthermore, the victims feel shame and discomfort especially because of the language obstacles between the

patient/victim and the service providers, and also because of the lack of availability of translation services, transportation and money. Moreover, the majority of the Latinas surveyed reported the lack of assistance from the government in legal rights and service assistance in court (Murdaugh et al. 2004). Other problems reported also include stress related to immigration, acculturation, language, prevalence of abuse, legal and economic pressures, and discrimination (Mattson & Rodriguez 1999; Murdaugh et al. 2004).

Methodology

In light of these considerations, this project relies on both primary and secondary data to identify the gaps in services available to human trafficking victims and to determine how framing victims/survivors as "innocent victims" impacts access to these services. Throughout the study, the term "perfect/innocent victim" refers to the way that law enforcement requires that victims of trafficking have no culpability or no history of engaging in criminal acts during their exploitation. However, frequently, a trafficking victim is not a "perfect victim,'' because they may have engaged in prostitution, illegal immigration or other crimes. Though he/she often does so under pressure from their captor, participation in these activities makes it harder for them to avail themselves of protection of the legal system.

Using secondary data, I analyze data from major governmental and nongovernmental reports related to human trafficking and immigration, U.S. Census, magazines, journals, documentaries, graphic material produced and distributed to the community by the U.S. Office on Trafficking in Persons, and published studies about this matter. Through the secondary analysis of images, I argue that not only is the notion of the "perfect victim" evident in the

portrayal of trafficking victims, but many victims remain vulnerable because of they are not recognized as victims.

The Interviews

I conducted interviews with survivors, service providers and law enforcement to examine the type of progress made in terms of services to the victims. The interviews with the survivors and service-providers also provide the data to allow me to argue why the notion of an "innocent victim" can undermine efforts to assist human trafficking victims. The descriptive details about the interviewees are presented in Table 1 (below). It was during the 2015 Human Trafficking that I was able to hear the stories of three human trafficking survivors: Lucia Lopez (29 years old, Cameroonian), Margie Silva (30 years old, Indonesian), and Carlos da Silva (28 years old, Philipino). I interviewed Sheriff Ryan Clark of Pasco County who has been working with human trafficking for more than 8 years in Tampa Bay and Pasco County areas. I also interviewed three service-providers. I conducted in-depth interviews with Clara Maria, a white American woman, prior victim of sex trafficking, and currently service provider. She founded a safe house for women victims of trafficking in Pinellas County, Florida in 1994. Today Clara Maria is sharing her own experience as a survivor in order to help women victims of trafficking and gender-based violence. The second service provider interviewed was Valentina de Jesus, a Latina service provider who works exclusively with immigrant victims of labor and sex trafficking in Tampa Bay area. She is the only one in this region in Florida that has a program focused directly on immigrant victims. The third service-provider interviewed was Mayhara Fletcher, a psychotherapist specializing in trauma who has been working for many years with victims of human trafficking, especially minors and runaways.

I used a snowballing methodology to locate the participants for my research. Commonly used by social science researchers, Neuman (2004) classifies this approach as a "networking sampling" (p.269), where through a person or a small group, I connect to other individuals that introduce me to other people that are aware of cases that could fit in my research. The strategy that I used was to try to meet people during the task force meetings occurring once a month in Tampa/Clearwater areas. During those meetings, I was able to tap into a large network to locate interviewees. Through the meetings, I found professionals and advocates who are passionate about this issue, and who are working hard to combat human trafficking in the United States. In those meetings, I had the opportunity to meet and informally speak with several law enforcement officers – including FBI agents - service providers, activists, and individuals that have connection with immigrant victims of trafficking – especially Latinos. Through them, I was able to meet Latinas survivors and also talk with other survivors from Africa and Asia that were trafficked into the U.S., and today are U.S. citizens.

In total, seven people were interviewed for this research, including: three immigrant survivors of trafficking, three service providers, and one law enforcement officers. The main interviews were recorded with the permission of the participants. Before they agreed to participate in this research, I guaranteed that their names would be maintained in confidentiality, avoiding negative consequences to their personal lives. All the names that I use in this research are pseudonyms. Each of the interviews ranged from one hour to two hours.

Table 1. This table provides an overview of the interviewees included in the research conducted on human trafficking between 2015 and 2016. The names are pseudonyms.

TABLE 1: PARTICIPANTS CHARACTERISTICS				
Name	**Age**	**Country**	**Type of Participation in this Research**	**Today**
Lucia Lopez	29 years old – trafficked with 9 years old	Cameroon, Africa	Survivor - Labor Trafficking	Anti-trafficking advocate
Margie Silva	30 years old – trafficked with 22 years old	Indonesia	Survivor - Sex Trafficking	Anti-trafficking advocate and service provider
Carlos da Silva	35 years old – trafficked with 28 years old	Philippines	Survivor - Labor Trafficking	Anti-trafficking advocate and service provider
Ryan Clark	not informed	United States	Sherriff Pasco County - Law Enforcement	Working with human trafficking for more than 8 years in Florida
Mayhara Fletcher	not informed	United States	Service Provider Specialist in Trauma	Specialist in trauma, professor and anti-trafficking advocate – helps exclusively minor victims of trafficking
Valentina de Jesus	not informed	Cuba	Service Provider	Service Provider helping immigrant victims of trafficking
Clara Maria	not informed	United States	Survivor - Sex Trafficking and Service Provider	Service provider and founder of a women safe house in Pinellas County, Florida

Ethnographic Approaches to Fieldwork

Numerous scholars clarify that it is important to use ethnographic techniques, such as prearranged interviews with vulnerable groups to analyze sensitive topics (Li 2008; Fine, Weis, Weseen, & Wong 2003). Though this may cause socio-emotional complications, it can also "empower the very people being studied, transforming their public consciousness and common sense about the disadvantaged society'' (Li 2008, p.101). Through ethnographic studies you can

empower and inspire communities, and also show society about the veracity of the narratives of particular communities and individuals, making society more critical about what is happening.

From September, 2015 to March, 2016, I conducted ethnographic observations in Hillsborough County and in neighboring towns. Combining ethnographic observation, formal and informal conversations, I was able to collect extensive data and examine the realities of immigrant survivors and their difficulties trying to access governmental anti-trafficking services and reintegrate into American society. As described by Charmaz (2006) "seeing research participants' lives from the inside often gives a researcher otherwise unobtainable views" opening doors for different perspectives that lead us to see underneath of the surface and investigate what is happening with this particular community, and the reasons and socioeconomic consequences (p.25).

During this period, I attended Clearwater Area Task Force on Human Trafficking (CATFHT) meetings organized by the Department of Justice and the FREE – The Slavery Survivor Network, a survivor-led non-profit organization focused on combating all forms of slavery while empowering victims of trafficking in Tampa Bay Area. I also attended the Prevention Committee Conference created by advocates in Tampa Bay trying to create better strategies to increase awareness about human trafficking in schools and universities, hotels, bars and night clubs. In addition, I attended four Statewide Council on Human Trafficking meetings the stated purpose of which is seek to improve the relationship between local law enforcement and social services providers, with the aim to reduce the gaps in Florida's system aiding the victims of trafficking.

Finally, I also attended the 2015 Human Trafficking Summit that was held at the University of South Florida, where more than 800 activists, law enforcement, service providers, scholars and people from different states participated in panels, over two days, sharing their experiences and knowledge about how to solve this problem. During this event, I had the opportunity to meet and talk with three immigrant trafficking survivors from Cameroon, Indonesia, and Philippines. Their experiences as survivors and as advocates were fundamental to my research. It is because of their narratives and experiences combating human trafficking that I decided to change the path of my research. As is apparent throughout this study, I use their narratives and points of views several times to show the gaps that persist in the Florida anti-trafficking system from the perspective of a human trafficking survivor. Through their stories, I was able to gain a better understanding of the problems inherent in the existing system, so we can work more efficiently helping the victims and better reintegrate them into society.

Furthermore, during my journey conducting ethnographic research, and also analyzing how service providers work with the victims, I attended several events organized by them. One of those events was a fundraising for a safe house in Tampa Bay area that was potentially closing its doors for lacking of funding. This safe house operates without financial assistance from the government and is also the only one in Pinellas county. Since 2004, the service provider operating the safe house has been trying to help the victims of trafficking, and female victims of gender-based violence. However, the founder is struggling to keep the house open because of the lack of financial support from the government. All funding for the safe house comes from private donations. In addition to being a researcher, I took on the role of assisting with event set-up and clean-up. According to Herrmann (1989), how an ethnographic researcher acts during a field investigation has several implications for the data collected. By participating, I became an

"insider." An insider researcher needs to be ethical and critical about how to act, what information collect and how the information is collected. However, the role of an insider researcher is not just examining the community that he/she is studying, but also contributing and interacting with the participants in an "equal" form, taking a role in the field, helping, being sociable, becoming "part of the group", but maintaining a necessary distance between researcher and community (Hordge-Freeman 2015; Unluer 2012, Hewitt-Taylor 2002). Through ethnography, new perceptions and data not imagined before can be collected enriching the research. Becoming "imperceptible" as a researcher, and blending in as part of the group was my goal. Through this positionality, I could better analyze and comprehend how the interactions between survivors/victims, service providers, law enforcement, and other advocates. Being an insider helped me to analyze issues critically, and also helped me to understand some of the reasons why certain gaps still persist in Florida's system. So, this moment was unique because I was able to contribute to the organization as a volunteer, and also talk to the volunteers in order to understand the issues confronting the safe house.

The majority of the ethnographic data cited here was observed during approximately eighty hours of informal activities including task force meetings, human trafficking events in Tampa Bay area, call conferences, online governmental anti-trafficking meetings, university anti-trafficking conferences in Hillsborough area and in Orlando, fundraising events, and community anti-trafficking meetings. Most of the data presented in this thesis is based on the interview data, but the ethnographic data provided me with important context for the research.

Conceptual Approach

In terms of organizing the data, I used a qualitative and intersectional approaches. According to Nadal et al (2015), intersectionality approach is identifying the relationship among several key concepts (biological, social and cultural categories) that "are not independently, but rather are interdependent and form a matrix of domination or vectors of oppression and privilege" (p.149) contributing to social inequality. In this research, I examine how several intersectional elements of one's identity including race, class, ethnicity, gender, and immigration status impact and contribute to exploitation in the sex and labor trafficking industry. This orientation also contributed to the importance that I placed on highlighting the victims' experiences, and my focus on how policies, programs, and framing of them as "innocent victims" impact their reintegration in the society. Moreover, I draw on Arlie Hochschild's perspectives on "emotional labor" to illustrate survivors' expectations that law enforcement and service providers sympathize and empathize with their situations. Hochschild (1983) argues that feelings are used today as a commodity. Some professionals are hired and paid to smile, show affection, and to listen with empathy to the other's stories. In addition, society expects this behavior of certain professionals, since that is how "he/she is supposed to act." Emotional feelings and behaviors are part of the labor itself. In the case of the service providers and law enforcement interviewed in this research, having compassion for the victims and willingness to listen to their stories are requirements that victims expect service providers and law enforcement officers to acknowledge their trauma. Hochschild states that emotional labor is as the type of work that

> "requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others – in this case, the sense of being cared for in a convivial and safe place. This kind of labor calls for a coordination of mind and feeling, and it sometimes draws on a source of self that we honor as deep and integral to our individuality" (7).

Hochschild also explains that this demand for "emotional work" is increasing. The society is requiring "happy workers'' who know how to deal with others, who understand others' stories without judging them. Trafficking victims expect that professionals who work directly with them show more empathy and respect towards them, and respond emotionally to their narratives and sufferings.

Key Terms

It is important to clarify the meaning of the terms I will use throughout of the thesis, especially the distinction between the terms "victim" and "survivor." Even though I will more frequently use the term "victim,'' there are some situations in which I use the two terms "victim/survivor" together, or occasionally use only "survivor." Although the terms 'victim' and 'survivor' seem similar, for those exploited through trafficking the terms have important implications for seeking help, accessing governmental assistance, and fighting for their civil rights. I use the term "victim'' for women who have expressed interest in services but have not been able to receive them. According to Hackett and Saucier (2015), the term "victim" is used for those who suffered oppression and are perceived as blameless. Unfortunately, they are often deprived of resources and still need assistance due to their vulnerability, and economic, physical and psychological conditions. Contrastly, I refer to "survivors" as those who have navigated

government services and have successfully reintegrated into society. According to Hackett and Saucier (2015), the term "survivor'' expresses more positive outcomes, resistance, and empowerment. A survivor is considered to have more "positive beliefs, attitudes, perceptions and behaviors held by others; more positive post-trauma experiences" (10).

My use of the terms "survivor" and "victim" to describe my interview is based on how the participants in this research classified themselves, and how they identified other individuals in their own community. In some cases, a person who was a "victim" in the past, but who today has reintegrated into society is identified as a "victim/survivor" if their interviews describe their continued need for government services and assistance. One of the major differences that I observed is that a "survivor" receives respect from society, while a "victim" is perceived as powerless and receives sympathy. Due to the reasons previously mentioned, the "victim" label is sometimes required by the judicial system to access public recovery programs and required for those seeking to receive legal benefits created exclusively for trafficking victims.

Organization of Thesis

In chapter 1, *"Overview of Human Trafficking in the U.S. and Florida,"* I provide background on human trafficking in the United States, and specifically in Florida. I show that before the creation of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 -TPVA, the U.S. did not recognize human trafficking as a crime, and a lacked legislation to assist the victims of trafficking. This lack of legislation resulted in harm to the victims and their families (especially immigrant victims). In this chapter, I describe the state legislation passed in 2014/2015 in Florida which impact trials and the victims' experiences. Furthermore, I outline

statistics related to human trafficking in the U.S., and in Florida explaining how traffickers are acting to exploit and reach new immigrant victims. By highlighting the new trends in trafficking, my goal is to show how traffickers create strategies to exploit immigrants' vulnerabilities and exploit the gaps that persist in the Florida's laws and in reintegration programs.

In chapter 2, *"Labelling: The Perfect Victim,"* I analyze how anti-trafficking discourses and images in governmental campaigns focusing on immigrants influence the ability of law enforcement and service providers to recognize a trafficking victim. I rely on secondary data to illustrate how the manner in which victims are portrayed can contribute to victimization. By constructing an image of human trafficking victims as "perfect victims,'' (those who are blameless and have not been involved knowingly in illegal activities), many trafficking victims who are not perfect compared to that image receive negative treatment from law enforcement. This also impacts their access to and experiences in reintegration programs. To visually convey how notion of the "perfect victim" is constructed, I analyze images created in "Look Beneath the Surface", an anti-trafficking awareness campaign created by United States Department of Health and Human Services and Administration for Children and Families. These materials are distributed throughout the entire country, yet they teach those in local communities to recognize a victim of trafficking based on the stereotypical "perfect victim." I argue that many victims become invisible to society because they do not fit the standards of the "perfect victim."

In chapter 3, *"Please, Listen to Us: Individual and Structural Considerations from the Perspective of the Survivors,"* is one of the main chapters of this research. My goal was to hear the survivors' narratives and give them the main voice in this study, so they can share their experiences and difficulties. As discussed previously, their perspectives are often disregarded

before, during and after their participation in anti-trafficking recovery programs. The reason is because many of the victims' struggles are not being recognized in trafficking trials and therefore, they are discounted by law enforcement, and not necessarily given priority in interactions with service providers. In this chapter, I illustrate that survivors perceive many gaps, which according to the interviews include individual and structural factors. One of the major concerns is having access to appropriate emotional support. The chapter focuses on labelling and stigma and draws on Arlie Hochschild's (1983) studies on emotional labor to highlight the diverse needs that victims have for emotional support. The lack of understanding of the victims' narratives and the existence of stigma rooted on the victims' immigration status, class, language and cultural barriers, gender and race cause their re-victimization, and also affect how the victims exercise their rights and seek support. In this section, I reveal the long-lasting consequences of not having access to emotional care on successful reintegration into society.

In chapter 4, *"Helping or Hindering Hands? Perspectives of Service Providers and Law Enforcement,"* I address the experiences of service providers and law enforcement who are working to help the victims of trafficking in Florida. The interviewees shared their struggles as professionals trying to support the victims. Their experiences are consistent factors outlined by the survivors. In terms of the main findings, service-providers admit that they do not have enough tools, training or conditions to attend the needs of the victims. The participants not only spoke about what is being done to assist with the reintegration of the victims in the anti-trafficking system, but they also discuss the gaps that need to be addressed to work with this particular community. One of the major findings in this chapter are that the concerns articulated by the human trafficking survivors were validated by the service-providers and law enforcement. However, one of the unique findings from this group is the lack of governmental support.

Service providers and law enforcement are daily finding new trafficking victims; however, the lack of housing, and available services such as healthcare programs, substance abuse treatment, and long-term services are making it more difficult for them to help trafficking victims. Furthermore, the participants also identified the need for more anti-trafficking and cultural training (including language training) for law enforcement and professionals who work directly with the trafficking victims – especially trauma professionals.

In "*Conclusion: Moving Forward,"* I reiterate the main arguments introduced in this research, and I also make recommendations for improvement of the Florida social services and legal system. I also examine some of the difficulties that I encountered during this research trying to reach Latinas victims/survivors, law enforcement, service providers and other governmental departments working directly in the field of human trafficking. Those difficulties are important because lack of access to vulnerable populations are partially responsible for the limited knowledge that we have about trafficking in Florida and the U.S. In this section, I reflect on our role as researchers and advocates in efforts to combat human trafficking, and how very often we contribute to the dissemination of the idea of "moral and perfect victim" narratives for trafficking. Influenced by the arguments of Hoang and Parreñas (2016), I argue that it is important to go beyond the social paradigms of victimization to better understand the experiences of trafficking victims. Our role as researchers is to challenge those paradigms, and to explore different alternatives to access vulnerable groups like trafficking victims. I end the chapter with suggestions for additional research to support efforts to improve anti-trafficking programs, and combat human trafficking in Florida, the US, and worldwide.

CHAPTER 1

What Does Human Trafficking Mean: How Does It Affect the U.S. and Florida?

