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Public Perceptions on Domestic Sex Trafficking and Domestic Sex Trafficking Victims: A  
Quantitative Analysis

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A thesis  
presented to  
the faculty of the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology  
East Tennessee State University  
In partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree  
Masters of Arts in Criminal Justice & Criminology

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by  
Faith L. Browder  
December 2018

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Dr. Chris Rush  
Dr. Larry Miller  
Dr. Dustin Osborne

Keywords: Domestic Sex Trafficking, Prostitution, Perceptions

## ABSTRACT

### Public Perceptions on Domestic Sex Trafficking and Domestic Sex Trafficking Victims: A Quantitative Analysis

by

Faith L. Browder

Sex trafficking is a grossly misconstrued and increasing issue within the United States. The purpose of this study was to extend current knowledge regarding the public's education on domestic sex trafficking and perceptions of domestic sex trafficking victims. The public's awareness of domestic sex trafficking and perceptions of domestic sex trafficking victims were examined through the utilization of a 31 closed-ended question survey. The survey included questions about domestic sex trafficking and prostitution myths, domestic sex trafficking victim characteristics, domestic sex trafficking legislation, law enforcement's involvement in domestic sex trafficking cases, and demographics. The sample consisted of 195 Criminal Justice and Criminology students at East Tennessee State University, located in Northeast Tennessee. The results showed that, despite having a mostly empirical based view on domestic sex trafficking, students misconceived domestic sex trafficking victims when comparing the age of victims, such as child victims versus adult victims.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

In 2005, Mary, a foreign national living in Atlanta, enrolled in a linguistics class at a local church to increase her English language skills and make new friends (End Slavery Tennessee, 2017). Mary befriended a woman in class whom introduced her to two men, Arturo Perez and Jesus Garcia. At first, these two men seemed nothing more than friendly. However, as the night went on, the men's true intentions were revealed.

Arturo Perez and Jesus Garcia followed Mary home, where she lived with her sister (End Slavery Tennessee, 2017). They waited until Mary's sisters left and then forced Mary to pack her belongings. They threatened that if she did not pack her belongings and leave with them that they would kill her sister. Mary was then forced to leave her home and was soon forced into domestic sex slavery. The men transported her through Florida, Georgia, and Tennessee. Mary was sold seven to eight times a night for sex over a three year period. The men beat Mary, stabbed her in the side with an ice pick, and made threats toward her family if she was not compliant.

In 2008, vice squad detectives learned of the situation and sent a confidential informant to meet the two men at a motel in south Nashville (End Slavery Tennessee, 2017). Later that evening, vice squad detectives rescued Mary during a prostitution sting. The two men were charged under the sexual servitude statute, which was a part of the new sex trafficking laws in Tennessee. The two men received a six-month sentence followed by deportation back to their country of origin. Since then, Tennessee has increased the sex trafficking penalty from a six month sentence to an eight to 12-year sentence.

## Human Trafficking in Tennessee

In 2011, the Tennessee Legislature passed roughly 20 new laws, which tightened protections for domestic child trafficking victims and increased punishment for traffickers (Duncan, 2016). According to TBI Special Agent Margie Quin, “The Legislature has done an incredible job in giving us the laws and the policy to go out and tackle this type of crime” (Duncan, 2016). The new laws placed pimps and buyers on the sex offender registry, increased penalties for selling a minor, extended the statute of limitations for underage trafficking prosecutions, and barred pimps and buyers from using “I didn’t know she was under age” as an excuse. The Legislature also made purchasing sex from a juvenile a felony act rather than a misdemeanor and established that anyone who arranged a sex act with a minor could be charged with the most serious felony classes, which entails 30-60 year prison terms. One of the more significant changes that Legislators have made is that juveniles under the age of consent (age 18) can no longer be arrested and charged with juvenile prostitution. This legislation has prevented juvenile victims from having a criminal record.

Human trafficking continues to be an increasing issue across the state of Tennessee (Shared Hope International, 2017). According to the TBI Annual Crime Report (2017), sex trafficking is the second fastest growing crime across the state, following drug trafficking. Due to the increasing prevalence of the crime, Tennessee is increasing its protections for sex trafficking victims. In 2013, Shared Hope International, an anti-trafficking organization which ranks states on how well they protect children from sex trafficking, graded Tennessee with a score of 93.5, ranking Tennessee as one of only six states with an “A” score. In 2017, Tennessee’s score rose to 96.5, ranking Tennessee as the leading state across the U.S., with Louisiana ranked second.

## Human Trafficking: An Ongoing Problem

Human trafficking, also referred to as modern-day slavery, is a multifaceted form of subjugation and mistreatment affecting children, adolescents, and adults domestically and transnationally (Hardy, Compton, & McPhatter, 2013). Human trafficking is a serious and developing problem worldwide. As of 2018, human trafficking was the second fastest growing criminal industry, following drug trafficking (ERASE Child Trafficking, 2018). Annually, human trafficking generates a profit of approximately \$150 billion worldwide and \$32 billion within the United States (International Labor Organization, 2017).

The International Labor Organization (2017) found there was an estimated 40.3 million people enslaved worldwide, including 24.9 million in forced labor and 15.4 million in forced marriage. Thus, for every 1,000 people worldwide, there were 5.4 victims of human trafficking. Within the United States, there were approximately 403,000 people enslaved in human trafficking in 2016 and more than 8,500 reports of suspected human trafficking in 2017 (Polaris, 2018). Of the 8,500 suspected cases of domestic human trafficking reported to the National Human Trafficking Hotline, 1,067 were cases of labor trafficking and 5,591 were cases of sex trafficking. The remaining cases accounted for state-imposed forced labor and forced marriages.

Human trafficking is considered to be a relatively new crime and was not well-researched until recent years (Farrell, Pfeffer, & Bright, 2015; It Has to Stop, 2013). “Despite increasing pressure and publicity, there have been fewer than 200 prosecutions of human trafficking cases since 2000 in the United States” (Farrell & Fahy, 2008, p. 68). In 2011, the BSJ reported that there were 2,515 investigations conducted for suspected cases of human trafficking. Human trafficking is illicit in nature and due to the complexity of trafficking networks, is hard to

understand and hard to identify (Jahic & Finckenauer, 2005). This has made it difficult to find data that accurately represents each element that human trafficking entails.

Although there exists federal and state legislation defining sex trafficking as a crime and specifying the penalties for it, there has been little research conducted on how the public perceives sex trafficking in comparison to prostitution and the victims involved. As a result of the lack of education on sex trafficking and the lack of resources to recognize sex trafficking, it is common for the public to perceive and label sex trafficking victims as juvenile prostitutes, thus criminalizing victims and hindering victim rehabilitation (Hoyle, Bosworth, & Dempsey, 2011; Palmer, 2010). It is also common for the public to believe prostitution myths, which contribute to the misleading perceptions of sex trafficking victims (Cotton, Farley, & Baron, 2002; Farley et al., 2003). Therefore, this issue must be further researched in order to educate the public about sex trafficking and sex trafficking victims in hopes that the public's perceptions of criminalizing victims will change to finding better ways to identify and rehabilitate them.

### Current Study

The purpose of the current research was to explore the perceptions of the public when asked about sex trafficking and victims of sex trafficking, specifically in Northeast Tennessee. For this study, the public was conceptualized as college students in Northeast Tennessee who at the time of the study were attending East Tennessee State University. To answer the primary research question, *how do college students in Northeast Tennessee perceive sex trafficking victims*, an in-class survey was administered to 195 Criminal Justice and Criminology students at the University. To answer the primary research question, five secondary research questions were examined focusing on college students' perceptions and education of sex trafficking victims. The five secondary research questions for the current study are as follows:

*R1: Are male students more likely to perceive sex trafficking victims as prostitutes compared to their female counterparts?*

*R2: Have students received an adequate amount of education on sex trafficking?*

*R3: Do students' political affiliations affect their perceptions on victims of sex trafficking?*

*R4: Will level of education, in terms of classification, affect how students perceive victims of sex trafficking?*

*R5: Do students agree that more legislation needs to be implemented to help increase the fight against domestic sex trafficking?*

The administration of the in-class survey helped to assess how college students perceived sex trafficking in comparison to prostitution. It also helped to assess whether college students had received prior education on sex trafficking, such as what sex trafficking is, ways to identify it and sex trafficking victims, and ways to help prevent it from occurring within the United States. The more educated and aware the public are about sex trafficking, the more efforts can be produced to identify domestic sex trafficking.

The data collected through the survey allowed the researcher to answer the objectives formulated. SPSS software was used to conduct frequencies, descriptives, and bivariate analysis (correlations). Those analyses provided information about students' knowledge of sex trafficking and perceptions of sex trafficking victims. It also examined whether support of sex trafficking/prostitution myths were significantly related to negatively skewed perceptions of sex trafficking victims.

The results of those analyses revealed that most students in the sample had prior empirical based knowledge of sex trafficking and that most students viewed individuals in sex trafficking as victims rather than prostitutes. The results of this analysis further substantiated previous findings in regard to the effects education and public awareness have on individuals' perceptions of sex trafficking victims (Opening Doors, 2011; U.S. Department of Education, 2015). According to the results, students who had been educated on sex trafficking agreed that it was an increasing issue in Northeast Tennessee and that there is need for increased sex trafficking legislation and policy change. The results also concluded that the more students knew about sex trafficking, the more positively they viewed individuals in sex trafficking, specifically as victims rather than prostitutes.

The policy implications associated with this study are threefold. First, advanced public awareness and education are needed due to the lack of educational programs in schools and public awareness campaigns focusing on the effects and red flags of domestic sex trafficking. Second, sex trafficking /victim identification training and education for law enforcement are needed because law enforcement are not adequately equipped to respond to cases of sex trafficking. Third, trauma informed care programs need to be implemented and provided to all victims of sex trafficking in order to help treat and rehabilitate them back into the community.

This thesis builds on prior literature regarding the further examination of the public's perception and education on sex trafficking and sex trafficking victims. This paper will provide definitions necessary to better understand sex trafficking, specifically the definitions of what sex trafficking and prostitution are, as well as a contrast between the two. The following chapters will discuss the components of sex trafficking, including the victims, the traffickers, victimization, and the policies related to sex trafficking. A relevant theoretical framework will be

applied to better understand how the public perceive sex trafficking victims. Moreover, this study proposes that the public perceive sex trafficking victims as juvenile prostitutes due to the lack of education and resources on human trafficking.



## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Although research on sex trafficking is increasing, there have been few attempts to explore how the public perceive sex trafficking and sex trafficking victims (Farrell et al., 2015). Due to the lack of education on sex trafficking, it is common for the public to condemn and criminalize sex trafficking victims, which hinders efforts to rehabilitate victims back into the community once rescued from the sex trade (Palmer, 2010). The purpose of the current study is to explore the perceptions of the public when asked about sex trafficking and victims of sex trafficking, specifically in Northeast Tennessee. In this chapter, the various types of human trafficking are discussed, a contrast of sex trafficking and prostitution are given, and the components of sex trafficking are discussed. A relevant empirical work is also discussed to help better understand how the public form perceptions. The goal of this chapter is to provide a broad understating of the empirical work relevant to this thesis.

#### Types of Human Trafficking

The International Labour Organization (2012) estimated that three out of 1,000 people worldwide were enslaved in forced labor. Furthermore, ninety percent of trafficking victims were exploited in the private economy. Of these, 22% (4.5 million) were victims of forced sexual exploitation and 68% (14.2 million) were victims of forced labor exploitation. Reports have indicated that “forced labor leads to the greatest number of trafficking victims” (Smith, 2011, p. 764). The remaining 10% (2.2 million) were victims of state-imposed forced labor, such as the state military or rebel armed forces.

Human trafficking is considered to be a fairly new crime and many are unaware that there are multiple ways trafficking of persons occur (Farrell et al., 2015; It Has to Stop, 2013). As

mentioned in the above paragraph, human trafficking includes: labor trafficking, sex trafficking, and state-imposed forced labor exploitation (Human Rights Commission, 2015). Within these categories are forced marriage, forced child labor, illegal adoptions, and illegal organ donations. The following paragraph will briefly define the three types of human trafficking previously mentioned.

The three types of human trafficking occurring within the United States are labor trafficking, sex trafficking, and debt bondage (Human Rights Commission, 2015). Labor trafficking, also referred to as involuntary servitude, is the most prominent type of trafficking domestically and internationally. Sex trafficking, referred to as involuntary prostitution or sex exploitation, primarily affects women and children and involves forced or coerced participation in commercial sex acts (Lutya & Lanier, 2012). Debt bondage involves individuals forced to work in order to pay off a debt (Human Rights Commission, 2015). For the purpose of this thesis, the focus will be on sex trafficking.