Understanding Human Trafficking

Though this project will emphasize research on the reintegration and rehabilitation of human trafficking survivors, it is important to provide background on the growth of human trafficking and the laws created to combat it. Trafficking of human beings is a form of modern-day slavery, a universal problem and a violation of human rights (UN 2000, 2014). Studies supported by governmental, non-governmental organizations, scholars and activists have shown that human trafficking is a growing industry. The number of criminals in trafficking has increased and trafficking has become one of the most prevalent forms of transnational crimes, second only to drug trafficking (Shelley 2010). Trafficking usually occurs through small criminal networks operating independently or in cooperation with other local or international gangs. Trafficking also occurs through violations of labor and immigration codes, governmental corruption (Richard 1999; U.S Government Accountability Office 2006; Verité 2013) and coercion from relatives and friends (Polaris 2012). According to the United Nations, human trafficking is defined as:

> "the recruitment, transportation, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having

> control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs." (UN 2000).

According to the International Labour Force (ILO), human trafficking is a lucrative business that occurs in every country, including in the United States. It generates approximately $150 billion in illicit profits each year. An estimate of $99 billion in earnings are generated exclusively from forced sexual exploitation (ILO 2015). The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reveals that the sex trade is the most common form of trafficking. Statistics show that 77 percent of the victims are forced to work as sexual slaves, and another 18 percent are victims of forced labor (UNODC 2009, 6).

Sociologist Kevin Bales (2000) estimates that 27 million people in more than 118 countries around the world are working as slaves, and many of them are transported within and across international borders. 55 to 60 percent of them are women and girls (UNODC 2012; TVPA 2000). Moreover, the majority of traffickers' targets are immigrants from countries marked by poverty, high unemployment rates, gender-based inequality, lack of access to education, sexual and ethnic-cultural discrimination (Europol 2005, 4). They are from Asia, Central and South America, India, the former Soviet Union, Europe, and Africa (U.S Migration and Refugee 2011).

Understanding Human Trafficking in the U.S. and in Florida

Studies reveal that the United States is one of the top three destination countries for

trafficking of persons (Schauer & Wheaton 2006, p.1; Mizus et al. 2003). An estimated 100,000 to 150,000 people are victims each year within the U.S. (Frederick 2007), and a majority of them are women and children from Latin America, Southeast Asia, and Europe (CATW 2011). Furthermore, a study of the characteristics of suspected human trafficking victims in the United States from 2008 to 2010 reveals that as a group, Latinos were the third most frequently trafficked people, after white and Afro-Americans (U.S. Dept. Justice 2011).

The International Organization of Migration (IOM 2010) acknowledges that an accurate number of victims of human trafficking in the U.S. is difficult to ascertain due to the illegal and clandestine ways that traffickers operate, and because numerous cases are not reported (Vejar 2015). This is in part because many victims fear being punished by the government, and also by their traffickers. In addition, the majority of victims face difficulties such as language barriers, lack of access to phones to ask for help, lack of money, and being shamed of being prostitutes. Many victims also fear of having their visas confiscated or the few risk of being deported to their native country and not being able to reenter in the U.S. (Polaris 2012).

The UN study reveals that the main strategy traffickers use to attract the victims is by offering false promises. They guarantee finding a job with better conditions and higher wages - jobs such as nannies, maids, dancers, factory workers, waitress, sales clerks, and models. In some cases, criminals also use debt bondage forcing the victims into sex trafficking. The criminals also buy children from unprivileged families and force them to work as prostitutes or in forced and bonded labor (TPVA 2000). Many women also migrate to U.S. as ‘mail order brides’ believing that they will get married to a wealthy man accomplishing their “American dream.”

The U.S. government has been advancing in federal anti-trafficking legislation by combatting transnational organized crime within the country, and thereby decreasing the number of human trafficking victims. Moreover, creating new educational programs directed at bringing more awareness of trafficking to local communities. One big step was the creation of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act 2000 - TVPA that ensures effective punishment of traffickers. The TVPA also allows the creation of new social programs to protect the survivors (Department of State 2014, 398). Previously. instead of protecting the victims and prosecuting traffickers, many of victims were criminalized for having violated prostitution laws and severely penalized because of their illegal immigrant status while traffickers are free (Department of State 2000, p.6).

However, even though the U.S. has been developing more effective laws and strategies to combat human trafficking within the country, there are still several challenges in implementing the law and creating opportunities for victims to receive the right to protection. Aiming to address those challenges, in 2007, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) created telephone hotlines for the victims. Since then, anywhere within the country, anyone can call for free to report human trafficking crimes or ask for assistance. As a result, statistics show that the number of cases increased 259 percent from 2008 to 2012. Of the 9,298 new cases initiated during this period, 64 percent involved sex trafficking, 22 percent labor trafficking, 3 percent both types of human trafficking (sex and labor), and 12 percent were unspecified (Polaris 2012, p.4). The statistics also show that 5,932 victims were connected to the sex trade, and the majority of the cases occurred in hotels/motels, massage, acupuncture, and other health and spa services, streets, truck stops, commercial-front brothels, and residential brothels. Various cases involve pornography. Other crimes were also negotiated in advance on the Internet by the pimp

and the sex buyer known as a "John." Almost 57 percent of the victims involved were foreigners, women, and children; and most of them were Spanish native speakers (Polaris 2012, 5 -18).

FIGURE 1: OVERVIEW OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE U.S. (POLARIS, 2012, 9).

THE STATES WITH MOST REPORTS OF VICTIMS ARE CALIFORNIA, TEXAS, FLORIDA, NEW YORK AND ILLINOIS.

Indicators, related to labor trafficking suggest that 61 percent of the cases involved women. Furthermore, 66 percent were foreigners – exclusively from Mexico and Central America - and 20 percent were U.S. citizens or Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR). The most common cases, the victims were being exploited for domestic work, sales crew, restaurants, massage spa, small business, and in agricultural fields (Polaris 2012, 5).

The NHTRC also reveals that the U.S. states with the highest number of reported victims of human trafficking are California, Texas, Northeast and Southern Florida, New York and Illinois (see figure 1). The recruitment of victims often occurs socially through a friend or at a party, or in a public space, online, residence or shelter, or at bars or clubs. In the case of shelters,

traffickers take advantage of homeless housings, rehab facilities, non-foster home, runaway or homeless youth lodging, and also through parents housing. (Polaris, 2012, 17). Additionally, 59 percent of the recruiters identified were associated with Latin American trafficking networks, and the victims are mostly U.S. citizens, Latinas and Asians (Polaris 2012, 18 - 45).

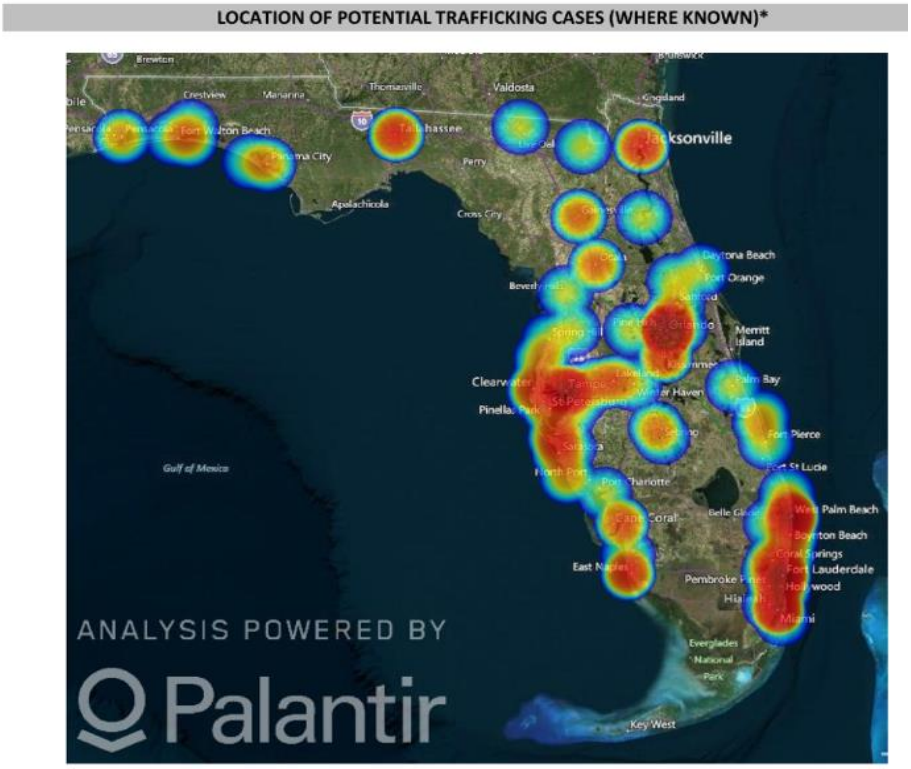

FIGURE 2: OVERVIEW OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE U.S. (POLARIS, 2012,.9).

82.70% OF THE CASES ARE WOMEN AND CHILDREN, AND 39.46% ARE IMMIGRANT (POLARIS, 2012). FLORIDA IS ALSO THE 3RD STATE WITH HIGHEST NUMBER OF LATINOS, INCLUDING ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS. (PEW RESEARCH, 2013)

Furthermore, the report released by the Pew Hispanic (2013) points out that the U.S. states with the highest number of Latinos are in California (27.3%), Texas (18.8%), Florida[1] (8.6%), New York (6.7%) and Illinois (3.9%). Florida is also the state with the third highest number of victims of human trafficking (Polaris 2012). Based on this evidence, it is extremely important that Florida government creates new and more effective strategies to work with Latino communities, especially with victims of human trafficking. The most important reason is that a significant number of victims and traffickers living in Florida are from Latin American communities (see figure 2).

Understanding Florida's Anti-Trafficking Legislation

One of the challenges to understanding human trafficking is the complexity of the newly developed laws. According to Florida law, human trafficking is defined as "the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjugation to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, slavery or commercial sex act" (Section 787.06, Florida Statute 2006).

(1) Force is identified as any type of physical violence such as imprisonment, torture, rapes, starvation, murder, or beatings. (2) Fraud is when someone offers employment, marriage, or a better life in exchange of some type of favor. (3) Coerce means the use of force, schemes, plans, or patterns intended to cause a failure to perform an act, and make them believe that failure to perform that act would result in force, document confiscation, abuse or threatened

[1] According to Department of Law Enforcement (2008), Florida has 850,000 illegal immigrants becoming one of the U.S. states with highest number of illegal aliens (Hoefer et al, 2006).

abuse of the legal system, or threats of family according to the Statewide Council on Human Trafficking Florida (2015, 6).

The acknowledgement of human trafficking in Florida is still recent. However, since 2004, the Florida government has made progress in anti-trafficking legislation to better protect the local community, provide the support to the survivors, and punish the criminals. In 2006, four civil and criminal statutes were amended, reinforcing the fines for the perpetrators of human trafficking, and also making sure victims are properly protected and assisted by the state and its agencies. The new legislation also allowed the implementation of training programs to better prepare judges, attorneys, law enforcement personnel, investigators, and advocates (Florida Statute 2006)[2].

However, Butkus (2007) explains that the anti-trafficking legislation amended in 2006 was still inadequate because victims were still insecure, unable or afraid to report the abuses, and did not know their civil rights. In addition, many victims were still detained and punished as criminals because of their illegal immigrant status, or because of being caught by law enforcement officials committing crimes, even if though many of those victims were forced by the pimp to commit such offenses. Furthermore, the new laws' failure to recognize the importance of the nongovernmental agencies (NGOs) helping the survivor overcome their traumas and reintegrate into society. In 2012, new anti-trafficking legislation was adopted.

[2] In the civil statute, the Section 772.102 elucidates that human trafficking and sex trafficking victims are allowed to obtain a civil remedy. The Section 772.104 provide to all victims of human trafficking and sex trafficking the civil right to receive three times more the amount gained during the time she/he was exploited by the trafficker. In the criminal statues, the Section 787.06 change the meaning of "financial harm'' and also included fraud, coercion, debt practices, manipulation of victims' documents as an act of forced labor or services (Florida State, 2006).

Penalties became more severe[3] for the criminals. In 2014-2015, the Florida legislature signed four laws as a strategy to make Florida a zero-tolerance state for human trafficking. The legislation recently passed include:

(1) **Law 369:** Statute 787.29. This legislation went into effect in January, 2016 and requires that the Departments of Transportation and Health create and display anti-trafficking signs in specific places with the aim of increasing awareness of trafficking on the Florida community. Posters must be displayed in rest areas, weigh stations, primary airports, emergency rooms, welcome centers open to the public, bus stations and others public locations. The main goals of the posters are to teach society to recognize signs of possible victims of trafficking and to teach the community that reporting human trafficking cases is important. In addition, many Floridians do not know that Florida is the state with the third highest number of victims of human trafficking in the U.S.

(2) **Law 465:** Statutes 796.07 and 943.0583**.** The legislation provides criminal penalties for any person that is soliciting another person to commit prostitution or similar acts. The criminal will have to perform community services, pay restitution for the victim and attend educational programs. According to the Sheriff Ryan Clark, this legislation is important because in many cases - especially cases involving minors – the trafficked do not have pimps or recruiters. This bill is fundamental because it identifies the sex buyer (the John) as the trafficker. Clark also explains that some victims of trafficking "do not have a pimp, but the law says that you cannot be a trafficked if you do not have a trafficker. So, now we are looking for the Johns.

[3] Some of the changes in the legislation were the crime of human smuggling became from a first-degree misdemeanor to a third degree felony. Criminals convicted of human sex trafficking were nominated as a sex offenders and sex predators. Any property for human trafficking is a subject to forfeiture. And all massage establishment/employees must have their valid photo identification upon request.

The buyers. The buyer is now the new trafficker." (Sheriff Ryan Clark, quote Interview, Jan. 4, 2016).

(3) **Law 469:** Statutes 409.1678 and 787.06. This legislation was created exclusively for the residential facilities serving victims of sexual exploitation. According to the law, all address and private information of safe houses, safe foster homes, and other types of shelters assisting or serving victims of sexual exploitation are exempt from disclosure as public records. According to Mayhara Fletcher, a trauma service provider who has worked for many years with survivors, this legislation is important because many traffickers or recruiters attempt to get into the safe house and recruit the victims for the second time – especially teenagers.

4) **Law 467:** Statutes 119.071 and 943.0583. This legislation requires that personal information of human trafficking victims is exempt from public records including information that reveals their identity, and their human trafficking offenses. According to the Sheriff Clark, this bill is important because in many cases, victims have been prosecuted before being identified by the law enforcement as a human trafficking victim. As a result, the criminal record can affect their lives forever. To avoid this problem, all victims will have their records cleared. This will help them to find new jobs opportunities, and may allow them to apply and bee accepted to law school, for example.

Even though these four laws were approved, there are several gaps that still need to be addressed in Florida's legislation related to trafficking. In 2014, the Statewide Council on Human Trafficking composed of 15 member represented by law enforcement officers, prosecutors, legislators, service providers, and educator. The councils purpose is to work together to identify what needs to be changed in the law to improve the criminal justice and

social services to combat human trafficking. The Council meets quarterly and its goals are: (1) improve awareness among the Floridians, (2) improve law enforcement strategies giving them more tools to work with human trafficking victims, (3) increase prosecution of traffickers, (4) creation of more strategies to increase the safety of the victims, attend their needs and to improve their likelihood of their recovery, and (5) create a Florida model for fighting human trafficking (Statewide Council on Human Trafficking, 2015). I participated in some of these taskforce meetings via online conference calls to better understand how community partners work together to combat human trafficking.

The New Trends in Florida

National trends are somewhat different than statewide trends. According to the Florida State Council on Human Trafficking (2015) new trends in the Florida state are: prostitution initiated through internet-based contact, massage spas, agricultural brothels, sex trafficking of minors – especially runaways, prostitution at sports events, delivery "outcall" prostitution services, hotel "incall prostitution services" and prostitution at strip clubs (Statewide Council on Human Trafficking Florida 2015, p.5). The Center for the Advancement of Human Rights at Florida State University also shows that labor trafficking and minor sex trafficking are the most prevalent types of trafficking in Florida. The victims are frequently in the agricultural sector, or in the tourism and hospitality industries.

Furthermore, unregulated temporary employment agencies are also one of the main actors responsible for human trafficking. The traffickers usually use those agencies to reach the vulnerable victims who are desperate to get a job. Usually the victims that utilize those agencies are immigrants (especially temporary and undocumented), and also workers that have experience

with homelessness, substance abuse, mental illness, or have a low level of education. International students are also one of the targets used of traffickers, because their student visas do not allow them to have a legal and fulltime job. If the government finds out that they are violating the terms of their visa, they can be deported. Trying to avoid deportation, many international students look for agencies to find temporary jobs, so they can save money and send money to their home country. In addition, these companies are leasing workers on a monthly and weekly basis to hotels, resorts, construction companies, golf courses, condominium rentals, restaurants, tee-shirt shops and others. Informal jobs are a multi-million-dollar profit business, resulting in growth and exploitation of workers in exchange for cheap labor (Center for the Advancement of Human Rights 2010).

In addition, statistics shows that Florida today is the third most frequent destination for human trafficking in the U.S., because of several factors, and these include: (1) The state has one of the highest numbers of immigrants' communities. Usually, immigrants do not know their civil rights, and those who are undocumented believe that they have no rights. (2) The economy still operates with little control by the government. As a result, traffickers and recruiters use this gap to exploit and find new vulnerable victims (Center for the Advancement of Human Rights 2010). According to the Department of Children and Families, most of the reports that involved victims of human trafficking in Florida happened in areas such as: Broward, Hillsborough, Lee, and Miami-Dade counties. The majority of the most recent cases involved children, teenagers age 13 or older and runaways. The majority of the calls received through the free anti-trafficking hotlines were from Miami, Orlando, Tampa, Jacksonville, and Fort Myers (Center for the Advancement of Human Rights 2010).

Another problem in the state is that Florida is known as the mecca for runaways. Every year thousands of children leave their homes because of family instability. As a result, minor sex trafficking is becoming a serious issue in Florida. Statistics from 2010 indicate that between 30,000 to 40,000 pre-teen and teenage runaways are believed to live in Florida. Being aware of this problem, traffickers are using strategies to sexually exploit minors. Usually they recruit the victims on the streets, in schools, and in malls, and especially on social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Craigslist, Myspace, and Backpage.com (Center for the Advancement of Human Rights 2010).

One of the strategies used by the traffickers now is to use "mobile brothels" where they deliver victims to residences or rented hotel rooms. This tactic is increasing because it is more difficult for law enforcement to discover. The traffickers also have the ability to take the victims to different states for a short-period of time, making human trafficking an undetectable business without a single location. According to the Center for the Advancement of Human Rights (2010) the internet is the "virtual street corner" used by the traffickers. It is more profitable, and the chance of them being exposed are much lower.[4]

Conclusion

Human trafficking is an industry that is growing, and the U.S. is the third highest

[4] Though this research is focused on Latinas, another new trend in Florida is the increased number of male victims of human trafficking. It is important that researchers increase the study of human trafficking of male victimization as part of human trafficking. Usually the general public associates victims of trafficking – especially for sexual exploitation - with women, immigrants and children. However, this is not accurate. According to psychologist Mayhara Fletcher, there is still a taboo related to rape, sex trafficking and men. Many male victims of trafficking do not report or seek help because they feel embarrassed of having their manhood and their sexuality exposed. It is important that new research concerning these issues be initiated in the United States.

destination countries measured in numbers of individuals being trafficked within its borders. Before the TPVA was adopted in 2000, the U.S. did not have official legislation that addressed human trafficking issues, or laws that appropriately protected the victims – especially immigrants. As a result, many of the survivors faced several risks, such as: deportation, prison, discrimination, and re-victimization. The federal and state legislation still contains several gaps that need to be addressed. The remaining chapters identify these gaps from the perspective of human trafficking survivors, service-providers, and law enforcement. The ultimate goal is to come to a better understanding of human trafficking and best practices for ensuring successful reintegration.

CHAPTER 2

Labelling Trafficking Survivors: The Consequences of the Ideology of "Perfect Victim"

In the previous chapter, I outlined many of the recent laws, policies and trends related to human trafficking. However, as stated in the introduction and mentioned throughout my interviews, survivors often express their frustration about how their experiences are being disregarded. While there have been advances in formal policies, victims/survivors find themselves on the outside of a process meant to assist them (Rieger 2007; George 2012). An analysis of their narratives is important because it provides insight into the persistent gaps in knowledge about trafficking, and these gaps undermine prevention and protection of victims.

Labels based on class, gender, race, ethnicity and physical appearance have a strong impact in trafficking victims' lives – especially immigrants. Throughout this section, I discuss how the paradigm of "perfect victim'' (Nils Christie [5]1986; Van 2013) existent in anti-trafficking discourse and narratives, affects the social identity, the opportunities, rights and the services available to many victims seeking help. These campaigns and discourses have a negative effect on access to services because when victims' stories do not fit the standards of the perfect victim, they are not immediately recognized as victim worthy of assistance. In this chapter, I examine how anti-trafficking discourse and images in governmental campaigns influence how the

[5] Nils Christie argues that for a victim of violence to be identified as the ''ideal victim'' in the society and worthy to receive support she/he needs to have those labels: (1) he/she needs to be identified as weak and vulnerable; (2) involved in respectable activity while she was in victimization (3) be blameless; (4) be victimized by a bad offender; (4) be unknown to the offender. In case the victim does not have those characteristics, he/she is seen as criminal or liar.

American people, especially law enforcement officials, identify a trafficking "victim." I rely heavily on pamphlets as data to analyze the narratives about how immigrants become human-trafficking victims in the U.S. In addition, I also analyze brochures from "Look Beneath the Surface", a public awareness anti-trafficking campaign created in 2007 by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and by the Administration for Children & Families.

The qualitative analysis of these public campaigns is important because these brochures and flyers were created in response to the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (U.S. Dept. of State 2000) and aim to combat human trafficking by increasing awareness of programs and laws related to human trafficking among victims of trafficking and the American public. These materials were also created specifically to teach immigration lawyers, service and health providers, faith-based organizations, civic groups, law enforcement, educators, and society in general how to recognize a victim based on their physical appearance and behavior. Disproportionally, the victims portrayed in those pamphlets are Asian and Latina women, girls, and boys. By inaccurately portraying the images of victims, the campaigns adversely make it more difficult for any victim who does not match the image of the perfect victim to be identified and recognized as a person needy assistance.

Labelling: The Survivor's Voice or the Victim's Voice?

In 1998, interviewee Margie Silva accepted a job offer at a prestigious hotel in the United States after losing her job at an international bank in her home country. When she arrived in the U.S., with a legal, temporary nonimmigrant visa in hand, she was picked up at the airport by an unknown man that she and five other immigrant women believed to be their job recruiter. He

drove them around for what seemed like hours and then announced to the six women that they had finally arrived at their new place of employment. As Silva stepped out of the car, her passport was forcefully taken away from her and she was placed in a small room where she was raped, was forced to work naked, use drugs, drink excessive amounts of alcohol, and forced to sell her body against her will. In a matter of days, she realized that she had been trafficked into the sex trade. After several years of being sexually exploited, she managed to escape. Left with no money and limited financial means, Silva became homeless. She sought help from various agencies yet the lack of services available to her made the situation extremely difficult - especially since she could not speak English. As a result, she was mistreated by law enforcement and by local community members because they refused to believe her story.

She reveals that throughout the trial to prosecute her trafficker, it seemed that Silva was treated more like a "criminal" than a victim by police officers. Today, Silva is an activist in a survivor leadership group that works exclusively with immigrant victims of human trafficking in the United States. During her speech at the 2015 Human Trafficking Summit, she pointed out that many law enforcement officials claim that many female immigrants use the same types of victimization narratives to avoid being held responsible for crimes such as prostitution; including: being a "poor and monolingual girl" who does not know how to speak English, and/or being a "good" and "naïve" victim who is guiltless, just so that they are able to obtain the T-Visa[6] and not be deported to their home countries.

[6]The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TPVA) created in 2000 created the T-Visa as a form of protection and assistance to immigrant victims of trafficking. Receiving the T-Visa, the victims become temporary U.S. residents until they get their permanent residency. Obtaining the permission, the survivors are allowed to receive federal and state benefits. Furthermore, some of their relatives are also legible to get their permanent residency in the U.S. The victims that receive the T-Visa are: 1) Suffered extreme forms of trafficking; 2) She/he was living in the U.S. during this period; 3) When she/he was trafficked, the victim requested some type of help and protection

Based on this experience described by Silva and other immigrant survivors, Uy (2012) states that intersectionality based on immigration and "race, class, and gender often play part of the construction of the "sympathetic" or "perfect" victim" (204). He explains that when a human trafficking crime happens, the middle and upper class victims with more education, and attractive (often European) features are the ones who receive more care and attention, while the victims who are poor and are minorities or undocumented immigrants are forgotten. This overrepresentation of white and middle or upper class woman as victims is also connected to the Missing White Woman Syndrome – MWWS. Brookins-House (2013) argues that this sensationalized tendency of the media to portray white, young, attractive women as the powerless victims contributes to the invisibility of victims that do not fit on those labels including victims who are poor, non-white women, immigrants (especially undocumented and monolingual), or transgender. Dressler & Thomas (2003) also suggest that a person's race and/or ethnicity may dictate whether or not the case will be reported or prosecuted. As a result, minorities and poor victims of human trafficking continue to be invisible, and traffickers continue to commit crimes without repercussion.

Burnett (2014) points out that this MWWS syndrome "articulates a lived experience of the intersectional realities of racism, sexism, and classism, which currently supports the myth that black people are not valued, important, or worthy of efforts to enforce laws in protecting black lives" (Rewire 2014). Burnett's analysis can be expanded to include not just black lives, but also the lives of other minorities and poor women and immigrants, as all of these people are rendered invisible in American society. This invisibility affects their civil rights, and how they

from the government), such as: investigation and prosecution (minors do not need it; 4) The victim suffered extreme hardship. (TPVA 2000; Polaris Project).

are perceived by the American society. In addition, “constructing victims of crime as middle and upper-class people, for example, tends to be more successful in encouraging sympathy than claims constructing poor or minority victims” (Loseke 1999, 81). This lack of representation means that race, social class, immigration status, language proficiency, and ethnicity are important cultural factors in the U.S. that dictate whether or not a victim is worthy of compassion. In those aforementioned cases, Silva and Lopez were underprivileged, “uneducated’’ based on the Western standards of education, monolingual, women of color, illegal immigrants, and were from developing countries with patriarchal culture that undervalues women, making them prone to accept any condition to escape. All of those “labels’’ influenced how Silva and Lopez was seen and judged by the law enforcement officials and society once they were in the U.S and victimized. Oyserman and Lee (2008) point out that thinking of oneself as a member of one group or another such as race, nationality and gender, can make a difference not only in one’s behavior but also in how one thinks about and treats others that are not a part of the same group. In Lopez and Silva’s aforementioned stories, the victims of human trafficking felt threatened because they were being judged against the “perfect victim” standard, while their identities made achieving that standard impossible being unnoticed and disregarded.

Uy (2012) also suggests that this notion of “perfect victim” in human trafficking discourses is related to the legislation that “elicits strong feelings from the Religious Right’’ (205). This goal also impacts sexual and reproductive healthcare programs that seek to meet the needs of “perfect victims’’ and these do not see the needs of actual victims (Kim & Chang 2007). This narrow portrayal creates more misconceptions and marginalization of non-perfect victims, limiting their access to public services, and even inhibits their ability to defend themselves. Society and the law often portray a victim as a person who is entirely innocent, decent,

submissive and without will-power, so that their story can be deemed "trustworthy." Realistically speaking, that is not frequently the case, because "surviving is the other side of being a victim'' (Barry 1979, 39). Shackel (2011) explains the importance of recognizing the different ways in which victims protect themselves. Many victims might choose to act "immorally'' (based on conservative standards of morality) after being trafficked just so they are able to survive. For example, victims sometimes agree to work as prostitutes and help the trafficker make money in exchange for protection. However, despite these decisions, they should still be viewed as victims. In certain situations, to survive a victim would need to attempt to fight back or try to escape; yet in other cases survival would require that same victim to assist or participate in criminal acts just so they could live another day. Furthermore, some victims might have an opportunity to escape, yet decide to stay (and be raped again), just so they could defend and protect their children, husband, and relatives from harm. Thus many victims are not "perfect victims'' yet, that does not change the fact that they are in fact victims in need of protection.

Wallinger (2010) argues that misrepresentation of immigrant women (especially undocumented, monolingual, and poor) victims of human trafficking creates a "political battleground of women's bodies," causing even more victimization and re-traumatization (15). This misunderstanding of who qualifies as a victim marginalizes immigrant women. Furthermore, the stigma attached to trafficking influences how society accepts and is sympathetic to the experiences of immigrant women living in poverty who accept undesirable and illegal offers to immigrate to a developed country to improve their lives, even though by immigrating illegally they will be committing a crime. Based on those misconceptions, many immigrant victims have been denied access to immediate U.S. law enforcement protection, medical services and immigration support (De Prince et al. 2012; Gracia et al. 2014).

Furthermore, in many cases women are being put in jail or deported because they have not "collaborated" with law enforcement, which adds to the stigma of both being trafficked and when their experiences are not recognized as trafficking labels, such as being dishonest (Olivares 2014)

It is also important to emphasize that the stigma associated with human trafficking and prostitution in the U.S. policies causes several problems related to the rights of the human trafficking victims. As a whole, victims often are judged as sex workers, because there is a lack of a proper definition of "prostitution and sexual exploitation.'' The government, especially law enforcement, creates its own criteria about how to recognize a victim, which is often based on the paradigm of the "perfect victim." Therefore, if a victim has accepted work as a sex worker, or even was forced against her/his own will, the prostitution is still considered a crime. Furthermore, the use of the "perfect victim" paradigm types of trafficking leads to the exclusion of victims of different types of trafficking including labor trafficking. Consequently, many migrant workers that are living in the same conditions, but do not "fit'' those standards of perfect victimization acknowledged as victims (Kim & Chang 2007, 17).

Labelling matters for a number of reasons both in terms of the "perfect victim" and also as it relates to being a "survivor." As described during the interview, Silva stated that sometimes besides being treated as a criminal, she was also referred during the trial as a "victim'' and sometimes as a "survivor." Though the two words are seemingly similar, they are viewed very differently with two separate meanings. What is the difference in context between being labeled a "survivor" by the law and being labeled a "victim" by the law?

Alter (2010) explains that labelling can shape and change our opinion and how we

perceive specific people, causing long-term consequences to those who are being categorized. Hacking (1995, 2004) argues that categorizations are defined by him as the "looping effects" where human beings are classified based on values (351). Those values are created, defined and transformed based on what other individuals or institutions want to do with this particular individual or community. Tannenbaum (1938) points that a stigmatized person is not based on this person's individual qualities, but on how his/her community (in this case immigrant trafficking women/ undocumented/ sex worker) is tagged by the dominant in society. Here the victim is not only dealing with how the law enforcement and the policies perceive his/her personal stories, but how those institutions in power define and label his/her community.

As an example of how labelling affects the rights and opportunities of an individual, Silva states that:

> *"A 'victim' is the community or the population who will receive the services. If you say 'survivor', sometimes the person loses it. So, we try to treat our population as a 'victim', because a 'survivor' has just sympathy and respect" (Silva speech, Human Trafficking Summit, 2015).*

As described by Silva, it is apparent that society and law enforcement treat victims much differently than survivors. As a survivor, individuals are often treated as heroes, yet do not receive the same rights a victim would - usually victims of human trafficking have access to special governmental services. Conversely, as a "victim", individuals are often treated poorly, and experience a loss of self-worth and civil rights, causing them severe long-term emotional and mental damage. Thus, the fact that the current laws treat victims and survivors differently needs to be questioned. How is it decided who becomes a victim and who becomes a survivor? Are there certain elements that make them equal with only slight variation? Or are they essentially both the same with one having less privilege? Does being a survivor mean that a person has

already recovered from the crime? Is a victim completely blameless?

The struggles that Silva faced during her interaction with the law enforcement was an example of how harmful the labels related to undocumented immigrant women, victim of human trafficking, and sex workers are in U.S. policy and deployment of law enforcement services. Gusfield (1967) explains that social control is created through labelling and also through the legislation of morality, where policies control behaviors, and how individuals should act based on cultural values. He states that the earning of morality created in the society can become political issues because "cultural beliefs of one group over another suggests that those beliefs are the morals" that needs to be followed by the others, and everything beyond that is seen as outsider or immoral (Inderbitzin, Bates, & Gainey 2012, 382).

Koss (2000) and Rios (2011) provide critiques about how labels can influence the criminal justice system in the United States, and how labelling can traumatize and criminalize the victim even more, especially minorities such as immigrant women (Konradi & Burger, 2000). According to Koss, the term "victim'' is used when the crime and social victimization is discussed in the criminal system. The term "survivor" is used "when discussing women's mobilization and satisfactory outcomes to demonstrate survivors' desires to retain choice and treated as autonomous individuals" (Hockett & Saucier 2015, 9).

Silva's narrative is not unique. Unfortunately, thousands of U.S. citizen and immigrants (especially undocumented and monolingual) females, who are non-white women and poor experience the same labeling issues while living in the United States and experience victim-blaming when trying to seek help (Meyer 2016). As a result, many of them end up not disclosing their stories. Meyer and other scholars (Devries et al. 2013; Ofstenhage et al. 2011; Dumn 2010;

Fattah 1989) discuss that "empathy and support seem to be reserved for victims who are seen as innocent and vulnerable in the process of their victimization and public perceptions of innocence tend to vary greatly with different types of victims and victimization" (Meyer 2016, 76). Past research also reveals that victims, having been denied access to support and protection resources have higher levels of re-victimization. These women are more likely to return to their traffickers due to their emotional connection, and the lack of prospects to sustain themselves (Meyer 2012; Tually et al. 2008).

Immigrants and the "Iconic Victim'': Media Campaigns Analyzed

Narratives are understood to be a variation of individual or collective experiences and memories that can be described in different forms such as myths, paintings, conversations, images, and gestures (Sandelowski 1991). Storytelling is created not only to entertain and inform, but to teach society about specific behaviors, a way of thinking, and the cultural practices of a particular group, individual, or generation. Through storytelling, one can comprehend how a society works, and how their principles and beliefs are reflected in people's lives through discourse, dialects, culture, and simple behaviors. Moreover, storytelling enables us to understand how cultural beliefs are defined and how they impact both a community and individuals.

Best (1997) argues that narratives of victimization found in American society are used currently in a fashionable and preconceived way, one in which the victims often go unrecognized and unacknowledged. Best also points out some of the victims' physical features are not accepted in the "guide to identifying abuse," consequently making a victim invisible and

disregarded (12). However, it is important to remember that just because a victim does not fit in a certain label or criteria this does not mean that this person has not been sexually abused, trafficked or exploited. The images displayed in the "Look Beneath the Surface" (see images and appendix) campaign illustrate how stereotypes created in narratives of human trafficking survivors affect immigrant victims' lives. As mentioned before, Breuil, Oude & Siegel (2011) also claim that "policy and law enforcement perspective on human trafficking often depart from a black-and-white picture of helpless victims" (32). However, the labels created by the law and media are still too constricted, suggesting that the experiences of the victims are the same, and imply that the victims have the same background. In reality, stories and cases of victimization cannot be labeled and standardized. Human trafficking is much more multifaceted than as defined in the legislation and in guidelines of the "perfect victim." Fukushima (2012) analyzed the images created by the United States government in the "Looking Beneath of the Surface" awareness campaign. She explains that these campaigns categorize the victims and the traffickers, thus creating an image that affects how the law and law enforcement perceive others. As showed in images 3 and 4, the anti-trafficking narratives often create this "iconic" victim usually from Asia, Latin America or Africa. Srikantiah (2007) argues that those stereotypes are gender, class and race-based, "suppressing the individuality of women and girls and rendering them simple prey for manipulation by clever traffickers. The iconic victim is consistent with this stereotype of foreign women and women of color as meek, helpless, and belonging to repressive male dominant cultures" (201-2).

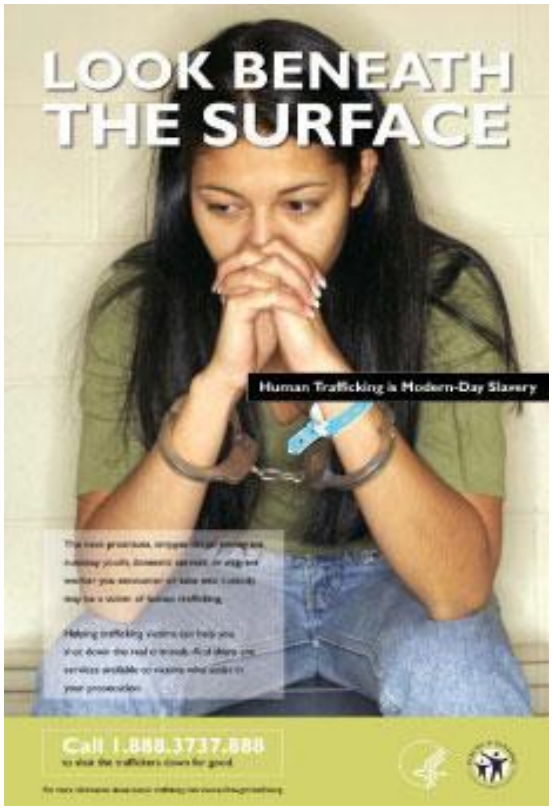

FIGURE 3: POSTER CAMPAIGN 'LOOK BENEATH OF SURFACE' CAMPAIGN, 2007.