As addressed in Chapter One, one of the changes implemented by the Tennessee Legislature was a prohibition on juvenile victims being charged with prostitution, as they are under the age of consent (Duncan, 2016). Prior to this law, juvenile victims could be charged with juvenile prostitution or prostitution if the victims was over age 18, thus criminalizing them instead of providing appropriate victim services. The criminalization of victims continues to be an ongoing issue with both the public and law enforcement (Farrell et al., 2015). Although, sex trafficking and prostitution share similarities, they are indeed different crimes. The following section will define and contrast sex trafficking and prostitution.

## Sex Trafficking vs. Prostitution

Prostitution is the voluntary act of engaging in sex work performance for monetary compensation (Farrell et al., 2015). Mucha (2012) found that there were approximately 41 million individuals involved in prostitution worldwide, 80% of which were females. Prostitution, the world's oldest profession, was considered to be a 'victimless crime' and tended to be treated as a lower priority (Matthews, 2005). The "victimless" label was attached due to the fact that many believed that the women engaging in sex acts were doing so voluntarily and that because they were receiving compensation, both parties were satisfied.

By law, prostitution is illegal in all 50 states; however, it is legal in certain counties in Nevada (Lopez, 2016). Although prostitution is illegal in the cities of Nevada, it is legal to offer brothel prostitution in counties that have a population of 700,000 or less. As of 2016, there were 19 brothels operating in Nevada, all of which fell into one of three classifications: small frontier brothels along remote stretched of the highway, small brothels in an isolated small town, and large, urban-like brothels outside of Las Vegas, Reno, Lake Tahoe and Carson City (Martinez, 2016).

Women have turned to prostitution due to a lack of economic opportunities (Lutya & Lanier, 2012). Unlike other professions, prostitution does not require an education and allows for quick, non-taxed income. Prostitution myths implicate that prostitutes gain wealth and enjoy having sex with johns (an individual who pays for or trades something of monetary value for sexual acts) (Basow & Campanile, 1990; Cotton, Farley, & Baron, 2002). However, myths about prostitution justify the sexual exploitation of women (Cotton et al., 2002) and minimize harm perception (Farley et al., 2003). They also serve to increase violence against prostitutes and reduce reporting. Lutya & Lanier (2012) highlighted that sex work performance was not equated

with sexual exploitation because the act was voluntary. The following paragraphs will define sex trafficking, as stated in the United States' Constitution.

In 2000, the United States Congress passed the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), which can be found in 18 U.S.C. Sections 1589-1594 (United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime, 2015). This act was aimed at protecting and assisting trafficking victims, prosecuting offenders, and preventing further trafficking internationally. A main focus of the TVPA was to establish that children involved in sex trafficking were victims and not juvenile prostitutes (Williamson & Prior, 2009). The other focus of the TVPA was to define and classify trafficking into two categories: sex and labor trafficking. With this act, federal laws prohibiting human trafficking were strengthened by establishing human trafficking and related offenses as federal crimes, attaching severe penalties for trafficking, and mandating paid restitution for trafficking victims (United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime, 2015).

The TVPA states that sex trafficking occurred when “a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such acts has not attained 18 years of age” (Hardy, Compton, & Williamson, 2013, p. 2). Consent is not a necessary factor when force, fraud, and coercion were involved (Lutya & Lanier, 2012). According to 22 U.S.C. Section 7101, sex trafficking also occurs when persons were recruited, harbored, or transported for labor or services “through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purposes of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery” (Hardy et al., 2013).

Three characteristics distinguishing prostitution from sex trafficking, provided by the TVPA definitions of trafficking, include: force, fraud, and coercion (Hardy et al., 2013). Force includes rape, confinement, or physical abuse. Fraud includes deception of a better life,

employment, or marriage. Coercion includes the threat of serious harm to any person. Force, fraud, and coercion are included in the three steps to trafficking as discussed next.

There are three necessary steps involved in sex trafficking as defined by the TVPA: the act, the means, and the purpose (United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime, 2015). The act that takes place is the recruitment, harboring, transporting, and receipt of the victim(s) prior to the sex act. Illegal transport of sex trafficking victims does not require the movement of persons transnationally. Victims can be trafficked across international borders or within the victim's country of origin. The Polaris Project (2006) found that within the United States, the greatest concentration of illegal transport of trafficking victims occurred in California, Florida, New York, and Washington D.C.

Upon the act of recruitment, harboring, transporting, and receipt of victim(s) is the means of threat or use of force, fraud, or coercion (United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime, 2015). The TVPA (2000) stated that trafficking occurred when there was a threat of force or use of force, fraud, or coercion against the victim. This form of threat could be real or perceived when the victim was exploited, which is the final process of trafficking. Exploitation included prostitution, forced labor, sexual exploitation, and slavery (United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime, 2015).

The current section discussed the definitions of prostitution and sex trafficking, as well as the three characteristics and processes of sex trafficking. The next section will discuss components of sex trafficking, of which there are four: the victims, the traffickers, victimization produced by trafficking, and legislation implemented to prevent sex trafficking and punish sex traffickers/consumers. Education on the components of sex trafficking are important because

they help the public to gain a better insight into who victims are and how sex trafficking victims differ from prostitutes.

### Components of Sex Trafficking

There are four components of sex trafficking. Educating the public on the four components can help identify sex trafficking victims, prevent sex trafficking from occurring, and create stronger policies to help prosecute sex traffickers and sex consumers. The following sections will define and discuss each component in some detail.

The first component of sex trafficking is the victim. Victims of sex trafficking have been found to vary in age, race, and socio-economic status (ILO, 2012). Although the statistics on age vary, Kotrla (2010) found that children and adolescents were the most vulnerable group within the United States to become victims of sex trafficking because they could be easily coerced and deceived by sex traffickers. “In the first ever national-level data on human trafficking investigations, 83 percent of the 1,229 investigations were sex trafficking cases; of those, 63 percent involved U.S. citizens, and almost one-third involved minors” (Kotrla, 2010, p. 182).” One in four children were victims of sexual exploitation and worldwide, there was an estimated 5.5 million trafficking victims under the age of 18 (ILO, 2012; ILO, 2017). Smith, Varadaman, and Snow (2009) found that within the United States, a child was purchased or sold for sex every two minutes and on average, these victims were enslaved for at least four years.

Shared Hope International (2009) reported that the average age of a minor’s initial entry into sexual exploitation was age 13 for females and age 12 for males; although, there is little information regarding male sex trafficking victims. However, there have been cases of minors being initiated as early as age 10 (Lloyd, 2011). Approximately 79% of female victims in the sex

trade have been forced into sex trafficking (Soroptimist International of the Americas, 2008). Thus, the remaining 21% of females involved in the sex trade do so willingly. As discussed in the Chapter Two, some females have chosen prostitution as a reliable source for income (Lutya & Lanier, 2012). Furthermore, Lloyd (2011) found that approximately 70-90% of female victims were sexually abused prior to being recruited by a trafficker.

Data from the Polaris Project (2006) suggest that sex trafficking victims originated from vulnerable populations, including areas of lower economic status, foster homes or foster centers, and abusive families:

Poverty, broken families, violence, alcoholism, addiction to drugs, poor children's social care in some environments, and a desire to have a better future are the most frequent reasons why children are easily deceived by stories of a better life... and why they unexpectedly end up in the claws of traffickers (Vinkovic, 2010, p. 5).

Many of the victims have not received formal education before their initial exploitation (Lloyd, 2011). Victims include runaways or homeless youth, illegal immigrants or refugees, and victims of abuse and neglect (Polaris Project, 2006). In 2001, there were approximately 244,000-300,000 runaway or throwaway children at risk for domestic minor sex trafficking in the United States (Estes & Weiner, 2001). By 2010, the number of runaway or throwaway children at risk for domestic minor sex trafficking had increased to 2.8 million (Kotrla, 2010). The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (2016) estimated that one in six endangered runaways reported to them were victims of sex trafficking. On average, one in four run-away children are propositioned by a trafficker within their first 48 hours of leaving home or foster care (It Has to Stop, 2013). Once a child becomes a victim, they are only expected to live eight years (Dill, 2011).

The second component of sex trafficking are the traffickers themselves. Sex traffickers, or pimps, are individuals that earned compensation, cash or other benefits, in exchange for the sexual exploitation of a minor by another individual (Hardy et al., 2013). Sex traffickers have been found to be male or female and known or unknown to the victim (Williamson & Prior, 2009). Sex traffickers have also been found to be professional or non-professional criminals who operate individually or as an organized group (Polar Project, 2006). Sex traffickers used a variety of ways to recruit minors. Recruiting methods have been found to include coercion and manipulation of the victims by responding to their emotional needs and/or recognizing their innate desires for love and protection that they lacked from their home life (Williamson & Prior, 2009).

The third component of trafficking is the experience of victimization. There are many effects associated with being a sex trafficking victim, including physical, psychological, and emotional (Rafferty, 2008). Rafferty (2008) compared the physical and psychological effects sex trafficking victims endured and found that the physical and mental abuse used by traffickers extinguished minors' physical and psychological defense mechanisms, such as their flight or fight response and logical reasoning, which further hindered their ability to escape. According to Dr. Judith Herman, individuals that experience prolonged traumatic events, such as constant physical and mental abuse, suffer anticipated psychological harm (Herman, 1997). Neither children nor adolescents are equipped psychology or emotionally to react to repetitive traumatic events (Courtois, 2008).

Trafficking victims have been found to experience include physical violence, starvation, gynecologic health problems, depression, anxiety, PTSD, panic disorder, substance abuse, suicidal ideation, and Stockholm syndrome (WHO 2012). Stockholm syndrome is the



psychological tendency of a victim to bond with, identify with, or sympathize with their captor. Sex trafficking victims are found to get their start in the sex industry as a result of an abusive home, either physically, sexually, and psychologically, and therefore became estranged from the situation by either running away or being taken. Van de Hoven and Maree (2005) suggest that repeat victimization could lead to a cycle of violence and that this cycle of violence could lead to older victims being coerced to recruit younger girls. This cycle continues as sex trafficking victims are repeatedly abused and sold to new traffickers.

The final component of trafficking was the legislation put into place to punish sex traffickers and buyers and to prevent sex trafficking from occurring. Historical legislation aiding in the fight against sex trafficking included the Tariff Act of 1930, the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO), the Mann Act, and the Prosecutorial Remedies and Other Tools to End the Exploitation of Children Today (PROTECT) Act of 2003 (Polaris Project, 2006). The importance of each act is discussed as follows: The Tariff Act of 1930 prohibited imported goods made by those who were entrapped in forced or indentured labor. The Customs and Facilitations and Trade Enforcement Act amended the Tariff Act to include goods that were made via coercion or by human trafficking victims. RICO was established to help the federal government more effectively prosecute members of organized crime for racketeering offenses, including human trafficking. The Mann Act of 1910 (18 U.S.C. § 2421-2424) was amended in 1978 and 1986. The amendments to the Mann Act established that transporting minors and coercing adults to travel across state lines or foreign countries for the purposes of engaging in commercial sex acts was illegal (Project Polaris, 2006). It also established that these crimes were punishable by up to 20 years in prison. Lastly, the PROTECT Act established the Amber Alert

System, grants for transitional housing for minor domestic trafficking victims, and enhanced punishments for individuals engaging in sex tourism, domestically and internationally.

Since the 1990s, there have been publicized reports on human trafficking cases, which have helped further anti-trafficking legislation (Fry, 2008). These reports attempted to cover information on how victims were recruited, transported, and exploited. The majority of these reports contained policy recommendations, which focused on helping to establish methods in which legislatures could use to help combat human trafficking. The following paragraphs will discuss current legislature that arose as a result of the publicized reports and that have been passed to help augment anti-trafficking efforts.

Prior to 2011, anyone convicted of sex trafficking was charged under involuntary servitude and slavery laws (Smith, 2011). The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) was established in 2000, and constituted the first federally created law that focused solely on the elimination of human trafficking-- specifically preventing, protecting, and prosecuting cases of human trafficking (Hepburn & Simon, 2010; Sverdlick, 2006). In terms of victims, the TVPA focused on rescue, rehabilitation, and reintegration efforts necessary to help victims (Sverdlick, 2006). Reauthorizations have been made to the TVPA to accommodate for changes that have occurred in anti-trafficking efforts, and are worthy of discussion.

Reauthorizations to the TVPA took place in 2003, 2005, 2008, and 2013 (U.S. Department of Justice, 2017). The TVPRA of 2003 established the right for trafficking victims to sue their traffickers and added human trafficking to the list of crimes that could be prosecuted under the RICO statute. It also included protection from deportation for trafficking victims and their families and mandated the Attorney General to report to Congress, yearly, concerning actions taken to fight against trafficking. The TVPRA of 2005 established a shelter program for

minor sex trafficking victims and grant programs that assisted state and local law enforcement agencies. It also directed the Department of Health and Human Services to establish and implement a program providing benefits and services for minor sex trafficking victims. The TVPRA of 2008 implemented several new prevention strategies and a new system to gather and report trafficking data. It also required a screening process for unaccompanied juveniles and expanded the definitions of various types of trafficking to aid the prosecution. Lastly, the TVPRA of 2013, an amendment to the Violence Against Women Act (1994), established and strengthened programs to prevent child marriage and ensure that U.S. citizens did not purchase products made by trafficking victims.

For the purpose of this thesis, the Domestic Sex Trafficking Deterrence and Victims Support Act of 2011 is particularly relevant because it was implemented to augment federal and state efforts to address domestic minor sex trafficking (Hardy et al., 2013). It established that children 18 and younger charged with a prostitution offense were victims of sex trafficking, not criminals or specifically, juvenile prostitutes. This ensured that the victims avoided being arrested and labeled a juvenile prostitute, and instead were treated as true victims. This was particularly important because research has found that negative labeling, such as 'juvenile prostitute', affected a victim's successful reintegration and rehabilitation (Palmer, 2010).

Within the United States, most criminal justice systems have moved towards a victim-centered approach (Austin & Farrell, 2017). This has allowed for prostituted or sex trafficked women and children to be treated as victims in need of protection rather than as criminals. However, it is still common for these individuals to be arrested and charged with misdemeanor or gross misdemeanor prostitution charges. This was evident in a study conducted in 2002 by the Minneapolis City Attorney's Office (Minnesota Legislative Reference Library, 2002), which

analyzed data from all of the prostitution investigations and prosecutions that took place within the City that year. A total of 577 prostitution offenses were reported within the city. Of those, 512 cases were actually prosecuted. Of those, 434 or 85% of charges were brought against women who had been prostituted or trafficked; whereas, only 78 or 15% had been brought against the john, which were customers who paid for sexual services.

Criminalizing prostitutes and requiring johns to pay a fine encompasses previous attempts to prevent prostitution and sex trafficking (Nicholas, 2015). However, this has had little impact on the underlying issue. Garza, and Smith (2010) found there is a need for drawing the public's attention to the issue of sex trafficking, as well as educating and training community members who work in public transportation, the medical field, social services, and hotel staff to be able to identify signs of sex trafficking, as sex trafficking victims are typically hidden in plain sight. A review of previous literature has found there is a sufficient emphasis on the need for policy changes, victim's identification training, increased public awareness, and for increased services designed to support human trafficking victims (Nicholas, 2015).

In addition, it is important to understand the general public's perceptions of sex trafficking victims in relation to prostitution, specifically whether sex trafficking victims are perceived as prostitutes or true victims because public opinion directly affects government policy (Kotsadam & Jakobson, 2012). Previous research has found that public perceptions, as well as media coverage and representation, influence policy makers' own personal assumptions (Sample & Kadleck, 2008). "...it is evident that policy makers' personal ideologies, beliefs, and assumptions play an active role in introducing, passing, and enacting legislation" (Sample & Kadleck, 2008, p. 43). Therefore, policy makers' own personal perceptions often drive the need for, and the content of, legislative responses (Beckett & Sasson, 2000). Thus, the public play a

significant role in the legislative process by informing legislators of problematic events and demanding action in response (Sample & Kadleck, 2008).

The purpose of this research is to gain a better understanding of the general public's perception of sex trafficking victims, in hopes that law enforcement and policy makers can use the information gained to increase the fight against domestic sex trafficking. In order to better understand the public's perception and stigmatization of sex trafficking victims as prostitutes, it is important to refer to a seminal work on the topic. Specifically, Lutya and Lanier (2012) found that a combination of integrated theories could be used to explain sex trafficking crimes.

For the purpose of this paper, schema theory was utilized to better understand how perceptions and stereotypes are formed, specifically perceptions and stereotypes of sex trafficking victims by the public. Although there are federal and state statutes that define sex trafficking as a crime and specify the penalties for it, there is little known about how the public distinguishes sex trafficking from prostitution and their perceptions of the victims involved. Due to lack of education and knowledge on human trafficking, the public are prone to create an ideal type of sex trafficking victim, utilizing a stereotype and labeling them as a prostitute or juvenile prostitute (Hoyle, Bosworth, & Dempsey, 2011).

#### Theoretical Framework: Schema Theory

Schema theory is utilized in criminal justice research to better understand the perceptions of law enforcement towards certain offenses and offenders (Robinson, 2000). Schemata are defined as powerful learning and developmental tools that help individuals fit acquired observations into pre-defined categories (Fiske & Linville, 1980). These observations develop through the individual's past experiences with people, objects, and events and predicted how the

individual would respond in future situations. Research shows that when schemas are developed through experiences, schemas are activated by familiar characteristics and are difficult to alter (Farrell et al., 2015).

Schema theory (1998) proposes that knowledge is organized into units and within the units, or schemata, is stored information. “All of our generic knowledge is embedded in schemata” (Rumelhart, 1980, p. 41). Schemata also refer to theoretical concepts, which are hierarchically categorized and webbed into complex relationships. Schemata develops and changes as the individual interprets new information and experiences (Pankin, 2013). Schemata also affect the way individuals interpret observations and respond to new information and experiences (Rumelhart & Norman, 1978).

Schema theory was first theorized by F.C. Bartlett in his publication, *Remembering* (Bartlett, 1932). Bartlett (1932) researched how schemas were affected by individual’s procedural memory. He found that past experiences helped individuals interpret new experiences because they permitted expectations. Furthermore, he found that repetitive encounters allowed individuals to generalize experiences and develop expectations.

Jean Piaget, whom theorized cognitive development theory, furthered the exploration of schemas (Pankin, 2013). Piaget found that new information was integrated into current schemas and cognitive dissonance was caused by newly integrated schemas, which changed to accommodate new information (Cherry, 2017). He proposed that schemas were changed through assimilation and accommodation. In assimilation, new information was incorporated into pre-existing schemas; whereas, in accommodation, existing schemas were altered or new schema were formed as individuals learned new information and had new experiences. The process of

assimilation was subjective because individuals modified previous information or experiences to fit in with preexisting beliefs (Trauma Research & Treatment, 2012).

Piaget also proposed that there were three factors contributing to an individual's cognitive development, all of which could affect the individuals' schema (Pankin, 2013). These factors included: biological development, interaction with the world through nature and objects, and interaction with others. Through these factors, self-schema, adult learning and development, schema and gender, and schema and culture were established (Pankin, 2013). Adult learning and development and schema and culture were particularly important for the purpose of this thesis. Schemata continued to develop over the course of adulthood as individuals' microsystems, mesosystems, and exosystems changed (Pankin, 2013). Therefore, as individuals experienced new situations, they accommodated and assimilated new knowledge as a response to that situation. Schema theory reinforced the importance of pre-existing knowledge and the use of learning aids to associate new knowledge to knowledge previously stored in schemas (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007).

Individuals also developed cultural schemas and schemas for cultural understanding that supported cultural identity. "A schema for understanding culture is culture-general-that is, it reflects knowledge that applies to all cultures (Renssch, Mot, & Abbe, 2009, p 1). Schemas for cultural understanding contrasted with the construction of stereotypes:

A schema for cultural understanding is more than just a stereotype about members of a culture. Whereas stereotypes tend to be rigid, a schema is dynamic and subject to revision. Whereas stereotypes tend to simplify and ignore group differences, a schema can be quite complex (Renssch et al., 2009, p. 3).

These two perspectives, adult learning and development and cultural schemas, are important because both influence how people perceive human trafficking as a crime and the victims involved. Di Tomasso, Strom, Shilma, & Bittito (2009) found that cultural schemata related to paying for sex influenced the overall demand for the commercial sex economy. Because cultural schemata vary between societies, the influence cultural schemata have on the public's perceptions of prostitution interfere with the public's perceptions of sex trafficking victims. Although little research has been conducted on the public's perception of sex trafficking and sex trafficking victims, research has been conducted on police perceptions of both. Previous research on the topic has utilized schema theory (Farrell et al., 2015). As an example, Farrell et al. (2015) found that law enforcement perceived human trafficking as a type of prostitution and that some agencies did not distinguish between the two. It was more common for law enforcement to refer to sex trafficking victims as 'prostitutes,' identifying the victims as perpetrators, rather than as victims. Thus, prostitution was the most common existing schema law enforcement used to comprehend human trafficking. The results of this study suggested that law enforcement's comprehension of human trafficking, through prostitution schema, limited the types of cases considered to be human trafficking. It also led some law enforcement to misidentify victims. Matthews (2005) found that it is common for law enforcement personnel to believe individuals selling sex did so willingly and this assumption lead them to believe there was no victimization present in human trafficking cases. Prostitution schema also prevented law enforcement from identifying other types of labor trafficking or trafficking of groups not identified in traditional prostitution enforcement (Farrell et al., 2015).

In addition, Halter (2010) and Mitchell et al. (2010) conducted studies on law enforcement's perceptions of sex trafficking victims. Halter (2010) found that some law



enforcement personnel viewed sex trafficking victims as offenders, despite laws translating otherwise. Mitchell et al. (2010) found that 31% of minors involved in sex trafficking were identified as delinquents rather than victims. Law enforcement's skewed perceptions occurred because law enforcement lacked both training in how to identify incidents of sex trafficking and institutional resources to help guide how law enforcement responded to sex trafficking cases (Farrell et al., 2015). Law enforcement were unlikely to understand the magnitude of human trafficking due to an unfamiliarity with the legal definitions of human trafficking. This unfamiliarity further misrepresented what human trafficking was (Newman, Mulcahy, & Martin, 2008).

### Chapter Summary

Human trafficking is considered to be a relatively new crime and is the second fastest growing criminal industry within the United States, following drug trafficking (It Has to Stop, 2013). It is a very profitable industry, generating approximately \$150 billion annually. Human trafficking is a deprivation of human rights, affecting children, adolescents, and adults (Hardy et al., 2013). "Human trafficking is a hidden crime that affects individuals, groups of individuals, and the communities in which the crime is occurring" (Logan, Walker, & Hunt, 2009, p. 26). Due to its illicit nature, human trafficking is difficult to understand and identify (Jahic & Fickenauer, 2005).

This chapter aimed to review the current and historical information on human trafficking by addressing the types of human trafficking, legal definitions of prostitution and sex trafficking, and sex trafficking components. Furthermore, it put forth a theoretical framework focused on how the public form perceptions of sex trafficking and sex trafficking victims. Due to the lack of education and training on the issue, it is important for researchers to understand and address the

public's perceptions of sex trafficking victims in relation to prostitution. This study will seek to gain a better understanding of the public's awareness of sex trafficking and to identify the public's current perception of sex trafficking victims in relation to prostitution, specifically whether or not the public perceive sex trafficking victims as prostitutes or true victims. The next chapter will discuss the methodology that is employed in this research.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the current research was to explore the perceptions of the public when asked about sex trafficking and victims of sex trafficking, specifically in Northeast Tennessee. As a result of the lack of education on the issue and the lack of resources to recognize sex trafficking, it is common for the public to perceive and label sex trafficking victims as juvenile prostitutes, thus criminalizing them (Hoyle et al., 2011). It is also common for the public to believe false prostitution myths, which contribute to the misleading perceptions of sex trafficking victims (Cotton et al., 2002; Farley et al., 2003). As a result of these misconceptions, it is more difficult for sex trafficking victims to be rehabilitated back into the community once rescued from the slave trade (Palmer, 2010).

This chapter will address the research methods employed in this study. Included in this discussion will be the research questions, hypotheses, research design, definition of constructs and variables, description of the sample and sampling technique, and an analysis of threats to validity and the methods used to overcome these problems. For this study, primary data was obtained to answer the research questions. This cross-sectional study used a non-experimental design. A survey was created to collect self-report data from undergraduate and graduate students within the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology at East Tennessee State University. The purpose of the survey was to measure the students' current perceptions and education of sex trafficking and victims of sex trafficking. Additionally, the survey collected demographic information to allow for a determination of the influence that these may have on perceptions.

## Participants

Participants were recruited using a non-probability convenience sample comprised of individuals willing to complete the survey. Students were recruited by visiting criminal justice classes at East Tennessee State University and asking attendees if they would be willing to complete the survey. During recruitment, the author spoke about the proposed study, requested participation, and expressed the voluntary and anonymous nature of participation. Prior to the administration of the survey, students were provided with an informed consent document (attached in the appendix). Any student enrolled in criminal justice classes who expressed a desire to participate was eligible.