Fukushima (2012) emphasizes that human trafficking in the U.S. relies on a cultural discourse connected to a transnational network and of immigration that shapes the characteristics of survivors, who are usually people of color and immigrants[7]. Image 3 is one of the images created by the U.S. Rescue and Restore part of the awareness campaign called as "Look Beneath the Surface". The flyer shows a young Latina girl, with indigenous features, straight, and black hair. She is wearing a basic t-shirt and jeans, emphasizing the idea that a victim could be anyone.

[7] For example, some of the terms and clichés implicitly used to describe immigrant victims of trafficking in the United States are: "Latina", " sexy mulata/mulato", "sweet Asian girl'', "innocent", "powerless'', "uneducated", "exotic features", "hard work", " helpless", "she/he was bought'', "she/he was sold'', "she/he is a slave'', "working forced and against their own will'', " passive'', "religious or spiritual seeker", " needy", "maid", "waitress", "dreamer'', "sentimental'', "subservient'', "compliant'', "eager to please", "untrustworthy", "sad", "ignorant", "the one saved by someone from the First World'', "illegal", "immoral'', "the one that accepted everything", and so on. (Media Action Network for Asians Americans; no date; Pehl, 2004; Rodriguez, 2008).

Her body language and facial expressions suggest that she is lonely, worried, deeply sad, and afraid. She is restricted (due to the handcuffs) and has a blue bracelet on her arm, which can suggest one of two things: that she either just left the hospital or was caught at a party. Meanwhile, her body language could also imply that she is praying. On the top of the photo, "Look Beneath of the Surface" is written, causing the reader to reflect about the idea of ignoring stereotypes, and to look further than outward appearance. The title also suggests looking deeper than the outside, and to look for characteristics and clues that are normally disregarded.

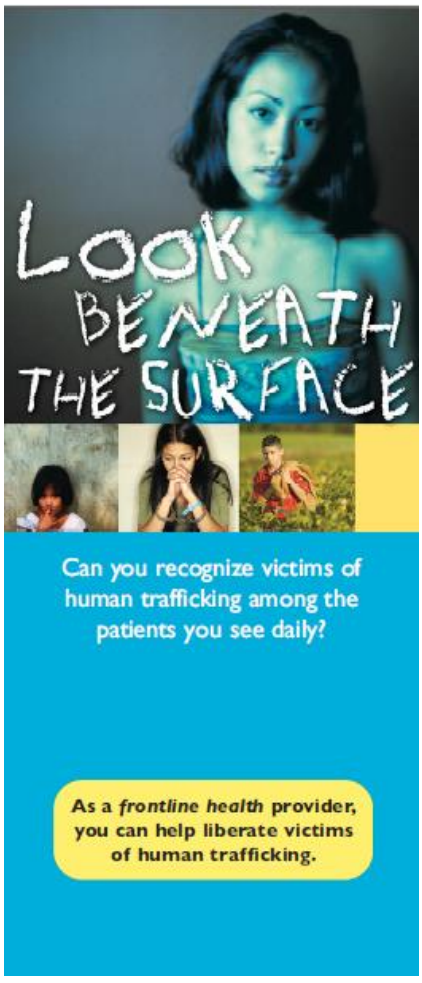

FIGURE 4: POSTER CAMPAIGN 'LOOK BENEATH OF SURFACE' CAMPAIGN, 2007.

Image 4 shows a skinny Asian girl. Below the main picture there is a child. Her features could be of Asian descent or of Central or South American descent, such as an indigenous girl from Guatemala. She is sucking her finger and expressing fear and confusion. On the other side, there is a Latino boy working in the agriculture field. And the bottom of the flyer reads, “Can you recognize victims of human trafficking among patients you see daily?”

The image 5, also a part of the material created for the same campaign, shows another Latina woman. This woman is possibly a maid who also is sitting down. Her body language suggests that she has no autonomy or confidence. She is scared and praying with the rosary, a very important and respected icon in Latin culture, frequently used by Catholics - the main religion of Latin America. She is looking down at the floor, expressing melancholy and powerlessness.

FIGURE 5: - IMAGE OF THE VIDEO FROM THE CAMPAIGN LOOK BENEATH OF SURFACE

Why are the victims all portrayed as foreign or represented as Latinos and Asians with stereotypical symbols? The most recent Human Trafficking Trends in the United States report released by the National Human Trafficking Resource Center 2007-2012 shows - that white and

black Americans are now the main targets of traffickers in the past five years (Polaris 2012); so why are they not represented in those campaigns? Where are the images of transgender people? Why are there no signs of narratives about LGBT communities? The same report also shows that the number of transgender victims of trafficking in the U.S. has grown in the past years. Why have they become invisible in anti-trafficking narratives? Why does the government focus mainly on immigrants from Asian and Latin America?

Cojocaru (2015) states that some of these images created by society about victims of trafficking and modern-day slavery are part of a "grotesque spectacle where stories of suffering and exploitation are trimmed and distorted to fit a narrow pattern of victimhood, which ignores the complexities of the human being behind the mask of sex trafficking. Narratives are flattened into the same story, the same woman, and the same miserable wretched whore in need of upraising, rescue, and salvation" (6). Images are shown without breaking paradigms, taboos, and the idea of good taste. Furthermore, those narratives portray the types of victims that can be considered "believable" and "worthy," increasing the public perceptions of the "model victim.'' This makes the use of the law and policies more complex, because they interfere with law enforcement measures and educational/service programs that normally help those victims (Coontz & Stahl 2007; Jones 2010). As a result, society becomes less aware of the real trafficking narratives. Vance also highlights that those melodramatic narratives portrayed in the media and popular culture, are the same image used in late nineteenth-century European, British and American social purity campaigns that discussed white slavery (203) in which the "good," sexually inexperienced and innocent victims were the ones who deserved to receive protection. However, the current trend is to use the "poor, innocent and powerless" immigrants as representatives.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I analyze how the idea of "perfect victim" in narratives of human trafficking are created and portrayed in American society and how the misrepresentation of said narratives impacts the victims. First, I start examining how categorizations and stereotypes influences how victims like Lopez and Silva are identified and recognized by law enforcement officials and the public. Afterwards, I analyze the "Look Beneath the Surface" governmental campaign and how the "perfect victim" is portrayed. I conclude that: 1) Anti-trafficking narratives define who deserves to be called a "victim", a "survivor" or a "criminal" based on labelling and stigma; 2) The discourses of human trafficking create barriers in the identification of the victims. The " most deserving victim" is always the "the ideal, powerless and passive victim,'' hence, ignoring the different characteristics of victimization, especially those who are considered immoral by cultural norms even if immorality is coerced ; 3) A "perfect victim" is portrayed as defenseless and/or passive, and the victim deserves the public's sympathy; 4) Narratives of human trafficking are almost always linked to immigration, race, class, ethnicity, legal status, and religion; these stereotypes often determine how victims are treated by the law; and 5) Other victims are being forgotten in anti-trafficking narratives. White, black, and LGBT Americans are seen as invisible, creating this idea that the problem does not happen with "insiders'' just with "outsiders (immigrants)." While I critique the over-representation of Latina immigrants as victims in public campaigns, there are reasons to be concerned about their well-being and reintegration because many still do not meet the standards of "perfect victim.'' This is what I will discuss in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3
Please, Listen to Us!
Individual and Structural Considerations and Structural from the Perspective of the Survivors

"We need to be treated as human.
Sometimes we can become criminals.
Law enforcement and service providers need to treat the victims and the survivors with care and empathy. Please, when you create policies, consider us."
(Interview with Silva, human trafficking survivor, sex trafficking)

In the previous chapter, I analyze how the image of the "perfect victim" portrayed by the government and American media affect how trafficking victims are recognized by society – especially law enforcement - and how those labels affect their civil rights and the trials of their traffickers. In this section, I give the survivors the primary voice, so they can share the experiences and struggles they experienced while they were seeking help. Listening to survivors is an important strategy to better understand trafficking. Their perspective allows us to improve "aftercare services based on their specific needs reducing the possibility of victimization and victim blaming which marginalize the victim making recovery even more difficult" (McCrory 2005, 1). Integrating the voice of human trafficking victims/survivors is also important because most studies in the United States do not include the perspectives of human trafficking survivors, especially those of immigrants. As a result, laws, public policies and programs are too weak to produce effective results, which cause additional problems, and eventually lead to more costs incurred by the state. Without considering the voices of survivors, policies fail and the victims

are not protected. The failure to create sufficient awareness of this issue in society, leads to the true criminals (traffickers) going unpunished.

Based on the aforementioned considerations, in this chapter, I explore immigrant survivors' experiences and discuss the individual (stigma and language barriers) and structural factors (discrimination and lack of access) that impact them on a daily basis. In this section, I focus on interviews conducted with two women and one man during the 2015 Human Trafficking Summit hosted at University of South Florida (USF), Tampa, Florida. The interviewees explained the challenges that they faced during interactions with law enforcement, during judicial trials of their traffickers, with lawyers, and judges. Furthermore, they also describe their relationship with service providers and the emotional difficulties that they experienced during the process of reintegration and recovery.

Stigma & Criminalization

In addition to labelling (as discussed in Chapter 2), human trafficking survivors often discussed the ways in which stigma impacted their experiences. Contemporary work on stigma can often be traced back to Goffman's (1963) work on "spoiled identity" and stigma. Goffman defines stigma as attributes that attach negative meanings to a person's identity. Building on this, Link & Phelan argue that stigma can be summarized in five components: (1) "People distinguish and label human differences." (2) "Dominant cultural beliefs link labeled persons with undesirable characteristics – to negative stereotypes." (3) "Labeled persons are placed in distinct categories so as to accomplish some degree of separation of "us'' and "them." (4) "Labeled people's experience status loss and discrimination that leads to unequal outcomes." (5) "It is entirely contingent on access to social, economic, and political power that allows the

identification of the different, the construction of stereotypes, the separation of labeled person into distinct categories, and the full execution or disapproval, rejection, exclusion and discrimination" (Link & Phelan 2001, 363).

Stigma for human trafficking victims/survivors means that their stories of victimization do not end after a crime. Scholars reveal that a 'secondary victimization', a state where victims are 're-victimized' by the judgments of others, can also occur (Campbell & Raja 1999; Martin & Powell 1994; Jordan 2013). During trials, law enforcement officials, the jury, and listeners of the court disbelieve, blame and humiliate the victim. Victims are frequently seen as guilty as their accounts of the crime are judged and mocked; essentially making the victim suffer for something beyond their control - this often generates "re-traumatization" (Jordan 2004, 2008, 2013; Kelly 2002, Madigan & Gamble 1991; Temkin & Krahé 2008).

During my interviews with the survivors, they often expressed concern about three important issues that make their reintegration and recovery more difficult: stigma, prejudice, and criminalization. As examples of stigmatization and re-victimization, Silva explains that when she finally escaped from her second trafficker, she asked law enforcement for help many times but the services were denied. Silva states that:

> *"When I went to the law enforcement, they did not listen to me. I went the second time. They did not listen to me. I was homeless. I was in a situation where nobody believed on me. I met a U.S. naval man on the street that listened to my story. He told me that he had a friend that works in the FBI. I was talking to him at the bus stop. He told me to wait the next day, at the same time and place. He was going to ask the help of his friend. Finally, his friend took my case. If wasn't through his help, I won't get help."*

Silva's story is an account of how law enforcement may deny, support, and oppress the trafficking survivors that do not fit the characteristics of a "perfect victim.'' Not only was she denied protection access, but she was also forced to live in the streets since she did not have

someone who could listen her story and help her. Furthermore, it is also important to highlight that Silva just found protection and took her case to court because she happened to meet someone who had contacts. If Silva had not coincidentally found the man that she mentions on the street, how might her life have been different? Silva explains that stigmas and prejudice related to her ethnicity, immigration status, and also because of her experience as a victim of human trafficking were the main difficulties that she faced trying to find help through the law enforcement and the service providers.

Rodriguez-Menés, Puig and Sobrino (2014) explain that this tendency of poly-victimization or re-victimization of women victims of violence can occur in two ways: "event-dependence" (850) where the victim experience new types of distressing victimization by the abuser (Wittebrood & Nieuwbeerta 2000). The poly-victimization makes the victim prone to more suffering and oppression, but also motivates her/him to become part of criminal activity due to the lack of other prospects. The Office on Drugs and Crime of the United Nations (2007) clarifies that "…the failure to be recognized as a victim or obtain effective support exacerbates the victim's vulnerable state, and often results in re-victimization, such as the now wide-spread phenomenon of re-trafficking, and the tendency of former victims to become recruiters'' (p.10). Lopez, the victim from Cameroon, also shared a similar story of stigma and criminalization. She states that during the trial, she was trying to tell her story to the law enforcement and one of the officers responded:

> *"You just want a green card! So I said: 'What the heck is a green card'? He was really upset with me. Instead of seeing me as a victim, he was seeing me as a non-victim. I was not comfortable talking about my story. When he left my case I was very happy. So, I was really glad that I had someone that understood me. I was able to talk. I was able to be myself. I felt comfortable."*

In this case, Lopez was not just re-victimized by the law enforcement through

preconceived prejudices, but she was also offended and it was implied she was involved in fraudulent behavior to secure a Permanent Residency Card (green card). Narratives like these from Silva and Lopez's occur frequently in the United States. Cross (2013) in his article *The Dual Victimization of Human-Trafficking Survivors* illustrates several cases of victims of human trafficking who many times asked for help from police officers (sometimes asking to put them in jail because they preferred that than stay on the streets), but the officers did not recognize those women as victims. In contrast, "not only did law enforcement fail to recognize her as a victim of crime, but they further victimized her by arresting her, labelling her as a criminal, and saddling her with a criminal record" (Cross 2013, 396). Cross refers to this problem as "a systematic failure within the criminal-justice system" that needs to be solved (Cross 2013, 414).

Immigrants, especially female victims of human trafficking and victims of gender-based violence, often face several difficulties when they are seeking the help of law enforcement and justice. Messing and her colleagues (2015) explain that when the phenotype and the language identify a woman as an immigrant, especially Latinas, "regardless their immigration status, members of the dominant social group may feel entitled to treat her or her loved ones as criminal thus impacting her ability to utilize the systems - particularly the legal systems – in place that may protect her" (Messing, Becerra, War-Lasher & Androff 2015, 329).

In both stories cited above, Silva and Lopez were stigmatized and devalued by law enforcement, and accused of being liars who intended to come to the US under fraudulent pretenses to secure a green card. As it relates to Latinas, scholars also point out that many female immigrants do not ask for help because: (1) Many of them have negative images of the police and the judicial system in their own country, (2) They are undocumented and afraid to go to jail

or to be deported (Menjivar & Abrego 2012), and (3) Victims who have also suffered some type of human rights abuses from law enforcement are less likely to contact law enforcement for assistance (Androff & Tavassolli 2012; Falcon 2007). Another factor related to stigmatization by law enforcement, as De Giorgi (2010) notes, is how law enforcement responds to victims based on an anti-immigration rhetoric, in which immigrants are portrayed as dangerous and prone to criminality and prostitution (Marshalls 1997; McDonald 2009; Messing et. al. 2015, De Giorgi 2006). As a result, this stigmatization based on race, gender, class and ethnicity has negative behavioral and emotional consequences affecting the victims and making them more vulnerable, and also influencing their decisions related to leaving or staying with the trafficker (The Leadership Conference 2011, 21).

Silva also notes the lack of compassion and care as part of the reason for law enforcement's difficulties in identifying a victim. The absence of emotional labor as defined by Hochschild (see introduction) is a factor that was discussed at several moments. Silva points out that:

> *"Here in the United States there is not compassion for the victim, especially if you are an immigrant. I was still homeless during the investigation. They did not take me to a shelter. I was still wearing the same clothes for a few days. No money. No food. It was hard to be with the police because they took me to all the places where I was trafficked. There was no trauma care professional with me. In my book with all my information, I had the locations where I was trafficked. But I did not know anything. They were just asking me, and I was forced to answer. It was not right. It was not right!"*

Silva argues that law enforcement often exhibits a lack of compassion and empathy for the immigrant victims' stories. In her case, she was a victim. She did not have a house or a shelter to live in until the trial was over. She did not have any service provider or someone that spoke her language, which might have allowed her to share her story without being judged and

blamed.

Garland (1990) argues that the professionals that work with in the criminal justice system in the U.S. are trained to show their feelings based on social values, authority relations, and hierarchy (Mason 2013). In Silva's case, she was viewed as not deserving of compassion by law enforcement because she is Latina, immigrant, and in part because she was not seen as blameless, but instead, she was identified as a felon. Silva was undocumented, poor, and a sex worker (even though she was forced into this by her trafficker). All these labels characterized her as inferior, and as someone that did not deserve sympathy and attention. Christie (1986) explains that law enforcement demonstrate compassion through force and authority while they are making decisions about crime, persecution, punishment, and victimization (Heil 2012; Hopper 2004; Rand 2009; Raphael et al. 2010, Nichols & Heil 2015).

Analyzing criminal law, with an emphasis on labelling and stigma, generosity and victimhood, Mason (2013) explains that at the core of formulation of law enforcement procedures, the manner in which policies are shaped, and how crimes are identified in the U.S. is a prejudgment towards particular groups based on: ethnicity, race, sexuality, disability, gender, class, and immigration status. The victims are rarely viewed as deserving of protection and health/trauma services, and are usually characterized as weak, vulnerable, and blameless. Loseke (1999) explains that not all individuals who experience harm are recognized as "victims" in American culture because frequently, Americans categorize a victim as a person who "deserves sympathy" (78).

Mason (2013) explains that law enforcement's compassion usually comes close to "pity, a feeling that involves a sense of superiority or condescension towards those who are harmed and

thus, has little utility for genuine legal or social change" (76). Adding to this, Luc Boltanski (1999) explains that pity can be used as a norm to define and evaluate if someone can be considered a citizen or not (4). Pity does not work for those who are responsible for their failure or for those who are considered dangerous to society. In her case, Silva was being judged by law enforcement as being responsible for her own misfortune, and even though she was forced to work as a prostitute, she was still perceived as dangerous and immoral, based on American values. As a result, she was not deserving of compassion, or assistance.

Investigating about how law enforcement recognizes a victim, Wilson and his colleagues (2006) created a questionnaire to evaluate the knowledge that law enforcement officers have about human trafficking. The findings showed that officers still have a limited perception of the victims and perpetrators, and usually the image that they have about them is sensationalized through the media. Furthermore, the findings also showed that 62% of the law enforcement agencies throughout the U.S. do not have units prepared to work with human trafficking cases, even though professionals received online training. In addition, many law enforcement officers still deny the existence of human trafficking in their own communities (Wilson, Walsh & Kleuber 2006, 155; Nichols & Heil 2015). Furthermore, scholars explain that "victims are reluctant to seek assistance, because they believe that social service providers will not take their claims seriously. They also believe that the police will charge them for some offense, or that authorities are unable to protect them from traffickers' reprisals" (Nichols & Heil 2015, 10, Hodge 2008, 144). This was confirmed through my interviews with survivors.

Training and Emotional Labor for Law Enforcement and Service-Providers

Survivors also described during their interviews that lawyers, judges and health service

providers who work with human trafficking also need to be more prepared to help victims. This assistance should take the form of knowledge and it requires emotional labor. Hochschild (1983) defines "emotional labor" as the effort that people expend to shape and transmit their emotional state based on social norms. Those "feeling rules" delimit how each individual should conduct and express their emotions, and also the types and intensity of those emotions depending on particular circumstances or with regard to specific groups. For trafficking victims, beyond assisting them with access to public services, survivors who were interviewed suggested that law enforcement and service-providers should also provide emotional labor so they can feel supported and understood. Training for both the emotional and practical elements of human trafficking assistance will be discussed.

Silva during the interviews states:

> *"I had a lawyer that listened to me, but he did not help me with anything. I appointed him as my lawyer, but I never saw him. I was supposed to receive restitution from my traffickers, but I did not know my right during this time."*

Kilpatrick, Beatty & Howley (1998) explain that legal protection is not enough to guarantee that victims are being protected and receiving benefits they are entitled to by current law and policy. The authors explain that one in four victims is satisfied with the services that the government gave them as victim. Many of them are not notified about critical events in their case, including: arrest of perpetrator, bond hearing, pretrial release of defendant, sentencing hearing, arrest of the perpetrators, dismissal of charges, nor are the informed of their rights to receive services before, during and after trial.

Furthermore, many victims complain that there are weak protection and recovery services. Many of the victims do not even know that they are entitled to restitution from

traffickers. The state may publicize that victims have legal protection, but many times the law enforcement professionals are not prepared to help, causing additional traumatization, and affecting their ability to assist in the prosecution of their trafficker's trials and in their recovery.

Analyzing survivors' narratives and after engaging in interactions with service providers, nongovernmental organizations and law enforcement, it appears many claiming to "help the victims" do not know the psychological, physical and socioeconomic struggles that victims must overcome to recover. Many professionals want to assist victims for economic remuneration, or because the work can bring to them some type of social status. According to Moore (2015) in her article *Money and Lies in Anti-Trafficking NGOs,* the state and NGOs describe their work combating trafficking as "restoring the victim,'' "combating trafficking," and offering direct "client exit-care services,'' and "trauma healthcare services". However, in reality the justification for the NGO existence may be because of the funding, grants and earnings (through tax-deductible donations) that they can obtain and receive while showing "social responsibility'' to vulnerable communities requiring assistance. Moore (2015) argues that anti-trafficking institutions, the media and also professionals are using fabricated feelings and stories about "reintegrating trafficking survivors,'' for profit.

As example of these types of fabricated services, Lopez describes moments when she was devalued, and did not have access to people who would advocate for her well-being. She states:

> *"I was supposed to receive restitution, but I didn't receive anything. I can't say about people that were working in my case, but I did not know and I did not understand my rights especially as a foreigner. The lawyers need to try to make us to understand our cases. I never saw any survivor getting restitution. It is important the survivor know about this, so this money can help them during their recovery. For example, this money could have helped me to pay my college now, but I did not know. It is important that the lawyer explain that for the victim, so they can understand the process."*

Lopez's statement and the arguments described earlier confirm that the infrastructure is symbolically there to support the victims, but without proper guidance, even victims who follow the "right" rules are not able to benefit from the very resources meant to help them.

During my interviews with the participants, they also explained the importance of creating better trainings for professionals who work with victims. Lopez states:

> *"Victims and service providers need to work together. For me, my service provider was more than a therapist. As part of the treatment, I had to go to a professional, but I did not like it. I didn't feel comfortable there. I was already dealing with so many things in my life. I liked to talk to my service provider. Sometimes the therapist was asking me so many stupid questions. Sometimes I thought: 'Are you sure you are asking me that'? You know. It really helps a little bit. In my case, coming from Africa, you do not talk about sex. She was asking so many questions related to that, such as: 'Are you sure you were raped?' I do not want to talk about that. It will take a long time for me to talk about that. They need to understand that. I think when you are talking to a foreign survivor you need to learn about the culture of the survivor. They are not used to some questions. I understand that she wanted to help, but you need to make the survivor comfortable. Do not ask stupid questions. Understanding their culture is also very important."*

As this quote exemplifies, victims of human trafficking often describe feeling uncomfortable while they are in contact with unprepared service providers and law enforcement. Besides understanding the trafficking victims' stories and struggles, Lopez argues the importance of "showing emotion and understanding'' while law enforcement and service providers are interacting with the victims. Furthermore, Lopez explains the importance of service providers showing sympathy regarding their experiences and also about the cultural differences and struggles that victims face when trying to seek help.

Hochschild (1979) explains that "feeling rules" are also a form of labor power, a commodity that can be commercialized and performed by individuals to achieve certain

objectives or impressions. Professionals are in a sense being paid to show emotions to their clients and patients. If they do not act how he/she is "supposed' or "expected" to act, the professionals judged as unprofessional and unethical. There are several cases where service providers are paid to smile and act in certain away. However, many of those behaviors or "norms of conduct'' are grounded in class, gender, and ethnicity hierarchies (572). Hochschild also explains that emotional work is an exchange in the sense that "individuals see themselves as being owed and as owing gestures of emotional work, and they exchange such gestures" (Hochschild 1979, 572). In cases of trafficking victims, survivors expect to tell their stories, and in exchange receive protection, attention and sympathy from the professionals that are working on their cases. Siemsen (2004) affirms that "people adjust their beliefs to make them consistent with what they try to feel" (34). Silva and Lopez's statements supports this assumption. Even though law enforcement and service providers may not be interested in the survivors' narratives, they should at least "pretend'' that they care, thereby decreasing the suffering and likelihood of additional traumatization of the trafficking victims. However, their lack of understanding is causing more negative effects than contributions.

The emotional needs of human trafficking survivors can sometimes be directly in conflict with ideas about masculinity, which poses a problem for law enforcement. Martin (1999) explains:

> "Interactions with female victims that require displays of support, compassion, or empathy, however, create emotional demands that many men (law enforcement) seek to avoid. Men's discomfort arises both because of the emotional hardness they have developed in response to their continual work exposure to the worst in humanity and because of the norms of emotional reserve included in their definition of masculinity" (120).

Through the analysis of "emotional feelings and work,'' it seems as though law

enforcement officers are expected to perform "emotional labor'' during their interaction with the victims, but they are also expected by societal norms to act in a certain way. During the trafficker trials, the victim is expecting that they act kindly and sympathetic, because from the victim's expectative that is how "they should act." Yet, the judicial system and norms of law enforcement also expect that law enforcement display power and masculinity, because that is how they are trained. As a result, law enforcement is ill-equipped to perform the type of "emotional labor" necessary to assist human trafficking victim/survivors.

Emotional Labor and Psychological Services for Survivors

As Silva noted, *"The most important thing is to treat the survivors how you wish people treat yourself. When you care about what they feel, the survivor can feel that too."* Research shows that empathy from healthcare professionals is fundamental to improve the well-being and outcomes of patients. In the case of service providers, scholars argue have noted emotional labor is more likely to occur and it is also expected as part of proper care services (Pugh 2001; Chih-Wei and Guy 2009). However, Ekman and Halpern (2015) argue that professionals that work with victims often suffer and display exhaustion arising out of this obligation to show affection, making the victim feel worse. Based on this, they argue that human care service providers need to receive training targeting "how to improve their empathy for the victim through managing their emotions." This type of training will help the professional to become more effective because they will be able to manage their feelings, avoiding tension, and therefore also help the recovery of their clients.

With regards to "emotional labor," Carlos da Silva, an activist and survivor of labor trafficking in Florida, North Carolina and California shares his experience with the health trauma

services and emotional labor.

> *"We really did not know the reason for the therapy. Please, therapist and psychologist, make sure that the survivor understands the importance of the treatment. I did not understand why I was there. Sometimes I was very, very, very sad after my appointment with the doctor; crying at night, depressed. You cannot imagine how traumatized we are. Only a victim knows what they go through."*

In this case, there is a disconnection between the survivor and the services offered to assist in recovery. DeBoise (2014) states that a collaborative interaction between the trauma service provider and the victim is fundamental. She explains that very often professionals failed to communicate with their clients, increasing the fears and traumas of the victims. Furthermore, she points out that each victim has their "own story, resilience, personality, tolerance for risk, family makeup, and ties to the trafficker," so it is important that victims feel welcomed, respected for their individuality, and not judged by their counselors (229-31). Communication and attention to survivors' feelings is fundamental to helping trafficking survivors.

Sharing a similar experience about psychotherapy services, Silva states:

> *"I used the service. They told me to go every week. The therapist was always making me go back to the same story. It was a flashback. Sometimes I was thinking. It is a counselor or a physiatrist. Sometimes I was crying and she was crying too. So I was thinking that maybe this was counseling. I did not understand. After all those years, I still need trauma treatment because I have a vaginal trauma. I got addicted to alcohol. So sometimes, I still drink alcohol to make me forget, or to make me calm down when I am anxious or nervous. So, I still receive mental help. I get medicine every day. Every week I see my doctor. That is the 5th year. Some doctors asked me in the past: When are you going to get out of this situation? For a survivor, this question is horrible. You feel so small. The professionals that work with trauma need to treat the survivor with care, empathy, and respect. We sometimes know that they are not listening to us. Even though they do not care about our stories, they need to act with respect. So we can think: 'they care about me, even though they aren't listening.' The most important advice for a service provider that works with the trauma is to guide the survivor so they can face their trauma. This is the most important thing that the health service provider needs to do, so the survivor can deal with our own*

trauma. Dealing with a victim of sex trafficking is very unique."

Silva's declaration supports Wharton's (2009) statement that this emotional management is relevant "because these jobs depend heavily on workers' ability to manage their emotions… transforming emotions management into emotional labor as a formal job requirement" (149). This condition of being a "good and emotional listener" described by Silva is a minimal expectation that trafficking survivors presume to receive from their service providers. Additionally, Silva's response also demonstrates how complex the traumas that victims of human trafficking face are. She did not just face psychological trauma, but also physical trauma, even though she lived in a shelter and received trauma treatment. Five years after being reintegrated in society, she still faces several forms of distress affecting her life. Her declaration shows victim/survivors may need to receive continued medical assistance, depending on the victim/survivor's experiences.

Language and Cross-Cultural Considerations

Another difficulty described by the immigrant survivors is the language and cultural barriers. Sandler, Shoop and colleagues (1997) state that "cross-cultural factors influence how people experience and react to offensive behavior, whether and in what manner crimes such as human trafficking and gender-based violence are reported. Cultural and language barriers also affect how satisfactorily complaint investigations are conducted, and how effectively complaints are resolved" (Shoop et al. 1997, 214). By incorporating the cultural values of an individual, community, or country, the anti-trafficking strategies, programs, and policies could impact human trafficking differently. Cross-cultural differences can affect conflict resolutions, working

and learning environments, and personal limitations. For example, a woman from the U.S. may have different cultural perceptions about sex, violence, and personal freedom than a woman from Latin America (Birdeau et al. 2005; Cortina 2001; Fitzgerald et al.1995; De Souza 1998; Sigal et al. 1999).

Cross-cultural variances can also contribute to the trivialization of sexual assaults and can thus, facilitate exploitation and crime (Luthar &Vipan 2007; Marin and Gomez 1995) making it more difficult to catch and prosecute the offenders. Gutek (1987) mentions that women from different ethnicities often prefer not to report gender based-violence, sexual exploitation and rape, because they are afraid of being blamed, having their names revealed to the offender, or being mistreated and/or punished based on their nationality. Furthermore, they also fear the exposure, the sexual harassment and victimization by law enforcement. In our interview, Silva states that:

> *"During the investigation I was treated as a criminal. Maybe because I spoke a broken English. I was not treated as a human. The police officer took me to some situations where I was afraid. I was hungry. I was cold. I was scared. In my case, we tried 3 different translators because all of them told a different story about me. I got tired. During this time, I discovered that there are few translators with the capacity and capability to translate, to deliver what a person means. In my situation, law enforcement could not understand me. So when the translator can,, one word could change the entire message. Because trafficking has three elements, coercion, forced and fraud, we need to have people able to translate what the immigrant victim is saying. Because sometimes the victim can become felonious."*

Adding to the lack of appropriate cultural and linguistic programs, Lopez also identified the lack of translators as a barrier to being understood by law enforcement during the criminal investigation causing her re-victimization. She states:

> *"When the law enforcement was asking some questions, I spoke just a little bit of*

> *English. It would be more comfortable for the victim if someone from my country was there. It did not need to be law enforcement, but someone in the room that can understand my native language to make me feel more comfortable. We need a good translator that could support us. But any translator is not enough. The government needs people from different countries working with them. Do you want one example? That happens a lot. They have a translator, but they do not understand what the person is really saying, the real meaning."*

Lopez's concerns echo those addressed in the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), which recognizes that immigrants face several challenges during identification by the victim service agencies, including lack of bilingual and bicultural workers and volunteers. Many crisis centers, for example, do not have a Spanish-speaking professional available to talk with the victims/survivors, especially non-English speakers. This lack of services available for immigrants can cause secondary victimization and creates more trauma for the victims. Furthermore, lack of bilingual and bicultural trainers and materials such as Spanish language written materials make it harder for the victims and their families become more aware of their rights. According to OVC, "victim advocates should be aware of diverse Latino/a groups and the differing acculturation levels that may exist and should respect the dialects that may be spoken within their agency services areas" (2).

Scholars point out the importance of having available a qualified language interpreter to work with a victim that has escaped from human trafficking. They explain that having a translator capable of translating the accurate message and helping the victim is a sign of respect of the victim's situation. Their research also points out that relatives of the victims should not be their translators because family members often can be a victim or a trafficker themselves (Macy & Johns 2010; Aron. Zweig & Newmark 2006, R.I.P.P.E 2007, Caliber 2007). One reason for this is because sometimes Latina victims are not prepared to share their experiences with their

families. In Latino families where *machismo* is still strong, sexuality is a taboo and virginity is synonymous with honor. According to D'Alonzo (2012), the concept of *Marianismo* is a gender and psychologic state present in Latin American culture connected to the Virgin Mary where "women must be acknowledging their destiny as mothers and wives, be prepared to tolerate the demands of motherhood, live in the shadow of husbands and children, and support them by all measures needed… women's self-worth is largely measured in terms of what she can do for others" (125).

Conclusion

Integrating survivors' narratives and experiences as immigrant human trafficking victims in the U.S., with current literature on cross cultural issues assists in identify several gaps in anti-trafficking programs that need to be addressed to better reintegrate the victims in society. The survivors identified several gaps including: 1) labelling and stigma, 2) criminalization, 3) inadequate training of professionals with regard to emotional labor, 4) language and cultural barriers, and 5) lack of qualified professionals to translate and provide services. According to survivors, law enforcement officials, lawyers and judges need to be educated and receive intensive training to fight against human trafficking. Awareness and training of law enforcement and the judicial system can have an important impact on effectively combating human trafficking, since the law enforcement and the judicial have the power to work in different sectors, such as: prevention, prosecution, and protection. Furthermore, they have important roles in developing advanced policies that can help the victims and prosecute the traffickers (Cooper 2008).

Expanding on what the interviewees revealed, Elison (2009) also adds that attorneys need

to go beyond training to assist victims. Moorer (2006) explains that to help victims of trafficking, he suggests: 1) attorneys should educate themselves not just about the laws, but also about the mental health of victims/survivors. 2) Attorneys and NGOs should create an empowerment model to motivate the victims/survivors so they can motivate and encourage themselves. 3) Attorneys should educate their clients about the victims' rights before and after the trial. 4) Attorneys should advocate within their respective agencies to better provide social services for the victims (183).

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (2006) also shows that attorneys and other professionals that have direct contact with the victims also have the power to increase the self-esteem and the confidence of their clients. Other researchers explain that attorneys are one of the main supports for the victims of human trafficking, because they have the power to help the victims in what they need (Sheldon &Sherman 2012, Kappelhold 2008). This is also true because usually the victim is more confident to share stories with the legal representative than with the law enforcement and health service providers. Furthermore, if the attorney works together with the service providers and law enforcement, he/she can improve their knowledge about their client's experience, and avoid the victim's re-traumatization

Analyzing emotional labor and how law enforcement, policymakers, service providers and other professionals work directly with trafficking victims, I question how the lack of intense emotional labor has affected these professionals' interaction with victims/survivors. Are they really concerned about the recovery and reintegration of the victims? And, how can the state intervene to better prepare professionals to work with victims? Though not all of these questions can be answered now, these interviews reveal both gaps and potential ares of improvement

within the system.

CHAPTER 4
Helping or Hindering Hands?