The survey was administered in-class to Criminal Justice and Criminology undergraduate students at East Tennessee State University. East Tennessee State University is a public university located in Johnson City, Tennessee, with a student population of approximately 14,330 undergraduates, 2,355 postgraduates, and 610 doctoral students (East Tennessee State University, 2016). The survey included questions about prior education on sex trafficking, prior experience with sex trafficking victims, differing opinions between human trafficking, sex trafficking and prostitution, sex trafficking victim myths, sex trafficking legislation, specialized law enforcement training, and respondents' demographics. The sample initially consisted of 198 East Tennessee State University Criminal Justice and Criminology students; however, three surveys were discarded due to lack of completion. Therefore, the final sample consisted of 195 students for which full responses were available. The following section will address the primary and secondary research questions, objectives, and testable hypotheses that will be addressed.

### Primary Research Question

The primary research question for this study was: *How do college students in Northeast Tennessee perceive sex trafficking victims?* Since 2016, there have been over 150 cases of sex trafficking reported within Tennessee (Polaris, 2018). The majority of these cases have been found to occur in larger Tennessee counties, such as Coffee, Davidson, Knox, and Shelby County (Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, 2013). This is due to the ease of travel along the 1,105 miles of Tennessee's highway system. Interstate 40, which covers a span of 455 miles, crosses 20 Tennessee counties and continues into eight surrounding states. Tennessee ranks sixth in the nation for United States cargo carrying trucks, making it easier and convenient for traffickers to transport sex trafficking victims.

*College students in Northeast Tennessee* were conceptualized as undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at East Tennessee State University. This included both males and females, ages 18 and up. Students varied in terms of religious preference, race and ethnicity, country of origin, marital status, political affiliation, number of children, and concentration (major). With that said, students were primarily Criminal Justice and Criminology majors or minors. These students' classification levels varied from freshmen to graduate students, which was assessed by asking respondents to identify their classification level, as well as their area of concentration and how long they had resided in Northeast Tennessee.

*Perceptions* were conceptualized as a prostitution schema versus a sex trafficking victim schema. As stated in Chapter #2, schemata are powerful learning and developmental tools that help individuals fit acquired observations into pre-defined categories (Fiske & Linville, 1980). Individuals develop schemata through past experiences with people, objects, and events. Once schemata are developed, they predict how an individual responds in situations. Research on

schemata have found that once developed, they influence how people perceive both human trafficking and the victims involved (Renstch et al., 2009). Di Tomasso et al. (2009) found that because cultural schemata vary between societies, the influence cultural schemata have on the public's perceptions of prostitution interfere with the public's perceptions of sex trafficking victims. To measure this variable, respondents were asked whether human trafficking and sex trafficking are different crimes, whether they believed that sex trafficking is a problem in Northeast Tennessee, and whether sex trafficking and prostitution are not related.

*Sex trafficking victims* were conceptualized as anyone who had been forced, deceived, or coerced into sexual exploitation, specifically within Tennessee. The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, found in 18 U.S.C. Sections 1589-1594, established that sex trafficking occurs when “a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such acts has not attained 18 years of age.” According to 22 U.S.C. Section 7101, sex trafficking also occurs when persons are recruited, harbored, or transported for labor or services “through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purposes of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.”

Respondents were asked to answer a variety of questions designed to measure their perceptions of sex trafficking victims. They were asked (1) whether they believed that underage prostitutes are sex trafficking victims, (2) if adults involved in sex trafficking are perceived as prostitutes rather than as victims, (3) if most people who become victims of sex trafficking are adults, (4) if females account for the majority of sex trafficking victims, (5) if adults involved in sex trafficking do not deserve a lesser punishment because they are prostitutes, (6) whether illegal citizens who become sex trafficking victims should be deported to their home country once rescued from the slave trade, (7) whether persons over the age of 18 are not considered to

be victims of sex trafficking, (8) if children are rarely victims of sex trafficking in the United States, and (9) if children involved in sex trafficking are labeled juvenile prostitutes by the criminal justice system. It is important to determine how the public perceive victims of sex trafficking because public opinion directly affects how victims are treated upon disclosure and government policy (Rights4Girls, 2017). The following section will address the secondary research questions.

### Secondary Research Questions

To answer the primary research question, five secondary research questions were examined focusing on college students' perceptions and education of sex trafficking victims. The first secondary question was: *Are male students more likely to perceive sex trafficking victims as prostitutes compared to their female counterparts?* The goal of this research question was to examine the differences in male and female students' perceptions. The hypothesis associated with this research question was: *There is a relationship between male students and negatively skewed perceptions of sex trafficking victims.* There is limited research on whether males and females perceive sex trafficking victims differently. Cunningham and Cromer (2016) found that men were more compliant of sex trafficking myths than women and also that men were more likely to blame or criminalize the victim. They proposed that this finding related to the fact that women experience sexual victimization at higher rates than men (Banyard, Ward, Cohn, Plante, Moorhead, & Walsh 2007). "Women's heightened awareness of potential victimization appears to be related to women's willingness to believe disclosures of abuse" (Cromer & Freyd, 2007; Cunningham & Cromer, 2016, p. 237; Miller & Cromer, 2012).

The next concept that arose in association with this research question was prostitutes. *Prostitutes* were conceptualized as those voluntarily engaging in sex work for monetary

compensation (Farrell et al., 2015). Mucha (2012) found that there were approximately 41 million individuals involved in prostitution worldwide, 80% of whom were females. Prostitution, the world's oldest profession, is considered to be a 'victimless crime' and tends to be treated as a lower priority due to existence of prostitution myths (Matthews, 2005). "Prostitution myths apply to all types of prostitution regardless of the context (i.e. indoor vs. street)" (Cunningham & Cromer, 2016, p. 230). As mentioned in Chapter #2, prostitution myths justify the sexual exploitation of women, increase violence against prostitutes, reduce reporting, and minimize harm perception (Cotton et al., 2012; Cunningham & Cromer, 2016; Farley et al., 2003). To measure this variable, respondents were asked whether sex trafficking and prostitution are related.

The second research question addressed was: *Have students received an adequate amount of education on sex trafficking?* The goal of this research question was to determine whether students had received previous education on sex trafficking. The hypothesis associated with this research question was: *Students have not received an adequate amount of education on sex trafficking.* In 2015, the U.S. Department of Education released an educator's guide that discussed ways to identify and help prevent domestic sex trafficking. It is important that America's youth be educated on sex trafficking since there are an estimated 1.2 million children trafficked within the U.S. annually (ILO, 2012). "It's critical for us to raise awareness of trafficking among adolescents because we know traffickers intentionally target youth" said ACF Acting Assistant Secretary for Children and Families Mark Greenberg (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

The next concept that arose in association with this research question was education. *Education* was conceptualized as information on sex trafficking, including risk factors,



recruitment, how to identify trafficking, and existing policies concerning sex trafficking (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). Education on sex trafficking needs to be implemented early on in order to eliminate misconceptions about trafficking. “Misconceptions about human trafficking thwart efforts to stop the practice” (Opening Doors, 2011). To measure this variable, respondents were asked whether they had received education on sex trafficking.

The third research question addressed was: *Do students’ political affiliations affect their perceptions on victims of sex trafficking?* The goal of this research question was to determine whether students’ political views misconstrued their perceptions of sex trafficking and victims of sex trafficking. The hypothesis associated with this research question was: *The more liberal students’ political affiliations are, the more likely they are to perceive individuals in sex trafficking as victims rather than as prostitutes.* There is limited research on how political affiliations affect perceptions of sex trafficking and victims of sex trafficking, but because those who associate with the Republican Party tend to be tougher on crime, they may be more likely to equate individuals in sex trafficking as prostitutes. Therefore, students affiliating with a more liberal or independent party may be less likely to adhere to myths associated with sex trafficking. This hypothesis was tested by first identifying students’ political affiliation and then examining their perceptions on sex trafficking and victims of sex trafficking.

The next concept that arose in association with this research question was political affiliation. *Political affiliation* was conceptualized as the support of a particular political party or group (ASU, 2018). As of 2017, 26% of registered voters identified as Republican, 37% as Independents, and 33% as Democrats (Pew Research Center, 2018). In terms of gender, 56% of women affiliated with the Democratic Party compared with 44% of men. To measure this

variable, respondents were asked whether they affiliated with the Republican, Democratic, or Independent Party.

The fourth research question addressed was: *Will level of education, in terms of classification, affect how students perceive victims of sex trafficking?* The goal of this research question was to determine whether students of higher classification, in terms of levels of education, had received more education of sex trafficking compared to students with lower classification. The hypothesis associated with this research question was: *In terms of level of education, students of higher classification will have more knowledge of sex trafficking than students who have been in college for a shorter amount of time.* This hypothesis was tested by first identifying the student's level of education and then examining the amount of knowledge they had on sex trafficking. *Level of education* was conceptualized as freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, and graduate student. Freshman were first year college students; sophomores were second year college students; juniors were third year college students, and seniors were fourth year college students. Graduate students were those who have already earned a bachelor's degree.

The last research question addressed the following question: *Do students agree that more legislation needs to be implemented to help increase the fight against domestic sex trafficking?* The goal of this research question was to determine if students were aware of current sex trafficking legislation. The hypothesis associated with this research question was: *Students agree there is a need for improved sex trafficking legislation in the U.S.* Although the United States Government has established anti-trafficking efforts, they have been shown to be ineffective (Mehlman-Orozco, 2016). Since the passage of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) in 2000, there has been an influx of funding, legislation, and public awareness campaigns to

combat domestic trafficking. However, available data suggest that the current attempts to combat domestic trafficking have failed. Mehlman-Orozco (2016) reported that:

There is a critical gap between law on the books and law in action, with regards to American anti-trafficking policy. Despite passing safe-harbor laws, adopting United Nations directives, and allowing T-visa protections; victims continue to be erroneously criminalized through arrest, detention, and deportation. Moreover, the clearance rate for human trafficking offenses is well below all other crimes, with few offenders ever being arrested or only charged for tangentially related offenses, which carry lighter sentences (e.g., money laundering or pandering).

*Legislation* was conceptualized as acts established by the U.S. Government to protect trafficking victims, prosecutes offenders, and prevents future trafficking (Mehlman-Orozco, 2016). As discussed in the second chapter, sex trafficking was not defined as a crime until 2000 with the passage of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA). The TVPA was the first federally created law that focused solely on the elimination of human trafficking, specifically the preventing, protecting, and prosecuting cases of human trafficking (Hepburn & Simon, 2010; Sverdlick, 2006, p. 18). Reauthorizations were made to the TVPA in 2003, 2005, 2008, and 2013, to accommodate for changes that occurred in anti-trafficking efforts (Polaris Project, 2006). Along with the TVPA, the Domestic Sex Trafficking Deterrence and Victims Support Act was passed in 2011, which established that children of age 18 years or younger charged with a prostitution offense were victims of sex trafficking. This act established that victims could not be criminalized as prostitutes or juvenile prostitutes. To measure this variable, respondents were asked whether they believed that better policies and legislation needed to be established in the United States in order to provide better assistance for victims of sex trafficking.

## Data and Analysis

The methodology employed in this study relied on the use of a survey comprised of 31 closed-ended questions. The survey included questions about respondents' demographics and perceptions of domestic sex trafficking, prostitution, and victims of sex trafficking. Analyses were conducted through the use of SPSS software. The following sections address the methods and analysis utilized in this research.

### Research Design

This research measured two dependent variables, education on sex trafficking and perceptions of sex trafficking victims and how they were influenced by three independent variables: gender, school classification, and political affiliation. Specifically, the survey consisted of the following: 11 items on respondents' demographics, one item on sex trafficking education, one item on profession, two items on human trafficking, one item on sex trafficking in comparison to prostitution, nine items on sex trafficking victims, one item on sex trafficking policy and legislation, four items on law enforcement's role in response to sex trafficking, and one item on sex trafficking prevention methods. The survey was created by combining items from a previously established survey and additional questions created by the author to obtain a more in-depth understanding and answer the established research questions. Specifically, the survey included four items from the *Attitudes Toward Prostitution and Sex Trafficking Awareness* survey (Nicholas, 2015). These items were selected for their relevance to the current study. The items that did not come from the previously established survey were developed based on statements commonly encountered by the researcher regarding prostitution, sex trafficking, and victims of sex trafficking. Knowledge of sex trafficking and perceptions of sex trafficking victims were examined through the utilization of questions using a five-point Likert scale

(strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, neutral = 3, agree = 4, and strongly agree = 5. The following section describes each of the questions in detail.