Perspectives of Service Providers and Law Enforcement

"In the Tampa Bay area we have thousands of victims. If we go and rescue all them today ... if law enforcement could do magic and rescue everyone, every single human trafficking victims…if we take them to the biggest football stadium in Tampa, law enforcement will say: "Good job! Look what you just did. You got all the victims in the Tampa Bay area." What do we do now? I don't have time. I don't have programs. We do not have educated and trained people to help the victims. So again, you can put all the money there, but if you do not have the basics, you cannot help the survivors." (Sheriff Ryan Clark, law enforcement))

In the past years, there have been many efforts by service providers and law enforcement to address the human trafficking issue in Florida. In order to examine the perspective of law enforcement officials and service-providers in the Tampa areas, I arranged interviews with three service providers and a sheriff. As described in Table 1 (see introduction), Clara Maria is an American survivor of sex trafficking and a service provider since 1994. She and her husband opened a safe house aiming to help female victims of gender-based violence and trafficking. Valentina de Jesus is a Cuban service provider living in Florida since her childhood. She operated a non-governmental organization since 2004, helping survivors to rebuild their lives and reintegrate in society. Mayhara Fletcher is an American psychologist specialist in trauma. She works for the government helping minor victims, especially runaways. The final participant is Sheriff Ryan Clark who has over 8 years of experience working with human trafficking victims in Florida.

In this chapter, I will explore their points of view with regards to the gaps and challenges

that they face on a daily basis trying to help the victims of trafficking, especially Latinas and immigrants in general. There are many issues that affect their efforts, which are consistent with the comments of survivors in the previous chapter. They discuss stigma, lack of awareness and prejudice of service providers that work with trauma, law enforcement and from people that create public policies and make decisions for the survivors.

Unheard Story: The Perspective of Law Enforcement

> *"We have huge gaps. Housing is the first. One night a police officer called me and told me: "Hi! Get prepared! We have nine victims tonight." I said: "Where I am going to put all them? It is not that easy, because you cannot mix a victim of human trafficking in a regular shelter. They need their privacy. Imagine a woman that came from sex trafficking. She did not have the right to even choose what to eat. She was forced to have sex with 20 men or more in a day. They are traumatized and sometimes sick. We cannot rescue them and put them anywhere. The trafficker can find them easily. Sometimes to find a bed for them can take a while." (Valentina de Jesus, Cuban, service provider)*

As described by Jesus, the lack of help from the government, insufficient funding, housing and programs to attend the victims' needs is a complex problem not just in Florida, but in the entire United States. Beyond the services themselves, there is a need to change how the anti-trafficking programs are created in Florida, and also how professionals are trained to take care of the victims. According to the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) and the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, one of the main difficulties in the reintegration of the victims is the availability of services, due to the long wait list, associated fees, especially for mental health services and substance abuse treatment, and lack of professionals prepared to work with survivors. As described by Clawson and his colleagues

(2003) in Figure 6, the main needs of the human trafficking survivors are housing, medical treatment, advocacy, legalization, transportation, food and others (18).

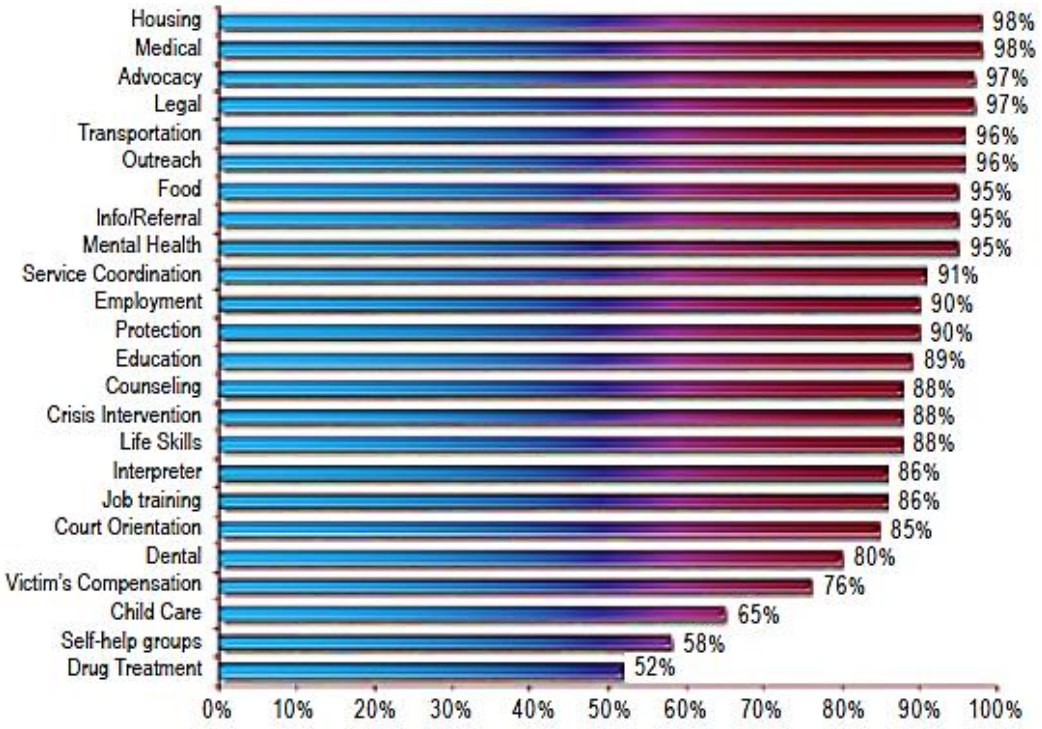

FIGURE 6: - THE MAJOR NEEDS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS (CLAWSON ET AL. 2003)

Housing

As described in the graphic above created by Clawson et al. (2003,18) housing is one of the primary needs of the victims of trafficking. However, service providers and law enforcement explain that the services are restricted, and sometimes hard to find, especially for minors and victims with mental health or substance abuse problems (Williamson et al. 2010). According to the National Institute of Justice (2007), 96 to 98% of the victims of trafficking need housing. However, they do not fit in all types of safe houses. They require different protection than other

types of people in shelters, and their vulnerability is more complex because how they are treated can cause their re-victimization and affect their recovery. Even though the problems of victims of human trafficking are very similar to the victims of gender-based violence and refugees, they still have some unique struggles that require them to receive different housing protection, because trafficking victims are running not just from one offender, but an entire system of organized crime. They are less stable than victims of domestic violence. They know less about their rights and about the criminal justice in the United States – especially victims who are illegal and undocumented immigrants. They have less contact a social network making them more isolated, vulnerable and an easy target for traffickers. Their trauma and mental health issues are more extreme, and their cases take much longer to be solved compared to other crimes. For those reasons, human trafficking victims typically need a place to stay that is extended longer than for other types of recovery programs. However, majority of the programs in Florida are short-term programs (Clawson et al. 2003).

Another problem described by Maria is the lack of safe houses that accept pregnant survivors or single mothers with children. She explains that safe houses do not have enough spaces to assist the victims of trafficking, especially when women have children. She states that:

> *"The difference in our house compared to other safe houses, is because we can take a woman who has a small child. There are a lot of victims that do not seek help because they have a child, and they know that safe houses will not accept her with the child. Whether it was a rape or the child was from the trafficker, or even if she had the child before the trafficker. Just because they were trafficked does not mean that they are bad mothers. Sometimes when they get help, one of the conditions is: I will get help from you if I take my child with me." And there is nowhere besides us that do it here (in Tampa Bay area). We will take mothers and small children.'' (Clara Maria, American, sex trafficking survivor and service provider)*

As described by Maria, a pregnant or a single mother victim of human trafficking also

needs special care, and this is a gap in the Florida programs serving victims/survivors. Many of these women are trying to protect their children. As a result, many of them prefer to continue being exploited instead of search or accept help. Many of these mothers are living in the shadows and afraid that if their identity is stigmatized. They will end up losing custody of their children. The fear of her being considered a "bad mother'', and "irresponsible'' are some of their concerns making them more vulnerable and contribute to why they keep living in exploitation, so they can keep protecting the child and maintain their identities as "good mothers.'' In the case of immigrant mothers (especially undocumented) the fear is stronger. The distress of being deported, the fear of being re-victimized in front of their children, or seeing their children mistreated and traumatized are some of the reasons that make them not search for help. According to Macias et al. (2013). For many victims knowing that something could happen to her and to her relatives prevents her to report the crime or seek assistance before, during and after leaving the trafficking condition (p. 198). Because she knows that it is already hard to find help for a single woman, she recognizes it will be much harder for her, as a mother.

Kennedy (2012) argues that women of color and the poor are often at risk of having their relationship with their children broken by the judicial system. She also explains that women that are criminalized, stigmatized and devalued because of their association as "being a drug user, being poor, and/or being Black or Latina may affect how these women are perceived and the extent to which they are viewed as capable mothers. These mothers may find it difficult to convince, first social workers and later judges, that they are fit or suitable parents" (186), which means that stigmatized mothers are often judged as "unqualified and unstable mothers.'' As a result, they have their rights to have custody of their children taken away from them. Moses (2006) also argues that parental termination standards are based on the patriarchal notion that the

mother is responsible for providing for her children, and mothers are also in charge of fulfilling the role of an "ideal mother." Consequently, being in prison or criminalized due to immigration status, or because she was a trafficked, undocumented, poor, and sex worker - even though she was a victim - are synonymous with determining that this mother is not prepared and not have the right skills to take care of her own children. As a result, fear of being criminalized and judged by service providers, and also by the judicial system leads to many poor, undocumented, trafficked, sexually exploited women continuing to live on the streets, be sexually exploited, and to not seeking or receiving any assistance and care from the government and nongovernmental organizations.

Kennedy provides a reflection about the need to create a systematic process that educates judges, lawyers, law enforcement and even service providers about the difficulties that trafficked, incarcerated and unprivileged women face to protect and care for their children. Those women face struggles that do not "lead to the preservation of families" (198), but many times it is not their fault. Many times their social identities (and the stigmas that they carry), affect their chances of improving their living conditions. This directly contributes to their lack of opportunities, and makes it harder for them to recover, thus interfering with their interaction with their children, and also hindering their economic and social growth. So, creating new anti-trafficking programs addressing the needs of victims who are mothers should be a priority. Improving the opportunities and the safety for those women and their children, it is a way to motivate many women that are still living in the shadows. Knowing that they (and their children) will be protected, increases the likelihood they will find ways to leave their traffickers and seek help.

Trauma Treatment and Trained Professionals

> "*You will be surprised by how many women that we work with that we settle them with a trauma counseling, and you will be surprised how many of them say: "I don't want to go back!" I talk more to my service provider than I talk to this doctor. Because all that I am doing is sitting there, and talking, talking and talking and they don't tell me about how to make this better (sic)." (Clara Maria, service provider)*

According to service-providers, trauma is complex and one of the main struggles that victims of human trafficking face in their recovery is a slow process that needs special care and attention. A victim of human trafficking often faces post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and the help of a qualified health care provider is vital for their treatment. However, Macias et al. (2013) explain that not just is the local health system weak, but health service providers are reluctant and apathetic. Many of them do not have enough understanding about human trafficking, or they ignore the victims' struggles. Furthermore, some healthcare workers discriminate against some of the patients, especially underprivileged ones (women of color, poor, and immigrants) resulting in the victims being reticent in sharing, asking for help, and even obtaining care. In addition, many survivors are stigmatized and treated as inferior by healthcare providers because they were working as sex workers, or because they tried unsafe abortion, or because they are illegal in the U.S. (120). Being a sex worker already creates the idea in service providers' minds that she is guilty and immoral, even though they do not know the background and the reasons why she was in prostitution, or the reasons why she was trying illegal abortion, or why she came to the United States illegally.

Similar to the narratives of the survivors in Chapter 2, Maria also explains that survivors face stigma and judgment from those who are supposed to help. She explains that during one of

the government anti-trafficking meetings, she states that she heard a counselor saying:

> *"It is very clear that if we want survivors to get better, we need to teach them how to have a better self-esteem.' I didn't believe it when I heard this! I wanted to make this point to that professional: By the way, just get up and go to the lady in the hospital with 17 stiches in her head and say to her, "If you have better self-esteem he won't beat you that bad!" I mean… It made me so angry. Every survivor that watched this meeting and heard this comment was so angry and upset. It is like twisting our head and making it our fault. Imagine you go to a 17-year-old mother who started being molested at 12. She was trafficked at 15 and you say: 'If you have better self-esteem nobody would have ever touched you.' This is what she is implying! She is putting the fault on the survivor. It is because of the survivor's lack of self-esteem that she was trafficked, raped, and violated. I will tell you. This woman has no business being a counselor and making decisions for the survivors. That is the problem! We need survivor-to-survivor care. We need survivors in those meetings helping in decision-making. I think this is the answer to the healing of a trafficking victim."*

Maria's statement shows that policymakers and service providers that work directly with the victims are not prepared to support and help the survivors. The legislation and programs that are being created still marginalize and create boundaries for the victims that do not fit the standards of "perfect victim.'' Furthermore, justice and care system sometimes implicitly blame the victim for being responsible for their own suffering, instead of giving support and attending to the victim's needs. Wright and Cummings (2005) explain that battered women/ men - especially people of color or someone that is economically disadvantaged – are blamed and victimized in the modern Western countries, due to some ideas that suggest that they were "asking for it'' (Brownmiller 1975) or "deserving it'' (Marshall & Barbaree 1990). As a result of their bad choices and behaviors, they ended up being trafficked and victimized. This patriarchal view makes the victim totally helpless yet at the same time also responsible for their own outcomes, contributing even more for their marginalization, re-victimization, and lack of self-esteem. Very often, victims end up believing in this idea, and blaming themselves which results

in suffering from depression, and even can lead to suicide. Caplan & Hall-McCorquodale (1985) explain that this culture of victimization is connected to patriarchal and sexist society that creates standards for how moral women should act. If she is in a situation opposite of those "ideal and moral labels," she is not recognized as a victim, but instead as someone whose choices caused her own despair.

In agreement with Maria's statement, Sheriff Clark adds, *"the most effective houses that I have seen, not always the case, but majority of them are survivor-led. Because the service provider/survivor understands the victims. They were victims in the past. They know the problem. They know the mindset and how to go through the process."* The participation of survivors of human trafficking is the most effective way to help the needs of others survivors. The government needs to recognize this need and seek survivors' participation in the process of creating anti-trafficking strategies. Including survivors is a way to empower them, and also offers them more opportunities to draw on their experiences to lead the fight against trafficking in their communities.

Jesus, the Latina service provider, agrees and also points out the need for professionals specializing in trauma. She states that sometimes victims engage in bad behavior, including lying, escaping, or even stealing. However, behind those behaviors the victims are scared or distrust their health programs, so it is important to have tolerance for inappropriate behavior from those victims. Jesus states:

> "*We need professionals that do not judge the victims, giving them some chance. These people are victims. Sometimes they use drugs. Sometimes they fall in love with the pimp. So they want to go back to the pimp. You need to understand that it is the only life that they know for many, many years. I never saw someone more traumatized than a human trafficking victim. You feel like that they are walking*

but without their soul. They are breathing, but there are no feelings, because the traffickers took away their dignity. Especially when you see a women of sex trafficking. For example, many of them don't escape because they have a child, and because she is scared of the trafficker. In one case she witnesses the trafficker raping her 2-year-old child. She wanted to die watching this scene. But she thinks: If I escape, he will rape my son again. Imagine the trauma of seeing your child being raped. How do you expect this person to be normal? Every time she looks at her child, she looks at herself. In her mind she thinks that she did that. She blames herself. For me, my job is very difficult because it is like you are dealing with a ghost. Do you think a 3 months treatment is a long time? It is nothing."

Jesus explains the need of professionals that are prepared to take care of the victims without judging their background and the reasons why they were trafficked, or working in prostitution. She states that each survivor has their own story, and they need to be heard by their psychologist and therapists without being labeled (emotional labor theory). Bicknell-Hentges and Lynch (2009) explain that service providers need to understand both emotional/behavioral comportments of the victims that are dealing with traumas. How a victim acts is hard to foresee, because each person is different and sometimes their cultural experiences also can predispose their behaviors. Professionals need to have empathy and accept the different cultural background of the survivors (McFarlane & Yehuda 1996). However, as described previously, there are still professionals that are not prepared to deal with trafficking survivors.

Interconnected to Jesus's argument, Maria also states the importance of understanding the psychology and complexity of the human trafficking survivor:

"All of the victims have post-traumatic disorder. Trying to find someone that can treat them that understands what they had to go through is very difficult. We need professionals that try to look at them as a victim, but not as someone that made a stupid choice and ended up in a bad situation. Usually the victims are ashamed, feeling guilty because we always have this thought: 'If I had not entered in the car. I wouldn't be in this situation. If I had not trusted him… If I had not been

drunk... If I had not eaten that food…." (Clara Maria, service provider)

As described by Jesus and Maria, the treatment of the victims is very difficult. Earnshaw and Chaudoir (2009) explain that stigma, stereotyping, labeling and any type of discrimination can cause several outcomes for the victims who need healthcare assistance, and these marginalized social identities and disparities related to sexism, racism and homophobia those that cause their re-victimization. Browne, Smye & Varcoe (2005) point out that there is a need to restructure the culture of healthcare, understanding "how practices, policies and research approaches within health care can themselves create marginalizing conditions and inequalities" (415).

Long Term Services

In addition, service providers also stated the need for long term services, giving enough time for the survivors to recover and reintegrate into society. Because the services available for them are still short-term services (3 to 8 months), after treatment, the victims are still vulnerable. They face several challenges post treatment, such as: financial instability, lack of education, family reunification issues, and difficulties in finding a job – it is important to emphasize that several victims ended up being trafficked again because they ended up living in poverty and not finding a better job. Without education and job experience, many victims are prone to find another person that will exploit their services and traffic them again. Moreover, many victims live in fear, because they think the trafficker or the pimp's "friends'' can find her and her family again.

Furthermore, in the case of immigrants, the lack of proficiency in English, fear of American culture, and isolation are some of the difficulties that survivors face that increase the difficulty of reintegration into society. Jesus states:

> *"We need to follow up with the survivors. Be like a mother. They need housing, education, and a job. This will help them to be more stable. Also churches, private organizations need to help them. Support them. They need an emotional support. We can pay their rent, but sometimes they spend months alone in their house. They also need to get into English as a Second Language (ESOL) classes, so they can learn the language. Without speaking English, they cannot get a better job. They also should learn to do some craft, so they can produce and sell their own products. Becoming self-sufficient." (Jesus, Latina service provider)*

Jesus statement shows the importance of long-term services. Survivors today receive temporary services, but after three to eight months they are alone, without anyone to check their condition. As a result, many of those victims end up going back to trafficking, and also suffering depression, using drugs, and becoming alcoholics. Silva's narrative demonstrates the need of long term services. After five years of being recovered and having her life back, she still needs trauma services to address depression and addiction issues. So, the long-term services are vital to an effective recovery of the survivors.