Questions #1- #11 addressed the respondent’s demographics and background variables that may influence their perceptions of sex trafficking and victims of sex trafficking. These measures were gender (male =0, female =1, prefer not to answer =2), school classification (freshman =1, sophomore= 2, junior =3, senior=4, graduate =5), concentration (criminal justice major = 0, criminal justice minor =1, other = 2), age (18-19 years =1, 20-21 years =2, 22-23 years =3, 24-25 years =4, 25 or older= 5), years resided in Tennessee (less than 1 year = 1, 1-4 years = 2, 5-10 years =3, 11-15 years= 4, over 15 years =4), country of origin (United States = 0, Non-United States =1), race (African American =1, Hispanic =2, Asian =3, Caucasian =4, Native American =5, Other =6), religion (Christian =1, Buddhist =2, Muslim =3, Hindu =4, other =5, no religion =6), marital status (single = 1, married =2, divorced =3, widowed =4), whether respondents had children (yes = 0, no =1), and political affiliation (Republican =0, Democrat =1, Independent = 2). Some demographics were recoded due to the uneven distribution of responses: gender (male =0, female =1), school classification (lower level =1, upper level = 2), religion (Christian =1, Buddhist =2, other =3, no religion =4), and marital status (single =0, married =1, divorced =2). These were treated as independent variables for the purpose of statistical analysis.

A summary with the attributes of the variables and their codes are presented in Table 1.

*Table 1. Attributes of the Variables and Codes*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Codes</b>
Gender	Male	0
	Female	1
School Classification	Lower Class	1
	Upper Class	2

Table 1. Continued

Concentration	CJ Major	0
	CJ Minor	1
	Other	2
Age	18-19	1
	20-21	2
	22-23	3
	24-25	4
	Over 25	5
Tennessee Residency	Less than 1 year	1
	1-4 years	2
	5-10 years	3
	11-15 years	4
	Over 15 years	5
Country of Origin	United States	0
	Non-United States	1
Race	Hispanic	1
	Asian	2
	Caucasian	3
	Other	4
Religion	Christian	1
	Buddhist	2
	Other	3
	No religion	4
Marital Status	Single	0
	Married	1
	Divorced	2
Do you have Children?	Yes	0
	No	1
Political Affiliation	Republican	0
	Democrat	1
	Independent	2

Questions #12 and #13 addressed whether the respondents had received prior education on human trafficking and whether the respondents had worked with human trafficking victims

within their professions. These questions were addressed to determine whether the respondents were knowledgeable about human trafficking prior to the administration of the in-class survey. Respondents with more knowledge or experience on the issue were believed to perceive individuals involved in sex trafficking as victims, rather than as prostitutes. Respondents could respond as “strongly agree,” “agree,” “neutral,” “disagree,” or “strongly disagree.”

Question #15 addressed whether respondents believed that human trafficking was a problem in Northeast Tennessee. This question was addressed to determine whether respondents were aware of the prevalence of human trafficking in Northeast Tennessee. As discussed in the review of the literature, the prevalence of human trafficking in Northeast Tennessee is due to the ease of travel along the 1,105 miles of Tennessee’s highway system (Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, 2013). Respondents could respond as “strongly agree,” “agree,” “neutral,” “disagree,” or “strongly disagree.”

Questions #14 and #16 addressed human trafficking vs. sex trafficking and sex trafficking vs. prostitution. As previously discussed, sex trafficking is a form of human trafficking and sex trafficking and prostitution are distinctly different (Human Rights Commission, 2015; Lutya & Lanier, 2012). Respondents were asked whether they believed that human trafficking and sex trafficking were different crimes. Respondents were also asked whether they believed that sex trafficking and prostitution were not related. This question was administered to determine whether respondents were cognitively aware of prostitution myths. Respondents could respond as “strongly agree,” “agree,” “neutral,” “disagree,” or “strongly disagree.”

Questions #17- #25 addressed respondent’s views on sex trafficking victims. Within these questions, respondents were asked the following: (1) Whether they believed that underage

prostitutes were sex trafficking victims, (2) Whether respondents perceived adults in sex trafficking as prostitutes rather than victims, (3). Whether respondents believed that most people who become victims of sex trafficking are adults, (4) Whether respondents believed that females accounted for the majority of human sex trafficking victims, (5) Whether adults involved in sex trafficking did not deserve a lesser punishment because they were prostitutes, (6) Whether respondents believed if illegal trafficking victims should be deported to their home country once rescued from the slave trade, (7) Whether respondents believed that persons over the age of 18 were not considered to be victims of sex trafficking, (8) Whether children were rarely victims of human trafficking in the United States, and (9) Whether children involved in sex trafficking were labeled juvenile prostitutes by the criminal justice system. Respondents could respond as “strongly agree,” “agree,” “neutral,” “disagree,” or “strongly disagree.”

Question #26 addressed respondents’ views on the need for more policies and legislation concerning sex trafficking and sex trafficking victims within the United States. This question was included because public opinion directly influences governmental policy (Kotsadam & Jakobson, 2012). Therefore, more informed public awareness can lead to the implementation of stronger policies against sex trafficking and stronger policies can help establish improved protections and rights for victims of sex trafficking. Respondents could respond as “strongly agree,” “agree,” “neutral,” “disagree,” or “strongly disagree.”

Questions #27- #30 addressed respondents’ views on law enforcement’s involvement in sex trafficking. These questions queried whether respondents believed that sex trafficking was best handled by law enforcement, whether respondents believed that sex trafficking was a law enforcement issue rather than a social service issue, whether respondents believed that a greater effort needed to be made by law enforcement to combat sex trafficking, and whether



respondents believed that human trafficking was not considered by law enforcement as a being a highly organized crime. Once reported, law enforcement officers are the first to respond and interact with victims of sex trafficking. Respondents could respond as “strongly agree,” “agree,” “neutral,” “disagree,” or “strongly disagree.”

Finally, question #31 addressed how respondents viewed steps to eliminate sex trafficking and false perceptions and myths associated with sex trafficking. Respondents were asked if the use of media campaigns and educational programs would be beneficial steps to eliminating sex trafficking, false perceptions of victims, and myths associated with sex trafficking. Respondents could respond as “strongly agree,” “agree,” “neutral,” “disagree,” or “strongly disagree.”

#### Data Cleaning

Upon data collection, the data was manually examined for missing information. These omissions were coded as missing and removed from the data. Consequently, the total number of responses was reduced. The sample size (n) for each statistical model will be presented in the following section. An analysis of the results obtained from the administered surveys will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.

#### Analysis

Analyses will be conducted with the use of SPSS software. Frequencies and descriptive statistics will be presented, as well as the results of bivariate analyses (correlations). These tests should adequately allow for the various hypotheses of the study to be tested. To answer the primary research question, *How do college students in Northeast Tennessee perceive sex trafficking victims*, five secondary research questions were examined. To answer the first research sub-question, *Are male students more likely to perceive sex trafficking victims as*

*prostitutes compared to that of female students*, correlations will be conducted between gender and whether respondents believe that 1) underage prostitutes are sex trafficking victims, and 2) adults in sex trafficking are perceived as prostitutes rather than as victims. To answer the second research question, *Have students received an adequate amount of education on sex trafficking*, descriptive statistics will be ran to determine whether respondents believe they have been adequately educated on sex trafficking. The third research question will examine *how students' political affiliations affect their perceptions of sex trafficking victims*. A correlation will be conducted between respondents' political affiliation and whether respondents believe that 1) underage prostitutes are sex trafficking victims, and 2) adults in sex trafficking are perceived as prostitutes rather than as victims. The fourth research question will examine *if students of higher classification, in terms of level of education, will have more knowledge of sex trafficking than students who have been in college for a shorter amount of time*. A correlation will be conducted between respondents' classification level and education on sex trafficking, The last research question will examine *if students agree that more legislation needs to be implemented to help increase the fight against domestic sex trafficking*. Descriptive statistics will be ran to determine whether respondents believe that better policies and legislation need be established in the United States to provide better assistance for victims of human trafficking.

#### Validity and Limitations

This study was not without limitations. The main threat to external validity related to the sampling technique. A convenience sample, rather than a random sample, was used; therefore, the representativeness of the sample could not be assured. The data utilized to examine college student's perceptions of sex trafficking and victims of sex trafficking came from students located in a single geographic area (Northeast Tennessee). Hence, it could not be assumed that the

sample was representative of all college students within the United States. Additionally, the data is drawn from students at a single University and for the most part from students with a similar major/minor (Criminal Justice and Criminology). As a result of lack of heterogeneity in participant major/minor, it may be difficult to generalize these results to other college students within different concentrations.

A third limitation was that the data utilized in this study captured only college students' perceptions of sex trafficking and sex trafficking victims; therefore, it may be difficult to generalize these results to people who are not enrolled in college. Finally, the study is limited by its relatively small sample size. A total of 198 Criminal Justice and Criminology students were surveyed; however, three surveys were discarded due to lack of completion. Therefore, 195 surveys were analyzed. The elimination of this data; however, was not systematic and therefore did not affect the results of this study. Of the 195 surveys, 105 were females, 88 were males, and two preferred not to answer; therefore, there was an uneven ratio of females to males. Additionally, of the 195 surveys, only nine respondents were graduate students; therefore, the ratio of undergraduate to graduate students was highly disproportional. Due to the limitations, the author was cautious when drawing conclusions from this research. A larger random national sample would be required to generalize the results to the public across the U.S. However, that was beyond the scope and resources available for this particular study.

In relation to the survey validity, all items had face validity because they were selected and designed in line for the purpose of this research. In addition, there could be an internal threat to validity because participants were aware of the purpose of this research, as addressed in the informed consent, and may have adapted their responses to meet the researcher's expectations. Anonymity was assured to avoid disclosure of participants' identities. A signed consent form

was waived and no additional personal information was collected; therefore, it was impossible to connect responses to individual participants. No other threats to internal validity was present.

During the collection of this data, no historical events related to this research topic, which could confound the study results, took place. As a cross-sectional study, there were no threats of maturation nor experimental mortality. The confidence in the validity and generalizability of these research findings could be further strengthened by replicating this study using the same survey. If future research seems to confirm these hypotheses, the weight of evidence provides support for the validity of the measure.

This chapter discussed the methodology used in the current study, as well as the validity and limitations that were present. The following chapter provides a breakdown of the results of this thesis. The results will indicate how the public perceive sex trafficking and victims of sex trafficking, specifically in Northeast Tennessee. Additionally, the results may inform about further implementation of anti-sex trafficking education, public awareness, and prevention methods.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

The following discussion provides a breakdown of the results of this thesis. The purpose of this study was to examine how students perceive sex trafficking and victims of sex trafficking, specifically in Northeast Tennessee. To examine the primary question, five research questions were established: 1. *Are male students more likely to perceive sex trafficking victims as prostitutes compared to their female counterparts?*; 2. *Have students received an adequate amount of education on sex trafficking?*; 3. *How do students' political affiliations affect their perception on victims of sex trafficking?*; 4. *Will level of education, in terms of classification, affect how students perceive victims of sex trafficking?*; and 5. *Do students agree that more legislation needs to be implemented to help increase the fight against domestic sex trafficking?*

To answer the research questions, primary data was collected and then analyzed with the use of SPSS statistical software. Frequencies, descriptive statistics, and bivariate analysis (correlations) were ran to test the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. These analyses examined whether there was a statistically significant relationship between students' demographics and their perceptions of sex trafficking victims. First, the sample demographics will be discussed.

#### Sample

A total of 195 college students from East Tennessee State University completed the survey. The sample was comprised of 88 males (45.1%) and 105 females (53.8%), with the majority being lower level (freshman and sophomore) students (51.1%) majoring in Criminal Justice (65.1%). The majority of respondents were between the ages of 18 and 21 (83.6%), had

resided in Tennessee for more than 15 years (62.6%), were Caucasian (79%), Christian (75.9%), single (97.9%), and had no children (93.8%). The results are displayed in Table 2.

*Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for the Research Sample*

<b>Sample Characteristics</b>	<b>Frequency (n= 195)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	88	45.1%
Female	105	53.8%
Prefer not to answer	2	1.0%
<b>School Classification</b>		
Freshman	65	33.3%
Sophomore	30	15.4%
Junior	66	33.8%
Senior	25	12.8%
Graduate	9	4.6%
<b>Concentration</b>		
Criminal Justice Major	127	65.1%
Criminal Justice Minor	33	16.9%
Other	34	17.4%
Missing	1	0.05%
<b>Age</b>		
18-19	83	42.6%
20-21	80	41.0%
22-23	18	9.2%
24-25	5	2.6%
Over 25	9	4.6%
<b>Tennessee Resident</b>		
Less than 1 year	15	7.7%
1-4 years	31	15.9%
5-10	16	8.2%
11-15	11	5.6%
Over 15 years	122	62.6%
<b>Country of Origin</b>		
United States	182	93.3%
Non-United States	13	6.7%

Table 2. Continued

<b>Race</b>		
African American	22	11.3%
Hispanic	9	4.6%
Asian	2	1.0%
Caucasian	154	79.0%
Other	8	4.1%
<b>Religion</b>		
Christian	148	75.9%
Buddhist	1	0.50%
Other	8	4.1%
No religion	38	19.5%
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	191	97.9%
Married	1	0.50%
Divorced	3	1.5%
<b>Do you have children?</b>		
Yes	12	6.2%
No	183	93.8%
<b>Political Affiliation</b>		
Republican	73	37.4%
Democrat	53	27.2%
Independent	62	31.8%
Missing	7	3.6%

The following section, which is organized by research questions, discusses the statistical analyses conducted and results obtained.

#### Research Question 1

The first research question assessed whether *male students were more likely to perceive sex trafficking victims as prostitutes compared to their female counterparts?* A bivariate analysis was conducted to examine how similar male students' perceptions of sex trafficking victims were to their female counterparts. The analysis showed to what extent students agreed or disagreed that adults in sex trafficking are prostitutes rather than victims.

Among the students in the sample, 75% (n= 66) of males agreed that adults involved in sex trafficking are prostitutes compared to 65.7% (n= 69) of females. In addition, 69.9% (n= 135) of all students agreed that adults involved in sex trafficking are perceived to be prostitutes compared to 21.8% (n= 42) of all students who disagreed. While the correlation did not yield statistical significance, there is a strong relationship between male students and the negatively skewed perceptions of sex trafficking victims ( $p = .073$ ). Therefore, the current study fails-to-reject the null hypothesis; there is no statistical significance between gender and skewed perceptions of sex trafficking victims. The results are displayed in Table 3.

*Table 3. Comparison of Male and Female Students' Responses*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Total sample</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>DF</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
N	193	135 (69.9%)	42 (21.8%)	2	.073
Male	85	66 (75%)	19 (21.6%)		
Female	92	69 (65.7%)	23 (21.9%)		
Missing	16				

$p > .05^{**}$

### Research Question 2

The second research question assessed whether *students had received an adequate amount of education on sex trafficking?* Descriptive statistics were conducted to examine whether students felt they had received an adequate amount of education on sex trafficking. Among the students in the sample, 72.8% (n= 142) agreed they had received education on sex trafficking compared to 13.9% (n= 27) who disagreed. The remaining 13.3% (n= 26) of students neither agreed nor disagreed. The results are displayed in Table 4.



Table 4. Percentages of Students Who Agreed They were Educated on Sex Trafficking

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency (n= 195)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Agree	142	72.8%
Disagree	27	13.9%
Neutral	26	13.3%

### Research Question 3

The third research question assessed whether *students' political affiliations affect their perception on victims of sex trafficking?* A bivariate analysis was conducted to examine how students' political affiliations affect their perception of victims of sex trafficking. The analysis showed to what extent students' political affiliations influence how they perceive victims of sex trafficking, specifically whether they perceive individuals in sex trafficking as prostitutes or victims. Among students in the sample, 37.4% (n= 73) affiliated with the Republican Party, 26.2% (n= 51) with the Democratic Party, and 32.8% (n= 64) identified as independents. Thus, there were more students who affiliated with the Republican Party than any other party. The remaining 3.6% (n= seven) of students did not respond, and thus were coded as missing.

The results of this analysis indicated there is no difference among students' political affiliations and their perceptions on victims of sex trafficking. Among students in the sample, 74% (n= 54) of Republicans, 68.6% (n= 35) of Democrats, and 62.5% (n= 40) of Independents agreed that adults involved in sex trafficking are prostitutes rather than victims. Thus, despite political affiliation, students had a misconstrued perception of sex trafficking victims. Therefore, the current study fails-to-reject the null; there is no relationship between students' political

affiliations and their perceptions on sex trafficking victims. While it is not statistically significant ( $p = .248$ ), this finding is relevant for the purpose of the current study. This will be further discussed in the following chapter. The results are displayed in Table 5.

*Table 5. Comparison of Students' Political Affiliations/Views on Sex Trafficking Victims*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Total sample</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>DF</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
N	195	129 (68.6%)	43 (22.9%)	4	.248
Republican	73 (37.4%)	54 (74.0%)	16 (21.9%)		
Democrat	51 (26.2%)	35 (68.6%)	9 (17.6%)		
Independent	64 (32.8%)	40 (62.5%)	18 (28.1%)		
Missing	16 (3.6%)				

$p < .05^{**}$

#### Research Question 4

The fourth research question assessed whether *level of education, in terms of classification, affect how students perceive victims of sex trafficking?* A bivariate analysis was conducted to examine whether lower-level students (freshman and sophomore) perceived victims of sex trafficking differently than upper-level students (juniors and seniors). The analysis showed to what extent education on sex trafficking influences students' perceptions of sex trafficking and victims of sex trafficking.

The results of this analysis revealed that education on sex trafficking influences how student's perceive sex trafficking and victims of sex trafficking. The correlation yielded statistical significance at the .05 level ( $p = .035$ ). Therefore, the findings examining the effect of the level of education on students' knowledge of sex trafficking yielded results complimentary to

the hypothesis; therefore, students of higher classification have more knowledge of sex trafficking than students who have been in college for a shorter amount of time, and the null is rejected. Moreover, these results indicated that more education on sex trafficking positively influences how students perceive sex trafficking. The results are displayed in Table 6.

*Table 6. Comparison of Lower Level/Upper Level Students' Knowledge*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Total sample</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>DF</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
N	195	135 (69.2%)	44 (22.6%)	4	.035**
Lower level	95	67 (70.5%)	19 (20.0%)		
Upper level	91	63 (69.2%)	24 (26.4%)		
Missing	9				

p<.05\*\*

#### Research Question 5

The final research question assessed whether *students agreed more legislation needs to be implemented to help increase the fight against domestic sex trafficking?* Descriptive statistics were ran to examine whether students felt that more legislation needs to be implemented within the U.S. in order to provide better assistance and protections for victims of sex trafficking. Among students in the sample, 88.2% (n= 172) of students agreed that more legislation needs to be implemented compared to 2.1% (n= 4) of students who disagreed. The remaining 9.7% (n= 19) of students neither agreed nor disagreed. The results are displayed in Table 7.

*Table 7. Percentages of Students Who Agreed More Legislation Needs to be Implemented*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency (n= 195)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Agree	172	88.2%
Disagree	4	2.1%
Neutral	19	9.7%

### Conclusion

This chapter discussed the findings of the current study. The results indicated most students in the sample had some empirical knowledge of sex trafficking and most students perceived individuals in sex trafficking as victims rather than as prostitutes. In addition, the findings concluded there is not a statistically significant relationship between gender and negatively skewed perceptions of sex trafficking victims or between students' political affiliations and their perceptions on victims of sex trafficking. Students did tend to agree that there is a need for improved sex trafficking policy and legislation in the U.S. The next chapter provides a discussion of these findings, in addition to addressing the need for future research, and policy implications that can be derived from the results.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This thesis constituted an attempt to examine how students at a regional university perceived sex trafficking and victims of sex trafficking by focusing on five research questions. The first research question examined whether male students were more likely to perceive sex trafficking victims as prostitutes compared to their female counterparts. This assessed whether male students as a group had a similar view of sex trafficking victims and if their opinions were based on sex trafficking myths or empirical evidence. Previous research has found that men are more accepting of sex trafficking myths than women and that they are more likely to blame the victim (Cunningham & Cromer, 2016). The second research question examined whether students had received an adequate amount of education on sex trafficking. Previous research has found the lack of education on sex trafficking contributes to acceptance of sex trafficking myths, as well as prostitution myths (Cotton et al., 2002; Farley et al., 2003). These myths contribute to the public's misconception of sex trafficking and victims of sex trafficking. The third research question examined whether students' political affiliations influenced their perceptions of sex trafficking victims. This assessed whether there was a relationship between students' political views and skewed perceptions of sex trafficking victims because there is limited research addressing political affiliations influence/effect on perceptions of sex trafficking victims. The fourth research question examined whether level of education, in terms of school classification, affected how students perceived victims of sex trafficking. This assessed whether students at the upper level (juniors and seniors) were more knowledgeable on sex trafficking compared to students at the lower level (freshman and sophomores). Previous research has found that implementing an educational program focused on the dangers and red flags of sex trafficking

helps eliminate sex trafficking myths and misconceptions about sex trafficking victims (Opening Doors, 2011). The last research question examined whether students agree that more legislation needs to be implemented to help increase the fight against domestic sex trafficking. This assessed whether students had prior knowledge of sex trafficking legislation. Although sex trafficking legislation is currently in place, previous literature has found there is an adequate need for policy changes, increased victim's identification training, increased education and prevention methods, and for increased services designed to support victims (Nicholas, 2015).

To test these research questions, primary data was collected from Criminal Justice and Criminology undergraduate and graduate students at East Tennessee State University via a survey of 31 closed-ended questions. The survey included questions about respondents' demographics and perceptions of domestic sex trafficking, prostitution, and victims of sex trafficking. Statistical analyses including frequencies, descriptives, and bivariate analysis (correlations) were conducted to describe students' knowledge on sex trafficking and perceptions of sex trafficking victims. The results of this exploratory study extended current knowledge regarding perceptions of sex trafficking by examining students' views on sex trafficking and victims of sex trafficking, specifically in Northeast Tennessee. In this chapter, a discussion of the current research, future research, and policy implications associated with domestic sex trafficking and the public's perceptions of sex trafficking victims are addressed.

### Discussion of Findings

Research question one examined whether male students were more likely to perceive sex trafficking victims as prostitutes compared to their female counterparts. A bivariate analysis (correlations) was conducted to analyze the difference between gender and perceptions of sex trafficking victims because previous literature has shown there is a difference between gender

and perceptions of victims, specifically adult victims in comparison to child victims. Although the results did not yield statistical significance, they did show a strong correlation between both variables. The results revealed that male students as a group had a similar opinion about victims of sex trafficking compared to their female counterparts. Both males and females seemed to be aware underage prostitutes are sex trafficking victims; however, both perceived adults in sex trafficking as prostitutes rather than victims. Therefore, respondents believed that minors involved in sex trafficking were victims; whereas, adults involved in sex trafficking were prostitutes.

In general, these findings are consistent with previous research, which has found that men are more accepting of the sex trade compared to women and that men are more likely to blame the victim (Cromer & Freyd, 2007; Cunningham & Cromer, 2016; Miller & Cromer, 2012). Research has found that women experience sexual victimization at higher rates than men; therefore, women are more likely to sympathize with victims, rather than blame them (Banyard et al., 2007; Cromer & Freyd, 2007; Cunningham & Cromer, 2016; Miller & Cromer, 2012). The current study provided further information about the scientific knowledge students possessed about sex trafficking victims. The majority of students, regardless of gender, agreed that adults involved in sex trafficking are prostitutes rather than victims; thus, students' views on sex trafficking victims were influenced by age of consent, which is the minimum age at which an individual is considered legally capable to consent to participation in sexual activity (Age of Consent, 2018). The age of consent varies by state and ranges from 16-18 years old across the United States. In the state of Tennessee, the age of consent is 18 years old. Furthermore, their limited knowledge of sex trafficking legislation may explain why students perceived adults in sex trafficking as prostitutes, but not underage persons. As addressed in Chapter Two , the TVPA

(2002) states that any time in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, the individual involved is considered to be a victim of sex trafficking, not a prostitute. Further examination of the gender difference in perceptions of sex trafficking victims within a larger sample is therefore needed. Further examination of the gender difference within a larger sample may yield a higher statistical significance and reveal, as aforementioned, that males hold a more negative perception of sex trafficking victims in comparison to females.

Research question two examined whether criminal justice students had received an adequate amount of education on sex trafficking. Descriptive statistics were utilized to answer this question. The results revealed the majority of students agreed they had received an adequate amount of education on sex trafficking. In general terms, criminal justice students seemed to be aware that sex trafficking is an ongoing issue in the state of Tennessee, agreed that females account for the majority of sex trafficking victims, agreed that children are more likely to be involved than adults, and viewed sex trafficking with a victim-centered approach.