According to *Research on Human Trafficking Victims: Survivors Speak Out About Long-Term Needs* (University of Texas 2009) "service providers and policymakers sometimes operate under an assumption that clients will quickly access mainstream services, and that those services will be adequate" (32). However, the needs of human trafficking victims are different and "time-limited services are not able to accommodate trauma-related needs that may not show up during the first six months of services" (32). This idea of long-term services for re-integration is also reflected in Sheriff's Clarks observations:

> *"We need to reintegrate the survivors in society, but we need to teach them how to function, and it takes time. Can we look at a 18 months program as a minimum to get them through that. We deal with drugs. We deal with alcohol. So when we have a trafficking victim, we expect them to recover in 4 days. This just is not going to happen. Many of the victims have been in this life for many years. Many of them started when they were minors. They did not finish school. They do not have the GED. They were trafficked and taken to the streets. They know how the streets works, but they do not know how society works. They do not have education. We again victimize them when we rescue the victim, and we simple say: "You are free to go! Go live your life!" No, they are not prepared to face the world. So having the time and resources are important. The money, the time and the people that can bring to them some lives skills. Help them to get education. Get the GED. Get through high school education. Learn how to do a resume. Get their criminal record expired. For all this, requires money, time and people. That is our big need now."*

As described by Sheriff Ryan and the service providers, without prepared professionals and programs that teach the victims to become self-sufficient, there is no way to improve the current human trafficking circumstances in Florida. Survivors sometimes are motivated, ready to improve their lives, but they do not know how to start, and which way to go. Educating the survivors about their importance in the society, and teaching them how to become self-sufficient, how to make a resume, research and find a job are important skills that need to be implemented in reintegration programs. Helping survivors to find a better job based on their future goals, help them to get in technical and school programs that teach them to become qualified professionals are important initiatives, and it is a long term investment that will result in great success of long term recovery. Furthermore, many survivors are embarrassed to ask for help, and sometimes they want to obtain help, but they do not know anybody that can support - especially immigrants that do not understand how America works and what are their opportunities in the country. It is important that the government think about those issues during and post-treatment, and implement programs to assist this vulnerable population.

The Perception of Law Enforcement

During the course of this chapter, I connected some of the similar opinions of service providers and law enforcement. However, during the interview with the Sheriff Clark, he introduced some important facts that were not addressed by any of the other participants. Those issues need to be discussed because they are important when creating programs, policies and campaigns aimed at fighting against human trafficking. Many of the issues addressed by him are particularly about legislation, how law enforcement is trained to respond and act to human trafficking crimes, and also about the relationship between police officers, investigators, service providers and the local community.

Focusing in the legislation and how law enforcement usually defines if a victim is a "real victim'' of trafficking, he states:

> "*Before the anti-trafficking legislation, we (law enforcement) really did not work with human trafficking cases. We worked with prostitution, rape, sexual battery. Before sex trafficking was a kind of sex charge, but now we have a sex trafficking law. And as law enforcement, we had to do a big education for ourselves because we were trained to see black and white. We are dealing with victims, but not with a criminal, even though this person committed a crime. Before was lot of easier to make a charge of prostitution. Now we need to look underneath of the surface, because sometimes you are looking at a victim, even though she has all the characteristics of a criminal." (Sheriff Ryan Clark, law enforcement)*

As described by the Sheriff Clark, human trafficking is an issue recently included in U.S. legislation – after the TPVA 2000. For being "recently" addressed, the changes generated in the law still cause some concerns in how long serving police officers identify and label a victim. After the creation of anti-trafficking legislation, a victim, even though he/she may have all the characteristics of a criminal as described by law, is still a victim. But because the law was

different for years, some members of law enforcement still have difficulties identifying a victim of trafficking. Bales & Lize (2005) elucidate that victims frequently have contact with law enforcement, but the lack of awareness and training contribute very to police and investigators failing to identify victims (5). This lack of recognition by law enforcement is a serious issue that needs to be solved by the state, because many victims are being made invisible, re-victimized, and sometimes ending up in prison for crimes that she/he was forced to do by their trafficker.

The Sheriff Clark also states that not just law enforcement needs more training, but also lawyers, judges and investigators need to educate themselves to help the victims. He states:

> *"We have to really educate ourselves to train the law enforcement mind, being able to look, especially human trafficking, and be able to say: I know that looks like to be a crime, but let's take a step more, two steps deeper to determine if this person is really a criminal, or they are being forced to do this. So they are no longer criminal, but a victim. It is hard for the law enforcement officer to be able to say that, because the victim is committing a crime. Independent of everything what they are saying, even though they are still a victim. They are still committing a crime. For law enforcement to say: We got them, but we can't arrest them. Being able to step back and be able to do the mindset, it is necessary retraining all officers and change what we are doing. The State of Florida created an online course on human trafficking. The academy now is doing a human trafficking block. The new recruits are at least getting some exposure to what human trafficking means. But it started 4 years ago. The majority of the officers have been working longer than that. We need to train the old officers."*

Education and training are fundamental to teach law enforcement, especially the long serving ones, about human trafficking. Professionals need to be more prepared to understand the difficulties that the immigrant victims face due to their language barriers. Another important point concerns the online training courses. Throughout the Task Force meetings that I attended during this research, and after listening to references to the online anti-trafficking training courses for law enforcement, I decided to take one of the courses that are offered by the Florida

Law Enforcement Online Training. It was a two-hour course about how to recognize and help a trafficking victim. I was able to "pretend'' that I was taking the course and watch the videos. After acting as if I was taking the course, I was able to take the final test. I did not take the entire course. Purposely, I did not even pay attention to what was written in the online curriculum. Despite intentionally not preparing for the exam, and after taking the test, I passed with a high score. Given this, who ensures that professionals are actually taking this course seriously? Therefore, anti-trafficking online courses for law enforcement and service providers must be reconsidered. Anti-trafficking online courses are not effective in this case. During governmental and task force meetings, professionals are proud to say they have completed the online training. It was clear, from my experience that taking the online course does not mean that a person is trained.

As the survivors mentioned, Sheriff Clark noted that law enforcement also faces several challenges such as lack of knowledge about the culture of the immigrant, and also language barriers due to the lack of proficiency in English of many trafficking victims. According to the Sheriff Clark:

> *"In the U.S. we have such a variety of cultures that are here and represent the U.S. which is a great thing, but it is hard for law enforcement; and for an untrained officer it is easier to miss cases of trafficking. In brothels for example, we have seen subculture brothel and you don't get in because you are not part of this particular culture. The complexity of that to investigate that becomes and requires enormous types of resources and availability, but sometimes we do not have that. The cultural barriers, language barriers are extremely difficult to try to overcome."*

The concerns of Sheriff Clark and the trafficking victims have been well documented by researchers. Bales & Lize (2005) clarify that one of the other gaps is also the language barrier

between the law enforcement, the victim, and the witnesses. They argue that is important to have agents that speak the victim's language, so survivors can feel more comfortable to share their experiences with the law enforcement without victimization, and embarrassment. They also call attention to the different dialects. How a trafficked victim from Cuba speaks Spanish, is significantly different than how someone from Argentina or someone from Guatemala speaks Spanish. Furthermore, Bales and Lize (2005) explain the importance of investigators be aware about those language differences, and make sure that victims and witnesses from rural areas or with different dialects understand the entire message, because many times law enforcement and service providers think just because she/he speaks Spanish, she/he can understand all of the facts. Each country, community and cultural group has language differences, and they need to be respected - especially when speaking to victimized individuals. In addition, many of the immigrant victims do not have knowledge about the U.S. legislation, and the victims' rights. So, a proper translation is important in the services provided to them.

When Law Enforcement & Service-Providers Collide

An important problem described by the Sheriff Clark, also during the task force meetings and the 2015 Human Trafficking Summit was the different interests that law enforcement, victims, and service-providers may have. Sometimes law enforcement and service providers have different goals, and they end up entering in conflict, disturbing the victim's recovery. Sheriff Clark makes these conflicting clear in his statement about how these entities interact:

> *"There are times where I get mad with service providers, and with the lawyers. We are working for the same cause, but sometimes they do not help. When we go to a meeting, I, as law enforcement, want to interview the victim. The service provider may say: "The victim cannot talk to you." Just the lawyer can stop me,*

> *but the lawyer says: "You are not going to talk with my client. He is my client." So I say: "I need to have access to the victim." I need to try to find the trafficker, but they are trying to protect the victim and I am trying to get the bad guy. We want the same thing, that is justice. We may have similar ideas, but our services are different."*

Wilson and Dalton (2008) explain that this service provider's behavior often occurs, because they are going to do anything to avoid problems and decrease the suffering of the victims, even though it makes harder for law enforcement. So, sometimes law enforcement, service providers, and lawyers need to talk understanding and making clear their own concerns about strategies for protecting the victims. In addition to these gaps, Sheriff Clark also emphasizes the lack of sufficient personnel to address cases of trafficking. Usually the cases take too long to be solved. An increase in the number of officials working in the identification of traffickers and investigation is important to combat human trafficking in Florida, and in the entire United States (Wilson & Dalton, 2008, 310).

Ethnographic Observations: Engaging the Community

Though they may disagree in some areas, community engagement is a goal of both service-providers and law enforcement. During the Task Force meetings, and also during the 2015 Human Trafficking Summit there was dissatisfaction by service providers and law enforcement about work being done to promote awareness in local communities and private spaces – especially in schools - due to the high number of runaways and the increased number of youth being targeted by the traffickers. According to advocates, talking about human trafficking is still a problem in public and private schools. Parents do not want their children talking or learning about trafficking, violence and sex. Those subjects are still taboos, and they are afraid of

how their children will react afterwards.

Joy (2009) explains that individuals and institutions are afraid of using taboo words and subjects because there is an assumption that talking about them can cause harm to the students. He argues that certain taboos exist because, "it is considered obscene or indecent" (154). For many parents and educators, talking about human trafficking is still synonymous with shame. As a result, they prefer to ignore this matter, because they think it will not happen to their family. Furthermore, many parents prefer that their children do not know about this issue until an appropriate age. Battistoni (2003) explains that parents do not talk to their children about sex, because many believe that there is no need. As a result, children become more vulnerable and naïve; trusting in everybody that they call "my friend.'' Furthermore, the author argues that parents need to change how they parent. There is a need to talk about sex and violence, so the children can be more prepared in the future to face hazardous situations. In addition, they can also share their knowledge with other children, and help to identify cases or victims of human trafficking in their own school and neighborhood. Parents and churches have an important role in promoting awareness, and make the youth more aware about trafficking, sexuality and violence.

Echoing the sentiment that parents and children need to be involved in these conversations, Sheriff Clark states:

> *"We see that schools want to get involved, but they just do not have the room to get there. We need to work with the state system. They know that subject is important. They need to include as a mandate of what schools need to do. It is hard to talk about human trafficking with kids without showing them a graphic. It is violent. Imagine teachers talking about sex trafficking. Imagine those kids arriving at home and saying: Guess what I learned at school today? We learned how a man is raping a 16 years old girl. This is tough one. The parents will be at school the next day. Those things are a kind of thing that we have to work through to send the message across. They will do in a way for age appropriate."*

Awareness in schools and universities are very important. However, law enforcement and activists also explained during the Task Force meetings about the importance of promoting consciousness among the "Johns" - the people who buy sex, the "patrons or customers" including women (Shapiro 2014). Sounds unlikely, but some of them do not know that they are paying to have sex with a trafficking victim. Many of them do not know about Florida's legislation that criminalizes the person paying for sex. There is a need to promote more awareness among sex buyers, especially in Florida, where strip clubs are legalized, and where so many tourists visit and so many sports and conference events are held.

In addition, the Sheriff Clark also explains that the number of parents and relatives becoming the traffickers are increasing over the years. He states that family today is a broken system that needs care. He states, "We are not just fighting with the trafficking system. Now you are also fighting with the family system, and how you can do that? Now it is really a struggle, because families are included in human trafficking. We need to get in this family system. And try to see what is wrong." Parents also need to become aware about human trafficking. Unfortunately, families are becoming unbalanced due to economic circumstances, lack of time and communication. Investing in family awareness is also an effective way to reintegrate families, and combat trafficking.

Conclusion

Attending meetings and interviewing the law enforcement and service providers that work directly with the trafficking survivors was a unique experience. I was able to hear the

struggles that they are facing trying to fight against trafficking in Florida. However, due to the lack of incentive of the local government, and weak legislation and services programs, many times they end up finding their own short-term way to attend the needs of the survivors, helping them to overcome their traumas and reintegrate again into society. As described by the participants, difficulties in reaching this goal, such as stigma, lack of awareness and prejudice from law enforcement, policymakers, and health service providers still persist. Those problems need to be acknowledged and eradicated through training. Furthermore, prejudice and stigmas are deeply rooted in how polices and anti-trafficking healthcare programs are created. In the case of immigrant survivors, immigrants do not have the same opportunities for healing because of the limited services available as a result of their immigration status, and language and cultural barriers.

During the course of my ethnographic research, the service providers described their main difficulties trying to help the survivors. One of the most difficult problems faced by them and by the victims/survivors is lack of structural services, such as: 1) Housing created exclusively for trafficking victims; 2) The need of healthcare services created for the immigrant victims; 3) The need of better trauma treatment 4) More trained professionals – especially law enforcement and psychotherapist; 4) Creation of a survivor hotline to support the victims that are seeking advice from other survivors; 5) Long-term services; 6) Service providers and law enforcement need to work together; 7) Greater investment in awareness and educational anti-trafficking programs.

CONCLUSION

Moving Forward

As described by the survivor's narratives used in this research and also by the trafficking studies in the US, even though the government and anti-trafficking organizations are trying to create more programs to help the victims, existing programs are not sufficient. The federal and state anti-trafficking legislation is still problematic. Based on the lack of recognition of the needs of the victims, this study's main goal was to extend current research to focus on victims' rehabilitation and reintegration into society. Most research focuses on broader causes of victimization, but few research projects document the individual and structural considerations from the perspective of the survivors. In this project, survivors, law enforcement and service providers shared their experiences, and also made recommendations about what needs to change to better protect and address the needs of the victims. Furthermore, in this research the voices of the service providers and law enforcement were also documented to better understand the gaps in polices and services that are persistent in Florida, and how we can close those gaps

Florida has the third highest number of human trafficking cases reported in the U.S. Unfortunately, many Floridians still believe that human trafficking does not happen in their own country, and many do not believe that human trafficking victims live close to their neighborhoods. This lack of awareness in society needs to change. Becoming educated about trafficking, knowing how trafficking works and understanding how to recognize a victim are the

first steps in assisting the victims/survivors and fighting against human trafficking. However, for this to happen it is necessary to create more dialogue about this issue in society, specifically at schools, universities, churches, and other private and public institutions. New public policies and more educational programs can de-stigmatize victims of human trafficking, making society more conscious about what is happening in Florida, and also making it easier to identify a victim that does not conform to the image of the "perfect victim. The idea of "perfect victim," and the impact this concept has on identifying victims based on immigration status, class, ethnicity, race, and gender is embedded in the legislation, policies and recovery programs. These biases are marginalizing many victims who are being ignored because their stories do not fit the standards of "the perfect victim" as defined by anti-trafficking laws. As a result, many survivors stop seeking help or return to their traffickers. Even those that have found proper treatment to assist with their reintegration in society have become more vulnerable and more traumatized because of the prejudice and stigmas associated with human trafficking.

Research Challenges

I believe that through this study, other students, organizations and scholars will be inspired to continue studying these issues and try to identify new gaps not just in Florida, but in the entire United States. More studies still need to be done about human trafficking, to improve our system for working with victims, properly punishing the traffickers, and bringing awareness to society. As researchers move this research forward, some of the limitations that impacted this research were:

Firstly, the majority of the research focuses on female victims of trafficking; however,

males, boys, and transgender people are also victimized especially in sex trafficking. Society believes that majority of the victims are women, but traffickers now are also selling male victims – especially minors. Many of those victims are embarrassed to seek help and share their stories of victimization due to the stigma that a male faces about sexual exploitation. Expanding this research and increasing awareness concerning this issue is extremely important because it will increase awareness of the problem, it will help decrease prejudgment and misunderstanding created in America concerning to male rape.

Another limitation was the ability to identify and hear the experiences of Latina victims of human trafficking. During this research, I was able to talk and hear the stories of immigrant survivors from Asian, Africa, U.S., and Europe. However, I was not able to interview Latinas. None of the Latinas that I contacted in my research returned my calls nor did they attend the meetings that they had been scheduled for based on the Latina survivors' schedule. While I was talking to the Latina survivors on the phone, they were excited to share their experiences, but they did not show up for the interviews. They called me back, apologized, rescheduled, but then they did not show up at the second scheduled interview. These experiences demonstrate some of the important cultural considerations that are critical for Latina victims, as they felt ashamed and afraid to share their experiences. These considerations may contribute to a victims remaining invisible and frightened. Talking about trafficking, being forced to commit crimes by their pimps, breaking the law, and also talking about sex may all go against the idealized notions of purity and womanhood (*Marianismo*), especially prevalent in underprivileged Latino communities. Sharing trafficking experiences is synonymous with sharing experiences of shame and dishonor in Latino culture, which poses unique problems for Latina victims.

Furthermore, I believe that the fear of being deported, having their name revealed, or being caught by law enforcement or traffickers are some one of barriers that may keep Latina victims of trafficking from sharing their stories and not searching for help. It is important that Latino survivors start to speak out and share their stories and help their own community. However, in the U.S. many Latinos are still living in vulnerable conditions and are marginalized – especially because their immigration status, and lack of socioeconomic stability. The fear of being discriminated against, re-victimized, and deported are one of the main reason why Latinos victims do not come forward, share their stories or seek help.

Regardless of ethnic backgrounds, it was very difficult to find survivors who wanted to talk and share their experiences as a victim. I waited for hours for one the survivor at the mall and for another at Burger King where we scheduled our meeting, but she did not appear. Even though it was frustrating, we (researchers) need to understand how hard it is for a victim of trafficking to share their experiences. Not all victims are prepared to share their stories. We need to be ethical and accept their reticence, especially law enforcement who sometimes wants to interview the survivors, when they are not prepared to talk. Human trafficking is a difficult subject that needs to be approached with care, especially when you are talking to a victim. Sometimes a simple word or question that we researchers say or think is normal, can be harmful and affect the victim's lives, causing re-victimization, depression and more frustration. Relatedly, through this research, I learned that it is important to allow the victim/survivor to direct their narrative. Many of them are not prepared to talk, and scholars and professionals who work directly with victims need to understand how delicate it is to interview or approach a trafficking victim.

The difficulties that I encountered were not only with trafficking victims. I also experienced difficulty trying to reach service providers, law enforcement officials, and professionals that work on human trafficking for the government. Sometimes I had to call or send several e-mails to the same person, before he/she would answer me. The majority of them did not respond to me. Sometimes it was frustrating because one of the main ideas highlighted in the task force meetings, summit and conferences is that "we need" to try to improve the communication between the service provider, law enforcement, educators, and the government so we can better fight against human trafficking in Florida. However, often the professionals did not respond to my e-mails, making it harder to engage in collaboration. I believe that service providers are the ones that can help increase the communication about human trafficking in Tampa Bay area. If they interact more with the local community, educators, and researcher they can share their knowledge and struggles, promote more awareness and also increase community partnerships. From a university perspective, I noticed that there is a need for more communication between law enforcement, service providers, victims/survivors and scholars. If finding information and contacting people was hard for me as a researcher, how hard is it for a victim – especially those who do not meet the standards of "perfect victim?'' Is he/she able to find someone to help?

Another unexpected aspect of this research was revealed by the survivor and service provider, Maria, who works with human trafficking. She is concerned that anti-human trafficking is becoming a trend and a business where people want to show off and have their five minutes of fame, and afterward move on to their next profitable project. Increasingly people attempt to label themselves service providers just to achieve social status, without having any preparation to work with the victims. Rather than treat anti-human trafficking as a business,

those who are service-providers need take seriously the individual needs of victims.

Findings and Recommendations

Based on the results of this research, below are recommendations that were developed through the interviews with immigrant survivors, law enforcement, and service providers who participated in this research, and during the Task Force meetings and Human Trafficking Summit that I attended.

The first recommendation is that policies should not be adopted without considering survivors' perspectives. There is a need to increase the participation of the victims in decision making. Their help is important to improve the quality and effectiveness of legislation that address human trafficking. Their personal experiences can help policymakers have a better overview about this problem and offer insight into how to improve legislation and rehabilitative services - during and after the survivors' participation in recovery programs.

Secondly, many victims are being harmed because law enforcement does not know how to properly recognize a victim of human trafficking, especially an immigrant. Professionals need to receive intense training and health service providers also need training to improve their methods of working with victims. During the interviews, very often survivors expressed their discontent with the trauma services that they received. Sometimes stigma, prejudice and judgment impacted the treatment of victims by those professionals. Lawyers also need to receive training, especially those that work with immigration and trafficking. Many the victims are not aware of their rights, so the lawyers need to not only be familiar with the law, but also, have the appropriate cultural and language skills to properly communicate and protect the immigrant

victim. This training must involve "emotional labor," which is rarely discussed theme but it is critical to the reintegration of human trafficking victims.

Thirdly, more translators and workers from different countries could help address cultural and language barriers. These are some of the primary difficulties immigrant victims face before, during the trial of their traffickers, and also during their recovery process. According to the survivors, there are few professionals capable of translating what the victims are saying to law enforcement and service providers. Hence, there needs to be greater availability of professionals from different countries to work with immigrants to translate and also identify culturally-specific factors that might shape the victims' behavior and way of thinking. The immigrant victims might also feel more comfortable sharing their stories when speak to someone who speaks their native language fluently.

The fourth recommendation is that policy makers need to improve the legislation and provide that immigrant victim have access to all the services created by the government, even if the immigrant is illegally in the country. Many of the victims are not able to attend school, because they are undocumented or because they do not know how to prove that they were trafficked – as described by the survivor Lopez, who ended up losing her opportunity to go to school because she did not have her documentation.

Fifth, there is a critical need for long-term resources (housing) and educational programs for victims. Rehabilitation services for the victims of human trafficking are very expensive, but they are central to reintegration. Today the programs in Florida are short-term (3 to 8 months), but some of the victims take longer than others to recover. Based on this fact, it is important that services are created based on the needs of each victim. In the absence of long-term programs,

many of the victims might complete short-term programs and still be vulnerable due to socioeconomic, educational, family issues, emotional and physical instability. Because many of them are still connected to the traffickers, or they do not know how to start their lives, this may increase their chances of re-victimization. Long-term programs might also consider language courses so that victims can find employment opportunities. One of the other long-term services issues that service providers and law enforcement are facing today is finding stable housing made exclusively for trafficking victims. As described by the service provider participants in this project, trafficking victims may not be a good fit for a normal shelter, as their needs are very different compared to the victims of gender-based violence. The majority of trafficking victims also suffer post-traumatic stress disorder and other health issues making their recovery harder. Desperate and without options, without long-term housing, education, and employment, victims may end up being exploited again with access to jobs and appropriate housing.

Additionally, more awareness campaigns in Florida organized by the local government and the state education department can help create strategies to teach members of the local community about human trafficking, especially teenagers due to the significant number of runaway victims of trafficking. It is also important to teach educators about human trafficking, and also include in the academic curriculum workshops and talks about this problem in a more effective and interactive way based on the age of each student. It is also important to teach parents about this problem and help them to interact and talk more about sex, violence and crime with their children making them more aware, so they can protect themselves when they feel that they are in danger. They also can share this knowledge with their friends.

Human trafficking is still a taboo in our society, and many parents do not know how to

approach and talk to their children about it. However, communication is important, so children and teenagers can be more prepared to recognize a trafficking victim, and also avoid situations that can make them more vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking – especially now with easy access to Internet and social media. Focusing on educational programs designed specifically for Latino and other immigrants means that all educational materials need to be created in Spanish and other languages, so immigrants can read and have a better understanding about what human trafficking means, the new trends, how to find help and who to call if they know a potential trafficking case. Including monolingual immigrants in the discussion is important, because they are the ones in most vulnerable and prone to becoming trafficking victims. It is also important to promote more awareness among workers in hotels, nightclubs, bars, restaurants, farms, spas and other areas marked by informal and irregular employment. Teaching sex buyers (the Johns) about their contribution to human trafficking is also important, so they can become aware of risks if they are caught by the law enforcement.

The development of a survivor/victim hotline is another recommendation. The law enforcement and service provider described how effective survivor-victim care services are. The creation of a hotline where victims can talk and ask advice from recovered survivors during their crisis or when they are feeling lonely could facilitate efforts. The creation of a hotline and other programs with the participation of other survivors can help empower both sides, because it may also help the recovered survivor to find a stable job.

These aforementioned recommendations are the main suggestions made by the survivors, law enforcement and service providers during their interviews. However, during my field research at the Task Force meetings, and the 2015 Human Trafficking Summit, in addition to the

conversations with service providers and law enforcement in Tampa and Clearwater area, there were additional major recommendations including the following:

According to the FSU Center for the Advancement of Human Rights report (2010), some of the gaps that need to be improved for immigrants' victims of human trafficking in Florida are related to medical service, legal assistance, and transportation. Many times medical services are difficult to access and sometimes the victims must wait for a long time to receive their treatment. Dental services are also a big issue, because many victims have their teeth broken due to the violence by the traffickers. In one of my interviews, one of the service providers showed me a before and after picture of a victim's mouth. When the victim arrived in the safe house, all her teeth were damaged. After few months, her teeth were totally restored. However, the service provider did not have any support from the government. Instead, the dental work was completed using a donation from the local community. The governmental care services need to be available in every state in the U.S. in case the victim changes their residence. There is also a need to improve culturally appropriate services for the immigrant victims of human trafficking, and also the services such as HIV/STD tests. Dissemination of those services should be also available in Spanish, for example.

In terms of health, some victims are not prepared psychologically to receive medical treatment – especially therapy treatments – because they are not ready to share their experiences while they were trafficked. The government needs to be sure that those victims will receive proper treatment and assistance when they feel comfortable sharing their experiences, which can take months or years. The services should be there when victims are mentally able to take advantage of them. Additionally, in cases of minor immigrant victims of trafficking, there is a

need of clear communication between custody services and federal agencies concerning youth vulnerabilities due to their immigration status, cultural and language barriers. Relatedly, increasing funding for professionals who work on the prosecution of traffickers and the creation of family reunification plans for immigrant families can help address re-victimization.

In terms of transportation, Florida needs make sure that secure transportation is being provided to the victim. Many victims are re-victimized or have contact with drugs, alcohol, and also with the traffickers while they are using public transportation. It might be useful to train the victims about how to use the public transportation, and teach them how to avoid problems that can make them more vulnerable. This could be especially important for non-English speakers who might be more likely to seek assistance from others due to their cultural and language barriers. By helping immigrant victims obtain drivers licenses they can become less dependent on public transportation – since it is unreliable in several areas in Florida, especially in the Tampa Bay area. Food and clothing are also needed for trafficking victims.

Finally, education and training programs need to be created especially for immigrant victims due to their cultural and language barriers. Job placement programs for all trafficking victims can provide the tools and training they need to be more prepared to find a better job. This might include centers for job training staffed with people who speak Spanish and also other languages with flexible hours to accommodate the lives of trafficking victims. Finding a job is particularly important because cash assistance provided by the government to refugees and victims of trafficking does not cover all of their basic needs, such as clothing and personal cleaning supplies.

Concluding, I share a reflection of Grimes', a survivor of childhood sexual abuse,

statement. According to her, “There is a need to change the paradigms of reception. To empower people to hear the words ‘I was raped’ or ‘I was abused’, so they can hold them and experience them without defensiveness, panic, or pity. If we do this – give listeners a cultural script for hearing those stories – I think, we can go a long way toward empowering victims to tell their stories” (Grimes 2014). It is possible that seeking this change in social behavior may be too idealistic, yet it is not impossible to achieve. Through education, proper awareness and less categorization and discrimination, this goal can be achieved. Giving victims/survivors a voice and respecting their stories are the first steps to accomplishing this goal to combat human trafficking.

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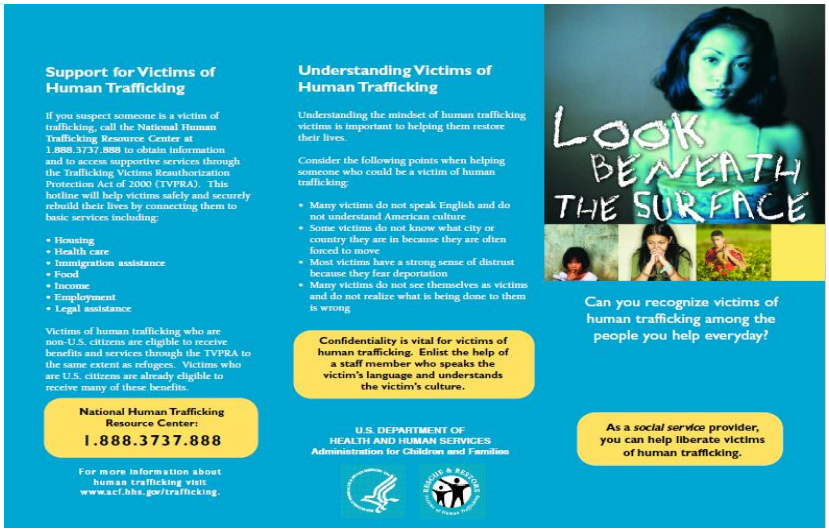
APPENDIX A

Images 1A to 6A: Anti-Trafficking images produced by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Administration for Children and Families.



Understanding Child Victims of Human Trafficking

Understanding the mindset of child human trafficking victims is important to helping them restore their lives.

Their reasons for coming to the U.S. vary, but consistently, children succumb to exploitation under the guise of opportunity. Children may believe they are coming to the United States to be united with family, to work in a legitimate job or to attend school. Additionally, children may be subject to psychological intimidation or threats of physical harm to self or family members.

Child victims of human trafficking face significant problems. Often physically and sexually abused, they have distinctive medical and psychological needs that should be addressed before advancing into adulthood. Taught by those who traffick them to fear government officials—and in particular, law enforcement and immigration officers—they are often distrustful of authority figures.

Children have the most impressionable minds, and the road to recovery is long. Understanding their mindset and building trust through open dialogue is the first step to rescuing and restoring their faith in a new beginning.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Administration for Children and Families

Support for Child Victims of Human Trafficking

If you suspect a child is a victim of human trafficking, call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center at 1.888.3737.888 to obtain information and to access supportive services through the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA). This hotline can help victims safely and securely rebuild their lives by helping you connect them to basic services such as:

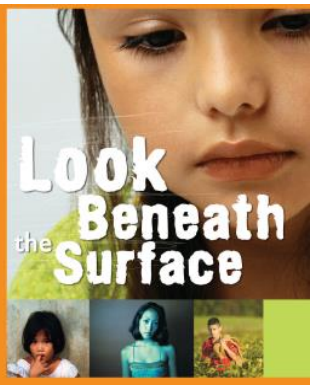
- Immediate shelter/specialized foster care
- Health care
- Immigration assistance
- Food
- Legal assistance

Child victims of trafficking may be eligible for the T visa, which allows them to remain in the U.S. and apply to adjust their status to lawful permanent resident after four years. Through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), unaccompanied trafficked children also are eligible for the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (URM) program, which provides a comprehensive range of services for children and places them in culturally appropriate foster homes, group homes, or independent living arrangements, appropriate to their developmental needs.

For more information about human trafficking, visit www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking.

National Human Trafficking Resource Center:

1.888.3737.888



Can you recognize child victims of human trafficking among the people you help everyday?

As a law enforcement officer, a health care professional or a social service provider, you can help rescue and restore the future for victims of human trafficking.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human Trafficking is Modern-Day Slavery

Human trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery. Victims of human trafficking are subjected to force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of sexual exploitation or forced labor. Victims are young children, teenagers, men and women.

Every day human beings are forced into slavery. Hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children are trafficked throughout the world, across international borders, and in the United States every year.

Child victims of trafficking are often exploited for sexual purposes, including prostitution, pornography and sex tourism. They are also exploited for forced labor, including domestic servitude, sweatshop factory work and migrant farming.

Child victims of trafficking can be found in:

- Commercial sex
- Domestic servitude (servants)
- Factories
- Construction
- Farming or landscaping
- Fisheries
- Hotel or tourist industries
- Panhandling
- Janitorial services
- Restaurant services

Identifying Child Victims of Human Trafficking

Children who are victims of human trafficking may be mistaken for prostitutes, runaway youth, migrant farm workers or domestic servants. By looking beneath the surface, picking up on the right clues and asking the right questions, you may uncover children who are being exploited.

- Children exploited for labor are often hungry or malnourished to the extent they may never reach their full height or they may have poorly formed or rotting teeth.
- Children exploited for sexual purposes may show evidence of untreated sexually transmitted diseases, urinary tract infections, and kidney problems.
- Children who are victims of trafficking can also be identified by environmental factors, including whether the child lives at the workplace or with an employer, lives with multiple people in a cramped space, or is not in school, attends school sporadically or has a significant gap of schooling in the U.S.
- Forced labor may expose children to physical abuse or leave signs such as scars, headaches, hearing loss, cardiovascular/respiratory problems and limb amputation. They may also develop chronic back, visual and respiratory problems from working in agriculture, construction or manufacturing.
- The psychological effects of exploitation include helplessness, shame and humiliation, shock, depression, denial and disbelief, disorientation and and confusion, and anxiety disorders including post traumatic stress disorder, phobias, and panic attacks.

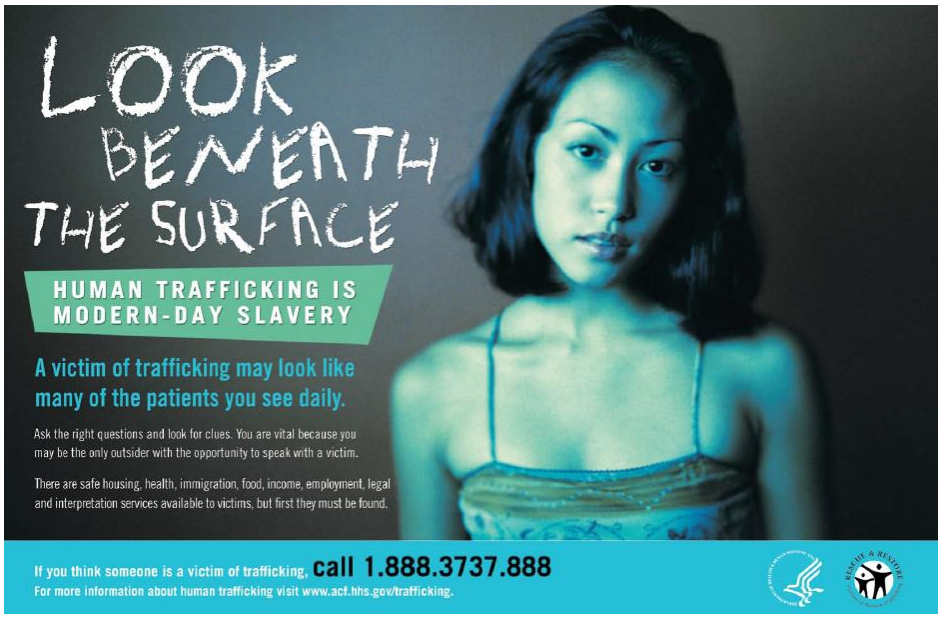
Communicating with Child Victims of Human Trafficking

When communicating with children who have been exploited, it is important to remember child victims have special needs and may assume what has happened to them is their own fault. Often, child victims of trafficking may not establish trust easily due to their experiences. They may have been coached to answer your questions in a certain way. With the guidance and involvement of a child welfare expert, asking some of the following questions may help you determine if you are dealing with a child victim of trafficking:

- Why did you come to the U.S.? What did you expect when you came? Were you scared?
- Do you have any papers? Who has them?
- Are you in school? Are you working? Can you leave if you want?
- Where do you live? Who else lives there? Are you scared to leave?
- Has anybody ever threatened you to keep you from running away?
- Did anyone ever touch you or hurt you?

While these questions provide a beginning to a challenging dialogue, it is vital to remember that the child should be approached in a manner that reflects his or her age, development, culture, language and what is known about the nature of his or her experience.


LOOK
BENEATH
THE SURFACE
HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS
MODERN-DAY SLAVERY
A victim of trafficking may look like
many of the people you see everyday.
Ask the right questions and look for clues. You are vital because you may be the only outsider with the opportunity to speak with a victim.
There are safe housing, health, immigration, food, income, employment, legal and interpretation services available to victims, but first they must be found.
If you think someone is a victim of trafficking, call 1.888.3737.888
For more information about human trafficking visit www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking.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