These findings correlate with previous research, which has found that implementing educational programs focused on sex trafficking enables students to eliminate misconceptions about trafficking (Opening Doors, 2011; U.S. Department of Education, 2015). When misconceptions are eliminated, the harm and effects of sex trafficking are better understood and more appropriate perceptions of victims are displayed. Moreover, additional educational programs focusing on sex trafficking education, ways to identify red flags within communities, victim identification training, and prevention methods need to be implemented in schools and communities in order to further eliminate sex trafficking myths. This will be later discussed in the policy implications section of this chapter.



Research question three examined if there was a relationship between criminal justice students' political affiliations and perceptions of sex trafficking victims. To answer the research question, a bivariate analysis (correlations) was conducted to determine if students who affiliated with a more conservative party perceived sex trafficking victims differently than students who affiliated with a more liberal party. It is important to note that, across the sample, there was a fairly equal distribution of Republicans (n=73), Democrats (n= 51), and Independents (n= 64). The results revealed that despite their political affiliations, students had a skewed perception of sex trafficking victims. Students agreed that adults in sex trafficking are prostitutes rather than victims. Thus, it was expected that students relied on prostitution myths to answer this question rather than empirical evidence and in spite of political affiliation

The current study explored a topic not yet fully covered within the research literature about the scientific knowledge students possessed about sex trafficking victims and how their political affiliations influence their perceptions. Further examination of how political affiliations influence perceptions of sex trafficking victims within a larger sample would be needed. In addition, surveying policy makers on their perceptions of sex trafficking victims would be beneficial. As addressed in Chapter #2, public opinion directly affects government policy and the public play a significant role in electing policy makers (Jakobson, 2012). Also, policy makers' personal perceptions influence the passing and enactment of legislation (Beckett & Sasson, 2000; Sample & Kadleck, 2008). "Some scholars suggest that public officials' rely heavily on their own personal perceptions when enacting social policies" (Sample & Kadleck, 2008, p. 42). Therefore, it is important to understand whether policy makers understand sex trafficking, in comparison to prostitution, and how they perceive and advocate for victims of sex trafficking.

Research question four examined whether level of education, in terms of school classification, affect how students perceive victims of sex trafficking. To answer the research question, a bivariate analysis (correlation) was conducted to determine if students at the lower level (freshman and sophomores) were less knowledgeable of sex trafficking and thus, had a skewed perception of sex trafficking victims. The results revealed that students with less education had a misconstrued perception of sex trafficking victims. This misconception may be explained by the students' subjective definition of the term "prostitute" and the lack of knowledge on how to distinguish sex trafficking from prostitution. They may believe all prostitutes perform sex acts voluntarily and that because an individual is labeled "prostitute," they have not been forced or coerced into the sex trade.

In general, these findings support previous research. First, as stated with research question three, previous education on sex trafficking helps students eliminate certain misconceptions associated with sex trafficking, such as the prevalence of sex trafficking in the U.S. and victim characteristics (Opening Doors, 2011; U.S. Department of Education, 2015). Second, previous research has found that a lack of education or resources to combat sex trafficking contribute to the misconstrued perceptions of sex trafficking and victims of sex trafficking (Hoyle et al., 2011; Palmer, 2010). In addition, the lack of education on sex trafficking contributes to prostitution myths, which affects how individuals perceive sex trafficking victims (Cotton et al., 2002; Farley et al., 2003). Therefore, the more educated students, or the general public, are on sex trafficking, the less likely they are to misconceive individuals in sex trafficking as prostitutes and instead, perceive and treat them as victims. Also, the more educated students and the public are, the more likely they are to identify sex trafficking

within their communities and help victims of sex trafficking by connecting them with law enforcement and social services.

The last research question examined whether students agreed more legislation needs to be implemented to help increase the fight against domestic sex trafficking. To answer this research question, descriptive statistics were used to determine whether students agreed or disagreed. The results revealed that the majority (n= 172) of students agreed that more sex trafficking legislation needs to be implemented in the United States. This finding is consistent with previous literature that addressed the need for policy changes, increased training, increased public awareness, and increased services for victims of sex trafficking (Nicholas, 2015). Further implementation of sex trafficking legislation in the United States would provide better assistance and protections for victims of domestic sex trafficking and increase their chances of being rehabilitated back into their community. This will be further addressed in the policy implications section of this chapter.

In addition to the above results, the majority of students (n= 163) agreed that steps to eliminate sex trafficking and misconstrued perceptions of sex trafficking victims should include media campaigns and educational programs. This finding is consistent with previous literature that found "...public perception and media coverage can both affect the enactment of legislation" (Sample & Kadleck, 2008, p. 43). Thus, the media plays a significant role as the source of information for public officials and as a result, "Directly or indirectly... play a vital role in framing the legislative response to sex crimes" (Sample & Kadleck, 2008, p. 58).

### Future Research

For this study, the majority of students in the sample had a mostly scientific based opinion about sex trafficking. Students seemed to be aware that sex trafficking is an ongoing

issue and that there is a need for policy changes, educational programs, increased public awareness, and increased prevention methods to help combat domestic sex trafficking. Students did not have misconstrued perceptions of sex trafficking victims; with the exception of child victims in comparison to adult victims and students' political affiliation. Students were more likely to perceive minors as victims of sex trafficking in comparison to adults. Therefore, the age of consent influenced student's perceptions. Thus, students did not account for the factors of force, fraud, and coercion and believed that because adults are legally capable to consent to sexual activity, they were not victims of sex trafficking. In terms of political affiliation, although there were less students who affiliated with a liberal or independent party, they viewed individuals in sex trafficking as prostitutes rather than victims. Overall, despite political affiliation, the majority of students had a misconstrued perception of sex trafficking victims because they did not view individuals in sex trafficking as victims. This may be explained by the relatively small sample size and lack of representativeness (to the public at large). Thus, future research should use a larger random national sample to obtain representative results that could be generalized to population of the general public across the United States. The following paragraphs discuss recommendations for future researchers seeking to build upon this study.

These recommendations are twofold. First, since the study is strictly limited to the population sampled, future research on this topic should be conducted within other departments at East Tennessee State University and other campuses across the United States. This would be useful to see whether students across the United States have been educated on sex trafficking and to explore their views on victims of sex trafficking. In addition to college universities, it would be beneficial to conduct research in other areas, such as hospitals and hotels in large U.S. cities

where trafficking is present, in order to gauge the public's general knowledge and perception of sex trafficking.

Second, future research should examine how law enforcement perceive sex trafficking and victims of sex trafficking. This research should provide the knowledge necessary to determine the effects of training and education on law enforcement's perceptions and response to incidents of sex trafficking. Once reported, law enforcement officers are the first to respond and interact with victims of sex trafficking. It is common for law enforcement to believe that all individuals involved in the sex trade do so voluntarily (Matthews, 2005). Due to the lack of both training in how to identify incidents of sex trafficking and institutional resources to help guide law enforcement's response to sex trafficking cases, law enforcement officers more commonly perceive victims of sex trafficking as prostitutes and arrest them at the scene of the incident (Farrell et al., 2015; Matthews, 2005).

Research indicates that law enforcement officers are more likely to apply a cognitive schema to interpret unfamiliar actions or actions of uncertain intent (Ruby & Bringham, 1996). Law enforcement learn to respond to people, places, and situations based on past experiences, including training. Training and experience provide the basis for the mental model of police officers and the cues or schema that trigger suspicion (Rubenstein, 1973). When law enforcement initially respond to a call, they utilize prior knowledge to interpret the evidence of the crime committed and the victim's story (Venema, 2016). If law enforcement officers are not trained or educated on sex trafficking, they lack the schema to recognize sex trafficking and its victims. Instead, law enforcement perceive the victims as prostitutes and treat them as perpetrators.

## Policy Implications

The policy implications associated with this study are threefold. First, the need for awareness and education on sex trafficking will be addressed. Next, in-depth training and education on sex trafficking for law enforcement will be addressed. This is necessary in order for sex trafficking to be more easily identified and to prevent victims of sex trafficking from being arrested and entered into the criminal justice system. Last, there is a need for proper care of victims of sex trafficking once they have been identified and/or reported to law enforcement.

### Public Awareness and Education

Sex trafficking affects individuals, groups of individuals, and the communities in which the crime is occurring; therefore, it is important that the public be made aware of and educated on the issue (Logan et al., 2009). Because sex trafficking is an illicit crime, it is often hard to identify and as a result, victims do not self-identify. Schools should therefore incorporate curriculum that educates students about the dangers and red flags of sex trafficking. These types of programs would be especially beneficial to incorporate at the middle school level, grades 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>, because the average age of entry into the commercial sex trade is 12-14 years old (Shared Hope International, 2009). Educating students about the dangers and red flags of sex trafficking would make them less vulnerable to the exploitation tactics and recruitment methods of sex traffickers and less tolerant of the sexual exploitation of others. In addition, public awareness campaigns need be implemented to inform the public of the exploitation tactics and recruitment methods of sex traffickers, the effects of sex trafficking on victims, and the overall harm caused by sex trafficking.

When the indicators of sex trafficking are made known, the public can become more aware of how to identify sex trafficking and victims of sex trafficking. More informed public awareness can lead to stronger policies against domestic sex trafficking. Advanced public policy will help to establish better protection for the dignity and rights of trafficked and abused girls (Rights4Girls, 2017). Advanced public policy can also lead to the creation of global partnerships with international human rights and women’s rights organizations to vocalize the traumatic experiences victims in the United States endure. The overarching potential impact is to end domestic sex trafficking.

#### Training and Education for Law Enforcement

Increased training and protocols, ongoing awareness, and coordination within and across agencies are recommended due to the substantial needs of sex trafficking victims (Logan et al., 2009). This is particularly important for law enforcement and service providers, such as social workers, mental health professionals, and victim advocates. Given the growing number of cases of sex trafficking within the United States, “it is critical that service providers and law enforcement be aware of the red flags and to screen out potential cases to determine whether it might be a case of trafficking” (Logan et al., 2009, p. 26). In addition, “sometimes victims have already had prior negative experience(s) with law enforcement, which makes them scared of police and, in general, mistrustful of institutions and people that are supposed to help” (Chisolm-Straker, 2006, p. 6). Therefore, law enforcement agencies need to be better equipped to identify sex trafficking cases and victims of sex trafficking. Identifying victims of sex trafficking is a necessary step in assuring that victims get the help they need. When law enforcement falsely perceive sex trafficking victims, it affects the way that trafficking laws are interpreted and implemented (Farrell et al., 2008). “There is a need for better clarification of the U.S. judicial

system towards victims of trafficking to ensure their safety and other needs that are central rather than conditional” (Logan et al., 2009, p. 26).

Law enforcement officers need specialized training and the institutional resources to help guide how they respond to cases of sex trafficking. Law enforcement should use a victim-centered approach when combatting sex trafficking, meaning that their primary objective should be to rescue and protect victims. In order to do so, law enforcement need adequate time, funding, and specialized training to gain experience and knowledge from which they could utilize for sex trafficking investigations (Farrell et al., 2015). This would allow law enforcement to develop a sex trafficking schema and better identify cases of sex trafficking and sex trafficking victims. Specialized training could also enable law enforcement to differentiate and rule-out sex trafficking from prostitution. The more equipped law enforcement are to investigate sex trafficking cases, the less likely they are to depend on existing, but inadequate theories.

### Trauma Informed Care

Many of the victims of sex trafficking have been manipulated or psychologically coerced to the point that they cannot leave their pimp or trafficker (Stark & Hodgson, 2003). Likewise, many of these victims experience the same traumatic events, such as physical, sexual, and psychological abuse. The traumatic events trafficking victims experience include physical violence, starvation, gynecologic health problems, depression, anxiety, PTSD, panic disorder, substance abuse, suicidal ideation, and Stockholm syndrome (World Health Organization, 2012). “These post-traumatic symptoms and problems reflect those service providers often identify as common among the trafficking victims they work with (Clawson, Salomon, & Goldblatt, 2010, p. 2).



Trauma informed services should be implemented for victims of sex trafficking upon their disclosure or identification. Trauma informed services include victim-centered practices and can improve victim identification and promote sensitive and relevant responses from local law enforcement and mental health professionals (Clawson et al., 2008; Harris & Fallot, 2001). Trauma informed services can also help produce better case results for local law enforcement. According to Harris and Fallot (2001), to be trauma informed means to “know the history of past and current abuse” and

“to understand the role that violence and victimization play in the lives of most consumers of... services and to use that understanding to design service systems that accommodate the vulnerabilities of trauma survivors and allow services to be delivered in a way that will facilitate consumer participation in treatment” (Harris & Fallot, 2001, pg.4-5).

By gaining this information, key stakeholders (law enforcement, mental health professionals, social workers, and victim advocates) are better able to create a more cohesive and suitable approach to meet the victims’ needs. Trauma informed services are committed to providing services that are both welcoming and appropriate to the special needs of trauma victims.

Second, trauma specific services are intended to treat the actual symptoms of physical and sexual abuse in specialty treatment programs (Harris & Fallot, 2001). Trauma specific services are typically found within mental health programs and help manage dissociative symptoms. Management of symptoms include behavioral therapies and desensitization therapies. These therapies can be delivered in individual or group settings; however, group settings are more often utilized in intervention programs (Clawson et al., 2010).

By implementing trauma informed care, victims of sex trafficking are provided protections that other victims of sexual abuse are afforded. When key stakeholders emphasize both trauma informed and trauma specific services, trauma screening, trauma assessment, and trauma-related treatment and rehabilitation, two changes take place. First, the implementations leads to improved conditions for victims of sex trafficking and second, the implementations allow for trauma recovery to be more likely to occur. When trauma recovery occurs, it enables the victims to repair and regain their lives.

### Conclusion

The current study built upon previous literature that suggest minimal support for the public's current knowledge on domestic sex trafficking and perceptions associated with victims of sex trafficking. Researchers contend that public knowledge on sex trafficking is limited and perceptions of sex trafficking victims are skewed, which contribute to the likelihood of the issue (Cotton et al., 2002; Farley et al, 2003; Hoyle et al., 2011). Nevertheless, domestic sex trafficking is an ongoing and increasing issue in the United States (International Labor Organization, 2017; It Has to Stop, 2013; Polaris Project, 2006). As revealed in the results, students are aware of this ongoing and increasing problem, specifically in Northeast Tennessee. While it is uncertain to what extent college students, at the national level, are educated on sex trafficking, further examination of this phenomenon should be explored to fully understand how college students and the general public perceive victims of sex trafficking. The need for policy changes, educational programs, increased public awareness, increased training for law enforcement and victim services, and increased prevention methods affects overall efforts to combat and end domestic sex trafficking (Garza & Smith, 2010; Nicholas, 2015). If the general public are is aware of the prevalence of domestic sex trafficking and the red flags, citizens are

better equipped to identify sex trafficking victims. The more knowledgeable the public are on this topic, the more likely they are to disagree with misconceptions of sex trafficking/prostitution myths and perceive individuals in sex trafficking as victims rather than prostitutes. Proper perceptions of sex trafficking victims enables law enforcement and victim services to provide the support and services necessary to help rehabilitate victims re-claim their lives and re-integrate back into their communities.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

#### Verbal Script

Hello,

My name is Faith Browder. I am a graduate student earning my master's in Criminal Justice and Criminology. Like you all, I earned my bachelor's degree at ETSU. I graduated in May of 2017 and will be graduating this December from the master's program. My field of interest and research is human trafficking, more specifically domestic sex trafficking. I am particularly interested in people's perceptions of trafficking victims, whether or not the public views them as prostitutes or as true victims. Sex trafficking was not considered a crime until 2011 and as a result, there is little education on trafficking.

\*Read informed consent document.

## Appendix B

### Informed Consent Document

Public Perceptions on Domestic Sex Trafficking and Domestic Sex Trafficking Victims: A Quantitative Analysis

Faith Browder

Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology, ETSU

[browderf@etsu.edu](mailto:browderf@etsu.edu)

Read aloud prior to the passing out of the survey:

This study is aimed at measuring the public's current perception and education of sex trafficking and sex trafficking victims. This will be measured by conducting an in-class survey from Criminal Justice and Criminology undergraduate and graduate students. This survey is voluntary and anonymous. Your participation in this study is not required. Refusal to participate involves no penalty or loss of benefits and will not affect your grades. The approximate completion time is 10-15 minutes. You have the right to terminate the survey at any time prior to its completion. There are no risks associated with survey participation. You will personally receive no direct benefit as a result of completing the survey. The potential benefit of the research is increased understanding of the public's perception and education of sex trafficking.

Every attempt will be made to see that your study results are kept confidential. A copy of the records from this study will be stored in the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology for at least 6 years after the end of this research. The results of this study may be published and/or presented at meetings without naming you as a participant. By completing this survey, you attest that you agree to participate in this research project and that you are 18 years of age or older.

If there are any questions or research-related problems at any time, contact Faith Browder at [browderf@etsu.edu](mailto:browderf@etsu.edu). Also, you may call the chairperson of the IRB at ETSU at (423) 439-6054 if you have questions about your rights as a research subject. If you have any questions or concerns about the research and want to talk to someone who is not with the research team or if you cannot reach the research team, you may call an IRB Coordinator at 423/439-6055 or 423/439-6002.

## Appendix C

### In-Class Survey

1. What gender do you identify with?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Male</li> <li>b. Female</li> <li>c. Prefer not to answer</li> </ul>
2. What is your classification?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Freshman</li> <li>b. Sophomore</li> <li>c. Junior</li> <li>d. Senior</li> <li>e. Graduate Student</li> </ul>
3. What is your concentration?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Criminal Justice major</li> <li>b. Criminal Justice minor</li> <li>c. Other</li> </ul>
4. What is your age?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 18-19</li> <li>b. 20-21</li> <li>c. 22-23</li> <li>d. 24-25</li> <li>e. Over 25</li> </ul>
5. How long have you lived in Tennessee?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Less than 1 year</li> <li>b. 1-4 years</li> <li>c. 5-10 years</li> <li>d. 11-15 years</li> <li>e. Over 15 years</li> </ul>
6. If you were not born in the United States, where were you born?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Canada</li> <li>b. Mexico</li> <li>c. Europe</li> <li>d. Asia</li> <li>e. Central or South America</li> <li>f. Middle East</li> <li>g. Other Country</li> </ul>
7. What is your racial background?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. African American</li> <li>b. Hispanic</li> <li>c. Asian</li> <li>d. Caucasian</li> <li>e. Native American</li> <li>f. Other</li> </ul>
8. What religion do you practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Christian</li> <li>b. Buddhist</li> <li>c. Muslim</li> <li>d. Hindu</li> <li>e. Other</li> <li>f. No religion</li> </ul>
9. What is your marital status?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Single</li> <li>b. Married</li> <li>c. Divorced</li> </ul>

	d. Widowed
10. Do you have children?	a. Yes b. No
11. What political affiliation do you associate with?	a. Republican b. Democrat c. Independent
12. I have received education on human trafficking.	a. Strongly agree b. Agree c. Neutral d. Disagree e. Disagree strongly
13. In my profession, I have dealt with human trafficking.	a. Strongly agree b. Agree c. Neutral d. Disagree e. Disagree strongly
14. Human trafficking and sex trafficking are different crimes.	a. Strongly agree b. Agree c. Neutral d. Disagree e. Disagree strongly
15. Human trafficking is not a problem in Northeast Tennessee.	a. Strongly agree b. Agree c. Neutral d. Disagree e. Disagree strongly
16. Sex trafficking and prostitution are not related.	a. Strongly agree b. Agree c. Neutral d. Disagree e. Disagree strongly
17. Underage prostitutes are sex trafficking victims.	a. Strongly agree b. Agree c. Neutral d. Disagree e. Disagree strongly
18. Adults in sex trafficking are perceived as prostitutes rather than as victims.	a. Strongly agree b. Agree c. Neutral d. Disagree e. Disagree strongly
19. Most people who become victims of sex trafficking are adults.	a. Strongly agree b. Agree c. Neutral d. Disagree e. Disagree strongly



20. Females account for the majority of human trafficking victims.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Strongly agree</li> <li>b. Agree</li> <li>c. Neutral</li> <li>d. Disagree</li> <li>e. Disagree strongly</li> </ul>
21. Adults involved in sex trafficking do not deserve a lesser punishment because they are prostitutes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Strongly agree</li> <li>b. Agree</li> <li>c. Neutral</li> <li>d. Disagree</li> <li>e. Disagree strongly</li> </ul>
22. If illegal, trafficking victims should be deported to their home country once rescued from the slave trade.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Strongly agree</li> <li>b. Agree</li> <li>c. Neutral</li> <li>d. Disagree</li> <li>e. Disagree strongly</li> </ul>
23. Persons over the age of 18 are not considered to be victims of sex trafficking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Strongly agree</li> <li>b. agree</li> <li>c. Neutral</li> <li>d. Disagree</li> <li>e. Disagree strongly</li> </ul>
24. Children are rarely victims of human trafficking in the United States.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Strongly agree</li> <li>b. Agree</li> <li>c. Neutral</li> <li>d. Disagree</li> <li>e. Disagree strongly</li> </ul>
25. Children involved in sex trafficking are labeled juvenile prostitutes by the criminal justice system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Strongly agree</li> <li>b. Agree</li> <li>c. Neutral</li> <li>d. Disagree</li> <li>e. Disagree strongly</li> </ul>
26. We need better policies and legislation in the United States in order to provide better assistance for victims of human trafficking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Strongly agree</li> <li>b. Agree</li> <li>c. Neutral</li> <li>d. Disagree</li> <li>e. Disagree strongly</li> </ul>
27. Human trafficking is best handled by law enforcement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Strongly agree</li> <li>b. Agree</li> <li>c. Neutral</li> <li>d. Disagree</li> <li>e. Disagree strongly</li> </ul>
28. Human trafficking is a law enforcement issue rather than a social services issue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Strongly agree</li> <li>b. Agree</li> <li>c. Neutral</li> <li>d. Disagree</li> <li>e. Disagree strongly</li> </ul>

<p>29. There should be more effort by law enforcement to combat human trafficking.</p>	<p>a. Strongly agree  b. Agree  c. Neutral  d. Disagree  e. Disagree strongly</p>
<p>30. Human trafficking is not considered by law enforcement as being a highly organized crime.</p>	<p>a. Strongly agree  b. Agree  c. Neutral  d. Disagree  e. Strongly disagree</p>
<p>31. Steps to eliminate trafficking and individual perceptions should include media campaigns and educational programs.</p>	<p>a. Strongly agree  b. Agree  c. Neutral  d. Disagree  e. Strongly disagree</p>

## Appendix D

### Attitudes Towards Prostitution and Sex Trafficking

Are you 18 years of age or older?

Yes (1)

No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q2 Are you a resident or citizen of the United States?

Yes (1)

No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Please state the degree with which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Questions of Legalizing Prostitution:

Q3 Prostitution should be legalized in the state where I live.

Strongly Agree (1)

Agree (2)

Somewhat Agree (3)

Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)

Somewhat Disagree (5)

Q4 It is ok for consenting adults to agree to exchange money for sex.

Strongly Agree (1)

Agree (2) Somewhat Agree (3)

Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)

Somewhat Disagree (5)

Q5 Prostitution is ok, as long as the health risks can be minimized.

Strongly Agree (1)

Agree (2)

Somewhat Agree (3)

Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)

Somewhat Disagree (5)

Q6 Demand for prostitution increases when prostitution is legalized.

Strongly Disagree (1)

Disagree (2)

Somewhat Disagree (3)

Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)

Somewhat Agree (5)

Q7 Legalizing prostitution promotes sex trafficking.

Strongly Disagree (1)

Disagree (2) Somewhat Disagree (3)

Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)

Somewhat Agree (5)

Q8 When prostitution is legal men are more likely to pay for sex.

Strongly Disagree (1)

Disagree (2)

Somewhat Disagree (3)

Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)

Somewhat Agree (5)

Q9 Legalizing prostitution protects the women used in prostitution.

Strongly Disagree (1)

Disagree (2)

Somewhat Disagree (3)

Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)

Somewhat Agree (5)

Q10 Prostitution is a necessary evil in our society.

Strongly Disagree (1)

Disagree (2)

Somewhat Disagree (3)

Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)

Somewhat Agree (5)

Human Trafficking Awareness:

Q11 Pimps often use physical force to control the women they prostitute.

Strongly Disagree (1)

Disagree (2)

Somewhat Disagree (3)

Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)

Somewhat Agree (5)

Q12 Pimp-controlled prostitution is a form of human trafficking.

Strongly Disagree (1)

Disagree (2)

Somewhat Disagree (3)

Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)

Somewhat Agree (5)

Q13 Prostitution is a form of sexual exploitation.

Strongly Disagree (1)

Disagree (2)

Somewhat Disagree (3)

Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)

Somewhat Agree (5)

Q14 Prostitution and sex trafficking are the same thing.

Strongly Disagree (1)

Disagree (2)

Somewhat Disagree (3)

Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)

Somewhat Agree (5)

Q15 I believe that the majority of girls used in prostitution are controlled by a sex trafficker or “pimp.”

Strongly Disagree (1)

Disagree (2)

Somewhat Disagree (3)

Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)

Somewhat Agree (5)

VITA

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